

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ROWANFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucester

Unique reference number: 115591

Headteacher: Harold Bailey

Reporting inspector: David Marshall  
27681

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2002

Inspection number: 197219

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Alstone Lane Cheltenham Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL51 8HY
Telephone number:	01242 516611
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ray Woolley
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27681	David Marshall	Registered inspector	Music Physical education Information and communication technology Special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are the pupils taught?
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' personal development and attendance
16733	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	English Religious education English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
4430	Richard Eaton	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?
27545	Andrew Scott	Team inspector	Science History Geography Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
10391	Val du Plergny	Team inspector	The Centre for Pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Rowanfield is a larger than average junior school on the northern outskirts of Cheltenham. The area it serves is mainly local authority housing. It shares a very large site with the infant school. There are 312 pupils on roll – 172 boys and 140 girls. Sixty-nine (22 per cent) of pupils are eligible for free school meals – around the national average. Only two per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups – eight pupils in all. A very small number of pupils have English as an additional language. Pupils' attainment on entry from the infant school is well below the national average. There are 80 pupils with special educational needs (26 per cent), eight with statements of educational need. Both of these figures are above the national average. This does not include pupils from other schools who attend the school's centre for pupils with specific learning difficulties each afternoon. There have been one permanent and two fixed period exclusions this year. Pupil mobility is low. The school is set in very large and attractive grounds. Their nature (wild) garden is well established and has won the Cheltenham in Bloom 'Wild Garden' award for the last two years.

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

Rowanfield is a very effective school. The quality of teaching is good overall leading to improving standards and good achievement by all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils are catered for well, with appropriately challenging activities. This enables all pupils to achieve good standards by the time they leave school when measured against their prior attainment. The leadership and management provided by the head teacher, deputy head and subject co-ordinators are very good, and give a continued drive to improving the work and standards of the school. All have worked together very well to create a very positive ethos in the school that provides good value for money.

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

- Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are steadily improving, and pupils achieve well by the time they leave school.
- The quality of teaching is good, and staff use their accurate assessments of pupils' achievement in the core subjects most effectively.
- The leadership and management provided by the head teacher, deputy head and key staff are very good.
- The school has effective provision for all pupils and learning opportunities, including extra-curricular activities, are good throughout the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good; these pupils have access to the full curriculum and make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are very good. They are polite, courteous and enthusiastic. They co-operate very well, think of others, and make very good relationships.
- The school's relationships with parents are very good.
- All non-teaching staff make important contributions to the effectiveness of the school.

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

- The pupils' use of their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum in order to raise their attainment further by the time they leave school.
- Pupils' spiritual development and their attainment in religious education.
- Parents' involvement in the work of the school and their children's attendance.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since the last inspection in June 1997 the head teacher and staff have worked hard to meet the requirements of the key issues and their overall progress has been good. Standards in English, mathematics, science and geography have risen throughout the school. Pupils of all abilities, including those of higher ability, make good progress. Consistent planning, based on good assessment procedures, ensures that pupils in all classes in each year group make the same progress and receive

appropriate provision in all subjects. The standard of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection owing to the consistent use of classroom observations by the senior management team. The governing body is well involved in the work of the school and they now have a strategic view of the school's needs and priorities for development.

## 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	D	E	C
Mathematics	D	B	E	C
Science	C	B	B	A

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

The table above shows the results obtained at the end of the academic year in 2001 at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment was well below the national averages in English and mathematics but above average in science. It is broadly average in English and mathematics when compared to that in similar schools, and well above average in science. Overall achievement is good, and over time the school is improving above the rate of most schools. By the age of eleven, attainment in current work is below average in English and mathematics but improving, and above average in science. In some aspects of music, information and communication technology and design and technology pupils attain standards above those expected by the time they leave school. In history, geography, physical education and art and design pupils are achieving standards in line with what could be expected for their age. In religious education standards being achieved are below those that could be expected. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets set for them. Those pupils with English as an additional language are taught well, receive good support and make good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Pupils are keen to get on with their lessons, try hard to do their best, and sustain interest well throughout the school day.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The behaviour of the great majority of pupils is good. There is little evidence of bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. Pupils talk very positively about the improved atmosphere in the school and playground.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships throughout the school are also very good. Pupils and staff get on together well. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful and work together well in pairs and groups.
Attendance	Overall attendance rates are unsatisfactory and are below the national average for junior schools. This is due to the poor attendance of pupils from a few families.



The personal, social and emotional development of all pupils is very good. The relationships they form are very good and the way they work together so well makes a significant contribution to their overall learning.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	N/A	N/A	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Where teaching is good, teachers plan well, support all pupils with great care, and often teach with a sense of fun and excitement that helps pupils to enjoy their lessons. This good teaching is characterised by good planning that guarantees that pupils receive the same opportunities regardless of which class they are in. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum are good throughout the school. This enables them to teach the essential basic skills of literacy and numeracy well to all pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and class discussions are usually lively and challenging, with all pupils being brought into discussions. A wide variety of teaching methods is employed to make lessons interesting, and the teaching of English and mathematics is particularly effective. Teachers manage pupils very well and lessons are consistently of a good pace. The quality of day-to-day assessment is good and enables resources and time to be used very effectively. The good teaching meets the needs of all pupils very well and so they work hard and are enthusiastic about their learning. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for their own learning as they go through the school.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are well known to all staff and well supported throughout the school. Their progress is tracked very regularly. The targets in their individual education plans match their individual needs exactly.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision and support in this area are good when required. Pupils make good progress and achieve appropriately high standards.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The provision for pupils' personal development is good with some very good elements, such as that for pupils' moral and social development. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection are very good. There are very good procedures to improve pupils' behaviour and good procedures to improve attendance. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are also good.

The school has satisfactory links with parents and provides them with good information about their children's progress. However, parents' involvement in the school and their contribution to their children's learning are weak.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher provides very good leadership; he leads by example and gives a very clear direction to the work of the school. The deputy head, senior management team and other staff as co-ordinators, work closely with the head to develop the curriculum and improve pupils' standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. They visit the school regularly and understand the needs of the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes very good use of its improvement plan to prioritise action and evaluate the changes it has made.
The strategic use of resources	All resources are used well. Support assistants work hard and are effective in helping pupils. The grant for pupils with special educational needs and the standards fund are used effectively.

The current level of staffing and resources is good and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school accommodation is generally good. This enables the staff to meet the requirements of individual pupils in full. The school manages its finances effectively. The administrative officer carries out the day-to-day functions of the office very well. All matters relating to income and expenditure are dealt with efficiently. The school has good procedures to ensure that it gets best value for its money when purchases are made.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The good progress their children are making.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> <li>• The school's expectation that their children will always work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The leadership of the school. The head and all teachers are welcoming and eager to please.</li> <li>• The interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount and type of homework their children receive.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>• How closely the school works with them</li> </ul>

The evidence from the inspection confirms the positive views of the parents. The inspection team does not agree with some parents' comments about the homework their children are given. The tasks given as homework are linked with the work being covered in lessons, parents are informed so that they can help, and pupils' progress is enhanced as a result. The new head teacher has made great efforts in a short time to improve the information parents receive about their children and the school in general. He is also working hard to involve even more parents so they can now work more closely with the school. However, there is still some way to go in this respect.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children are first admitted to the school their attainment is well below that expected for their age, and often very low.
2. In the national statutory tests for pupils aged eleven in 2001, the proportion attaining the levels expected in English was well below average nationally, but broadly average when compared with pupils from similar backgrounds. There was little difference between the results of boys and girls. The pupils who are on the special needs register make good progress in English and are a testament to how carefully the school now assesses their individual needs in this subject and plans appropriately. Results of tests over the last three years show that the overall trend is upwards at the end of Key Stage 2 and above the national trend of improvement.
3. In mathematics the results in the National Curriculum tests of pupils aged eleven had shown improvement from the time of the previous inspection until 2001. They fell back to be well below the national average again in that year due to the larger number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. They were average when compared with the results for schools in similar circumstances and the percentage of pupils who achieved the higher level was also in line with similar schools. Teachers' assessment this year, 2002, shows better results. They estimate the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level to be significantly better than the 2001 figure and the percentage of pupils achieving the national average also to be improved. Preliminary results of the 2002 results, and inspection evidence, confirm this improvement.
4. In 2001 the science results were above the national average overall but well above average when compared with similar schools. There was little difference between the results of boys and girls and the school is raising levels of attainment in line with the national trend of improvement.
5. The school's targets for pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science in 2001 at the end of Key Stage 2 were achieved, although there was a slight dip in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels. Inspection evidence shows that the school is well placed to extend and challenge all pupils further and in 2002 the school's targets were raised to an appropriate level in all subjects. The school's rate of progress has been above the upward national trend in the last three years.
6. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in speaking and listening are in line with those expected nationally. Standards in reading and writing are below expected levels. Pupils' attainment in all areas has shown significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in English as they go through the school, given the low levels of oral and writing skills children have when they enter. Pupils make similar progress in most year groups, although it is in Year 6 that more able pupils do best. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. The speaking and listening skills of pupils are well below the level expected of their age group when they enter the school. Pupils in Year 6 now talk and listen with more assurance. They listen carefully and understand the main points of discussions, but do not question the ideas and views of others. Reading standards at the end of Year 6 are at the level expected for their age. Average readers in Year 6 are accurate and understand the main ideas in narrative and information texts. They talk

about the plot and characters in stories. More able pupils read fluently, with good levels of understanding. They use well-established knowledge of letter sounds and blends, together with understanding of the context of the passage, to read words they have not encountered before. Attainment in writing is below the expected levels at end of Year 6. By the time they are eleven, more pupils undertake imaginative writing and their ideas are sustained, but are often not set out clearly for the reader due to lack of practice. More able pupils develop their ideas in an interesting way, and start to use sophisticated punctuation such as colons and semi-colons to achieve this. Pupils begin to write at length in English lessons, but less so in other subjects. Spelling continues as a relative strength in Key Stage 2. Handwriting is of consistent size by now and most letters are efficiently formed.

