

INSPECTION REPORT

CALTON INFANT SCHOOL

Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115486

Headteacher: Mrs S Welbourn

Reporting inspector: Jennifer Nicholson
23036

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 March 2001

Inspection number: 197709

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Mundy
Date of previous inspection:	29/09/1997

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			History	
			Religious education	
			English as an additional language	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Calton Infant School is a small inner city school situated to the south of the centre of Gloucester. It shares a site with the partner junior school. Most pupils come from the immediate locality, an area with some disadvantage and unemployment. There are fewer pupils on roll than at the time of the last inspection following the requirement for smaller classes. However, the school is oversubscribed. One hundred and seventy-six pupils attend the school, including 58 children in the Foundation Stage, in the two reception classes. Just over half of these children are of non-statutory school age, being aged four or just five. Children are admitted in the September of the year in which they will be five. Overall there are more girls than boys, in the reception and Year 2 classes in particular. Fifteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. Thirty-six per cent of pupils, an above average proportion, are on the school's register of special educational needs, mainly for learning difficulties, and mostly on the first two levels. The proportion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is in line with the national average. The attainment of most children when they enter the school is well below what is to be expected nationally, especially in their experience of language. The school makes good use of its partnership with the Gloucester Education Achievement Zone, for example through the provision of a variety of parent education groups.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of the school is good. From low starting points at age four, and with a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the school achieves satisfactory standards across the breadth of the curriculum by the time pupils are seven. In national testing last year, standards in reading and writing were satisfactory; in mathematics they were good. During the inspection, due to differences in the year group with fewer potentially higher-attaining pupils, standards in writing were found to be close to national expectations, but below such expectations in reading and mathematics. Teaching is consistently good, enabling pupils to make good progress in their work. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher leads the strong team of dedicated teachers very well, and the comprehensive monitoring programme impacts positively on the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are well organised and fully involved in all aspects of school life. The main strengths reported following the last inspection have been maintained well. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils experience a consistent approach, in the good teaching in all classes, and in the positive way all staff promote good behaviour, and as a consequence their learning is good.
- The school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. This is a strength of the school.
- Extra-curricular activities are excellent.
- The school works very hard to find ways to involve parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school.
- The school fosters very good links with the community; liaison with the on-site playgroup, in particular, contributes very positively to children's smooth, settled transfer into school.

What could be improved

- Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1, in Year 2, are below national expectations. Pupils do not have enough regular opportunities to read.
- The outside classroom is too small for young children in the Foundation Stage to play and work whereas the other reception classroom has ample space for active learning. Also, the outside classroom does not have integral toilet facilities.
- Responsibility for the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is unclear, and the curriculum does not yet fully meet the nationally recommended guidelines.
- Pupils are not clear enough about what they need to do to next to improve their work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in 1997. The previous key issues have been addressed very well. As a result of the schools' focused work, standards in writing have improved in particular, and have been satisfactory in national testing for the last two years. Standards in information technology, design and technology and art now reach national expectations, having been previously below. The quality of teaching is now consistently good. In planning for development, clear action plans are in place for identified priorities. Most other identified shortcomings have improved, although spelling and the amount of pupils' individual reading practice remain of concern. Despite the school's best efforts to improve provision for the youngest children, the outside classroom, identified as urgently in need of replacement at the time of the last inspection, remains clearly poor.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	D	C	C	C
writing	D	C	C	C
mathematics	D	E	B	B

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

In the National Curriculum test for seven-year-olds in 2000, standards in comparison with all and similar schools in mathematics were good. In reading and writing they were satisfactory. Over the last three years, standards have improved overall. Standards in mathematics show particular improvement in the last year, due to intensive staff training and the rigorous implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In science, although the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level was well below average, the proportion gaining highly was well above average. During the inspection, standards in all subjects were found to be satisfactory, apart from reading and mathematics, where they are below what is to be expected. In writing they are close to national expectations. Differences between inspection findings and the more favourable 2000 results reflect differences in the year groups; this year there are fewer pupils attaining at higher levels than last year. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to achieve the nationally set goals for the end of the reception year in most areas of learning. However, despite the good progress these children are making from low starting points, many are unlikely to achieve the goals for speaking, reading and writing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very enthusiastic. They become involved well in activities provided, and work purposefully.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are friendly and polite. They respond well to the school's high expectations for their behaviour, in class, at lunchtimes and in the playground. They almost always move about the school sensibly. There are identified pockets of challenging behaviour but these are dealt with in a consistent and effective way.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form good relationships with one another and with adults. They are caring and kind with each other. They enjoy appropriate but not extensive opportunities to take responsibility.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is consistently good. In nine out of ten lessons seen across the school, teaching was good or better, enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Ten per cent of lessons were judged to be very good, in Key Stage 1. In the best lessons, teachers motivate and engage pupils' interest in a lively and challenging way, with high expectations for learning. Some very good subject knowledge is evident, as in religious education. All teachers find interesting and imaginative ways to make the work relevant so that pupils build securely on previous experiences and learn well. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, and value their individual contributions. The good range of behaviour management strategies, used consistently by all staff, is effective, including for pupils with identified difficulties. The most common shortcomings in teaching are that pupils themselves are not aware of what they need to do to get better, and that there are times when the youngest children sit for too long. Other shortcomings occur when lessons over-run, constraining learning in the subsequent lesson, and when plenary sessions are not used to best effect. The high level of support staff contributes effectively to pupils' learning. Staff work together well as a team so that pupils experience a consistent approach. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good, as evidenced by the improving results. The needs of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are met well and pupils with higher abilities are challenged effectively in their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. The school works hard to make sure that all pupils are included. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities further enhances provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school provides a good level of specialist support for these pupils, including teaching, learning support workers and the assistance of appropriate outside agencies.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. These pupils are integrated well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; a strength of the school. Teachers pay very good attention to developing pupils' appreciation of feelings and to capturing moments of wonder and surprise. They implement behaviour strategies consistently well. They provide a wide range of cultural experiences for pupils, including multi-cultural.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall; very good in the way the school provides for the welfare of its pupils, a strength of the school, but weaker in aspects of assessment. Although teachers make good use of comprehensive assessment strategies to plan future lessons, pupils themselves are not clear about what they need to do to improve.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The school works very hard and effectively to find ways to extend their involvement in the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the work of the school and gives a strong lead to staff. She is firmly committed to raising standards and enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers manage their subject responsibilities effectively, but leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unclear.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are strongly supportive and well organised. They contribute well to the smooth running of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school makes good use of information gained from national testing to guide lesson planning with a view to improving future performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of its financial and other resources, including support staff and specific grants. The school is making an appropriate start in applying the principles of best value.

