

INSPECTION REPORT

BERRY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Coleford, Gloucestershire

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115549

Headteacher: Mrs Gail Jones

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Pittman
18275

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd May 2002

Inspection number: 196174

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Nine Wells Road Berry Hill Coleford Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL16 7AT
Telephone number:	(01594) 832262
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of vice chair of governors:	Mr Kevin James
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18275	Mrs C Pittman	Registered inspector	Foundation stage Art Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? How well are the pupils taught?
11094	Mr I Blair	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
13307	Mr I Hancock	Team inspector	Equality of opportunity Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22790	Mrs J Pinney	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History Geography Physical education Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Berry Hill is a one form entry primary school situated in the rural village of Berry Hill near Coleford in Gloucestershire. The school draws most of its pupils from the immediate catchment area, which is mainly of owner occupied homes with some social housing. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds; the population is mainly white British. The school is similar in size to most other primary schools. There are 221 pupils aged from 4 to 11 years in mixed ability classes. The attainment on entry is just below average. Some, but not all, the children attend a nursery or playgroup before joining the school.

The percentage of pupils thought to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Over a third of the pupils have special educational needs (SEN), which is above the national average. However, the percentage of pupils with statements of SEN is in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school which is improving rapidly and is well placed to improve further. Its aims and objectives are targeted on raising standards, which have improved significantly over the last four years. Most pupils make good progress from the time they come to the school to when they leave at 11. High proportions are keen to learn and have very good attitudes towards their work. Behaviour is very good and there is little absenteeism. Most of the teaching is good or very good; occasionally it is excellent. This good teaching has begun to impact positively on pupils' learning. There are good arrangements to support all pupils and care for them; the school has a strong partnership with parents. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The school is well governed, self critical and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils are attaining above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at age 11.
- The provision for pupils' personal development including pupils' moral and social development is very good. Spiritual development is good.
- The school's good care and family ethos encourages very good pupil attitudes and behaviour. Most pupils enjoy school, are very eager to learn and are making good progress.
- Teaching is good, with much that is very good and sometimes excellent in the junior classes. It is consistently very good in the Foundation Stage.
- The school has very effective links with parents.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher and well managed by senior staff and an effective governing body.

What could be improved

- Standards attained in English, mathematics and religious education by pupils aged seven years.
- Improving the pace of learning for higher achieving pupils in infant classes.
- Subject co-ordinators monitoring teaching in the foundation subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected five years ago inspectors found that the standards achieved by pupils and the management and efficiency of the school needed improving. The quality of education provided and the school's climate for learning were good. Since then the school has made good improvement.

There has been good improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science for pupils

aged 11, although standards have fallen in religious education for pupils aged seven. Teaching has improved significantly and so have the quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils. Learning objectives are clearly stated in lesson plans and assessment is now used more effectively to evaluate pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Pupils' attainment in writing, however, is low when they start at the school and continues to be a weakness in Years 1 and 2. Day to day management has improved appropriately. The school has also effectively improved its performance in other areas. The provision for pupils with SEN is very good. All pupils' attitudes and behaviour have been significantly improved and are now very good. The monitoring of curriculum planning has enabled the headteacher to ensure that teachers have clearer learning goals, although co-ordinators still do not monitor the teaching of skills sufficiently enough in foundation subjects to identify areas for improvement. There are more opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative in problem solving and evaluate their own learning. However, the school is aware that this is still an area where improvements are needed. The monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' progress have all been significantly improved. Governors are now more involved in financial planning, supporting the curriculum and evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses more effectively. Given the very good quality of its leadership and the commitment of its staff, the school is well placed to develop further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	B	B	D
mathematics	E	A	B	C
science	B	B	B	D

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

Most children when they start school are achieving standards just below expectations for children of this age. However, they make good progress in the Foundation Stage and by the time they reach Year 1 their attainment is at the expected standard in most cases. By age 11, pupils are attaining standards that are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. This is good progress. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above the national average in English and broadly average in science and mathematics. When compared to similar schools standards are below average in English and science and in line in mathematics. This is partly because learning was affected by previous unsatisfactory teaching. This has now been addressed. The school's improvement trend for all core subjects is broadly in line with the national trend. In lessons seen, in the infant classes, standards are in line with expectations in all subjects except religious education where they are below. In the junior classes, standards in lessons seen are in line with expectations in all subjects except mathematics where they are above. The school met and exceeded its challenging targets last year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to take part in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour around the school and in lessons is very good. Pupils respect each other and their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good overall. Relationships throughout the school are very positive and older children are given

	specific responsibilities which they carry out well.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

Pupils are very keen to learn. They show sustained interest in their work. Most pupils are polite, well mannered and show respect for property. There is no evidence of bullying or disruptive behaviour. There have been no exclusions, either permanent or fixed term, over the past year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. Over half the teaching throughout the school was good or better and just over a third was satisfactory. Occasionally lessons were excellent. There was a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. There is a positive ethos for learning in most classrooms. The best teaching is in the Foundation Stage where nearly all the teaching is very good and in Years 3 to 6, where two thirds of the teaching was good or better. Most of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 was satisfactory. The school meets the needs of most pupils well, although pupils with SEN are better challenged than higher attaining pupils in the infant classes. Pupils with SEN receive focused and effective support and make good progress. Learning support assistants are very well trained.

The quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory in the infants and lower junior classes. In Years 5 and 6 the teaching is exemplary and pupils make very good progress in their learning. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 indicates that insufficient use is made of assessment to match work well to individual needs and teachers' planning frequently focuses on what the teacher will be doing, rather than what skills pupils are expected to achieve. This results in a lack of challenge, particularly for higher achieving pupils. In the junior classes, pupils are managed well.

The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6. Some exceptional teaching was observed in Year 6. In the best lessons learning is very effective because pupils are well motivated and challenged by high expectations of work. Where teaching is less effective pupils are insufficiently challenged or supported, time is not used effectively and teachers lack confidence in teaching mathematics. Assessment procedures are very good in mathematics and this information is used well to inform future planning. The school successfully analyses intermediate and national tests to set appropriate individual targets. In Year 6, marking is used extremely well to move pupils forward in their learning and the school's homework policy is rigorously applied, but these practices are not consistent throughout the school.

In the most effective lessons teachers have high expectations, set a brisk pace and provide challenging work. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, as in a literacy lesson in a lower junior class, the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy was limited and all pupils were given the same task, regardless of their individual needs. Where teaching is exemplary, as in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, teachers have very good subject knowledge and lesson objectives are made very clear and continually referred to, so pupils know what is expected of them. These lessons are presented in a lively innovative way and tasks are well matched to individual needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory; there is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and in line with the new code of practice. Pupils' learning is enhanced through the close liaison between well-trained support staff and class teachers. Target groups are well identified and support is well focused.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The principles of right and wrong are actively promoted and pupils' moral and social development is very good. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is very good at caring for its pupils. Children are well known and this awareness is used effectively to support their personal development. Good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics have been introduced and day to day assessment is effectively used to inform future lessons. The school is in the process of extending this to all other subjects. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good.

The partnership between the parents and school is very good. Most parents are satisfied that the school works closely with them. The school's literacy and numeracy strategies are taught appropriately in the infant classes and well in most junior classes. A great deal of work has taken place, in monitoring the strategies and this is beginning to raise standards in the teaching. However, a minority of lessons did not follow the recommended lesson format.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very good leadership of the headteacher ensures clear direction for the work and development of the school. All staff have a shared commitment to improving standards. Key staff manage the school well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is very supportive and takes an active role in forward planning and the day to day work of the school. Governors fulfil their statutory duties, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set the right priorities for development and improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Teaching is well monitored by the headteacher, although there is insufficient monitoring of teaching, learning and target setting by subject co-ordinators particularly in the foundation subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Decisions on spending are linked very effectively to educational priorities. This ensures that good value for money is achieved and the very best use is made of resources.

There is a good match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. There are enough support staff and they are very well trained. The accommodation is good, cleaned to a very high standard and in a good state of repair. Resources are good in most subject areas. The headteacher has worked hard to create a cohesive and committed team of teachers to take the school forward. The governing body is shrewd, effective and well aware of best value principles.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• The school expects children to work hard to achieve their best.• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem.• The teaching is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school's leadership and management.• The relationship between the school and the parents.• How they are informed about their children's progress.• The amount of work their children get to do at home.

Inspectors agree with the positive comments from parents; the findings of the inspection do not, in the main, support the negative views above of a few parents.