7. Pupils make good progress in mathematics throughout the school, and although current work by pupils is below the standards expected at the age of eleven, they are improving rapidly. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of ability, and many have underdeveloped skills in number. Given the low attainment of many when joining the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well in mathematics, particularly in their use of numbers. By the age of eleven, pupils increase their skills of working with numbers, and their understanding and use of four operations. Year 6 pupils quickly work out calculations mentally and many are ready to share with the class their strategies for working out calculations. They are more confident in using multiplication than division when solving problems. Due to their experience of data handling and using graphs, these skills are now being developed well. There are many opportunities for pupils to engage in practical and investigative work in mathematics. Older pupils use calculators to check their work and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is now exploited well.
8. Pupils make good progress in science throughout the school. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2 at the age of eleven, attainment is above national expectations, and well above average when compared with that in similar schools. The school has improved standards from where they were at the time of the previous inspection. This is despite pupils' low attainment on entry, and the high percentage of pupils in the school with special educational needs. The majority of Year 3 pupils are beginning to recognise the terms *opaque*, *transparent* and *translucent*. In a Year 4 class pupils are able to identify a liquid and a solid, and know that wax and water can be either. In Year 6 pupils, identifying ways and situations in which bacteria can be spread, understand that micro-organisms are harmful. A number of pupils requiring help in understanding the set tasks made good progress. Only a small minority of pupils in the current Year 6 cohort are unlikely to achieve the expected Level 4 in science by the end of the current year and overall attainment in Year 6 is above the national average.
9. In design and technology, ICT, and the performing aspects of music, pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age by the time they leave school. In art and design, physical education, geography and history, standards achieved by pupils at the end of the key are in line with what could be expected for their age. In most aspects of religious education standards are below those expected.
10. Pupils with special educational needs, whatever their level of need, make good progress in relation to their abilities. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and against the targets set for them in their individual education programmes. Work for all pupils matches targets set in individual education plans, and their progress is reviewed rigorously and measured against these goals each term. Very good support from classroom assistants enables pupils to complete tasks successfully and make good

progress as a result. Pupils with English as an additional language are identified early and given good support. As a result they make good progress and achieve well.

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

11. Pupils' very good attitudes to school, good behaviour and very good relationships with staff and each other are having a very positive impact on their achievements, especially on their personal development. This shows an improvement over the standards described in the previous report. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and this is confirmed by the very lively and keen interest they show in their work and the general life of the school. They show a very keen interest in extra-curricular activities.
12. Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Pupils are keen to get on with their lessons, try hard to do their best, and sustain interest well throughout the school day. This was seen in a Year 4 English lesson when pupils were bubbling with enthusiasm throughout the lesson when learning how the use of powerful and descriptive adjectives can make poems more interesting. The very good interest pupils show in science and design and technology has a very positive impact on their achievements in these subjects. For instance, in a Year 3 science lesson, their very keen approach when identifying parts of a plant contributed very well to their learning as they drew and labelled various plants.
13. The behaviour of most pupils is good. There is little evidence of bullying, racist or sexist behaviour and pupils talk very positively about the improved atmosphere in the school and in the playground. They praise the prefect system and the use of mediators in helping improve behaviour in the playground. A minority of pupils, mainly boys, are boisterous and sometimes aggressive in the playground and on a few occasions misbehave in class, but rarely cause disruption. Two pupils have been excluded on a temporary basis and one permanently in the current year: a figure below the national average. Pupils have a good awareness of why rules and conventions exist, and are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of their actions on others. They show a sound respect for the feelings and beliefs of others given the limited opportunities provided, but show a genuine appreciation of the efforts of others.
14. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils and staff get on together well. This pleasant rapport has a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially the interaction between teachers and pupils during lessons. Pupils in Year 6 talk avidly about their teachers, and say, "School is interesting. We'll miss it when we move to secondary school." Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. They love talking to visitors. Pupils work together well in pairs and groups. Teamwork is good and boys and girls co-operate well as they showed when playing cricket against a local school.
15. Pupils' personal development is very good. They are developing a very good awareness of citizenship. A very good example is their keen and responsible approach to being prefects and mediators in Year 6. They talk about helping teachers and especially younger ones in the playground if they have problems or get into squabbles. They like to show visitors around and "show them where to park." Pupils show pride in the school achievements. They are developing a very good awareness of moral and social issues especially in relation to those who are worse off than they are. For example, in an excellent Year 5 English lesson, pupils expressed their feelings very well about "loneliness in Africa". They said people should be encouraged to give to charities with phrases such as "A penny can turn tents into houses", "Everyone deserves clean water" or "Just a small amount will bring happiness to many people." Pupils show initiative and independence when working. The Buddy system where older pupils

regularly work with and support younger ones, organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator, has a very strong impact in developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem, as well as helping improve the spelling and reading of the younger pupils.

16. Overall attendance rates are unsatisfactory and are below the national average for junior schools. Levels of unauthorised absences are nil and lateness is not significant, although several pupils from a small number of families are persistently late or absent. These absences mean pupils miss important parts of their learning. Absence levels are lower in Year 6 in the summer term.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good, and this enables pupils to make good academic progress throughout the school. Teachers are aware of the very differing needs of pupils. Pupils of average or high prior attainment are well catered for with appropriate extension activities. The use of support assistants to support pupils is very good across the school. Most teachers are experienced and use a good range of appropriate strategies to develop pupils' learning. This was very apparent in a number of lessons when the teachers moved from whole-class exposition in literacy or mathematics sessions to group work. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, the teacher moved the pupils from a detailed examination of two books by the same author, to their own writing at the optimum time. The pupils were enthused by their own responses to the teacher's rigorous questioning. The resulting writing was a credit to them all.
18. The good teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge and understanding, and very clear planning. This was evident in almost all lessons. Teachers' attention to detail and high level of expertise showed what could be achieved with the pupils who have good attitudes and want to learn. A very good Year 6 design and technology lesson was based on a careful analysis of the process needed for pupils to make their own slippers. The steps of designing, researching, making and testing were very well established. The excellent music lesson taken in Year 4 was also based on a very high level of teacher expertise, knowledge and enthusiasm. As a result, the pupils made very good progress and thoroughly enjoyed singing and making music.
19. There are many occasions when the teachers make links between different subjects, which produce cross-curricular activities that are particularly valuable. There is emphasis on investigative work that leads to independence and the good personal development of all pupils in every year group. Throughout the school, class discussions are lively and challenging. Questions are well focused and designed to bring all pupils into the discussions. This helps all pupils to make quick progress towards the particular aims for the lessons. Teachers use a good range of methods and group pupils to match the purposes of the lesson. The arrangement where pupils of similar ability are taught together rather than in their classes enables teachers to focus more precisely on the needs of individual pupils and groups and therefore they make good progress.
20. English and mathematics are both taught very well. During the inspection 13 literacy sessions and 13 numeracy lessons were observed. In English ten lessons were good or better, with four being very good and two excellent. In mathematics, ten lessons were good or better, with five being very good. In English and mathematics sessions, teachers lead discussions well, introducing new ideas with care and clarity. Although pupils receive a great deal of encouragement to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in these sessions, there are opportunities in other subjects that teachers do not use to the best effect.