The school provides sufficient well-qualified teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum, and also a good level of trained support staff. Artefacts are used very well to support learning. Accommodation, overall, is adequate, although some aspects are poor, in particular the two outside classrooms, and staff toilet facilities.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school; they settle well and make good progress. • The teaching is good; teachers expect children to do their best. • The school is well led and managed. • Staff are approachable about problems or concerns; they really care for the children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some concern about the amount of homework given. • Some parents feel that they are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on.

The findings of the inspection reflect the very positive views of parents. Inspectors judged homework to be of good quality, relevant and supportive of work in class. The school provides suitable times for parents to talk about their children's work through its approachable attitude, and through daily opportunities as well as termly meetings. In addition, annual written reports give suitable information about what pupils have learnt, but lack consistency about identifying pupils' next learning steps.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In national testing in 2000, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in mathematics were above national averages and above those of similar schools. Standards in reading and writing were in line with national and similar school averages. In science, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 2 was well below average, but the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was well above average. In mathematics the proportion gaining highly was above average, but in reading it was below average. Few pupils achieved the higher level in writing. Results in reading and writing have improved steadily, from low levels in 1996 to satisfactory levels overall for the last two years, representing creditable performance from low starting points, in literacy in particular. As a result of the school's intensive work and rigorous implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, mathematics scores improved particularly well last year, having been below or well below average for the three previous years. Girls do better than boys in reading and writing, in line with the national trend, but boys outperform girls in mathematics. Over the last four years, boys have improved particularly in reading and mathematics. Boys' improvement in writing is similar to that of girls. Just over half the pupils with identified special educational needs are boys whereas it is the reverse with identified more able pupils.
2. The attainment of most children on entering the school is well below what is to be expected, especially in their experience of language, books and early writing skills. Children in the Foundation Stage are making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals set nationally for the beginning of Key Stage 1. They are likely to reach the goals in all areas apart from communication, language and literacy, where their attainment on entry to reception is particularly low.
3. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1 and achieve satisfactory standards overall, apart from in reading and mathematics where standards are below what is to be expected. Standards in writing are close to national expectations. Since the last inspection, standards in writing, information and communication technology, design and technology and art have improved, although some decline is indicated this year in mathematics and reading due to differences in the year group.
4. Pupils' speaking and listening skills in Year 2 meet expectations. Pupils express themselves appropriately, including in discussions, and generally listen well to teachers and to each other. Through the emphasis teachers give to new words, pupils' vocabulary is extending suitably.
5. Standards in reading in Year 2 are below expectations. Pupils read a range of texts but many are not fully confident in reading independently and accurately. Library skills are developing appropriately. In writing, standards are close to expectations. Pupils write for a range of purposes, including stories, poems, letters and lists. They use their developing writing skills effectively to support learning in other subjects such as religious education and history. Handwriting is generally neat and well formed but, despite structured teaching, many pupils still find accurate punctuation and spelling difficult, reflecting their low starting points.
6. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are below expectations overall. Pupils add and subtract numbers to ten and many are beginning to understand the value of each

numeral in a two-digit number, but a significant minority is working at lower levels.

7. Standards in science in Year 2 are satisfactory. Pupils have a suitable understanding of the main types of food. Higher-attaining pupils know which foods the body requires most.
8. In relation to prior attainment, pupils at all ability levels are making good progress, from low starting points on entry to the school to satisfactory attainment in most subjects when they leave. Pupils with higher abilities are identified early on and are given challenging tasks to move their learning forward. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with particularly high abilities, are also identified early as a result of baseline assessments. They make good progress towards their individual targets. There is no evidence of underachievement because support and work are well matched to their needs. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their command of English. They are well integrated and fully involved with all aspects of class life. Teachers promote good learning by their consistent approach, high expectations, and by providing challenging, relevant tasks which build securely on pupils' previous learning. Sometimes lessons over-run, however, constraining learning in the subsequent lesson, often a foundation subject. There are times in the Foundation Stage when lessons are too sedentary and active practical learning is restricted, particularly in the small outside classroom.
9. The school has set challenging targets for testing for the next two years, lower overall than in 2000, but reflecting the capabilities of the specific year groups. Targets are reviewed annually and suitable tasks are set in lessons to enable pupils to work towards them. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils. Individual targets are set for reading, and communicated to parents, but in general pupils are not clear enough about what they need to do to improve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils are keen and eager to come to school and their attitudes are good. Their behaviour in and out of classrooms, and the quality of their relationships, are good. They enjoy lessons and join in enthusiastically in the excellent range of other activities after school. In almost all lessons, pupils try hard and show appropriate levels of concentration and commitment to work. This is because teachers maintain quiet, orderly routines in which pupils settle to work sensibly and quickly. Pupils know the standards of behaviour expected and this consistent approach from all adults greatly enhances the learning experience. For instance, in a Year 1 class, a child was sick and two of the adults were needed to deal with the situation. The rest of the pupils carried on without fuss and the teacher was able to work steadily with her group throughout.
11. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn. The reception classes provide secure learning environments, which encourage children to grow in confidence. Relationships between adults and children are strong. Children settle quickly into routines and are encouraged to become independent from their first days in school. Although many enter school with poor personal and social skills, they make good progress, quickly starting to share equipment and show concern for each other. They are becoming aware of acceptable standards of behaviour, for example taking turns with dolls, prams and trolleys in the outdoor area.
12. In Key Stage 1, pupils are increasingly good at listening to each other and keen to answer questions. They readily read out what they have written and show pleasure in

their own and others' successes. A very good instance of this was in a whole-school assembly when many pupils were asked to stand for special awards and the others were very patient, polite and pleased for those receiving praise. Assemblies are used well to reinforce pupils' attitudes to each other and to celebrate achievement. Pupils take pride in their school and are respectful of property. Cloakrooms are tidy and precious artefacts brought in by adults and pupils are carefully treated, for example the headteacher's sheep and a mother's childhood rocking horse.