Inspection evidence found that the leadership and management of the school are very good. Overall, parents strongly support the school and appreciate what it has to offer their children. The relationship between the school and the parents is good. The quality and range of information provided by the school to parents on their children's progress is very good. Homework is used appropriately to help raise standards in some classes but its use is not consistent throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most children when they start school are achieving standards just below expectations for children of this age. However, they make good progress in the Foundation Stage and by the time they reach Year 1, their attainment is at the expected standard in all the Early Learning Goals. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving results that are above national averages in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above average in English and in line in mathematics and science. There is good progress by the end of Year 6. Progress by the end of Year 2 is unsatisfactory. However, when results are judged against those of similar schools they are in line in mathematics and below average for English and science. This is partly because learning was affected by previous unsatisfactory teaching. This has now been addressed.
2. Pupils' achievement at 11 years, when judged against their prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average for mathematics and in line with expectations in English and science. Inspection evidence shows that good progress is being made in the junior classes. There is good analysis of attainment by gender. Analysis of test data shows that girls perform better than boys in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school has made good improvement in all these subjects, bringing them to above average levels. This upward trend is largely the result of successful targeting and monitoring of pupils and is broadly in line with the national trend. There is no significant difference between the attainment and progress of boys and girls. The school exceeded its challenging targets last year.
3. The results of the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for English are below the national average for writing and well below for reading. The percentage of pupils reaching higher levels was below the national average and, when compared to similar schools, was well below. No pupils achieved the higher level 3 in writing. The number of pupils in Key Stage 2 who reach higher levels in English is well above the national average and similar schools.
4. In mathematics, the attainment of pupils, in the national tests and in comparison with similar schools, is well below the national average by the end of the infant stage. By the end of the juniors, results are above average against all schools nationally and in line when compared to similar schools. Standards have significantly improved since the last inspection for all pupils and particularly for pupils with SEN who make good progress. Inspection findings show that by the time pupils are aged seven attainment is close to that expected for their age and their achievement is satisfactory. By the age of 11, attainment is above average and progress is good. The poor Key Stage 1 results do not reflect the standards seen during the inspection. The difference in last year's test scores, at Key Stage 1, is explained by the large proportion of pupils with SEN. Since the last inspection, the improving trend in English and mathematics, was disrupted by the results achieved by this group of pupils.
5. In science, national test results in 2001 at age 11 were above the national average and the percentage attaining the higher level was close to the national average. Overall, standards attained in science were above the national average although, when compared to the performance of similar schools, they were just below average. Standards have been maintained above average for the last three years. In Year 2, teacher assessments last year showed that the percentage of pupils attaining at the expected level was below average but the pupils attaining standards at the higher level were well below the national average. Inspection findings indicate standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Progress is satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the juniors.
6. There has been an overall improvement in the standards attained in literacy and numeracy since the last inspection, although there has been better improvement in the junior classes. The literacy

strategy has been well implemented. Pupils have good opportunities for speaking and listening and attainment is above average by the age of 11. Discussion is of a good standard in all subjects and teachers actively encourage and develop this skill in lessons. Standards of reading are improving and help pupils to make progress in many subjects. By the age of 11, many pupils are confident in the use of subject specific vocabulary. Although attainment in reading, for the present Year 6, is average pupils are achieving well for their capability. Writing standards at Year 2 are average, although too few pupils are producing work at the higher level. Very few write with a joined script and too much time is sometimes spent discussing writing rather than incorporating discussion into the writing process. In the junior classes pupils progress well with their writing in literacy lessons but the standard of work produced in other curriculum areas is often of a lower standard. Literacy skills, particularly writing are underdeveloped through the other subjects of the curriculum.

7. The numeracy strategy has been successfully implemented within mathematics lessons and the use of numeracy in other subjects is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Most pupils apply a range of techniques effectively to solving mathematical challenges. They find ways of breaking up difficult calculations into manageable sections. The pace of their learning is improving significantly. Throughout the school activities are provided at appropriate levels according to pupils' capabilities. This is done particularly well in the junior classes where pupils are placed in ability sets.
8. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT), by the age of seven and 11 is broadly in line with the national expectations and they are achieving well. Standards have significantly improved during the last year due to the installation of an impressive ICT suite. For example, by the age of seven, pupils successfully used ICT to design a front cover for a book and merge a picture from a paint program to decorate. In Year 6 pupils are able to search the Internet to find information and import pictures on the Second World War and the structure of bridges to support their learning in history and science. They use spreadsheets to record and analyse information on databases, for example in mathematics. Information and communication technology is fast becoming part of their everyday repertoire of ways to communicate.
9. By the end of both the infants and juniors attainment is broadly in line with national expectations in all other subjects except religious education in Years 1 and 2 which is below average. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in most subjects. Progress in music is satisfactory at both key stages. There is insufficient progress being made in religious education in the infant classes.
10. Pupils with SEN make good progress in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills. Progress is particularly good in reading, spelling and handwriting, as a result of specific targets in IEPs and effective in-class support. Some parents said that needs of higher attaining pupils are not being met. Whilst this may be the case in the infant classes the proportions gaining the higher level 5 in the junior classes last year was well above average in English and in line for mathematics and science compared to similar schools.
11. Since the last inspection, in the infant classes, overall standards of attainment have been maintained except in religious education where they have declined. In the junior classes, there has been good improvement in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Standards have been maintained in all other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils show a very positive attitude towards their learning. They are eager to come to school each morning and participate fully in all that is on offer both in the classroom and as extra-curricular activities. Pupils are generally very proud of their school and are keen to represent it at outside events. In lessons they respond very well to good teaching, follow the instructions they are given and settle promptly to their work. They show genuine delight whenever they succeed in a task.
13. Standards of behaviour both in the classroom and elsewhere around the school are generally very high and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. In lessons where the

teaching is good there is an expectation of good behaviour and pupils respond very well to this. An example of pupils' generally very good behaviour and also their respect for school property, is the virtually complete absence of litter and graffiti. Instances of bullying and oppressive behaviour are rare and where they do occur they are dealt with promptly and efficiently. None were observed during the inspection nor was this raised as a concern by parents. There have been no exclusions, either permanent or fixed term, over the past year.

14. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils are generally courteous and helpful towards others and they applaud and share in each other's successes. For example, pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion, doors are held open for adults and there was a joyous response to the announcement in an assembly that the Year 6 athletics team had won. There is a very good rapport between pupils and teachers which is based on mutual respect. Pupils respond well to the mature way they are treated by staff. Consequently the school operates as an orderly community which is conducive to good learning. Pupils are aware of the impact of their actions on others. They care and are concerned about each other in the way they help each other in the dining hall and the playground. Pupils are also eager to take on responsibilities when asked to do so. For example, some help in assemblies, older pupils care for younger ones by acting as prefects or peer mediators and many do various activities in support of charities. Pupils are developing well as independent learners and take the initiative often without being asked to do so.
15. The level of attendance is very good, is well above the national average and has been so for a number of years. This makes a substantial contribution to pupils' good progress. Attendance is somewhat lower in the reception class and Year 1, though still comparable with the national average and this arises mainly from pupils in these year groups being taken on family holidays during term time. Unauthorised absence is very low across the school. Punctuality is generally very good and lessons start on time. The deficiencies identified in the school's registration procedures, identified at the previous inspection, have been fully addressed and procedures are now good.
16. Pupils with SEN are fully involved in all the activities and good strategies for group work ensure that they enjoy learning and are well motivated. They receive good support in lessons to help them achieve the targets identified on their individual education plans.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching in the school is good and the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. Teaching is satisfactory or better in nearly all lessons. It was good or very good in half of the lessons. Nearly one in ten lessons was excellent. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection, when one in ten lessons were unsatisfactory. Teaching is strongest in the Foundation Stage and junior classes but particularly in Year 6 and the reception class. In Year 6 half the teaching was excellent or very good. In reception two thirds of the teaching was very good. Nearly two thirds of the teaching in the infant classes is satisfactory and nearly a third is good. There was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in infant and junior classes, in literacy and physical education lessons.
18. Most lessons are planned very carefully with clearly expressed objectives. Teaching is most successful when teachers remain focused on these objectives and provide activities to achieve them. This was illustrated well in an Early Years lesson where the teacher set tasks to match pupils' capabilities and subsequently children made very good progress because of the appropriately challenging activities which were well targeted to their individual needs. Teaching and learning is also effective when activities are lively and appeal to pupils, as in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where the teacher used a competition, fast pace and exciting resources to enthuse pupils to achieve well when nearly two thirds of the class had special educational needs.
19. Teachers generally demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding particularly in the upper junior classes. This is often evident in English and mathematics lessons because the school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy well. For example in a Year 6 English lesson the good choice of text and the punchy, upbeat

introduction motivated pupils from the start. One child stated when asked why he remained so interested throughout, "I don't really like English but my teacher makes it interesting." Many pupils in the class produced writing that was better than the average expected for their age. By contrast, in a less successful ICT lesson in an infant class, the teacher showed limited understanding of the subject and missed opportunities to show pupils how to improve their performance which had a negative impact on their learning.

20. Some teachers meet the challenge of addressing the differing needs of pupils well. Sometimes this is done through questioning, for example when a teacher in the mental arithmetic part of a mathematics lesson was pitching easier questions for lower achieving pupils and asking more demanding questions of the higher attainers. As a result all pupils made very good progress in their learning. Within lessons different activities can be provided as in the same English lesson where higher attaining pupils were completing difficult work about subordinate clauses in a more evaluative way than a group of lower attaining pupils who needed support to write a sentence. All pupils achieved well by the end of the lesson even though most were not clear what subordinate clauses were at the start. In another English lesson in an infant class, where tasks were not suited to pupils' needs, some pupils finished very quickly and no further work was provided to extend their learning.
21. Successful teaching has a sense of urgency about it and time is used very well. Pupils' interest is kept up by maintaining a lively pace to learning and by varying activities as was seen in a Year 4/5 literacy lesson about story writing. Learning in this lesson was very good, helped by the teacher's demonstration on the difference between effective and ineffective writing which held the pupils spellbound. In an unsatisfactory literacy lesson in Year 3/4 the pace was very slow, basic skills were not taught well, the work was unchallenging and most pupils learned very little.
22. Teachers also use questioning effectively to assess pupils' understanding and progress. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is good overall. However, the quality varies in some classes, where assessment is not recorded or used to improve further planning. In their weekly planning and daily lessons teachers build in ways to assess pupils' learning. This is done most effectively in the reception class and in English and mathematics in the upper juniors. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that insufficient use is made of assessment to match work well to individual needs in some classes, where teachers' planning frequently focuses on what the teacher will be doing, rather than what skills pupils are expected to achieve. This results in a lack of challenge, particularly for higher achieving pupils in Years 1 and 2. There is an established policy for marking that is aimed at helping pupils to improve their work. Pupils benefit from the feedback given by good marking that shows them their work is valued. These procedures enable the school to have a good knowledge of pupils' attainment. However, although there are examples of thorough and constructive marking in the school the quality of marking is inconsistent.
23. Literacy is taught well in English lessons but literacy skills are not consistently reinforced in other subjects of the curriculum. Most teachers ensure that pupils know the correct terminology for the subject but some do not follow this up by giving pupils the relevant vocabulary to use in specific subjects. Nonetheless, literacy is beginning to make an impact on pupils' overall attainment. Numeracy is effectively taught in mathematics lessons and is beginning to be used appropriately in other subjects. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in the upper juniors although a minority of lessons lower down the key stage did not follow the recommended lesson format. In the infant classes basic skills are not sufficiently reinforced.
24. Many teachers have good discipline and pupils behave well. This clearly contributes to effective learning. Most use a range of strategies to achieve a positive learning environment. Generally, relationships between pupils and teachers in the school are very good. Because pupils respect their teachers and they value pupils' efforts and contributions, learning improves. Homework is used appropriately to support learning and raise standards but its use is not consistent across the school.
25. Both teaching support staff and learning support assistants were frequently observed making important contributions to pupils' learning. For example in a science lesson with a large

percentage of lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 2, the teacher and learning support assistants were constantly motivating pupils whose learning in the lesson was very good. There is some very effective use of computers to promote learning across the school.