21. Teachers also set a good example to their pupils in how to work and discuss key issues in their lessons, and also how to make the most of the time they have to complete their work. They allow pupils time to complete their thoughts and express them clearly. This led to an amazing insight in a Year 6 literacy lesson where a pupil came to the conclusion that a character's real enemy in a book by Anne Fine had to be paper and pencils. This level of understanding was entirely due to the teacher's persistence and care. Both she and the rest of the class were impressed by the pupil's response that was then used well to further inspire the others.
22. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils throughout the school. They use praise well to modify behaviour and reward good work. The withdrawal sessions taken by the special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants were an object lesson in how effective this strategy can be. Instructions given to pupils were very clear, and all adults listened carefully to pupils' replies and questions, and showed they valued them all. Teachers manage pupils very effectively, which results in increasingly good behaviour. This is also evident in the centre for pupils with specific learning difficulties where the patience, firmness and attention of the teachers is exemplary and ensures the very good progress of the pupils.
23. Assessments, using informal strategies to gauge pupils' understanding, are apparent in lessons, and teachers use these strategies consistently. Groups of pupils are also chosen for assessment in lessons, and a range of checklists based on the lesson plans is used. These assessments are always used accurately and lessons are now demanding for individuals and groups as teachers set targets that are challenging.
24. Marking is often effective, and the way that the teachers of the less able pupils discuss their results rather than just write them in their books is particularly so. This is now consistent across the school. Homework is used appropriately and effectively to support pupils' progress throughout the school.
25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Good support is given both in class and when pupils are withdrawn from lessons. Teachers are aware of the pupils on the register of special educational needs and all make reference to providing suitable activities to promote their learning. Teaching is informed and attention is given to ensuring that the work set is appropriate and progressive. Particularly notable features of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are the regular assessments of the progress that pupils make towards learning targets and the detailed, informed records kept of their progress by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Teachers show patience and understanding and have high expectations of both academic performance and behaviour. They are given very good, skilled assistance from the well-qualified, experienced and committed support staff. The combined attention of teachers and support staff has a most positive impact upon the good progress that the pupils make.
26. The teaching of the very few pupils with English as an additional language is organised and planned well by an additional teacher from the local authority. This good planning is carried out well by the class teachers and supported well by the learning support assistants. As a result these pupils are making good progress.

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

27. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The planned curriculum is broad and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Religious education is

provided in accordance with the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. Although religious education is taught regularly, there are weaknesses in the planning that limits pupils' achievements in the subject. The school has developed a good programme for pupils' personal and social education. In lessons, pupils are often encouraged to make personal choices and take important decisions for themselves. In one such lesson, pupils in Year 3 learnt that appearances can be deceiving and raised awareness of the dangers of stereotyping. Appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about health issues form part of the personal and social curriculum. The statutory requirements to provide appropriate sex education and raise awareness of drug misuse are incorporated into the whole school curriculum. The curriculum provision is very inclusive and better than it was at the time of the last inspection and the school is offering a full range of activities to all its pupils.

28. All curriculum policies have been updated, including a policy for anti-racism and sex education. The new policies reflect the school's use of the national guidance for its schemes of work in most subjects. With the exception of religious education, the planning of the whole school curriculum provides a sound framework for a broad curriculum. There is a programme of work for most subjects and useful guidance to help teachers' planning. This effectively promotes continuity in learning across the school and provides consistency in practice. An overall plan for each subject shows overview of the topics covered through the year with good cross-curricular links. The amount of time provided for some subjects, such as design and technology and art and design, is limited and allows little time for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills to best effect.
29. Teachers carefully plan English lessons in line with the National Literacy Strategy, and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The implementation of National Numeracy Strategy is effectively improving pupils' mental arithmetic skills and the work in literacy has greatly improved pupils' reading skills, particularly in the teaching of phonics and spellings across the school. The literacy and numeracy skills are further enhanced with the provision of booster classes and also developed through other subjects such as science and design and technology. However, opportunities are often missed to develop literacy skills through other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education.
30. The curriculum provides good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. This enables them to learn and make progress. The weekly planning of subjects is sufficiently detailed to promote teaching and learning for particular groups of pupils, especially the pupils with special educational needs. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well supported by the visiting teacher from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and make appropriate progress. Withdrawal sessions, to provide intensive support in literacy or numeracy for some pupils who have special educational needs, are carefully organised to ensure full participation in all other subjects. Wherever possible, pupils receive support from assistants or adult helpers during normal lessons.
31. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good. Pupils have opportunities to take part in clubs of an interesting range outside normal lessons. The clubs such as orchestra, country dancing, the choir, recorders, nature club, and lunchtime computers, are well attended. There are a number of very popular sports clubs, such as football, netball, cricket, rugby and athletics. There are good opportunities to play competitive sport against other local schools. The extra-curricular provision consolidates pupils' learning well, particularly in the arts and physical education, and makes a significant contribution to their personal and social development. The curriculum is further enriched



by the provision of educational visits to a range of places of interest, including a residential visit to the Isle of Wight and a visit to Caerleon in Wales as part of the 'Romans' study. Other opportunities that enhance pupils' social understanding include visits from storytellers and theatre groups, as well as focus weeks such as 'sports week' or 'history week'. Very recently, the school had a helicopter land in its fields and the crew talked to all pupils about helicopters.

32. The school has effective links with the community, for example, the local police liaison officer and the Fire Brigade. Good links are well maintained with partner institutions, the local nurseries and playgroups, secondary schools and local training colleges. Pupils participate in a number of charity, sports and musical events throughout the year.
33. There is good provision in developing pupils' moral, social and cultural awareness. The ethos of the school is very positive in terms of its expressed aims and in its practice. It is founded upon the caring relationships evidenced at all levels in the school community. The school's philosophy, code of conduct and a series of experiences and activities effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The sense of family encourages pupils to reflect on their actions and those of others.
34. Despite the school's positive ethos, pupils' spiritual development is limited and the school's provision is unsatisfactory. Religious education lessons, and most other curriculum areas such as science, art, music and drama, make a limited contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Lessons are not effectively linked to school assemblies and opportunities for pupils to engage in personal reflection. The daily assemblies for all pupils and the time to reflect on pupils' own beliefs, values and experiences are not a regular feature of the school week. Year group assemblies are held once a week and there is a whole-school assembly on Fridays. The talks in assemblies are not effectively explored for a spiritual thought or prayer. In a few lessons, skilful teaching did create a sense of wonder, and this was noted in a Year 5 literacy session and in a Year 4 lesson about life in a Muslim home when the teacher took out artefacts out of a bag one by one. A regular visitor to Year 3 assembly uses a special puppet and gives a very clear message to pupils about being kind and helpful to each other. The few assemblies that do take place are used well to promote a sense of community and shared values.
35. The provision for moral development of pupils is very good. The school effectively teaches the values that distinguish right from wrong. Due attention is given to the reinforcement of codes of behaviour and sharing of positive values. The pupils respond positively, enjoying their work and showing care for the school. Pupils are well disciplined and understand what facilitates an orderly school. Moral values are effectively taught through stories and fables, as well as hymns and discussions. Pupils are well rewarded for best work and good actions. There is a well-established system of prefects, a 'Buddy' system and 'guardian angels' for pupils to provide help and support to peers. Both teaching and support staff provide good examples and encourage pupils to relate well to each other and behave courteously. Pupils also participate in a number of charities supported by the school.
36. Very good provision is made for pupils' social development through daily life, curriculum and local educational visits. When provided with appropriate opportunities, pupils carry out responsibilities with confidence. There are monitors who are given responsibilities for different things at break times, for example looking after younger pupils. A well-established 'Buddy' system is evidence of very good relationships and a sense of responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to show responsibility for their own environment and the area around school. Social interaction is also achieved through promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion within the school. Pupils show great respect for other

people's values and beliefs. The quality of relationship is very good throughout the school.

37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. It is promoted through opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of their own cultural traditions and practices and through some of the key features of two other faiths in society, Islam and Judaism, taught as part of the religious education. There are some opportunities to promote multi-cultural activities in art, dance, drama and music. Pupils regularly visit the local church, but visits to other places of worship such as the mosque or the synagogue are not planned. The school promotes respect for cultural diversity reflected in society but displays around the school do not reflect the richness of the multi-cultural diversity represented within the British society. As a result, pupils' appreciation of the richness and diversity of culture in the wider world is less well developed. Opportunities to involve parents and visitors from the local faith communities in order to contribute and enhance pupils' understanding of a culturally diverse British society are now being developed.

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

38. At the time of the previous inspection the school assessment systems were still being developed and there was little analysis of results to guide planning and teaching. The arrangements for assessing how well pupils are doing in their work are now good and teachers increasingly use results in the planning of work. The school bases targets for all pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science on these results.
39. The school has analysed national test results in recent years for eleven year old pupils in English, mathematics and science. Teachers take the results into account as they plan work for the following year. On entry to school, all Year 3 pupils take the 'Quest' screening test. This helps the school place them in the group best matched to their ability and attainment level for English and mathematics. Teachers consider these groups carefully, making any changes where needed. Pupils also complete optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Class teachers analyse these to show trends in attainment and what the school needs to do to raise standards across the core subjects. Other tests include verbal reasoning tests for Years 3, 5 and 6 and reading tests for all pupils in the school. The school handbook gives a comprehensive timetable for this very full programme of assessment. The assessment co-ordinator plans to improve formal assessment in the foundation subjects as a priority in the coming year. She has attended a course for the electronic management of assessment data and it is a school priority to use this fully in this planned development.
40. Teachers mark pupils' work well across all subjects. This ongoing assessment of pupils' work is usually helpful and thorough and in many cases challenging. Teachers know how well pupils have grasped the work. In Year 3 mathematics, for example, part of the lesson was changed from the original plan because pupils had not been as successful in the previous lesson as the teacher thought they would be.
41. The school provides good care for its pupils and has improved on the satisfactory standards outlined in the previous report. The standard of care and social inclusion contributes well towards pupils' positive attitudes to school.
42. Health and safety procedures and monitoring are good and potential risks are identified well. Child protection procedures and awareness are very good. First aid arrangements are good with adequate numbers of staff receiving training. Pupils' personal development is monitored adequately and staff know the pupils and their backgrounds

well, thus providing good personal support that enables pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem.