13. Lunchtime is well supervised and pupils settle easily and socially to their meal. They tidy up carefully at the end of lessons. They are pleased to use initiative when given opportunities to do so, for instance volunteering to tidy the library. Pupils with special educational needs contribute well in lessons. They successfully join in oral sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons, in class or in small group work with the special needs co-ordinator. Other pupils in the school are very supportive of and helpful to them in lessons and outside, demonstrating acceptance and a caring attitude. This enables pupils with special educational needs to become valued members of the community.
14. Pupils often help each other and are caring when someone is sad or unwell. They say they enjoy coming to school and that bullying is rare. They know that adults deal with any problems immediately and sensitively. Whilst pupils are caring and respectful of others' feelings, they do not always understand the impact of what they do and that they might be to blame for someone else's tears. The school constantly re-affirms the need to be aware, but few pupils are sufficiently mature to fully understand. Teachers and other adults in the school set a very good example in their behaviour towards each other and the pupils. Secure and consistent classroom management ensures that a calm atmosphere is maintained and pupils receive the same messages from all adults. Parents are generally very pleased with the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. No pupil has been excluded from the school in recent times, because the school's philosophy is to work with any difficulty, to overcome it, so that pupils can be included in school life.
15. Pupils' eagerness to come to school is reflected in their attendance and punctuality. The level of attendance has risen over recent years and is now slightly above the national average. Instances of lateness are rare. There is no evidence of any variation across the year groups. The small instance of poor attendance is beginning to improve through the intervention of the education welfare officer. Registration fulfils statutory requirements and all registers are accurately marked. Parents are made fully aware of their responsibility to ensure that their children come to school each day and arrive on time, and the school has suitable and effective procedures in place to follow up any unexplained absences. Hence the level of unauthorised absence at the school is now less than two thirds of the national average. Pupils' good attendance and punctuality are beneficial to settled learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is consistently good, enabling pupils to learn effectively and make good progress. In 90 per cent of lessons seen across the school, teaching was good or better, including ten per cent of lessons in Key Stage 1 judged to be very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The best lessons are characterised by teachers'

high expectations for pupils' learning, by very positive behaviour management, and by a brisk, lively pace which motivates and challenges. Artefacts are introduced with sensitivity and care, and teachers skilfully make connections between pupils' experiences and new learning. New vocabulary is emphasised clearly. In a religious education lesson in Year 2, the teacher's very good subject knowledge encouraged pupils to make connections between different faith religions very well.

17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. The two teachers are supported appropriately by two trained nursery nurses. Student teachers and helping parents also make positive contributions to children's learning. Staff use a variety of strategies to support children's learning across the curriculum. Teaching is particularly effective in the areas of communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. However, overall, too many activities are directed by the teachers and not enough are initiated by the children themselves. Good use is made of initial and on-going assessment to plan for learning.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. It is organised well to allow them to benefit fully from the good level of effective support available. The work is planned carefully, focusing on their specific needs but offering experiences similar to those of other pupils. When groups are withdrawn for specific teaching, it is often planned to mirror and consolidate what is happening in the main lesson.
19. In general, the main strengths in teaching lie in its consistency and in the way teachers make the learning relevant so that it connects with and is underpinned by pupils' experience. In religious education, for example, teachers invite pupils to bring special things from home as a pre-cursor to talking about things that are special to other people. In addition, teachers give good emphasis to pupils' practical understanding through the effective use of equipment and resources, as in mathematics. Teachers' expectations for what all pupils can do are high, including for good behaviour. They manage pupils effectively, including those with identified behaviour difficulties, in a consistently positive way. Teachers have good relationships and rapport with their classes and often use humour to good effect. Classes benefit from a high level of support, a positive contributory factor in promoting pupils' settled behaviour and learning. Teaching assistants, learning support workers and student teachers are well informed and ensure that pupils' attention and learning focus are maintained. Teachers and support staff work well together as a team, including the two teachers who share a class. Parent helpers are also committed in their contributions to pupils' learning.
20. The way teachers plan for and include all pupils is a strength, including ensuring that pupils withdrawn from lessons for extra literacy or numeracy do not miss key sessions in class. They provide appropriately for those withdrawn from lessons or assemblies on religious grounds. Teachers provide interesting and challenging tasks, suitable for pupils of differing abilities, in class groups or weekly sets. These focused tasks are effective in motivating pupils to work purposefully. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good and in some instances very good, as in religious education. They emphasise special vocabulary well, as in English and music. They have a secure understanding of the literacy and numeracy strategies and teach the basic skills of phonics, writing and numeracy in small structured steps. In this they are clearly effective as test results and pupils' overall progress show. However, on account of literacy timetabling, there was little evidence during the inspection of time given to listening to pupils read, a concern expressed in the last report. In this aspect, pupils are not yet reaching national expectations.
21. Teachers' planning for lessons clearly arises out of overall subject guidelines which

ensure that required work is covered appropriately term by term, throughout the key stage. Joint planning ensures that pupils in the same year group are taught the same things. Teachers share with pupils what it is hoped will be learnt in lessons. They use questions to good effect, for example to recall previous learning as in design and technology, or to stimulate discussion as when comparing music from the 1950s with that of today. They make good use of games to stimulate and motivate, for example in literacy. They suitably evaluate pupils' response to lessons, especially when learning new concepts, and adapt subsequent lessons accordingly, as when pupils in Year 2 needed extra practice in adding two-digit numbers. Teachers are always well prepared and organise pupils effectively to work in a variety of ways. Their clear explanations enable pupils to settle quickly to their tasks and work purposefully.

22. The most common shortcoming in teaching is that pupils themselves are not aware of what they need to do next to improve their work. Half-termly targets for each group are set in each class but they are not communicated well enough to pupils. Other weaker aspects occur when lessons over-run, taking time away from learning in the subsequent lesson. Also, plenary sessions at the ends of lessons are not always used to best effect, to extend pupils' learning through the use of new but related material. During activities, although teachers have a clear focus in working with a particular group, they do not always intervene sufficiently with other groups to check understanding and move the learning on.
23. The school's provision for homework is good with a variety of practical and investigative tasks as well as reading, spellings and tables. Tasks are relevant, appropriate for each age group and support learning effectively in class. Some parents are keen to support their children's work at home but in general the response is patchy. This is of concern with reading practice in particular. The well thought out policy has been shared appropriately with parents.
24. The quality of teaching shows good improvement since the last inspection, when several teaching weaknesses were identified and there was a high number of supply staff in school because of staff absence. What pupils should learn in lessons is now identified clearly in planning and in lessons. It is also displayed in classrooms for pupils and parents. Information gained from lesson evaluations and assessments is used to influence future planning, and there are now a suitable number of related activities in lessons.