26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Staff know their pupils well and suitable systems are in place to identify pupils with special needs. For the most part, lesson plans take account of their needs and individual education plans are well used by class teachers to plan work. Pupils are considerably helped by the learning support assistants, who are well trained, very knowledgeable and extremely competent. Teaching in withdrawal groups is good. Pupils' learning is enhanced through the close liaison between the support staff and class teachers. Teachers manage pupils with behavioural difficulties well and understand the importance of warmth, calm and patience with troubled pupils who are not always able to show at the time that they appreciate this. Teaching has improved as a result of the new staff that have joined the school in the last year.

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

27. The curriculum for infant and junior pupils is broad and includes all relevant subjects of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection the school has improved provision for the under fives and increased teaching time throughout the school to ensure the curriculum is now better balanced. A large proportion of time has been appropriately allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy to help raise standards and most teachers use the new strategies well. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects. However, religious education in Years 1 and 2 is not taught in sufficient depth and pupils do not acquire sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject.
28. The provision for pupils with SEN is very good and in line with the new code of practice. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum including the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are very thorough. Detailed individual education plans are provided for identified pupils and support is well focused. They include well-defined and realistic targets for improvement, together with specific details of action to be followed for the next steps in learning. The targets provide very useful guidance for teachers, parents and support staff and teachers mostly take them into account when planning work.
29. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. A relevant policy has been written since the last inspection to enhance this area of the curriculum. Personal, social and health education and circle times have successfully been introduced into the school timetable and the headteacher has targeted this as an area for further development in the school improvement plan. Sex education and issues of drug misuse are effectively taught as part of the science programme and the school encourages healthy eating.
30. The school curriculum is enriched by visits to local places of interest related to topics studied such as 'Clearwell Quarry' and the 'Mumbles' coastline near Swansea. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities supports the curriculum well in subjects such as physical education and music.
31. Appropriate links have been established with the local community to support curricular opportunities including the local parish church, police, school nurse and old people's home. A local artist has been commissioned to paint a school mural using pupils' ideas to improve the playground environment. Constructive curricular links have been established with local primary schools through joint in-service training, country dancing and sports events. Good relationships exist between the comprehensive school and local nursery through regular meetings. Students from the Royal Forest of Dean College regularly visit for work experience and the school accepts students from Gloucestershire University for teaching practice.
32. The school makes very good overall provision for pupils' personal development including spiritual,

moral, social and cultural development, which has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now one of the school's strengths. This has a significant impact on the very good behaviour, attitudes and relationships of pupils.

33. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. It is enhanced appropriately through daily acts of collective worship, which take place in a quiet respectful atmosphere. The local vicar and church worker regularly visit to lead assemblies, where pupils have the opportunity to engage in prayer and quiet reflection. Worship is predominately Christian but pupils have the opportunity to learn about other faiths and celebrate festivals in their religious education lessons. The school successfully provides planned opportunities to develop pupils' sense of awe and wonder to make the whole curriculum come alive. Very good use is made of the school environment and the Forest of Dean by visits to places such as 'Plump Hill' to effectively develop this aspect of pupils' personal development.
34. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school has a strong ethos and is an orderly community where pupils feel secure. High priority is given to equipping pupils with a clear set of moral values. These expectations are effectively reinforced by consistent application of the behavioural policy, promoting positive behaviour. Rewards and personal achievements are very effectively used to promote learning and good behaviour, which is celebrated in assemblies. The golden rules with individual class rules are displayed and continually reinforced. Staff provide very good role models and encourage pupils to be polite, friendly, show consideration to others and distinguish right from wrong. The school successfully promotes a sense of citizenship by participating in the Youth Enterprise scheme.
35. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Strong emphasis is given to personal and social development from the time pupils start at the school. Many opportunities are provided for the successful development of pupils' social skills, including everyday interaction between pupils and adults. The promotion of values such as friendships and care for others forms an important part of school life, for example when older pupils read with the infants. Pupils are encouraged to work and play well together in class and on the playground. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which are well supported and greatly enhance pupils' social development. Social development is effectively promoted with numerous visits including two residential trips to the Wilderness Centre in Mitcheldean and Barton Hall Activity Centre in Devon.
36. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils learn to appreciate their own culture through local visits to Gloucester Cathedral and further afield to Colston Hall in Bristol and St David's in Cardiff for concerts. Regular visitors invited into school include storytellers and drama/dance workshop groups. Pupils learn of other cultures appropriately through religious education and topics such as the international project which has links with various European countries. The strong association with a school in Kenya effectively helps pupils develop a real understanding of cultures found in the global community. There has been good improvement in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school cares for its pupils very well. It provides a safe and secure environment in which pupils can feel at ease and concentrate on their learning. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection. For example, there are unobstructed emergency exits from all teaching areas which are clearly and correctly signed, as are the locations of fire alarms and extinguishers. Good procedures are now in place to identify and remedy any health and safety issues. No issues were observed during the inspection. There is also very good provision for first aid and fire drills take place regularly. The procedures for child protection are very good. All staff have been informed of the steps to be taken should they have any concerns over a pupil.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. There is a good behaviour and discipline policy in place and a system of rewards through which pupils who behave exceptionally well can receive recognition. Similarly sanctions can be applied when behaviour is unsatisfactory. Examples were seen in lessons of both rewards and sanctions being applied

appropriately to individual pupils. Consequently pupils fully understand and appreciate the system and it makes a substantial contribution to the very high standards of behaviour that are observed. This is reinforced by the range of very effective behaviour management strategies used by teachers.

39. Overall, the school has good procedures in place for the assessment of pupils' academic progress. These have been much improved since the previous inspection although they are still not consistently applied. For example, although assessment is very good in English, mathematics and the Early Years, it is less well developed in some other areas. This pattern is reflected in the use that is made of assessment data to guide curriculum planning. Appropriate individual targets and weekly class targets are effectively set for pupils and records, on each pupil, are kept in the core subjects so that teachers know how pupils are progressing as they move up the school. There are clear and consistently applied criteria for assessment of pupils with special educational needs and their placement onto the school's register. Pupils are regularly tested and progress is rigorously tracked. Assessments are used well to establish appropriate targets on individual education plans.
40. The school is effective in supporting and guiding pupils' personal development. There are good policies in place on personal, social, health, sex and drugs education. This is taught across the curriculum and is reinforced by the good use that is made of circle time and assemblies. Its effectiveness stems from the very good rapport that exists between pupils and teachers. Procedures for the induction of new pupils into the reception class and the transfer of Year 6 pupils to secondary education are very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Overall, parents strongly support the school and appreciate what it has to offer their children. They are particularly impressed by the high standard of teaching which enables pupils to make good progress in their learning and personal development. They also like the high expectations that teachers have of their children, both in the targets they should achieve and in how they should behave. Parents find that the range of extra-curricular activities available to their children is extensive. However, a few parents expressed concerns about the use of homework, the information they received about their children's progress and the leadership and management of the school. These concerns are discussed in more detail in the appropriate sections of this report.
42. The quality and range of information provided by the school to parents on their children's progress is very good. For example, there are termly meetings with class teachers which most parents find extremely helpful. These are reinforced by many opportunities for effective informal contact between parents and staff through the school's 'open door' policy. Each parent receives an annual written report on their child's progress. These are of a very good standard. They contain details of the pupil's strengths and weaknesses in all subjects and in their personal development and highlight targets for improvement. Parents are invited to respond to the report and many do so in a positive and constructive manner, which strengthens the link between school and home. Parents are also kept very well informed of what their children are being taught. There are regular 'curriculum evenings' which are generally well attended. Information is also available on what work their child will be doing every half term and advice is given on how parents can help with the related homework and pupils' research. There is a very good newsletter (The Berry Hill Bulletin) which is sent home regularly and this keeps parents well informed on the more general aspects of life in the school. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are both good and now fully meet the legal requirements. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a good home/school agreement in place. Overall, inspectors do not support the view of a few parents that they are not kept fully informed.
43. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. Many parents give effective support to teachers in the classroom by undertaking a range of tasks, across the year groups but particularly in the Foundation Stage. Some parents are involved in supporting the provision of extra-curricular activities. There is a very active parent teacher association (The Friends of Berry Hill School) which raises substantial sums of money through a range of fund-

raising events in support of specific school projects such as the construction of the wildlife area and the outdoor classroom. It also organises social events which enable teachers and parents to get to know each other better. Parents effectively help their children with their work at home, mainly by hearing them read and assisting them with their homework.