43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. The behaviour policy, with an emphasis on the use of rewards and praise, has had a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils see the rewards system, especially the awarding of house points, as very fair and effective.
44. Procedures to discourage and deal with bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are also very good and any potential racial incidents are monitored and recorded very rigorously. Parents and pupils feel that potential incidents are dealt with quickly and fairly. The school makes very good efforts to include all pupils, including those with behaviour difficulties. Exclusions are used as a last resort, and there were just three last year. The school willingly admits pupils excluded from other schools.
45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Registers are well maintained and the close monitoring of absences enables the school to quickly identify and pursue families who present problems with maintaining prompt and regular attendance.

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

46. The partnership with parents is satisfactory; the standard is similar to that described in the previous inspection.
47. Response from parents to the inspection survey was low with only 25 per cent replying. Only two parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. This limited evidence indicates that parents have mostly positive views about the school. They feel that their children like school, are making good progress and behave well. They say teaching is good, and the school expects the children to work hard, is helping children to be mature and responsible and provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence supports these views. About a quarter of parents feel that the school does not work closely with them. Inspectors feel that the school works with parents adequately. Nevertheless the school rightly plans to attempt to improve the partnership, for example through information sessions about mathematics and English.
48. Parents receive good information from the school. Annual reports provide very good detail on attainment and progress in relation to all subjects; targets for improvement are included in reports but these are too general and do not clearly indicate specific areas for development. Newsletters give parents good information about the life of the school and also about work to be undertaken each term. Reading or homework diaries are not used consistently to enhance the two-way communication between teachers and parents. The school is open to parents; staff are available for consultation at the beginning and end of the day.
49. The contribution parents make to their children's learning at school and at home is limited. A few give help in the school, for example in helping with reading, and some give support to their children at home, helping with homework. The school does not currently have a parents' association. Parents keenly attend pupils' performances. Most parents ensure their children come to school regularly and promptly, although a small but significant number fail to do so.

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

50. The leadership and management by the head teacher and senior staff are very good. Although the head teacher has been in post for a short time, he has already gained a shrewd picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and where its priorities lie. For example, English and mathematics remain at the forefront of the school's development because attainment is still below average. He has worked hard to establish a very positive atmosphere within the school among both staff and pupils. As a result, staff morale is high and pupils' behaviour is good. He provides a calming influence yet is firm in his resolve for the school to develop apace. The deputy head teacher is very effective in supporting the head teacher and her colleagues, and is specifically responsible for the school improvement plan, which is an exemplary working document. She also played a valuable role in maintaining stability in the school when acting as head teacher.
51. The structure of management is complex but very effective. Senior staff meet regularly with the head teacher to decide on the school's activities. Year group leaders also meet regularly to determine issues that affect the parallel year classes, especially the shared planning. This ensures pupils benefit from equality in their curriculum. Curriculum leaders are very active in promoting and developing their subjects. All these staff have good job descriptions which ensure that their responsibilities are clear and dovetail neatly into the overall management. For example, it is the responsibility of the senior management team to monitor teaching but it is the responsibility of the four year group leaders to work closely with supply teachers so that they know exactly what they need to do. They all carry out their duties effectively and the school works efficiently as a result.
52. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very experienced, enthusiastic and diligent in her co-ordinating role. She ensures that all pupils have access to any necessary support and that their needs are met in lessons. The co-ordinator liaises well with teachers and support staff and is in regular contact with concerned external agencies such as the Learning Support Service, Educational Psychology Service, Social Services and relevant doctors. Early contact is made with all parents as soon as concerns are noted about their children and there is evidence of parental involvement in all stages of the new Code of Practice. The organisation and the quality of the records collected and organised by the co-ordinator, including the register of special educational needs are very good. Individual education plans, compiled by the co-ordinator in consultation with the class teachers and support staff, are reviewed regularly and learning targets modified accordingly. The quality of the individual education plans is very good. They are detailed, clear and give precise attainable learning targets. All teachers have a special needs file, outlining statutory requirements, the school special educational needs policy and details of pupils on the special educational needs register. The files are comprehensive, and clearly well used.
53. The head teacher meets regularly with the chair of governors to review the progress of a range of issues on both an informal and a formal basis, and he is now acting as the necessary 'critical friend' that is very much appreciated by the head and teaching staff. The chair and the other governors are also fully aware of the school's aims, values and policies and support them well. They fulfil all of their statutory requirements and have made a significant contribution to the school's recent building improvements. The school has a very clear sense of purpose and direction in meeting its aims, values and policies. This is reflected throughout in all aspects of work and leisure. The school's aims and requirements are clearly understood by staff, parents, governors and pupils and can be seen in the day-to-day life of the school. They all work hard to fulfil the school's aims. This is reflected in subject areas and through a very positive moral and social development programme. This results in the school's good ethos and a positive and

effective learning environment based on very good relationships and pupil behaviour. This allows all pupils direct access to all learning experiences in an enjoyable and supportive environment.

54. Taking into account the way that governors, head teacher and staff have worked together to secure the improvements since the last inspection and the school's successful drive towards raising standards and meeting its own targets, the capacity for further improvement is judged to be good.
55. Good performance management meetings of all staff currently take place. The head teacher discusses professional development with each teacher. This provides an effective platform for discussion about their individual training needs and the needs of the school. The school has a good performance management policy, approved and used by the head and governors. Newly appointed teachers receive an appropriate programme of support from a senior member of staff during the first part of their appointment to the school.
56. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Standards have risen in English, mathematics and, particularly, in science. This is mainly due to an efficient programme of monitoring teaching. Teachers are observed systematically by senior staff and teachers benefit from direct feedback. From this, teachers are set yearly targets for their own improvement and that of the school. This, in turn, forms part of the well-organised school's performance management process. The school has been able to identify issues of attainment in its thorough analysis of pupils' test results. This has meant that teachers can focus on specific areas, like spelling, to improve standards.
57. The school's action plan, which is the deputy head teacher's responsibility, is very thorough, clear sighted and achievable. The issues involved are sensible and have been identified as likely to help the school move forward. Good examples include the increased use of the computer suite and greater emphasis on the use of mental mathematics. The issues from the current plan have generally been addressed very efficiently. The very good three-year improvement plan ensures that all subjects regularly feature in the school's action plan. In addition, the school has a very good policy of requiring all subject co-ordinators to submit an action plan for their subjects each year. For example, co-ordinators have highlighted the need for more consistent use of assessment in history and the purchase of more multi-cultural instruments for music. Such emphases show that the school values all subjects and help to explain why the school is improving.
58. The school manages its finances well. At present, there is a quite high surplus of money that is being kept to cater for the expected downturn in pupil numbers in the near future. There are 90 pupils in the current Year 6, who leave at the end of this summer term and only 63 pupils in the current Year 3. This is indicative of the falling roll at the moment, for reasons that are outside the school's control.
59. The school has an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to teach the National Curriculum. Teachers work hard and in good association with the classroom support assistants. The school is adequately resourced. Science is well resourced, as are ICT and physical education but art is less than adequately funded. The 'wild area' in the school grounds provides a good resource for science studies. The school has won the 'Cheltenham in Bloom' competition for this area three times. The design and technology room, mentioned in the school's documentation, is not equipped as a working room for the subject but is a store for resources. It is not especially welcoming and although it makes resources more accessible is not contributing

positively to the standards of work in the subject. The school plans further changes to it in the near future.

60. The school's accommodation is good. The main building has adequate classroom space and there is a fine new computer suite. Two of the remaining four classrooms are good. This new block is light, spacious and very pleasant in which to work. The other classrooms, housed in temporary buildings, are not good, being rather dark and too small. The hall is large and resonant, suiting music performance well. The school has a separate dining hall, freeing the main hall for lunchtime activities.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

61. Rowanfield provides a caring community in which to learn. The areas for improvement identified by the inspection, and listed below, are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan and build on the improvements already achieved. In order to raise the overall standards of pupils' attainment, the governors, head teacher and staff should jointly:

1. Build on the improvements already made in English, mathematics and science to raise pupils' standards of achievement further in these and all subjects, by the time they leave school. This should be accomplished by:
  - a) Reviewing the amount of time made available for all subjects in the school's overall curriculum plan.
  - b) Planning for the additional use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects of the curriculum.

Paragraphs 28, 29, 70, 73, 78, 100, 106

2. Raise pupils' level of achievement in religious education and improve the provision for pupils' spiritual development.

Paragraphs 26, 34, 127, 129, 129, 130

3. Make further concerted efforts to involve parents in the education of their children and in the work of the school. This should include continuing to make parents aware of their statutory duty to send their children to school every day and on time.