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

25. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school for all pupils are good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It meets statutory requirements and those of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Staff make every effort to make it relevant to the particular needs of their pupils. In the entrance hall, for example, a stimulating display of costumes from differing cultures extends pupils' experience, as do stuffed models of wild creatures in Year R. Homework set supports work in the classroom and includes practical tasks, for example collecting resources for a design and technology project in Year 2. Higher-attaining pupils are recognised, suitably challenged and supported. Less able pupils are set tasks which are sufficiently challenging yet achievable. Boys, girls and pupils for whom English is an additional language are all well provided for. The school works hard to ensure that everyone is equally included. In this the school is successful apart from in the Foundation Stage where accommodation constraints mean that the two classes do not have comparable access to adequate space in which to work and play.
26. Health education permeates the curriculum suitably, and includes drugs education and visits to promote a healthy lifestyle, for example from a dentist about oral hygiene. Provision for personal development is a strength of the school with some good use made of circle time to address sensitively a range of personal and social issues. Currently staff are finalising a personal, social and health education programme to bring these elements together into an effective and comprehensive scheme. The governors have yet to take the decision on whether or not to teach sex education.
27. The reception staff are working hard on adapting and updating their planning in order to deliver a curriculum that meets the new requirements for the Foundation Stage. This is not fully in place yet, leading to an imbalance between adult-directed and child-initiated learning at present.
28. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and other opportunities. Arrangements comply with the current Code of Practice. Pupils with special needs are recognised early and their individual education plans are well prepared, with manageable academic or behavioural targets set. These are reviewed and up-dated regularly. Provision in statements is being implemented well. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school.
29. The number and range of out-of-school activities is excellent. Pupils across the whole age range gain tremendous benefit and a lot of enjoyment from the opportunity to engage in a diverse range of activities, alongside their parents, and including mathematics, country dancing, football and tennis. The school also runs a thriving lunchtime recorder group which increases pupils' experience. Visits to places of interest such as New Bridge Farm Park and Plump Hill are used well to enhance learning in the classroom.
30. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The school works hard to foster this from the beginning and has maintained its high standard from the last inspection. Pupils conduct themselves very well, playing and working together in classrooms and around the school. The school's aims are constantly re-affirmed and consistently applied to create a happy, secure and pleasant learning environment.

31. The provision for spiritual development is very good. Pupils have varied opportunities to consider lives other than their own. For example, they are currently planning to make cakes to sell for fund raising on behalf of Comic Relief, knowing that the money will help people who are less fortunate than themselves. Lessons in religious education provide good opportunities for pupils to consider feelings and to be aware of others. The youngest children enjoy studying and stroking stuffed animals and were thrilled by the bowl of frogspawn brought in from the school pond by the caretaker. The precious old rocking horse brought in by a mother for a history lesson in Year 1 sparked delight and fascination. Other moments for reflection occur naturally, in music and art lessons, and are planned for in assembly times. The school is careful to provide alternative opportunities for some pupils to be withdrawn from assemblies and aspects of the curriculum on religious grounds.
32. The school's provision for moral development is very good. Pupils understand school and classroom rules, knowing why they must be careful in the playground or quiet and respectful in assemblies. All teachers and support staff consistently apply the rules so pupils experience a common approach. They understand fairness and honesty and acceptable behaviour, and have appropriate opportunities to exercise self-discipline. School is a calm, orderly place where everyone is valued for their contribution. Provision for social development is also very good. Pupils relate well to each other and to the adults in school. All relationships are good and the adults provide very good role models. This includes lunchtime staff, who work very well with pupils and do not have to raise their voices. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to take responsibility around the school. One class in Year 2 is trying out a scheme of 'Helper of the Week' where the chosen pupils find jobs to do like tidying up or watering plants. The school further raises self-esteem through its excellent extra-curricular activities, Family Literacy and Numeracy groups and by inviting pupils' designs for the new playground murals and imminent web page.
33. Provision for cultural development is very good. The school makes every effort to ensure that displays, books and lessons help prepare pupils for living in a diverse society. A very good example of this is where the art curriculum has been planned to use real objects from three very different cultures: Aboriginal, Indian and Chinese. This work is extended into religious and other beliefs to induce tolerance and positive thinking. The school takes good care to include pupils from different cultural backgrounds and use their experience to enhance learning for other pupils. This includes making careful provision for a Muslim student teacher's prayer. Opportunities are also provided to study aspects of British culture such as rural farming traditions through talks and visits, and saints' days are included in assemblies. Local musicians and a theatre group come into school each year.
34. The school's very good links with the local community bring tangible benefits and enhance pupils' learning. For example, through its active participation in the Gloucester Education Achievement Zone a range of family learning projects has been set up in which parents and carers and their children work together on basic skills. Also, useful liaison through the 'Partners in Leadership' programme provides reciprocal management support with a local bank. The significant input from local businesses into the life of the school includes Post Office involvement to help improve the playground and the 'adoption' of the school by a local supermarket.
35. The many visitors to the school each year make a very good, direct contribution to pupils' learning. For example, the football club coach, local church leaders who regularly take assemblies, and local people from ethnic minority communities who talk to pupils about their ways of life and beliefs, all widen pupils' experience. Pupils

contribute to the community mainly by raising money for various charities. A highlight on the calendar is the splendid pyjama party for Red Nose Day, when pupils sell cakes to each other and to passers by.

36. Links with partner institutions are facilitated by the fact that the school is on the same campus as the playgroup from which most of the pupils come and the junior school to which they transfer. The playgroup is a particular asset and has already contributed much to children's learning before they enter school. Liaison and transfer arrangements are very good and children settle quickly into the routines of school. The arrangements for transfer to the junior school are improving through regular meetings between the two headteachers and better liaison between the Year 2 and Year 3 teachers. Being on the same site, the schools see mutual benefit in collaboration on premises issues through shared caretaking and security. Overall, links with the junior school are now judged to be good. The school has established strong links with the Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education with a succession of student teachers working in the school. Those observed in classrooms during the inspection were making a significant contribution to the work of the school as well as learning their trade. These very good links also assist the school in the recruitment of good teachers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Overall, the school provides for the welfare of its pupils very well. Arrangements for child protection are very good. The headteacher is considerably experienced in this area and both she and the 'named person', a class teacher, have undergone extensive training. All staff have been fully briefed about signs to look out for and procedures to follow and the school has established good contacts with outside agencies. Arrangements for first aid are good. All members of staff have received basic training and two are fully qualified. However, due to lack of space, there is no dedicated medical room where pupils can lie down if they are taken ill. A few minor health and safety issues were identified and reported during the inspection, mainly relating to partial obstruction of emergency exits and trip hazards. The school nurse visits each week and deals effectively with parents' and carers' or school worries about pupils' health.
38. Lunch is a very civilised affair that contributes substantially to pupils' social development. The school provides a hot lunch each day which is more than adequate in terms of both quality and quantity and which most pupils seem to relish. Mid-day supervisors ensure that all pupils, whether having the lunch or sandwiches, have a sufficient amount to eat. Pupils are well supervised in the playground at lunch and break times, when there are usually at least three adults present.
39. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring and improving attendance. For example, it has made school such an interesting and congenial place for pupils that they are eager to come each morning. This is backed up by rigorous registration practices and by winning the support of parents and carers. The gradual improvement in attendance over recent years shows that these strategies are being successful.
40. The school gives good guidance to pupils to promote academic progress and personal development. One of the strengths of the school is the extent to which it understands the nature of its pupil intake and the range of social contexts from which many of them come. Most, for example, are unaccustomed to sitting quietly whilst someone talks to them. Hence the school has successfully developed a range of positive 'calming' strategies to promote good behaviour, which are based on a comprehensive behaviour