44. The co-ordinator for special educational needs takes care to involve parents at every stage of the Code of Practice. Parents are consulted before pupils are placed on the register and processes explained to them. They are all kept fully informed of their child's progress. Regular review meetings are provided for parents of pupils on the register. The school values the support obtained from a wide range of professionals. The liaison with parents is valuable in developing positive attitudes towards work.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a clear vision of where the school is going and how standards are to be improved. Her deputy and other key staff are good managers and have a shared commitment to improving standards. A significant strength has been the development of a climate of mutual respect amongst staff and pupils alike. Staff and pupils feel valued; this improves their self-esteem and raises their level of commitment. The school has explicit aims and values and all share in wanting to make these work. The links with parents and the local community are very good. The headteacher has an open-door policy, which instils confidence in parents to share problems and concerns.
46. The school is very well managed. Senior managers and curriculum co-ordinators make a cohesive team, have clear roles and carry out most of their responsibilities well. Staff are trusted and there is a clear delegation of responsibilities and accountability for their work. There is a strong team ethos. The school reviews its own work very effectively. Decisions are arrived at by a thorough analysis of the problem or issue. The senior management team has been efficient in monitoring the work of the school and this has had a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching. Staff support each other effectively and policies and schemes of work are developed collaboratively. Subject co-ordinators monitor learning to help teachers assess outcomes and plan future activities, although, with the exception of English and mathematics, the co-ordinators' role in monitoring teaching is still insufficiently developed.
47. Educational priorities, such as the forward planning for ICT provision, are well supported through careful financial management. The school improvement plan is very good. It is well organised, costed, sets realistic targets and is effectively reviewed periodically to ensure the implementation of plans and focus on further raising standards in specific areas. The day-to-day running of the school is very well organised. Administrative procedures and routines are clearly documented and contribute to the efficient way the school is run. Administrative staff carry out their responsibilities very well and often go well beyond their stipulated contracts.
48. Governors make an effective and increasing contribution to strategic planning and management. There is an appropriate committee structure, which monitors and evaluates the work of the school. Governors are actively involved in planning decisions. There is a shared commitment to improvement and the need to succeed. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well in helping to shape the direction of the school and through effective monitoring understand its strengths and weaknesses. Both staff and governors are involved in regular audits and evaluations of the progress made in meeting the school's targets for improvement.
49. There is a good match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. There is a very good mix of experienced senior staff and teachers new to the profession. There is an appropriate number of effective support staff who have been very well trained. The midday supervisory assistants manage pupils well at lunchtimes. The process for the induction of newly qualified teachers is very good. There are also very good procedures for all teachers to have professional interviews with a senior colleague to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This procedure also helps to identify training needs, which are also managed very well. The school ensures that members of staff attend regular training sessions and has two advanced skills teachers (AST) who effectively train others. Overall the very good quality of the staff as a whole has a major impact on the ethos of the school and on standards.
50. The management of special educational needs provision within the school is very good. The co-ordinator is extremely knowledgeable and procedures are very well organised and rigorously applied. The SEN co-ordinator works from a basis of mutual respect and of valuing the potential of all pupils. This respect is also shown by staff who work under the SEN co-ordinator's leadership. All teachers have been made fully aware of the new code of practice and support staff are well trained and well briefed. There is close liaison between all staff to ensure that the programme of work is delivered well. The organisation of special educational needs in the school is very good. The additional funding for pupils with special educational needs is well targeted. There is accurate identification of pupils' needs and monitoring of progress is very conscientiously carried out by the

co-ordinator. Good use is made of outside agencies, who have regular contact with the school and have worked alongside class teachers. The governor for special educational needs effectively monitors provision through regular visits to the school and meets regularly with the special needs co-ordinator. Thought and care is given to the needs of all pupils with SEN and any withdrawal of pupils is carefully planned. The good quality specialist resources also help pupils with SEN to know that they are valued and well provided for.

51. The accommodation is good for the number of pupils on roll. It is cleaned and maintained to a high standard. The classrooms are cramped in space but teachers work hard to overcome this by using the open areas effectively.
52. Effective procedures ensure good financial control. All spending is carefully monitored and regular financial statements are available for Governors. All departmental plans are carefully costed and relate well to the overall budgetary position for the school. The school is cost conscious and makes significant savings in relation to the purchase of its equipment. The recommendations of the most recent audit have been implemented. Specific grants are used very effectively for their designated purpose. Resources are good in most subject areas.
53. The school makes good use of new technology. The best value principles of comparison, challenge and competition are rigorously applied by the headteacher and governors in the school's acquisition and use of services and resources. There has been significant improvement to certain aspects of management, such as governor involvement in the curriculum and the monitoring of teaching, since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Raise standards of attainment in English, mathematics and religious education for pupils aged seven years and improve the productivity and pace of learning for higher attainers by:

- using monitoring and targeting more effectively to raise the performance of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 to higher levels in National Curriculum tests;
- ensuring that regular assessment is used to identify higher attaining pupils and that outcomes are used to make future work appropriately challenging;
- encouraging the teaching of basic skills in all subjects particularly writing; and
- improving teachers' lesson plans by identifying the basic skills to be taught in every lesson.

Paragraphs: 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 20, 22, 23, 27, 72, 77, 78, 83, 86, 87, 107, 117, 130

Develop the roles of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning to reinforce skills and improve standards across the foundation subjects by:

- consistently monitoring and evaluating teaching and pupils' achievement and setting achievable targets;
- training teachers to identify the specific skills necessary for individual subjects; and
- ensuring that assessment is used to inform teachers' daily lesson plans particularly in the foundation subjects to change if necessary what is taught lesson by lesson.

Paragraphs: 21, 22, 23, 39, 92, 98, 103, 108, 110, 113, 118, 122, 125, 131

Other issues for consideration

- The consistent use of homework to help raise standards.
- The consistency and quality of marking.

Paragraphs: 22, 24, 41, 42, 80, 87

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	8	16	19	2	0	0
Percentage	8	16	33	39	4	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	71

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.1
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	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	20	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	14
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	31	33	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (79)	87 (83)	84 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	16
	Girls	19	18	18
	Total	33	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (79)	89 (83)	89 (79)
	National	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	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	15	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	16	17
	Girls	12	14	14
	Total	24	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (79)	94 (83)	97 (98)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	12	14	15
	Total	26	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (79)	91 (88)	97 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	194
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	27.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/ 2002
	£
Total income	487768
Total expenditure	502799
Expenditure per pupil	2276
Balance brought forward from previous year	59169
Balance carried forward to next year	44108

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	222
Number of questionnaires returned	121

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	40	49	7	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	46	11	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	52	11	1	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	57	17	3	4
The teaching is good.	41	45	7	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	44	18	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	37	7	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	42	6	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	26	46	23	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	27	45	15	10	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	52	9	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	53	7	2	3

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. The education provided for the under-fives is broad and balanced and in line with the nationally recommended areas of learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The reception class caters for 30 boys and girls of mixed ability.
55. Most, but not all the children, attend a local nursery or playgroup and have already started to learn well before joining the school. When they start at the school most have just below average levels of attainment overall, although some areas of learning are better than others. By the time they enter Year 1, pupils have made good progress and most are attaining standards at the expected level for children of this age, although some higher attaining children have made rapid progress this year and are achieving above average levels in most areas of their Early Learning Goals. Children's attainment is higher in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development when they first come to the reception class. Progress in physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world is less pronounced when they start school. The behaviour of the children is good.
56. The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned and organised well. Children are very effectively assessed by careful ongoing observations. Assessment procedures are very good and a simple baseline assessment is carried out when pupils join the reception class. Parents are encouraged to be involved from the beginning of their children's education and to follow their progress throughout. Regular formal and informal consultations, before and after admission, are well received by parents and effectively establish common objectives between home and school.
57. The reception classroom is visually pleasing and stimulating. Resources are good. There are sufficient books for pupils to use and borrow. Children's development of early computer skills is good. They can name parts of the computer, use the mouse efficiently and attempt to write individual words. Children in the Foundation Stage are making good progress and are prepared very well for more formalised work in Key Stage 1. There is good provision for children with SEN. They are identified early and their progress is monitored well. There has been good improvement in the progress made by children under five since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Most pupils when they start at the school are confident with adults, although some find it difficult to listen to instructions. Many are self confident and show a willingness to take part in activities, although only a minority are happy to take the initiative, take turns or give reasons for their decisions. By the time they are five they have made good progress. Most know how to follow instructions, initiate ideas and are sensitive to the needs of others. They are becoming more confident in making choices and, although they still need a lot of direction, they are eager to explore new learning. They understand what is right and wrong and why and can take turns and share fairly. A small minority of higher achieving five-year-olds is confident in solving problems and can give reasons for decisions. The more confident and mature children play co-operatively and concentrate on a task for a reasonable length of time especially when they are engaged in an activity that really interests them. When working with adults, children learn to listen carefully, join in with songs and rhymes and share. Children are encouraged to socialise informally with one another or with adults in small groups. This means that, children's speaking and listening skills develop well. By the time they start their formal education in Year 1 they are attaining at the expected level.
59. The very good teaching ensures that there are good levels of support for the activities set, to show children how to work together. The teaching is aimed at helping children to become more independent and to take the initiative. Most children are happy and secure in their learning

environment.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Teachers in the reception class place suitable emphasis on developing language and literacy. When children start at the school the majority listen carefully to what is being said and try to follow instructions. They understand that words and pictures convey meaning and most are familiar with books and experiment with a variety of mark making. However, communication and listening skills are encouraged in every activity, including role-play and, by the time children leave the reception class, a significant minority can talk confidently about what they like doing. A good start is made to early reading and writing skills and a few show rapid progress. Higher achieving children can identify the author and contents and relate why they like the book. All children are encouraged to take books home regularly. They enjoy books and handle them carefully. Some can tell stories, using the illustrations within the book and answer simple questions. A few can make up their own stories. Most are able to associate sounds with the letters of the alphabet and recognise key words from their first reader. Children hold their pencils correctly and many can shape letters accurately. Most can write their own name and show some awareness of the different purposes of writing. Many are keen to produce their own emergent writing. They can draw simple artistic figures well and are confident when talking about their drawings and mark-making. Most are achieving at the expected standard by the age of five, and some are achieving just above average. All children and particularly those with SEN make good progress because of the well planned and structured teaching in small groups.
61. Teaching is very good and pupils are achieving very well. The teacher understands these young children very well and makes learning 'fun'. In a literacy lesson blending two sounds, children of all capabilities made very good progress by the end of the lesson. The majority could use their phonetic knowledge to write simple words and to make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words. The teacher made sure the pace of learning was good and was rewarded by the children's productivity and enthusiasm. Even pupils as young as this are given targets to evaluate their learning. Skills are very well taught. Pupils are encouraged to hold their pencils and pronounce words correctly while they think that lessons are a series of 'games till its home time.'