Paragraphs 48, 49

### **Other minor issues which should be considered by the school:**

Ensure that pupils gain a clear understanding of the multi-cultural nature of society through incorporating and emphasising these aspects in the written guidance for all subjects.

## CENTRE FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

62. The school is host to one of four Centres, across the county, for pupils with specific learning difficulties (SpLD). The situation is rather different from that which was the case at the time of the last report, in that there are now only six full-time pupils on the roll of the school, who attend the Centre in the mornings, and spend their afternoons in their mainstream classes. These pupils are all supported through a statement of special educational needs. There are also seven pupils who are on the rolls of other local primary schools, and who attend the Centre in the afternoons. The Centre is planned and staffed for 12 full-time places, and six part-timers.
63. It is inappropriate to compare the standards reached by pupils in the Centre with nationally expected standards since their starting point is often very low. It is, however, a measure of the very good provision made by the Centre that when the pupils are working in the Centre they make very good progress. Their learning is of a high quality, and the degree of independence that they achieve is remarkably high. Pupils who are on the roll of Rowanfield generally make good progress in their mainstream lessons.
64. In the morning sessions the emphasis is very much on numeracy and literacy, and each pupil has a very specific and individually tailored education plan. This is made on the basis of very careful and rigorous assessment and observation. This means that the challenge in the lessons is very finely judged, so that the pupils do succeed, but they have to work hard to do so. For instance, when they learn about the 60 minutes of an hour, and the division into fives of the minutes on the clock face, they develop a very good idea of what they could do in one minute, or in five minutes, because they have done star jumps for one minute, and have learned their five times table thoroughly. The pupils are heard reading every day, and they always have homework – very often words to learn, or spellings. They use dictionaries, with varying levels of skill, and all pupils use all the available clues in the classroom to assist them in decoding new words. They keep their own records of what they do and don't know. The pupils benefit from good support by the learning support workers in their mainstream lessons.
65. The quality of teaching is very good in the Centre because the adults there know the pupils very well. They know their learning styles and their strengths and weaknesses. There are excellent assessment procedures, which are rigorously used when planning work. There is a very productive relationship between the adults and the pupils, the hallmark of which is mutual respect and trust. The pupils are given as much independence in their learning as they can handle. This is particularly finely judged, and the adults ensure that the pupils succeed in an increasing number of independent tasks, such as putting books away, remembering to tick off the words learned for spelling homework, and the organisation of writing on the page. The strength of the assessment procedures mean that the pupils are taught not only 'new' material, but also that their previous mislearning and the accompanying sense of failure is effectively replaced with a new assurance.
66. The full-time pupils display self-confidence. They have recently been working on the construction of puppets, with the help of a valued volunteer, and are actively relishing the thought of performing their puppet play to the rest of the school.
67. The staff of the Centre work in partnership with parents and carers and with the staff of the school. There is regular and frequent contact with parents and carers through the work that goes home each evening. There is also good contact through the record book that the pupils use as their organisational tools, and through the presence of parents and carers at the annual reviews of statements and at 'Parents and Carers' evenings.



All full-time pupils have homework of about half an hour per evening. This is to maintain the good work done at school by the pupils, and also to help to train them into good learning habits when they go to their next schools. In instances where the pupil has little opportunity to do homework actually at home, then the Centre staff and the school make it possible for pupils to do it in school – either at break or after school.

68. The qualities of teaching and learning, and the standards of achievement by the pupils, have all risen since the last inspection. There is very strong in-school support for the staff and the pupils of the Centre.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	19	21	19	0	0	0
Percentage	5	31	34	31	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	312
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	69

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	80

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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 2 (Year 6)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	54	57	111

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	28	53
	Girls	40	32	56
	Total	72	60	109
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (74)	54 (81)	98 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	35	52
	Girls	44	39	56
	Total	79	74	108
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (74)	67 (84)	97 (95)
	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	1
Chinese	0
White	303
Any other minority ethnic group	8

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	24

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

*FTE means full-time equivalent*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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.*

### **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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	819300
Total expenditure	841416
Expenditure per pupil	2331
Balance brought forward from previous year	145724
Balance carried forward to next year	123608

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	310
Number of questionnaires returned	72

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	46	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	1	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	55	10	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	54	13	1	0
The teaching is good.	44	53	0	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	53	15	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	42	8	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	47	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	49	25	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	33	51	7	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	60	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	54	6	1	4

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

### **ENGLISH**

69. Most pupils' attainment on entry is well below average in all aspects of English: speaking and listening, reading and writing. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in speaking and listening are in line with those expected nationally. Standards in reading and writing are below rather than well below. Pupils' attainment in all areas has shown significant improvement since the last inspection. In addition, there is a high number of pupils with special educational needs. Against this background, pupils' rate of learning is good and especially good gains are made in Year 6. The recent improvements in teaching and learning are having a positive effect on pupils' achievements.
70. Pupils' speaking and listening skills have greatly improved since the previous inspection report. Teachers build regular opportunities into their lessons for pupils to discuss their work with each other or in small groups, in which they express their ideas clearly and confidently. Teachers provide good examples and in some lessons pupils are required to report back verbally on topics they have investigated. Pupils are attentive in class and respond well to teachers' good questioning. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and the very few for whom English is an additional language, express themselves clearly. This was noted in a Year 3 lesson where the teacher worked closely with the two non-English speakers to ensure that they understood the gist of the poem and the meaning of key words. In another example, Year 6 pupils were encouraged to describe and evaluate the style of an individual writer to gain insights into how their own writing could improve. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and use praise effectively to encourage the reluctant speakers to participate actively in class discussions. Pupils' own reading and the teachers' use of subject-related vocabulary in lessons play an important part in this development. Pupils listen well to the teachers' advice and demonstrate growing confidence to interact and share opinions and ideas about stories and poems. However, more regularly planned opportunities, such as drama, 'hot-seat' or debate, would enable pupils, particularly the higher attaining, to speak at length and use a variety of expression and vocabulary.
71. Bearing in mind pupils' limited starting points, their progress in reading is good throughout the school. There are many confident and fluent readers in all year groups, and by the time they are eleven, a significant number of them attain standards close to average in reading, although the overall standard is below average. Where guided reading sessions are skilfully structured, pupils enjoy reading and achieve well. They show growing understanding of what they read and are fast developing a range of strategies to decipher words they find difficult in reading. Careful monitoring records kept by most teachers include clear and relevant information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and these are used effectively to improve standards in reading. Pupils enjoy talking about the books they have read. They read a wide range of fiction and sometimes quite challenging texts, independently and accurately. While lower attaining pupils still interpret their reading literally, a few average pupils show a growing understanding of more complex language. However, most pupils find it difficult to identify underlying meanings or appreciate the subtleties of humour. Most pupils are able to explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction and how 'contents' and 'index' can point the way to specific information when they study non-fiction text. Pupils' ability to skim and scan, make meaningful notes or search for information in subjects such as history, geography and religious education is rather limited. The school library is currently being refurbished and is a priority on the school improvement plan.

72. At the start of Year 3, only a few pupils write more than a few simple sentences. The combination of a tightly structured literacy hour together with the whole-school focus on improving skills has had a beneficial effect on pupils' writing. Pupils are well supported to think about the overall structure of their writing and most are beginning to use more ambitious vocabulary and sentence structures. By Year 6, the scope of writing increases appropriately to include narrative, descriptions, letters, poetry and story writing. Competence in spelling and punctuation is emphasised well. Pupils make good attempts at developing the use of persuasive language in their writing. This was noted in a Year 5 lesson, where pupils designed a 'Charity Flyer' and made use of good vocabulary such as 'imperative' and 'urgency' and powerful phrases such as, 'a few pennies can help turn tents into houses'. This work was much enjoyed by pupils and well presented. Most pupils consistently use a joined script. They write neatly and develop their own personal style.
73. Pupils are introduced to the main features of specific genres, for example writing reviews, but this work is limited and not extended sufficiently to also include reports, plays and autobiographies. There are not enough examples of sustained story writing with good attention to developing characters and plot. Pupils' spelling strategies of a range of different words, their proof-reading skills and vocabulary choice in writing, are insufficiently developed. The amount and quality of recorded work, in subjects such as history, geography and religious education, are limited. Pupils' independent use of ICT to word-process, re-draft or edit is now being developed.
74. The teaching of English is good. Lessons are well structured with many good features, and this promotes good quality learning in all aspects of English. In the best lessons, work is planned to ensure pupils' differing needs are met. Teachers make good use of both fiction and non-fiction, in the whole-class part of the lesson. Most lessons are generally lively and stimulating. For example, in a very good lesson, Year 6 pupils considered humour and sarcasm in their favourite author's book, 'How to write badly', and showed obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm in the lesson. Teachers are very encouraging and use praise positively so pupils respond well and try hard in lessons. Their questioning is skilful and includes all pupils at an appropriate level. The final part of lessons is used well to reinforce learning or to give the pupils the chance to perform to an audience. In most lessons, this enhanced pupils' learning and also gave the teacher the chance to check that pupils of all abilities had understood. Most teachers make sure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and how this links with what they have learnt previously. Lessons are well planned and organised with a good mix of whole-class, group and individual work. Teachers achieve a good balance between offering support and expecting independence. Most pupils are attentive and eager to answer questions and behave well. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good in most lessons. Teachers' marking varies considerably. The best marking was noted in Year 6, which indicated effectively how the writing could be improved. This is good practice and helps pupils focus on mistakes.
75. The management of the subject is very good. There is a systematic programme of monitoring teaching and learning. The literacy co-ordinator is very thorough in her work. The school is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and there is effective forward planning. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good, and the results of all tests are effectively analysed in order to set individual targets. Useful additions have been made to resources in classes to support the implementation of the literacy strategy. The monitoring of pupils' work is good and the school is well placed to make further improvements in standards.