policy that is well understood by staff and applied consistently across the school. Evidence for the success of this approach is the observed good behaviour of pupils with identified behaviour difficulties. There is very little evidence of any bullying or oppressive behaviour in the school but where it does occur it is dealt with effectively by staff, based on very good knowledge of their pupils. The high level of support staff, as well as the class teacher, enables pupils to benefit from individual or small group support. As a result, pupils are able to improve their academic attainment and develop a range of social skills over their time in the school.

41. Assessment is satisfactory overall. The school has a comprehensive and wide-ranging system for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils. On entry, pupils are assessed using a nationally recognised scheme alongside the school's own procedures. The results are effectively used to plan learning and to target appropriate intervention for individuals and groups of pupils. Assessment, both formal and informal, is consistent and continues at regular intervals throughout the school. Systematic procedures for looking at samples of work enable teachers to make accurate judgements about pupils' levels of attainment. Data is analysed in a sensible variety of ways and is used well to predict future performance and to inform curriculum planning. Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are informal but equally effective. Staff have good relationships with their pupils and know them well. Tracking of individual pupils is being developed to complement the systems already in place. The policy for marking work has recently been revised and is not fully in place. It is very supportive of pupil's efforts but does not as yet identify their next learning steps. Targets have been set for groups of pupils but, apart from reading, not yet at an individual level, to enable pupils to self evaluate and begin to take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils are not aware enough of targets already set.
42. The procedures for supporting and monitoring the progress of pupils needing special support are good. Individual educational plans are used well to target behavioural problems where appropriate. Teachers remind pupils of their targets, when necessary, and how they can work towards them, for example they need to work towards their 'Golden Time'. They are also well supported in their personal development by their teachers and all the other adults who work with them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents and carers are generally supportive of the school and have a high regard for the headteacher and the staff. They are particularly appreciative of the good teaching, the high standards achieved by their children both in their academic progress and in their personal development, the support given to pupils with special educational needs and the approachability of staff. The inspection by and large confirmed these positive aspects of the school. Some parents are concerned about the amount of homework, the sufficiency of the information they receive on their children's progress, the lack of a male role model and some aspects of the accommodation. The inspection found that some, but not all, of these concerns are justified and details of the findings are recorded in the appropriate sections of this report. There is an effective home/school agreement in place. This was appropriately produced in consultation with parents and carers in July 2000 and copies are signed by the headteacher, the parent and the pupil.
44. The school keeps parents and carers well informed about their children's progress. Parents and carers have daily informal opportunities to talk to teachers, and there are termly parents' evenings for discussion with the class teacher. Most parents say that they find these events useful. At the end of the academic year, each parent receives

an annual written report on their child. Although these are generally satisfactory, many are too descriptive and do not contain enough guidance on what the pupil needs to do next to improve. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs are well informed, at every stage, and are aware of their child's inclusion on the register. Regular times are organised to review targets or discuss problems and time is available on parents' evenings for discussion with the special needs co-ordinator, where necessary. The governing body produces a comprehensive and concise report for parents each year, containing much useful information. Copies of the school's policies on homework and behaviour were suitably sent out to parents with the home/school agreement, and parents and carers are kept well informed about what is happening in school through a monthly newsletter. The school prospectus is good and is revised annually to keep it up to date. Overall, the quality of the information that the school provides for parents and carers is good.

45. The school works hard to find appropriate ways to involve parents in the life of the school and in their children's learning. There is generally only a small take up at meetings, as evidenced at the pre-inspection meeting. However, many parents are more than happy to help in practical ways, so the school provides ample opportunities for them to do so. For example, some parents have decorated the library and the toilet areas with images that are appropriate to young children and these are a delight to behold. Others are involved in helping pupils to produce cakes, biscuits and pancakes. Although only a few help in the classroom, many others take part in the family learning projects in which they learn basic skills alongside their children. The school also devises appropriate means to involve parents and carers in the delivery of the curriculum. An example is to be found in the teaching of history. The current topic is the study of what life was like when pupils' parents and even grandparents were at school. Parents responded very positively to a request for artefacts or photographs of the period. Many also agreed to be 'interviewed' by their children to broaden the scope of relevant information. The help parents and carers give with reading at home is variable but this is effectively monitored by the school through the home/school reading book.
46. There is an active parent teacher association run by a small group of committed parents who organise a range of social and fund-raising events throughout the year such as a Barn Dance and a Christmas Fayre. These events are well supported by both parents and teachers and usually raise about £2000 each year for the school. Overall, the quality of the partnership between the school and parents and carers is good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very clear direction to the work of the school. She is strongly committed to improvement and to providing a consistently good experience in school for all pupils. She gives a strong lead to the effective team of teachers and support staff who work together well to raise standards. However, the school lacks a settled senior management team to support the work of the headteacher, as has been the case since the last inspection. The school is currently offering senior management experience to an aspiring deputy headteacher who fulfils her delegated routine tasks appropriately. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is unclear and, as a result, its future direction, especially in the light of recent national initiatives, and its voice within senior management are not explicit. Subject leaders are effective with clearly identified priorities for future development in their areas, as annual action plans show. Overall, the school is well placed to build upon its current provision and improve further.
48. Governors fulfil their statutory duties very well. Good systems are in place to enable them to understand the school's work and to provide effective support in shaping its future priorities. They are suitably involved with setting targets for improvement. They are very committed and work hard to improve provision, as in information and communication technology, and also in their bids to extend the building to better accommodate Foundation Stage children. In this respect, however, they have not yet been successful, despite indications of a replacement building from the local education authority noted in the last inspection report when urgent concerns were also raised about the suitability of the outside classroom. The school has effective procedures for appraisal and performance management.
49. The school uses all the means it can to support pupils with special educational needs, including liaison with outside agencies and in-service training. Provision for these pupils is good and the Code of Practice is carefully followed. The co-ordinator makes full use of her time in school for withdrawal groups and general support to staff. Procedures are efficient. This ensures that time is well organised and funding is spent judiciously, for maximum benefit. The headteacher also has a teaching commitment alongside the co-ordinator and they work effectively together. The link governor is knowledgeable, committed and concerned as well as very supportive. Whilst the school clearly needs the separate, demountable classroom for its valuable withdrawal work, the quality of the building used is poor and is not commensurate with the good work that takes place within it.
50. The comprehensive monitoring programme is carried out mainly by the headteacher but also includes the subject leaders for English and mathematics, and suitable plans are in hand to involve other subject leaders. Written feedback is constructive but lacks clear targets for development. Peer observation also takes place but on a more informal level. Governors are fully involved and monitor teaching in their designated subject when its policy and guidelines are under discussion, recently religious education, for example. In this way governors have good first-hand knowledge of the daily work of the school.
51. Through careful analysis of the results of national testing, the headteacher and main subject leaders have identified common weaknesses which are being addressed in lessons, for example spelling. Tracking results guides future targets for improvement. Although targets for testing this year are lower than last, reflecting differences in the year group, they are nonetheless challenging. Half-termly targets