Mathematical development

62. Children, when they start at the school, are just below average in the mathematical area of learning. The majority are beginning to use some mathematical language such as 'bigger', 'more' and 'less' appropriately, name shapes such as 'square' and know some counting rhymes. However they learn fast and make good progress. By the time they are ready for entry into Year 1, most know terms such as 'circle', 'triangle' and 'rectangle', can match, sequence, count to 15 backwards and forwards and add and subtract with up to 10 objects. Higher attainers can work out how much they are paying for an ice cream and how much the ice cream's have gone up since they were for sale the last time. Many can count in 10's to 100 and recognise number symbols from one to ten. Most can match objects by shape, colour and size. Their basic knowledge of capacity and weight, from practical experiences, for example sand and water activities, is satisfactory and many have developed a correct understanding of terms such as 'full' and 'empty.' Overall, most are achieving in line with expectations although a significant minority is achieving above by the time they start their formal education at five years. All make good progress.
63. Teaching is very good. Good attention is paid to number formation and the use of mathematics in play. Pupils learn well because they are having fun. Teachers' planning has clear objectives and matches tasks to pupils' capabilities. It is structured to provide appropriately challenging activities for all ability groups. Assessment is immediate and ongoing and is used to effectively to change what is being taught next.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. When entering the reception class most pupils are attaining just below average levels when compared to others of a similar age. Higher attainers know some features of the locality and are starting to question differences. Most are beginning to understand technology as they start to use computers. A few can talk about when they were babies, as well as exploring and recognising

features of living things. They use their senses successfully to identify materials. The majority are beginning to develop the skills of cutting, joining, folding and building. By the time they enter Year 1 most are attaining in line with expectations for children of this age and are making good progress. All the children can talk about where they live and their families. They show an emerging sense of chronology as they distinguish between past and the present events in their own lives. Most are aware of the purpose of some features of living things and can identify differences/similarities and pattern change. More than half ask questions about how things work and suggest explanations. Most try things out and can design/make and modify materials. They are learning how to use computers or programmable toys more effectively.

65. Teaching is very good and enables pupils to make substantial progress. In a lesson on sound pupils made their own percussion instruments using a variety of containers and various grains. Groups of pupils were rotated between structured outside play activities, role play and making instruments. All waited their turn patiently and were simply delighted when they realised they had constructed an instrument that worked. The activity gave the children good practice at problem solving, enabled them to practise their skills of construction and they listened with more interest to a sound they had created themselves. This is very good learning. Lessons have the right mixture of structure and teacher direction to enable the children to think for themselves. The resources used are excellent.

Physical development

66. When children first come to the school they have little awareness of space. Most pupils can use small equipment, like scissors and some are confident climbing and balancing. Attainment for many is below average. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children move confidently and imaginatively and with increasing control, co-ordination and awareness of space and others. They are beginning to use a range of small and large equipment, balancing and climbing apparatus with increasing skill. Most can handle appropriate tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. Older under-fives demonstrate a good range of co-ordinated movements when playing outside, although some still lack an awareness of space. Fine motor skills are developing, as children successfully build, join and shape malleable materials. By the time they are five, most pupils have made good progress and are attaining at average levels.
67. Teaching is good. There are good resources outside. In lessons in the hall, children's physical skills are successfully developed. Most can find different ways of moving and imitate a 'Jack in the Box' that the teacher uses very effectively as a teaching aid. All abilities try hard and move well. Most are aware of space and each other. Attitudes and behaviour are good. All get changed independently and listen to the teacher's instructions sensibly. Most can stretch high and curl low and small, showing good control and co-ordination. The good pace and focused challenge for pupils ensured that they experienced good levels of activity and variety of movement.

Creative development

68. When children start at the school they show good progress in all areas of creative learning; some show very good progress. When they first come to the school children have had varied experience of this area. Those who have attended a nursery or playgroup have had experience of mixing colours and creating collages with different textures. However this is not always the case and some children have had little experience of colour matching in their painting, or using scissors to cut, or to stick different media on card to produce a collage.
69. Older reception children use poster and powder paints with confidence. They successfully use sponges and various other materials to print effectively. They handle tools safely and many can cut and stick a variety of materials. They are increasingly able to depict their ideas and feelings through role-play, telling stories, drawing, painting and collage. They know many songs and nursery rhymes by heart and always sing enthusiastically. However, only a minority have the ability to think up activities, which are imaginative. At the end of the Foundation Stage the majority are achieving just below the expected standard. A significant minority are attaining

standards in line with expectations.

70. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of how to make learning enjoyable. The teachers' ability to turn learning into a game significantly enhances the children's rate of progress. High levels of teacher challenge and pupil interest result in children learning new ideas effortlessly while having a lot of fun. A wide variety of stimulating and well-structured activities are provided within each session. Children's responses are supported and extended sensitively. Appropriate interventions are made to give direction and enable learning to be consolidated. In some lessons repetition is effectively used in a variety of ways to reinforce learning. There is usually excellent teamwork between the teacher and support staff. Both constantly reinforce the pupils' use of skills. Teaching staff and assistants work very well together and have a clear understanding of how young children learn.

ENGLISH

71. At ages seven and 11, most pupils are working at the level expected for their age. Since the previous inspection, standards have remained below average at age seven. At age 11, although current standards are average, overall standards have risen steadily since the previous inspection.
72. At age seven, evidence from the work seen in lessons indicates that standards in writing remain below average. However, as a result of the school's focus on improving reading standards, there has been a significant improvement in reading standards and they are now average. Standards in speaking and listening are also average. At age 11, current standards are not as high as last year, due to the high number of pupils with special educational need within this year group. Nevertheless, pupils make good progress and achieve well against their previous attainment.
73. In the infant classes, pupils' skills in speaking and listening are average. Most pupils speak clearly and express their thoughts well. For example, pupils in Year 2 were keen to participate in a class discussion on drafting a poem about a giraffe. They listened carefully and gave thoughtful suggestions for improvement, when one pupil commented that the poem could be written in the shape of a giraffe. Pupils benefit from opportunities for speaking and listening during the literacy hour and from frequent opportunities for drama. This was the case when pupils in Year 1, used ideas from the fantasy story "Superkids" in their role play. They were well supported by adults, who intervened most appropriately to extend vocabulary and improve powers of expression.
74. At age 11, attainment in speaking and listening is above average. Pupils listen carefully to other pupils and await their turn to contribute in discussions. Most are very confident in expressing an opinion or putting forward their point of view, speaking articulately and without hesitation. They talk and listen with assurance in a wide range of contexts, both formal and informal. During the literacy hour, teachers frequently develop pupils' speaking and listening skills by widening their vocabulary and extending pupils' understanding of the use of language. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in group discussions and are assisted in the development of their speaking skills through questions that are effectively tailored to their needs. Across all areas of the curriculum, teachers are encouraged to identify in their lesson planning where opportunities occur for speaking and listening. As a result, all pupils make good progress, due to the frequent opportunities that are provided for the development of these skills. For example, in a history lesson, Year 6 pupils spoke very eloquently as they used role-play to describe the harsh conditions of the workhouse during the Victorian era.
75. At age seven and 11, pupils' skills in reading are average, with most pupils working to the expected level. At age seven, pupils read with increasing accuracy, responding with interest as they talk about what they have just read. They use a sound range of strategies in attempting new words. For example, they use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to build the whole word. Higher achieving pupils successfully use the sense of the surrounding text to help them read unfamiliar words. They have a good recall of texts and when reading stories consider possible endings to chapters. In Years 1 and 2, standards are beginning to improve as the school's focus on reading begins to take effect. The majority of pupils are making sound progress, due largely to recent initiatives, including a more structured approach to the acquisition of reading skills. Pupils' skills are developed effectively during the literacy hour lessons; the daily guided

reading sessions help pupils to gain a greater understanding of what they read. Pupils take books home on a regular basis and parents make a valuable contribution to the progress pupils make.