## MATHEMATICS

76. Current work by pupils is below the standards expected at the age of eleven but they are improving rapidly. The top set in Year 6 clearly has a quick recall and very firm grasp of the work. This is a quarter of the age group. The school has improved the low attainment by the most able pupils commented on in the last report.
77. Levels of attainment for pupils in Year 3 in their first year at the school are well below the national average. The work in a 'middle' set was below average and the higher attainers work at a level only a little above. Year 4 pupils similarly achieve below the nationally expected level. In a middle group, for example, only a small number grasped that 'a.m.' begins immediately after midnight and that adding an hour to 11.55 p.m. will be a.m. – that is, in the morning. The group's grasp of the bus timetable grid, on which the lesson's main task was based, was not good. Many could not work out whether to read it horizontally or vertically.
78. Good teaching raises attainment as pupils move through the school and by Year 5 this is having a significant effect. Over the three groups, attainment is more in line with the national average. Year 5 pupils understand rotation and translation of a shape on a graph, and the difference between the two. Some of these able pupils had a very quick grasp of work that was entirely new to them. They understood the idea of using co-ordinates very well. Similarly the highest attaining pupils in Year 6 are working at a good level. They have begun work, after the national tests, on Key Stage 3 tasks, and, although a few were not clear in the lesson seen, most understood it well; some were quick and fluent. The initial work on formulae for their 'function machines' showed many pupils thinking hard, rapidly, and very successfully. A small group also understood well both the fraction and the negative numbers suggested for the machine. Some other eleven year old pupils, however, experienced difficulties in straightforward work about time, many of them having only a slender grasp of the 24-hour clock. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum in science and ICT, but there is still room for further development in other subjects.
79. Pupils enjoy their work in mathematics. In Year 3 pupils enjoyed the quite formal work with numbers, a forest of hands shooting up at the first question. In all lessons seen, pupils settled to work quickly and worked hard. They work well together in groups, Year 3 pupils for example co-operating well in group work. Pupils set out their work carefully, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In both these year groups the higher attainers concentrate hard and work at a very good pace. They enjoy the challenge of mathematics and respond well to the need to think quickly. Less able pupils in Year 6 also learned well through good concentration. Pupils' good behaviour means that they can concentrate and learn.
80. The school introduced the National Numeracy Strategy successfully. This gives good coverage of the National Curriculum and shape to the planning of mathematics. Teaching in mathematics is good. There were some very good lessons where good class management was coupled to appropriate, well-chosen tasks and a lively pace was maintained. In these lessons pupils made very good progress, as in the Year 5 lesson about translation and rotation where they absorbed much new knowledge quickly and securely. Teachers question well, leading pupils to think about the work. They plan lessons carefully and almost always are well organised. The good presentation of work reflects calm classrooms in which work can be sensibly and neatly done. Teachers mark work in mathematics fully and well. This means that they know how well pupils understand their work and what needs to be altered or re-emphasised. Until the present year the national test results have been analysed and the results used to set targets

guide future teaching for the Year 6 pupils. The new co-ordinator from September intends to use the results in this way again.

81. The system of grouping pupils by ability for mathematics works well. Pupils gain from working with pupils of similar ability and on tasks carefully selected to match that ability. In some of the sets further differentiation of work would help even more. The teaching of those for whom English is an additional language means they do as well as other pupils. Very able pupils and those with special educational needs do well because they get very challenging work that stretches them.
82. ICT is now being used in mathematics well. Year 6 have used computers for creating very colourful pie charts of favourite sports and data sheets. The work of lower attaining pupils especially has clearly benefited from the use of computers. A group of higher attaining Year 6 pupils showed that they can use a computer program well in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

83. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above national expectations. Pupils have a good knowledge of a range of scientific topics and are skilled at carrying out investigations. Nearly all pupils achieve expected standards and many achieve above what is expected for their age. This shows a dramatic and sustained rise in standards since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved substantially and the curriculum has been strengthened, thanks predominantly to the enthusiasm and efficiency of the subject co-ordinator. Pupils with English as an additional language do as well as other pupils. Very able pupils and those with special educational needs do well because they get very challenging work that stretches them.
84. By the end of Year 6, pupils know how to conduct experiments successfully. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use fair tests to determine, for example, the saturation qualities of different solutions and how electrical circuits work best. Pupils present their findings clearly and accurately in text, often with good diagrams and graphs, and draw sensible conclusions from their work. Pupils in Year 5, for instance, can draw the key features of spiders, woodlice and ants and deduce that spiders are not insects because they have eight legs. Teachers make very good use of the school's environmental area and visits to broaden pupils' knowledge of living things. This makes pupils well aware of how a food chain works, for example, such as fox → blackbird → grasshopper → grass. They can define parts of plants, such as stigmas and anthers, and know what purpose they serve. They have a good knowledge of the human body, how the circulation system works and what might cause problems, such as nicotine or other drugs.
85. Pupils know how materials can be quite different. They know how solutions like flour and water can be separated using filters and that other materials will need different processes like sieving. They understand how processes such as evaporation work and use technical language to describe their findings, like, for example, "more heat means that more molecules can escape". Pupils also appreciate physical processes such as how sound travels, and are able to test this by using tuning forks of different sizes. They know the effect of friction on movement as, for example, through air when a parachutist falls. In investigations like these, lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve as well as most other pupils. The quality of their written work is not quite so good but their knowledge is secure. Higher attaining pupils are given the opportunity to work more skilfully. One experiment involved comparing ribbed, rough,

studded or smooth tyres of a bicycle. They present their findings more effectively using, for instance, line graphs.

86. The quality of teaching is good, and often very good. Pupils make at least good progress from Year 3 to Year 6. Teachers work from a broad curriculum and plan lessons together in year groups, so that all pupils benefit from the same experiences and opportunities. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and talk confidently about it. This inspires the pupils. In a Year 3 lesson on pollination, the teacher referred to a line on the head of one flower as being “like a runway for a bee”. A real strength of the teaching is the very good relationship between the teachers and pupils. Teachers manage pupils very well, hold their interest in lessons and value their contributions. As a result, pupils respond enthusiastically and responsibly, and this can lead to very good learning. When investigating mini-beasts in the school’s grounds, Year 5 pupils appreciated the chance to work with living creatures, were respectful of the environment and sustained a high level of concentration.
87. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They fully involve all pupils in lessons and expect lower attaining pupils to do as well as the other pupils. Higher attaining pupils do have opportunities to do more advanced work, although teachers do not always ensure that lessons are skilfully prepared so that these pupils can attempt separate, more challenging work. Teachers make effective use of resources. The opportunity to test the reaction of snails to different foods certainly captured the attention of all pupils in Year 4. Plants plucked from plant pots to expose root structures had a similar effect on pupils in Year 3. Teachers certainly work well in lessons to guide pupils and make sure they know how well they are learning. The marking of pupils’ work, though, is not so consistent. Some teachers offer useful guidance, others tend only to rely on praise and do not insist that mistakes are corrected.
88. The subject co-ordinator has succeeded in transforming the subject into one of the strengths of the school. She has strengthened the curriculum to make it stimulating and supports colleagues sensitively and enthusiastically. Although she does not have enough opportunity to observe lessons, she does monitor pupils’ work regularly and so knows how well they do. She has worked very hard to establish the environmental area in the grounds which has often won first prize in a local competition. The successful nature club enables pupils to devote extra time to working in this area.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

89. Timetable difficulties meant very little art and design was seen during the inspection. From this, from discussion with the subject leader, other teachers and pupils, and from looking at teachers’ plans and pupils’ work, overall standards appear to be at the expected level for pupils at the age of eleven. The teaching of those for whom English is an additional language means they do as well as other pupils. Very able pupils and those with special educational needs do well because they get extra challenging work that stretches them.
90. Pupils’ work shows that they have drawn and experimented with line, colour, tone and texture well. Across all year groups there are good examples of this work. During the inspection a Year 6 class, in a very good lesson, learned about perspective using digital photographs. There is other good work in Year 6 on this aspect of art and design. Almost all the work in pupils’ sketchbooks shows that it can be tackled by all the pupils at their own level and using their own skills. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, can do the work. In Year 3, for example, the designs using coloured tissue paper vary greatly not only in skill of execution but in maturity of thought and

artistic flair. The texture work using thick paint and the pencil drawings in the style of William Morris vary similarly. Some of this work shows a good level of skill for Year 3 pupils. Year 6 action pictures show a good appreciation of how a simple line or collection of lines can depict movement. One pupil, clearly having some flair for art, has used colour superbly in an abstract construction, to show a person diving into a pool.