are set for groups of pupils but they are not made explicit enough to the pupils themselves.

52. The school's vision is wide ranging and challenging. Its aims are fulfilled well and permeate the life of the school. Strategic planning has improved since the last inspection with staff and governors involved at all stages. The main priorities are relevant with a clear focus on raising standards, and include detailed plans for implementation and evaluation.
53. The school effectively links its expenditure with educational priorities, for example through the provision of a higher than average level of classroom assistance to support the school's work on raising attainment from pupils' low starting points. On the other hand, sharing the site with the junior school with which it collaborates effectively on many premises issues means that these costs can be kept below average by taking advantage of the economies of scale. Specific grants such as those for special educational needs and for training are used appropriately and to good effect. In recent years, the school budget has been running with a rather large surplus, representing some saving towards the Foundation Stage extension and also towards the retention of the high level of support staff. The accumulated surplus also enables the school to manage smoothly the loss of income resulting from the fall in school roll through the national initiative to reduce class sizes to 30.
54. The control of expenditure is managed well by the headteacher and the school secretary and checked regularly by the governors. The most recent audit report was generally favourable and its minor recommendations for improvement have been addressed. Even though the income per pupil is slightly above the national average, pupils make such good progress from low starting points, both academically and in their personal development, that overall that the school gives good value for money.
55. There is a wide range of experience amongst the teaching staff and a reasonable match between qualifications and curriculum responsibilities. The job-share arrangement in Year 1 works well with a common approach, especially to the positive management of behaviour. The major staffing challenge facing the school is the recruitment of a substantive deputy headteacher to contribute to senior management. The high level of support staff, at least one in each class, are used to good effect. Arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers are very good through effective mentoring, termly targets, and an extensive range of courses on offer. Good relationships and the sense of teamwork amongst the staff enable new teachers to settle rapidly into their new career. For the same reasons, the school has a good reputation for training student teachers, receiving about ten placements each year. Apart from the caretaker, all staff at the school are female. The lack of male role models is a concern amongst parents, which the school is taking all reasonable steps to address. For example, many of the regular visitors who lead assemblies are male, as is also the coach who runs the after-school football club. In addition, although the student teachers coming to the school are predominantly female, some are male.
56. Accommodation is adequate overall. Most of the school is housed in a solid early 20th century building that is generally of high standard. The school uses the available space well and has created an attractive and stimulating learning environment for pupils through good displays and interesting decoration. Thanks to the competence of the caretaker, the standard of cleanliness is very high. There is, however, a shortage of storage space, hence equipment tends to accumulate in passageways and in some cases restricts access to emergency exits. The school also uses two demountable buildings on the playground but these provide substandard

accommodation. One is used for teaching small groups of pupils with special educational needs and although it has been condemned as the exterior is in a very poor condition, it is still in use through lack of appropriate space in the main building. The other houses one of the Foundation Stage classes. It is distinctly crowded and does not have sufficient space to deliver an appropriate early years curriculum. Children's learning is constrained by the limited space and they spend overly long periods sitting, leading to restlessness. Staff need to constantly remind children to be careful about bumping into each other when moving about the room or squashing each other when sitting on the carpet together. One child tripped over a chair leg during the inspection. Practical activities have to be 'scaled down', constraining learning opportunities. For some lessons such as music and circle time, these children have to transfer to the hall with consequent loss of valuable teaching time. In addition, this classroom has no integral toilet facilities. This issue was highlighted as urgent at the time of the last inspection three and a half years ago. The arrangements are clearly poor and are made worse by the fact that the other Foundation Stage class is taught in a good quality classroom in the main building. Hence the school is not providing equality of opportunity to all children. Outside, the playground is adequate for its purpose. It is rather stark in appearance but plans are in hand for its improvement. Outdoor provision lacks an enclosed area for Foundation Stage children. In general, the toilet facilities available to pupils are good, though those for the staff are in need of improvement.

57. Resources are generally sufficient in quantity and used to good effect, but in information and communication technology there are barely enough computers and other related equipment. There is a well-stocked resources room and a good library, attractively decorated. The wealth of material in classrooms, including artefacts which pupils have brought in from home, is used well to support learning. There is a good display of multicultural artefacts in the entrance hall.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to build on existing good features of the school, and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Improve standards in reading by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to read;
 - reviewing the place of reading within the literacy curriculum.(Paragraphs 5, 20, 23, 74)
 - (2) Improve provision for children in the Foundation Stage by:
 - continuing to work in partnership with the local education authority to provide for all these children equal access to suitable accommodation which enables the delivery of an active practical curriculum;
 - revising the curriculum to reflect more closely the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals;
 - reviewing leadership and management.(Paragraphs 25, 27, 47, 48, 56)
 - (3) Enhance target-setting systems so that pupils themselves know what they need to do to next to improve their work.
(Paragraphs 9, 22, 41)

In addition to the issues above, the following points should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- improve staff toilet facilities; (Paragraph 56)
- seek to improve accommodation for pupils with special educational needs; (Paragraph 49)
- improve time-keeping so that lessons do not over-run. (Paragraphs 22, 103)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	80	10	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	176
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	27