76. Pupils continue to make good progress in their reading in Years 3 to 6. Although for this cohort of pupils attainment at Year 6 is average, pupils have achieved well for their capability. Pupils enjoy books and read fluently, with good expression. They respond to the subject matter with interest, expressing opinions on the plot and character. For example, one higher achieving pupil in Year 6 explained convincingly why, in her opinion, the ideas for the Harry Potter books and the Lord of the Rings trilogy had all been taken from Norse mythology! Most pupils use their reading skills well to access information; there are frequent opportunities to use the school library. Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective support in their reading. Teacher assessments indicate that many pupils are making very good progress against their prior attainment. For example, one pupil in Year 3 has improved her reading age by three and a half years in the last nine months.
77. In writing, at age seven, most pupils work at the level expected for their age, but there are not as many as would be expected working at higher levels. This reflects a level of underachievement for some potentially higher attaining pupils. The majority of pupils spell a range of familiar words accurately, choosing their vocabulary to add some descriptive words. For example a higher achieving pupil wrote in a piece of work about, "tiny, tickling, marching ants." Spelling is mostly consistent and handwriting is accurately formed print of a consistent size. Most pupils sometimes punctuate their writing with capital letters and full stops. No pupils write in a joined script. A few higher achieving pupils apply punctuation accurately and consistently and use interesting sentence connectives. Lower achieving pupils successfully communicate meaning through simple words and phrases. At age 11, most pupils work at the level expected for their age. Pupils know that writing is used for a range of purposes. The writing of many pupils is varied and interesting, including both stories and factual writing. Punctuation and sentence construction is satisfactory. Higher achieving pupils use punctuation, including speech marks confidently and express their ideas clearly. They develop an individual style within well-structured sentences, including the effective use of some extended phrases. Lower achieving pupils also develop a lively individual style, but they are not so secure in their spelling and punctuation. Most pupils write neatly and present their work well. They are given ample opportunity to draft and redraft their work. In Years 3 to 6 there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. However, pupils are not given the same opportunity to develop their writing skills across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2. In many lessons for these younger classes the required response is oral, rather than written.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the infants. In the junior classes teaching and learning is generally good. However, during the inspection one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. In Years 5 and 6 the teaching was exemplary and the pupils made very good progress in their learning as a result. Across the school learning support assistants are very well briefed and provide knowledgeable and useful help. The literacy strategy has been implemented successfully in most classes.
79. In infant classes, pupils are managed efficiently so they concentrate on the given task until it is complete. Questioning is used effectively to enhance and extend pupils' thinking. Assessment is used well to establish individual targets for improvement and match work to pupils' individual needs. Teachers' planning frequently focuses on what the teacher will be doing, rather than what skills the pupils are expected to achieve. This results in a lack of challenge, particularly for higher achieving pupils. The teaching of basic skills is not consistent in the infant classes. Although pupils regularly practise their handwriting they are not always encouraged to hold their pencils correctly during other lessons. They often use white boards rather than books for their writing, which results in untidy presentation.
80. In junior classes pupils are mostly managed well and very positive relationships have been established, so pupils have good attitudes to the subject. In the most effective lessons teachers have high expectations and engage pupils' interest by setting a brisk pace and providing appropriately challenging work. Basic skills are taught well in the junior classes. Almost all pupils work hard in their independent sessions, which contributes positively to their personal

development. They co-operate and support each other well. Where teaching is less successful, the teacher's knowledge and understanding of how to implement the literacy strategy is unsound. In these lessons pupils are given the same task, regardless of their individual needs. Where teaching is exemplary the teachers have very good subject knowledge. The learning intentions of the lesson are made clear and continually referred to during the lesson, so pupils know what is expected of them and can judge for themselves whether they have achieved the objective by the end of the lesson. Teachers demonstrate obvious enthusiasm for the subject, lessons are presented in a lively innovative manner and tasks are extremely well matched to individual needs. These elements all have a very positive effect on pupil confidence and interest. As one pupil related, " I don't usually like English, but Miss makes it so interesting". In Year 6, marking is used extremely well to move pupils forward in their learning. The school's homework policy is rigorously applied, but in both cases this practice is not consistent throughout the school. ICT is used satisfactorily throughout English teaching.

81. The subject co-ordinator is a leading literacy teacher who manages the subject very well. Although only in post for the past year, she has correctly prioritised areas for development and has implemented initiatives that are already beginning to lead to an improvement in standards. For example, the guided reading books have been banded to provide more structured development in skills. Teaching and planning is monitored regularly to ensure consistency of standards and full coverage of the programmes of study. Assessment procedures are very good. The co-ordinator analyses test results thoroughly and feeds emerging strengths and weaknesses to class teachers, from which they establish individual targets. Pupils in Year 6 take individual target books home. These include examples of work that is levelled to National Curriculum standards. In this way parents are more able to assist their children by being made fully aware of expected standards. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

82. Standards have improved since the previous inspection where they were in line with national expectations. This is due to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the high expectations and challenge given to the oldest pupils. An appropriate emphasis has been placed on improving mental computation and fact retention as part of numeracy. This is effectively reinforced by regular homework and has had a positive effect on raising pupils' basic number skills. The setting arrangements in Year 6 have had a major impact on raising standards especially where work is well matched to challenge and support the needs of individual pupils, including those with special educational needs. The additional mathematics booster groups and Springboard programme help pupils make good progress in their learning. Attainment in Year 6, which contains a high proportion of pupils on the special needs register is above average. All attainment targets are well covered, including many practical opportunities to use real life problems for older pupils as part of using and applying mathematical skills. This provision has greatly improved since the last inspection.
83. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 has improved from last year and is broadly average although some underachievement does occur through lack of challenge. This year group contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
84. By the age of seven, most pupils can add and subtract to 20. Higher attaining pupils can competently order numbers up to 100 and partition two digit numbers. Many pupils have good mental recall and are confident in using numbers but lower attaining pupils need much support in understanding the value of numbers. The pupils' competencies in mental calculations are improving in quality and speed as a result of the number work at the beginning of lessons. Many pupils recognise and identify the properties of two-dimensional shapes and can produce simple pictograms.
85. By the age of 11 pupils have made good progress and have effectively extended their knowledge of number, measurement and shape. Some pupils have developed a sound understanding of data handling skills by recording information into a database to produce a graph to solve problems. Higher attaining pupils can use computers to produce their own spreadsheets. Many pupils can

use a range of methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide accurately and have a good understanding of the relationships between these operations. Less able pupils are able to add a range of numbers together and find the mean value. Higher attaining pupils can effectively use their understanding of number operations to solve complex problems through mathematical investigations. Most pupils have a good understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Higher attainers confidently use correct mathematical vocabulary when describing their work. Most pupils have a good understanding of co-ordinates to produce reflective shapes. Pupils can use a protractor to construct triangles with obtuse and acute angles and find the perimeter and area of various shapes.

86. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have positive attitudes and are keen to succeed. This is particularly apparent in the best lessons where excellent attitudes were observed. However, when lessons are not well planned to match and challenge the needs of different capabilities or when pupils sit on the carpet for too long and are not actively involved, they lose concentration, slowing the pace of their learning. Most pupils' behaviour in the classroom is very good, having a positive impact on standards. Pupils work well individually or in groups. Pupils show respect for their teachers and have good relationships with them.
87. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but good overall in Years 3 to 6. The overall standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection; no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The exceptional teaching in Year 6 lessons ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress. In these lessons learning is very effective because pupils of all abilities are well motivated and challenged by high expectations of work. In some lessons although judged to be satisfactory there were weaknesses such as low expectations, insufficient challenge in activities and ineffective use of time. When homework is set it has a positive impact on pupils' learning but there is an inconsistency of practice across the school. The marking of work for older pupils is generally very good and evaluative. However in other classes the quality of marking is more variable, for example, insufficient information is given to pupils as to how to improve their work. Assessment procedures are very good and outcomes are used well to inform future planning. The school successfully analyses intermediate and national tests to set appropriate individual targets. The co-ordinator is very supportive to colleagues and effectively monitors the teaching and learning of pupils in lessons to raise standards. Numeracy is used appropriately across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

88. Standards have significantly improved in test results during the last four years due to more time being given to discrete teaching of the subject and the provision of a good scheme of work. Experimental and investigative science is now a central part of the curriculum; this has had a positive impact on standards. The attainment of the current Year 6, which contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational need, is average. Attainment in Year 2 is also average and has risen during the last year although higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Pupils with SEN make good progress.
89. By the age of 7 pupils know the parts of a plant and what it needs to germinate and grow. They learn to compare different habitats and make good use of the school's pond to discover how a change in habitat can affect plants and animals. They explore and recognise the differences and similarities in materials and are able to sort materials by their properties. Pupils are beginning to learn about forces through simple experiments and know the difference between pull and push. Higher attainers can use scientific vocabulary to explain their findings.
90. Pupils in junior classes can conduct simple experiments to test their theories on how various conditions affect plant growth. Most can explain clearly what constitutes a food chain using accurate scientific vocabulary such as consumer, producer and predator to describe the process. They know that materials can be classified into gasses, liquids and solids and how temperature affects the process. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to gain first hand experiences through their own investigations. Good links are often made with mathematics and information and communication technology where pupils learn to appreciate that the shape of materials can

determine strength and use the Internet to look at the shape of famous bridges. By the age of 11 pupils know the importance of a fair test and many pupils can organise their own experiments. Higher attainers can predict what might happen as conditions change and record their findings. This was well demonstrated where older pupils planned their own experiment to test air pollution in their local area and showed a clear understanding of the cause and effect of air pollution in different locations.

91. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They treat equipment and apparatus with respect and are able to sustain their concentration. They show enthusiasm when designing experiments, clearly enjoy practical work and delight in their discoveries. Pupils behave very well and co-operate well in group activities.
92. The quality of teaching is good overall. This standard has been maintained since the previous inspection and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Many good lessons and occasionally very good lessons were observed. In consequence the majority of pupils, including those with special educational need, make good progress in their learning. The best lessons have tasks, which provide high levels of challenge for all pupils and a brisk pace of learning. Where this is linked to confident class management and good subject knowledge, learning is at its best. Successful teaching and learning is also characterised by good relationships with pupils who are encouraged to evaluate their findings and extend their studies with homework. Support staff provide valuable help often working closely with less able pupils. Where teaching is less effective, teachers lack confidence, expectations are too low and the pace of lessons is slow. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and as a result teachers lack this important information when planning work, which can lead to inappropriately challenging tasks for individuals. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Specific targets to help pupils improve are rarely identified. Some useful cross-curricular links are beginning to be established but insufficient use is currently made of the potential of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. The subject is well co-ordinated.