91. There is little three-dimensional work and there are no examples of weaving or ceramics. Some good wire sculptures hang in a Year 3 room and the careful designs for them appear in pupils' books. Pupils in Year 3 and in Year 4 have done a little work with clay. Year 3 has been involved in a good project on sculpture in the environment but pupils have drawn as a result. There is no art and design on a large scale and no big collages or paintings. Pupils have not been able to develop their ideas for large-scale use of colour in paint or material. In this respect the school has not made good progress since the last inspection when these elements were considered strong. The sketchbooks show that skills in two-dimensional work in paint, pencil, and crayon continue to be well developed. Here the school has maintained the good level of work noted at the time of the last inspection.
92. Pupils enjoy art and design. Year 6 pupils were very keen in their lesson on perspective and were reluctant to stop at the end of the lesson. Pupils in all year groups talk enthusiastically about the work.
93. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. Sketchbooks also show that many teachers bring considerable personal skills in art to their teaching. They teach basic art skills well, for example the work on blending colour in Year 6, where lower ability pupils have made good progress in understanding how to use shades of colour together for effect. Teachers' general teaching skills are good. This means that they prepare and organise well, and manage pupils and time effectively. Pupils therefore work in a calm atmosphere and can concentrate and develop their skills. Teachers mark the work thoroughly. In most classes they take time to comment positively but could advise more. Tasks are interesting and in line with the National Curriculum.
94. The school has missed opportunities through display both of pupils' work and of the work of great artists. Little art and design work is on show around the building. This means that there is no ready access to examples from which pupils can learn through observation and discussion. There is no world art and design, thus missing the possibility of developing pupils' multi-cultural awareness through the display of artwork. The idea of employing a mural designer, considered too expensive, was a good one. The school building, with its long corridors and large areas of wall space, has very few large displays to lead pupils into the skills necessary to produce large paintings, and collages that would also brighten the 'public' areas of the school.
95. Art and design is enthusiastically and well led by the co-ordinator. The policy document is to be revised in the near future. Resources are not adequate for complete coverage of the National Curriculum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

96. Few products of pupils' work in design and technology were displayed in the school. From those seen and photographs of others, but mainly from design work in pupils' books, standards of attainment can be judged as above the expected level for pupils at the age of eleven. This is especially true of design work and research and evaluation of designs. Pupils also evaluate the completed product. Their written comments show a good appreciation of the design process as well as fitness for purpose of the designs

and products. This means that the school has made good progress in design and technology since the time of the previous inspection, the design element being stronger. Pupils' work grows in style as well as skill. Some of the current Year 6 work, on slipper design, shows flair. Pupils in Year 5 showed that they have a good grasp of the design elements of their moving toys and a knowledge of cams. They talked fluently about what was good in their designs and what would need to be improved between the first prototype and the final product.

97. Pupils are very keen to design and to make. They work carefully and produce detailed, well-labelled diagrams. They concentrate well and work hard. In a long Year 5 lesson, for example, they worked hard throughout. Their interest led them to discuss the work sensibly and they learned from one another in this way.
98. Teaching is good. Teachers prepare and organise lessons well. This allows a lively pace, keeps pupils interested and helps them to learn. Teachers manage pupils well and so the atmosphere is calm and pupils can work sensibly and carefully. Relationships are good and this impacts particularly in practical lessons where pupils share equipment and work together well. In one lesson the teacher was able to enjoy a joke with pupils and there was good feeling and patience in the class with a pupil who took a long time to explain her point. In another, pupils listened sensibly to what others had to say about their first attempts at making moving toys.
99. Teachers question well, helping pupils to think about the design process and what will work and what will not. Tasks are open-ended, allowing all pupils to take a full part in the same work. Sometimes worksheets differ for pupils with different writing skills and this helps their thinking through the design and making processes too. This also means that all pupils, regardless of their educational needs or language skills, make good progress. Teachers mark design books thoroughly and well. They praise and challenge, helping pupils to take their ideas forward.
100. The time allowed for design and technology is barely sufficient to cover the National Curriculum and although the range of work is slightly limited, the quality of design and evaluation within each project is good. In some projects teachers give rather too much time to the research and planning and not quite enough to 'making'. Pupils need more time to make the things they design carefully and finish them to a high standard.
101. The design and technology room is currently used only for food technology and storing resources. It is to be changed soon, making way for the new library. The co-ordinator manages the subject well, has a good grasp of what is happening and knows the school needs to expand its resources and store them in an easily accessible way. She looks at a sample of work regularly and records finished work with a digital camera. She has ideas about linking design and technology with ICT and this link is currently being developed. There are some examples of the use of ICT in the pupils' books.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

102. Pupils' attainment in both subjects is in line with expectations for their age. They have a sound factual knowledge and competent skills in simple research. Their presentation of facts is adequate but sometimes restricted by uncertainties in English. The overall picture is very similar to that of the last inspection, although geography has slightly improved.
103. Pupils have a clear understanding how geography impacts on life. They appreciate that agencies like the Forestry Commission exist to make the best of the land for both

commercial and recreational activities. Teachers ensure that pupils learn at first hand by planning residential visits to the Forest of Dean for pupils in Year 5. Pupils have reasonable skills at interpreting maps, and can trace the course of a river, like the Severn, although their use of map co-ordinates is limited. Only higher attaining pupils in Year 6 handle six-figure co-ordinates with any confidence. Pupils know about their own locality and also communities further afield. They appreciate that life in an Indian village is quite different, where some houses may still have grass roofs and there are few cars. Pupils learn facts from a range of sources. Usually they filter information from reference books, but they also use pictures, videos and, increasingly, computers. For example, pupils in Year 6 have downloaded Internet data for their river study.

104. In history, pupils know about key periods from the past. Pupils in Year 6 understand the perils faced in World War II, particularly the Blitz in London. They know why food was in short supply and why children had to be evacuated into the country. They can also draw comparisons with earlier periods such as the Victorian age. They know that central heating did not exist and that toilets were usually at the bottom of the yard. They know how to deduce such facts from sources like photographs. Pupils in other year groups delve further back in time. Pupils show a feel for history as, for example, when pupils in Year 5 wrote a diary of a Tudor workman and pupils in Year 3 dressed up as Roman soldiers, on a visit to Caerleon. Pupils in Year 4 warmed to the gory details of mummification in ancient Egypt and enjoyed re-creating their own Roman mosaics. All pupils learn from artefacts. Year 5 pupils safely assumed that life was dangerous in Tudor times because many people carried daggers. Pupils' writing is not always full enough; only higher attaining pupils write in real detail. Lower attaining pupils suffer from insecure language skills and their accounts are brief and not so convincing.
105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils so that the atmosphere in lessons is positive. Topics hold the interest of the pupils and ensure a good attitude to work. Pupils in a Year 6 history lesson were happy to dress up as a Victorian washerwoman to show how hard doing the laundry used to be, using a washboard. Teachers make good use of sources of information, like maps, to encourage pupils to think for themselves. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were eager to pore over local maps to compare how life had changed, such as the rash of new housing. Teachers are well organised and keep the pace of the lesson flowing. This, in turn, keeps pupils active and concentration is generally good. Teachers plan well across year groups to ensure that all pupils have very similar experiences in both subjects. In individual lessons, though, teachers do not often provide a good level of challenge for the different abilities of pupils. This means that lower attaining pupils can struggle with the vocabulary, for example, and higher attaining pupils are not able to explore topics thoroughly on their own.
106. Both subjects benefit from a more comprehensive curriculum than at the time of the last inspection. However, the school does not allow enough time and does not promote these subjects enough to support other skills like English and ICT. Resources are adequate but not especially inspiring.