Special educational needs

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	64

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	39	27	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	34	36
	Girls	24	25	24
	Total	60	59	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (91)	90 (86)	92 (74)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	35	33
	Girls	24	25	20
	Total	60	60	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (91)	91 (80)	80 (91)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	128
Any other minority ethnic group	10

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	89

Financial information

Financial year	1999 / 2000
	£
Total income	331,299
Total expenditure	325,802
Expenditure per pupil	1,780
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,809
Balance carried forward to next year	45,306

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	176
Number of questionnaires returned	46

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	35	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	61	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	39	13	0	0
The teaching is good.	65	35	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	13	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	39	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	41	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	63	37	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	41	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	37	7	2	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Children in the reception classes follow a varied curriculum in which they show obvious enjoyment. The teaching, which is always good, is having a positive impact on children's learning.
60. Many children begin school with poor skills, particularly in speaking and listening and in personal and social development. This is confirmed by initial assessments carried out by the school. As a result of consistently good teaching, all children make good progress, and by the time they enter Year 1 the majority are likely to have attained the Early Learning Goals except in communication, language and literacy. This is similar to the situation at the time of the previous inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Many children enter the reception classes with immature personal and social skills. By the time they move into Year 1 most are likely to achieve the learning goals in this area. This shows good progress and reflects the skilful teaching of the staff. Children are continually encouraged to feel that they can do well, for example through 'circle time' sessions when they are encouraged to say 'what they are good at'.
62. In both classes, the children have good relationships with each other and the staff. They share equipment and show concern for each other. Children are becoming aware of acceptable standards of behaviour, as for example when two girls reminded each other that they must not throw sand. Children are helped to be considerate to each other, although in the outside classroom the staff need constantly to remind them to move about carefully as there is so little space. Children are keen to learn and are generally very involved in activities, for example when discussing photographs of themselves as babies and rolling out 'play dough' to make hand shapes. However, they can become restless when expected to sit for long periods. All the adults provide good role models, treating each other and the children consistently with courtesy and respect. They help children to understand about caring for each other through their curriculum work, as in a story about looking after someone who is ill. Staff encourage children to become independent by helping to tidy up, getting changed for physical education and taking the register to the office, but at times opportunities are missed, such as helping at snack time.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Many children enter the reception classes with poor communication, language and literacy skills, particularly in the areas of speaking and listening. Therefore, although all children, including those with English as an additional language, make good progress because of the good teaching, many are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the beginning of Year 1. Children in both classes enjoy listening to stories. Most are competent at handling books, know that print carries meaning and can recognise and name the main characters in familiar books. The classrooms are set up as rich reading environments with attractive displays and access to a wide variety of books. Good use is made of student teachers and other adults to enable children to make regular use of the school library. Many children are desperate to share books with an adult and further opportunities need to be developed to ensure that this happens regularly to encourage their development as readers.

64. Through good, carefully structured direct teaching and the use of a published interactive scheme, many children have gained knowledge of some initial sounds. They are linking them appropriately to letters, and write them using correct formation. However, some elements of literacy sessions involve children sitting for overly long periods, becoming restless and inattentive. In role-play situations, such as the class 'hospital', children enjoy dressing up as doctors and nurses and looking after the dolls. However, their expressive language is limited with many children only using simple phrases. Many find it difficult to talk about what they are doing and to use language to clarify thinking. It is the effective support from staff that extends their play. Although there are suitable opportunities for children to write in different situations, such in the 'hospital', children's take-up is limited as they lack the confidence to 'have a go' and see themselves as writers.

Mathematical development

65. Many children have limited previous mathematical experience, but during the reception year through the good teaching, they are making good progress and are likely to reach the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. Teachers make good use of practical activities to support this area of learning. For example, as part of work on 'longer' and 'shorter', children use different length bandages in the hospital. They line people up in queues at the bus stop as part of small world play. Many children can count reliably to ten and recognise numerals 1 to 9. They recognise and recreate simple patterns. They are beginning to use simple language to describe length, but few children are using everyday words to describe position. Good use is made of focused teaching sessions. For example, when talking about 'long' and 'short' the teacher encouraged children to predict the outcome and then to find ways to check. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to practise problem-solving skills in practical everyday situations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Children enter the reception classes with a very basic general knowledge. The staff carefully build upon and extend this knowledge during the year, meaning that most children are likely to have achieved the Early Learning Goals on entry to Year 1. Many children can recognise and compare body parts and draw some of them. They can record the planting of a seed and talk about what it needs in order to grow. Children understand that there are different sources of light such as a torch, candle and an electric light. Imaginative, stimulating displays including stuffed models of wild creatures such as an owl and a fox encourage the children to observe closely and find out about living things. The caretaker taking a moment to show a small group of children frogspawn from the school pond let them experience the magic of nature first hand.
67. Some children are beginning to question why things happen and how things work, as when a boy explained that he needed to put round wheels on his construction model of an ambulance 'so that it will go'. Adults support children well in investigating their surroundings and encourage them to think things through for themselves, for example a student teacher talking to a small group of children about a 'fever scan' thermometer. By looking at and discussing photographs of themselves and the staff as babies, and how they are now, teachers are helping children to develop a sense of history and to understand about changes over time. In both classes, children use appropriately tools such as scissors, drawing implements and rolling pins, but teachers do not provide enough regular opportunities for them to select and use such

resources in an imaginative way. Teachers use information and communication technology suitably to support the curriculum, for example a science program on the computer for making up faces and a listening centre for taped music and stories. When working with the computer, some children are developing good mouse control.

Physical development

68. Children's physical skills are developing in line with expectations and they are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area. In physical education sessions they move with confidence and co-ordination, moving from space to space and avoiding each other. They are confident on the apparatus, enthusiastically jumping off boxes and moving along benches and planks on different parts of their bodies such as feet and stomachs. Teaching is good in these sessions, with children being challenged to refine their movements and hold a position. Outdoor learning opportunities are limited as the classes have no fenced area, but staff work hard to ensure that children have the chance to use wheeled toys and small equipment such as balls outside regularly. In the classroom, teachers provide suitable opportunities for children to use paintbrushes, pencils, crayons, scissors and rolling pins to encourage development of hand and finger control.