ART AND DESIGN

93. Overall, attainment is in line with expectations by the end of both the infant and junior classes. From the time pupils start school they are encouraged to experiment with paint and colour, to explore pattern, to work from observation and imagination and to respond to examples of art in the world around them. Reception children have enjoyed painting portraits of themselves in poster paint and expressing the five senses in rough and smooth collages. They listen to music and express this in paint. A particularly good example is a still life of flowers. They use 'colour magic' on the computer to depict the story of the Billy Goats gruff. They have also enjoyed colour mixing, matching and printing, producing pictures which are colourful and bright and show their enthusiasm for art.
94. By the end of Year 2 pupils' standard of attainment is at the expected level. In Year 1 pupils have made finger puppets and constructed a finger puppet theatre as part of their design and technology project. They are competent at sewing cross-stitch patches and have made a candy house for Hansel and Gretel. They are making satisfactory progress in drawing and sketching. This competence in using dry media, pencils, charcoal etc, stands them in good stead in the junior classes. In Year 2 pupils complete a picture from a section of another one, making up a storyboard. They have enjoyed creating an effective collage of Stephenson's Rocket. Pupils' attainment in other aspects, such as painting, shows an average range of skill and understanding. There is sound development of practical skills in some classes, although this depends largely on the subject expertise of the teacher.
95. By the end of Year 6 pupils are competent at colour mixing and matching, using pastels and are able to use a variety of media, like charcoal, to achieve the results they want. Year 3 have created a collage of famous London landmarks and chalk circles depicting the style of Kandinsky. They have also used LOGO on the computer to draw symmetrical patterns. In Year 4 pupils have used pastels to design and paint chairs for a character of their choice. In Year 4/5 pupils have experimented with Lino painting of dinosaurs and people and have effectively depicted the work of

Paul Klee painting a storyboard of different dream scenes in pastels and wax crayon. In Year 6 pupils are learning to evaluate their work. They have designed and made hats in various materials and papier mache plates in willow patterns. They are linking art to history and design and technology. At this stage pupils are beginning to question, adapt and modify their own work and learn from their own mistakes. Standards achieved in painting are in the average range. Some higher attainers are beginning to compare methods and modify and improve their work to meet their intentions. For example pupils in Year 6 were experimenting with a colour wheel. Higher achievers looked at warm and cool colours and were discussing how this affected mood. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress overall and use the skills they acquire in art for other subjects.

96. Pupils enjoy their artwork and are enthusiastic about the practical nature of the tasks. Attitudes are good. Most pupils demonstrate concentration, collaboration and respect for the work of others. They work as individuals and most can also co-operate well in groups when required to do so. Behaviour in lessons is also good.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Most teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the subject, although some lack confidence in certain areas of learning, and need more training in how to teach art skills. Where teachers' planning is good, it gives details of learning objectives and careful attention to the development of skills and techniques. In a good lesson with Year 1 children, the teacher's good planning and use of time and resources enthused pupils to not only stay with the task of creating straw sculptures, but also to develop their ideas. Teachers are responsible for their own assessment. However, most are not assessing and recording pupils' individual progress regularly enough. Although appropriate learning is taking place at both key stages, there is insufficient monitoring of assessment and the standards achieved. Assessment is not being used effectively to inform what is taught next. Examples of satisfactory learning and progress include a clear development in pupils' observational skills and in their understanding of artistic elements, as seen in Year 5 and 6. The use of information and communication technology for graphic work is developed well in some classes but is underdeveloped in others. Progress in the presentation of illustrative work in other curriculum areas is weakest in the junior classes.
98. The subject co-ordinator is committed to reviewing the scheme of work. However, she does not have the time to monitor the teaching of the subject adequately. There is no whole-school overview to monitor pupils' progress. Standards have been maintained in the infant classes since the last inspection but have fallen from above average to average in the juniors.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards are in line with national expectations throughout the school. In the previous inspection standards were above average but with a great deal of variation in the quality of work achieved in different classes. Since that time the subject has not been given such a high priority because of the strong emphasis on the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Due to timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see any lessons in Years 1 and 2. Observations are based on other information including discussions, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around the school.
100. Infant pupils learn to manipulate simple tools and use materials to communicate their designs. They learn to join materials using glue and tape. They are able to design and make their own hand puppets from felt using a paper pattern. By the age of seven, many can design and make their own simple vehicle and begin to evaluate their products. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed appropriately in Years 3 to 6. They develop a good understanding of food safety and hygiene. Pupils conducted a survey to determine which biscuits they would make in school; they can design and make their own sandwiches. By the age of 11 pupils have the opportunity to investigate, disassemble and evaluate simple products as part of their work on designing and making a variety of shelters. Many pupils appreciate the importance of detailed designs when making a controllable vehicle for a child. Higher attainers can develop their ideas with a job list for various stages of production, including a simple mechanism to drive the vehicle.

101. Pupils' attitudes to their work in design and technology are good. All pupils including those with special educational need enjoy practical lessons and are actively engaged in their learning. Most pupils behave well; they work co-operatively in groups often sharing equipment and materials.
102. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use resources and equipment well. However, tasks are often prescriptive with too few opportunities for all pupils to experiment or be given opportunities to develop their own skills. Some teachers lack confidence and the subject knowledge to teach more advanced skills. This situation has an adverse effect on pupils' learning; for example some higher attaining pupils are underachieving because work is not sufficiently challenging.
103. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She intends to broaden the range of experiences and use pupils' skills more effectively to design and make for a specific purpose. Currently she has no opportunities to use her expertise to monitor teaching and learning in different classrooms. ICT is used satisfactorily in design and technology lessons.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Only two lessons were observed and so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching overall. From the analysis of pupils' work and discussions with them, standards have been maintained since the previous inspection; they are in line with expectations throughout the school.
105. By the end of Year 2, standards seen in lessons are broadly average. Pupils are observant when looking at photographs of a local seaside area and can identify the natural and manmade features. They have a basic understanding of maps and plans; higher attaining pupils understand the use of keys. Through the good links, which have been established with a school in Kenya, pupils are beginning to gain insight into the wider world around them. For example, Year 2 pupils have enjoyed contacting the Kenyan school to compare the different activities undertaken by pupils during a normal school day. In conversation, pupils demonstrate good attitudes and sound knowledge and understanding of basic geographical skills. A review of pupils' work indicates that literacy skills are not used satisfactorily to enhance geographical learning because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills by recording what they have learned.
106. At age 11, pupils have made satisfactory progress. They have appropriate geographical knowledge and map skills are developed effectively. Pupils can use atlases and maps of various scales, progressing from street maps of their local area to maps of Britain and the world. They can locate key features such as mountain ranges, major cities and recognise different climate types. In conversation, pupils confidently explain how they use grid references and scales to find routes and measure directions. Pupils use data on climates to compare countries and demonstrate understanding of the effect of the climate on the environment. They recognise physical and human processes and can explain how these can cause change, for example in the effect that quarrying has on the local environment. Pupils make comparisons between Britain and other countries, particularly as they are able to make detailed comparison with their link village in Kenya. Pupils are efficient in searching for information from a variety of sources, including the use of information technology. In their investigation of coasts, Year 6 pupils have gained a good understanding of the processes of erosion and deposition and understand how these shape the coastline. They are well motivated being able to construct alternative models of sea defences. The majority of pupils can name different types of sea defence and consider the advantages and disadvantages of each with reference to their cost, durability and aesthetic effect.
107. An analysis of pupils' written work indicates that lower achieving pupils are effectively supported by teaching assistants. They make satisfactory progress against their previous attainment. However, the provision of suitably challenging tasks for higher attaining pupils is inconsistent, limiting their progress.

108. The subject is appropriately managed and adequately resourced. The co-ordinator has successfully initiated the implementation of a nationally recommended scheme of work and has effectively adapted it to meet the particular needs of the school. She has been responsible for establishing the links with Kenya that enhance geographical understanding and cultural development. The local area is also used well. Teachers' planning is monitored, to ensure full coverage of the recommended programmes of study, but there is no monitoring of the quality of teaching or of standards of attainment.

HISTORY

109. At ages seven and 11, standards are in line with national expectations. Since the previous inspection standards have remained the same at age seven but have dropped slightly at age 11. Pupils enjoy the subject and make satisfactory progress as a result of the satisfactory teaching in Years 3 to 6. It is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 as no lessons were observed and the subject is not timetabled for this half term.
110. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop an idea of chronology, understanding the concept of old and new, past and present. They begin to develop observational skills as they look at examples of old toys and describe the similarities and differences with those of today. Pupils learn about some famous people of the past, including George Stephenson and Florence Nightingale. Pupils were able to use pictures to make comparisons between Stephenson's Rocket and the high speed trains of today. They began to understand the effects of inventions of the past on contemporary life. The use of role-play enhances pupils' historical understanding. For example, in Year 1, the role-play area became Florence Nightingale's hospital and pupils learnt something of the conditions of the time. They dressed up in Victorian clothes and used utensils made from tin and pottery, rather than plastic. Visitors to the school support learning, as for example when a speaker talked about his own childhood. Teachers' planning provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills but there are insufficient opportunities to practice writing skills; a limited amount of written work is produced over the year. Generally pupils make appropriate progress and achieve satisfactorily.
111. Through Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. At age 11, pupils have a broad view of the history of Britain through studies of the Roman invasion, the Tudor period and the Victorian age. They demonstrate a good general knowledge of these periods. For example, they are aware of a number of famous people of the Victorian era and their effect on present day society and describe in detail living conditions of the time. They are familiar with other civilisations, such as ancient Egypt. Pupils develop historical skills in recognising the value of sources, such as Egyptian urns and the report of a Victorian school inspector. Pupils can effectively use Internet sites to obtain information; higher achieving pupils use these sources well in their work. Modified worksheets and tasks enable lower achieving pupils to produce appropriate work and make similar progress to other pupils. However, although higher attaining pupils are well challenged in Year 6, this is not consistently the case throughout the rest of the school. This limits progress in the development of skills.
112. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. In one lesson, teaching was exemplary. Most lessons are effectively planned and structured; pupils are set appropriately challenging tasks. For example, after watching a video of life in Roman times, pupils used a selection of books to find out further information. Where teaching was very good, pupils were highly motivated by the teacher's own enthusiasm for the subject. Very good relationships and very high expectations enhanced learning well. Very good links are made with literacy. For example, pupils worked in groups to perform a short dramatic piece, which demonstrated their good knowledge of conditions in Victorian schools and in the workhouse. Pupils gave sensitive evaluations of each other's performances and made useful suggestions for improvement, such as including more facts about the period. At the end of the lesson pupils showed good understanding of their own learning as they were given the opportunity to discuss how their historical understanding has been increased through watching the dramas.
113. The curriculum is based on a nationally recommended scheme of work, which has been