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

107. Standards in ICT are above average by the time pupils leave school. This good achievement reflects the consistently good and often excellent teaching.
108. By Year 6, pupils are fluent in the use of computers, are knowledgeable about the uses and applications of ICT and show a good understanding of its value, impact and limitations. Most pupils are adept in the use of word-processing to improve and present their work. They combine text and images to make, for example, the page of a school newspaper. They access the Internet and use a CD-ROM to research topics, for example, in history, and use spreadsheets to manage, present and interrogate data.
109. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good ICT skills and wide experience. This consistency of good achievement is a particular strength. It results from teachers' very effective use of the school's well-equipped computer suite to build pupils' skills systematically. It also reflects teachers' good subject knowledge. This gives them the confidence to take pupils forward by means of challenging work and imaginative projects. A good example of this is Year 6 pupils' current work on spreadsheets. With the teacher's guidance, pupils of all abilities were able to work out the time in many different parts of the world. The way the teacher made these calculations relevant to the pupils by drawing on their own experiences was particularly effective.
110. This example also illustrates the way in which teachers skilfully link ICT with other subjects, in this case, science and mathematics. Further examples link ICT with English, design and technology, music and art. These connections extend pupils' learning in each of the subjects and broaden their understanding of the ways in which ICT skills can be applied.
111. Pupils have a good grasp of the uses of ICT and can consider ways in which it has added to, and sometimes detracted from, the quality of their lives. They point out, for example, its value in exchanging information, for example by e-mail, as a research tool and as a means of organising and presenting data. They appreciate its usefulness in improving the accuracy and presentation of their work. On the other hand, they comment that technology can be frustrating when it goes wrong. They realise, however, that its apparent shortcomings may result from inadequate information or incorrect commands.
112. The quality of teaching is good. Progress through the school is good but in the upper junior classes it is especially vigorous and secure. This results from the teachers' very good subject knowledge, skilled management and ability to engage and motivate pupils. Teachers make lessons interesting, pace them well and set consistently high standards of work and behaviour. They question thoughtfully, checking pupils' understanding and encouraging them to think for themselves. They give clear explanations and use technology imaginatively to demonstrate and share ideas.
113. These features promote good progress and encourage very good attitudes to learning in all parts of the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about their ICT work and enjoy discussing it. They handle equipment sensibly and are very responsible. When working together, pupils support each other very well. Pupils' well-developed skills and the flexible, informed support that teachers provide, enable pupils of all abilities to work independently at a suitable level.

114. The subject co-ordinator is effective, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. He has a very clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and good plans for its future development. Several teachers have very good subject knowledge, which they valuably share, and recent training is helping to build a secure base of expertise in all parts of the school.
115. There are procedures for monitoring teaching and these are helpful in sharing further the features of effective teaching found in many lessons. The present planning systems ensure good coverage and are supported by basic assessment procedures.

## **MUSIC**

116. Standards in music are above those to be expected of pupils of a similar age in singing and performing. Their ability in composition is in line with expectations for their age. The school has made developing positive attitudes to music a priority target to raise standards across the school. In the lessons observed the singing was of a very good standard and pupils were thoroughly enjoying taking part. The singing was cheerful and well pitched, and pupils' diction was clear.
117. Good links are made between history and music and pupils described how they composed and performed songs about different historical times. They very much enjoyed putting together a production based on Alice in Wonderland to perform to the school, which included mime, playing instruments and singing songs with actions. Their performance in a local theatre was a good, new opportunity to show others the high standards they now attain.
118. The teaching of music is good throughout the school. Plans for the teaching of music are good and they are designed to broaden the pupils' experience. The range of lessons ensures that pupils develop their skills in performing and composing and listening and appraising. Visitors to the school have included an African drummer, and brass ensembles who ran workshops.
119. All pupils have the opportunity to attend the school choir. Both boys and girls go regularly and sing a variety of songs well. Resources for teaching music have improved since the last inspection and these have been selected to widen the range of music the pupils learn as well as the composers whose music they listen to each week. In an excellent music lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher's use of an African music CD was inspiring. The pupils were visibly moved and were very sorry when the lesson finished.
120. The music co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has identified areas for developing the subject and manages the subject well. This has led to the re-introduction of some peripatetic instrumental teaching of woodwind instruments. Teachers plan lessons together. Resources for music are good with a very good range of musical instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

121. Levels of achievement in physical education are in line with expectations for pupils' ages by the age of eleven. The school continues to provide a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Since the last inspection more pupils are involved in them and the school now enters every tournament with a full team. Careful attention is paid to eliminate any inequalities in the boy/girl ratio taking part. In the cricket match observed after school during the inspection week there were six boys and five girls taking part. It is



evident that pupils enjoy lessons and after-school activities and take great pleasure from sport, and so standards have improved since last inspection.

122. The quality of teaching is very good. Good subject knowledge and detailed planning combine to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Activities are well supervised and teachers pay attention to safety issues. All lessons begin with well-structured warm-up sessions: the pupils are actively involved in demonstrating stretches for each muscle group and can explain the benefits of performing them well and the dangers of doing them badly.
123. In gymnastics, pupils performed a range of rolls and jumps with continuous and controlled actions in a variety of shapes. Pupils with special educational needs were given unobtrusive support by a classroom assistant and improved their stretches and shapes as a result. A dance lesson focused on pupils' control of ribbons, at varying speeds, timed to music. Even groups who had little control at the beginning of the lesson improved because of the teacher's praise, support and encouragement.
124. The emphasis on appropriate coaching points in a games lesson meant that all pupils made satisfactory progress and learned how to pass a netball using chest and bounce pass techniques. At the beginning of a cricket lesson, pupils had difficulty bowling, but skilful use of demonstrations meant all pupils improved by the end of the lesson. A feature of all the lessons is the involvement of pupils in observing others' performance and reflecting on their own so that they can all improve.
125. All teachers use detailed warm-up activities provided by the co-ordinator. Dance and gymnastics have been identified for future in-service training. New schemes of work are being developed across year groups. The co-ordinator meets regularly with staff from other schools in the area to plan and arrange tournaments. They also arrange friendly matches to enable pupils to extend playing periods beyond planning cycles for each sport. The co-ordinator is effective in supporting good practice throughout the school.
126. Resources are good. Cricket and tennis sets have been purchased and the school benefits from arrangements with Cheltenham Football Club and a local rugby team with the provision of coaching days and some extra equipment. Pupils dress appropriately for lessons. Usually, all pupils reach the minimum standard of swimming 25 metres and many go beyond this to gain distance awards and learn personal survival skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

127. Standards by the age of eleven are below expectations and the progress is slow. Religious education makes a limited contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school has adopted the scheme of work and guidance based on the local authority's agreed syllabus. However, there has been little monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject, and the result is that the amount of work covered varies between classes. In almost every class there is insufficient evidence to show that all areas of the locally agreed syllabus are covered, in particular the parts relating to faiths other than Christianity.
128. The satisfactory standards reported at the last inspection have not been maintained. Very little recorded work was seen in pupils' books or on displays throughout the school. Lessons in religious education are often taught through general discussions and opportunities are missed for pupils to use and further develop their literacy skills. Additional evidence was obtained from an examination of teachers' documentation and interviews with staff and pupils about their work.

129. Pupils are taught briefly about Christianity, Judaism and Islam as part of the agreed syllabus. Most pupils have adequate knowledge of Christianity and develop positive attitudes towards other religions. However, they do not study different religions in sufficient depth or consider important aspects that are similar or different. They develop understanding of right and wrong through personal responses to appropriate stories and making links with their own experiences. Some lessons appropriately use stories from the Bible to teach pupils about the life of Jesus Christ and His teachings. Most pupils have an understanding of the main Christian festivals and are familiar with stories, for example, the Good Samaritan, Noah's Ark and the story of Zaccheus. The younger pupils are familiar with the Christmas story. Many pupils have had the opportunity of visiting a local church and know the names of some special objects that they might find there. Most, however, do not understand the deeper meaning of the religious stories. Pupils' knowledge of the religious symbols, such as the Star of David or the importance of 'Mezuzah' to the Jewish faith, is limited. By the time Year 6 pupils leave, they have some knowledge of the festivals of three different religions, the key people or the holy books, and a limited understanding of the way of life of people from different cultures.
130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Effective learning was noted in a Year 4 lesson, which was well structured and suitably planned. The teacher made good use of the artefacts for a baby's christening ceremony to illustrate how Muslims celebrate the birth of a new baby in the family. She used praise to good effect and questioning to promote good thinking. This resulted in pupils exploring their own emotions and participating actively in the discussion. Lesson observations and discussions with pupils indicate that their attitudes and responses to learning are generally satisfactory. Pupils behave well and respond to questions with confidence. Most pupils show a willingness to talk about and share personal experiences. Some teachers have inappropriate expectations of what pupils can achieve. The lessons are not always planned skilfully to match with pupils' abilities and previous knowledge. This was noted in Year 3 lesson where pupils lost interest and learnt very little as a result of inappropriate organisation and lack of ability to manage pupils' behaviour in lesson. In a Year 6 lesson, however, another teacher made very good use of her own subject knowledge and good relationships to enhance pupils' learning about 'God as Judge'. Very good references were made to everyday judgements and the importance of forgiveness to make the lesson come alive.
131. The teaching of religious education makes good contributions to pupils' personal and social development, through topics such as emotions and conquering conflict with co-operation. Appropriate discussions and questioning in some lessons support pupils' listening and speaking skills. In most classes, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to record their knowledge and write own simple accounts. Some school assemblies support religious education and extend pupils' knowledge of Christianity. The co-ordinator has had little opportunity to monitor the quality of work in the classrooms. The absence of an agreed approach to recording and assessing the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding detracts from teachers' ability to plan future lessons based on what pupils have already achieved. The school has an adequate range of books about other religions of the world and a few multi-cultural artefacts. Pupils regularly visit the local church as part of the religious learning, but visits to other places of worship are limited.