appropriately adapted to meet the needs of the school. For example, it takes account of the mixed age classes in the two-year cycle. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and monitors teachers' planning to ensure full coverage of the curriculum. However, she receives no non-contact time in which to monitor the quality of teaching or standards of attainment. There is a good range of quality resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. Pupils' attainment, at the ages of seven and 11, is broadly in line with national expectations. Standards have significantly improved during the last year. A new impressive information and communication technology suite was installed last September to provide good opportunities for pupils to use computers. Each class is now timetabled to use the suite twice a week, to develop pupils' individual skills. Teachers' subject knowledge has significantly improved through ongoing training; they are now more confident to provide pupils with a wider range of experiences, making good use of the new resources.
115. Pupils are introduced to computers at an early age; they are encouraged to explore information technology through structured and free activities. Pupils confidently learn to use the keyboard and mouse to develop word processing skills. By the age of seven, many pupils have developed these skills to produce their own address using different size fonts and colour. Higher attainers can design a front cover for a book and with help merge a picture from a paint program to decorate. However, lower attaining pupils need extensive adult help and direction. Many pupils can control devices such as a programmed toy by giving it instructions to move chosen distances. By the age of 11 most pupils can change print, size, font and colour independently and use their word processing skills to record their writing such as in newspaper reports, articles for the school bulletin and creative writing. Higher attainers are able to develop their own poster on healthy eating using a word art program to produce their own border and produce a watermarked document to enhance their work on pollution. Older pupils are beginning to use spreadsheets in different subjects such as in mathematics. Pupils can identify the pattern between the radius, circumference and diameter of shapes. Many pupils are able to search the Internet to find information and import pictures on the Second World War and the structure of bridges to support their learning in history and science. Pupils have recently been introduced to control techniques through the logo program but there are limited opportunities for multi-media or modelling techniques due to limited resources.
116. Pupils have good attitudes to learning in information and communication technology. They clearly enjoy opportunities to use the new computer suite. Most pupils listen attentively and respond well to teacher's instructions. They talk enthusiastically about their present and past work, explaining clearly what they can and cannot do. A number of pupils have computers at home and share information with their classmates. Pupils work well together when sharing computers and most can be trusted to behave sensibly when working in pairs.
117. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory; some is occasionally good. The good teaching is characterised by appropriate subject knowledge, well planned activities and challenging tasks, which enable pupils to make good progress. However, many lessons have insufficient differentiated tasks to challenge all pupils, which has a negative impact especially on the learning of higher attainers.
118. Many printers are unreliable restricting pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in lessons across the school. She has identified the need to develop a scheme of work to help teachers' plan more effectively with more cross-curricular links. Further training has been identified to develop teachers' skills and confidence. Currently assessment procedures are underdeveloped and teachers lack this important information to enable them to provide a logical sequence of knowledge, skills and understanding to be learnt. The use of ICT in other subjects is beginning to impact positively on pupils' attainment and progress.

MUSIC

119. Only a few lessons were observed during the inspection. However, from discussions with pupils and staff the indication is that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning and attain the expected standards by the ages of seven and 11. This situation is the same as that found in the previous inspection.
120. Standards are satisfactory in singing in the infant and junior classes. In assembly pupils sing tunefully, with attention to dynamics and pitch. During the inspection week pupils' learning was effectively enhanced through a visiting musician. Pupils in Year 2 were becoming familiar with a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and the sounds they made. They could clap their hands and click their fingers in time to different beats. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 understand the meaning of tempo and melody, as they compose and perform music in contrasting tempos. They begin to read simple graphic notation as they play tuned percussion instruments. Pupils explore rhythm and pulse. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils used untuned percussion instruments and as one half of each group maintained a steady pulse, the others improvised a polyrhythmic pattern. Throughout the school pupils explain their own ideas while listening to a variety of music by different composers. However there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their musical vocabulary.
121. In the two lessons seen the quality of teaching and learning was good. Good use was made of resources, for example, pupils used a variety of unusual African percussion instruments. Classes were well organised and well planned to include the opportunity for composition and performance. Pupils responded with enthusiasm. They behaved very well and gave sensitive evaluations of each other's work with well-considered suggestions for improvement. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to perform for others. For example there are whole school annual Christmas productions and pupils regularly perform in the local singing festival. Learning is further enhanced by the provision of extra-curricular recorder clubs and the school choir, which is well supported. A few pupils learn to play the violin through peripatetic teaching. The curriculum is further enhanced through the opportunity to join in musical events outside the school; junior pupils have attended a music workshop in Cardiff.
122. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable, but her role is underdeveloped. She monitors teachers planning but has had little time to monitor teaching or standards throughout the school. Music making is not a priority within the school. The scheme of work has not been recently reviewed to take account of changes in the curriculum. Assessment procedures are inconsistent. Resources are limited. There are few tuned percussion instruments available for pupils to use but insufficient opportunities for them to use computers to support their learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Standards are in line with expectations at ages seven and 11 and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrate sound co-ordination as they hop, skip and jump around the room. They use space well and follow instructions appropriately. They are learning to throw accurately from a distance as they aim beanbags at given targets. By Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress in their games skills. They throw, catch and field balls confidently and use batting techniques effectively. Many pupils enjoy competitive sports and they have gained success against other schools in events such as the local football league and The Wilden Cup. Although pupils observe the performance of others, they do not regularly evaluate their skills and those of others to improve the quality of their work. Pupils have a clear understanding of the need to warm up and cool down after exercise. It was not possible to see any swimming during the inspection. However, the school makes a satisfactory provision for this part of the curriculum. All junior pupils are given the opportunity to take swimming lessons and the majority have achieved the required 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
124. Too few lessons were observed to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Two lessons were observed during the inspection, both involving games skills. All pupils, including those with special educational needs took a full and active part in the lessons. Of the two lessons seen, one was unsatisfactory, due to insecure subject knowledge. In the other lesson the quality of teaching was good. The lesson was well organised and pupils made good progress in their

learning because they were challenged appropriately. The direct teaching of strategies and clear guidance enabled pupils to extend their skills successfully. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for sport, which reflects the high priority placed on physical education. Throughout the year there are various clubs for football, netball, volleyball, cricket and athletics. In addition, pupils receive extra coaching from qualified coaches in tennis and cricket. Students from a nearby college run an after school club, teaching a programme of football, netball and rugby skills. The subject contributes effectively to pupils' personal development. It gives opportunities for pupils to develop team spirit and compete fairly within understood rules of the games.

125. The co-ordinator is a newly qualified teacher who has only been in post for a short time, but is knowledgeable and committed; she has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision in the subject. There is currently no monitoring of the quality of teaching or standards of pupils' work and assessment procedures are not secure. Resources are satisfactory, but there is a lack of suitable gymnastic apparatus for infants. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. Attainment for seven-year olds is below average and they are making unsatisfactory progress. However the standard of attainment for 11 year olds is broadly comparable with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and here pupils are making satisfactory progress. The progress made by pupils with SEN is satisfactory. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection in the infant classes but satisfactory improvement in the junior classes.
127. Pupils in the junior classes are aware of the Five Pillars of Islam and have made records of their visit to a mosque. They are eager to recall their experiences of the visit including the removal of shoes and the expectations for Muslims' daily prayer. They show interest in aspects of Islam, for example the Muslim washing rituals preceding prayer. They are able to communicate their understanding in discussion and show respect for religious rituals. However, children are not sufficiently productive when it comes to recording aspects of their understanding in writing, and they are not learning to work independently.
128. Pupils in the infant classes are similarly attentive, for instance when they share their experiences with each other, or when they respond to questions about Hinduism. However their understanding of religion is very superficial. For example they know that the Hindu god Ganesh was a friend to everyone and that his elephant's head symbolised his strength, but are unaware of the religious significance of the symbolism. During a discussion with Year 2 pupils on what they knew and understood of the religious education curriculum it became apparent that there was insufficient coverage of the subject according to the agreed syllabus. When written work is asked of pupils, most start with a capital and end with a full stop but few join up their writing.
129. In the two lessons seen the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory overall. In the infant classes teachers show good rapport with their pupils, making effective use of praise to encourage them to listen and learn well. Teachers' use of questioning techniques is well developed, and the responses elicited from pupils are not over-directed. Lesson plans indicate clearly the purpose and sequence of activities, but teachers need to ensure that all key vocabulary identified is presented to the pupils. In the good lesson seen in Year 2, pupils were managed well. Time and resources were used effectively and the lesson had a good pace.
130. In the Year 6 lesson the teacher also demonstrated good rapport with her pupils. The planning identified some of the important vocabulary to be presented in the lesson but the levels the pupils needed to work at were too demanding for the capabilities of the majority. For example, pupils were asked to make a comparison between several religions to 'see the common goal in life' and although the meaning of this was effectively discussed many were left unsure as to what this really meant and could not attempt the task without a lot more teacher direction. From discussion with the pupils it is evident that teachers encourage them to consider how their actions may impinge on others, but do not always explicitly relate such teaching to Christian or other value systems. Higher achieving pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

131. The school's statement of policy on religious education draws on the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus. The rationale for the subject is clear and the aims are effectively detailed. Management of the subject is sound but the co-ordinator needs to initiate more training in how to teach the subject. Teachers' planning is not presently monitored and there is no direct observation of teaching, as well as discussion of work with pupils. There is no assessment policy for the subject and assessment is not used effectively to change what is taught in the next lesson. There is insufficient use of ICT to improve learning.