Creative development

69. Teaching is good and effective in encouraging good progress. Children benefit greatly from the sensitive, focused support, and most children are likely to achieve the goals set for the end of the year. In role play, many children need to be helped, by being given ideas, to act out scenarios such as in the hospital, taking messages on the phone, testing a baby's pulse. Children benefit from the opportunity to continue their role play outside when wheeled vehicles, roadways and traffic signs are added to extend the play.
70. In music, children enjoy the experience of playing a variety of musical instruments. Many can maintain a steady beat using their fingers and they try hard to keep in time to a piece of recorded music, enjoying the challenge. Most children can play quietly on request and a few are confident enough to stand up and play individually. The children in the outside classroom have difficulty playing their instruments, as there is insufficient room for them to move their arms freely. Although children print, paint and draw appropriately, as part of their topic work, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for children to explore colour, texture and form in an imaginative way.

ENGLISH

71. In reading and writing, results in National Curriculum testing for seven-year-olds in 2000 reached the national average, and were the same as those in similar schools. However, the proportion gaining the higher level was lower than the average found nationally. This is explained by the low standards in language, literacy and communication found when the children enter school. Over the last four years, the school's results have improved, but not at a steady rate. Achievement in speaking and listening is typical of what is expected for seven-year-olds. Inspection findings show that standards in the current Year 2 classes are close to the national average in writing, but below in reading. Generally, this group of pupils is not as proficient as last year, or next year, at reading. This disparity has to do with the general skill level of present Year 2 pupils, and mirrors the unsteady rate of improvement seen over previous years. However, these pupils are maintaining standards in writing due to the focused teaching and guided writing strategies used by the school.

72. Standards overall in English, at the end of Year 2, are close to those generally expected for the age group. This is good progress when compared to attainment on entry to the school. This is because teaching is consistently good throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, enabling pupils' skills to develop well. Careful analysis and intervention, focusing on problem areas in writing and spelling, have begun to improve pupils' strategies. Pupils with special educational needs and the more able pupils make good progress because the work set for these groups is suitably challenging for their differing abilities.
73. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language, express themselves appropriately and generally listen well to their teachers and to one another. They test out and increase their vocabulary of everyday words. They use technical language well because teachers use it with them and they become very familiar with terms such as 'end clusters' and 'high frequency words'. In one class, for instance, pupils were practising and revising letter strings, using 'str', 'spl' and 'spr'. They found a great many appropriate 'str' words with only two inappropriate. Another class were equally effective using their growing vocabulary because the teacher found novel and interesting ways to challenge and motivate them. Throughout the key stage, pupils develop an increasing ability to discuss and express what they know and feel because teachers find appropriate opportunities for such interactions.
74. Achievement in reading is below what is expected for seven-year-olds. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the key stage but many do not practise enough at home. The school has had an appropriate and effective policy of boosting writing in recent times, but it has resulted in fewer opportunities for individual reading practice. Pupils read a range of texts and about two thirds are fairly independent and accurate with familiar words. Teachers are planning well to ensure that they develop a good range of phonic and contextual strategies in order to tackle more difficult or unfamiliar words. Some pupils do not fully understand the meanings of the text, limiting their expression when reading. Library skills are developing appropriately. Pupils know where and how to find books for information, and how to use a contents or index page to find quickly what they need to know.
75. By the end of the key stage, pupils' achievements in writing are close to those expected for the age group. They progress well from a low starting point when they first come to school to copy writing, simple words or sentences, to stories, poems, letters, lists and accounts. At the time of the last inspection, pupils did not write for enough different purposes, but that has now been addressed and a full range of opportunities is used. They report factual information well in other subjects besides English, such as history, religious education and science. Some make a glossary and try to use interesting vocabulary, chosen for its effect on the reader, for example in their poetry. However, they still find punctuation and spelling difficult, despite the good, steady teaching, which takes place to help them improve. Handwriting is generally neat and well formed in Year 2. Letter formation is usually regular and legible, but a significant minority of pupils still cannot read back their own writing, for sense or spelling. Pupils take a pride in their presentation and the books are well cared for. They write unaided, at regular intervals, and make discernible improvements. The teachers correct this work but no level is given to it and pupils do not know if, what and how to improve. This lack of target setting hinders pupils from understanding their own learning and how to make their work better, in order to reach higher levels. Pupils of all abilities use the computer to write, but lack of equipment means that opportunities are not frequent enough. During group work sessions they have a considerable amount of help from adults, so that they can get on without a

fuss. However, they are able to work independently, using word banks, for example.

76. The quality of teaching is consistently good, enabling all pupils to learn well. Activities are well matched to the needs of the pupils, including in ability groups and weekly sessions in sets in Year 2. Teachers have a caring and positive rapport with their pupils and use humour well to foster good relationships. They have a good grasp of how pupils need to learn basic skills and devise interesting ways to practise. For example, they played a 'hang-man-type' game with magnetic letters in a Year 2 class and the pupils were bursting to answer, completely engrossed and concentrating very well. Good, challenging, purposeful activities ensure that pupils are thoughtful and build well on prior knowledge and understanding. This was evident in the lesson about a missing Granny when pupils used last week's work to form this week's poster. 'Would Granny being a good cook help us to find her if she was lost?' really made pupils aware of the quality of information they needed to record. All teachers use questioning well to include all groups of pupils, from the least to the most able. Boys were never allowed to dominate the oral sessions. However, work planned takes account of boys' learning patterns, and activities were often changed to hold attention. This good pace helps behaviour management because pupils know what is expected and there are times for quick-fire questions and times for reflection.
77. The co-ordination of the subject is very well managed and the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well. The subject leader knows where the next steps should take the school and staff have already modified the structure to put word work higher on the agenda to raise standards in spelling and writing. Whilst this is proving successful, there is a danger of too much emphasis on guided writing to the detriment of reading, especially to give more opportunities to practise where pupils do not do so often enough at home. Good, clear analysis of assessments enables the school to keep on track towards its targets and careful monitoring has ensured that teaching and learning are well focused.
78. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has worked hard to eliminate the negative aspects of the provision for English. Teaching is much improved; writing standards and the range of opportunities have been improved; pupils with special educational needs are well supported in classes and when withdrawn; and tasks are more challenging for all ability groups. Whilst reading is not quite so good and spelling and punctuation are still a cause for some concern, progress is good overall throughout the key stage. The school has a clear commitment to succeed in its aim to make pupils as good as they can be, by the time they leave the school.

MATHEMATICS

79. At the end of Key Stage 1, in Year 2, many pupils are working at satisfactory and sometimes challenging levels in mathematics. However, because about one fifth are working at a lower level than is to be expected for their age, standards overall are below national expectations. These findings differ from the good results in national testing in 2000 because, although both groups contain a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs, just over one third, this year there are fewer pupils working at higher levels. Inspection findings reflect the school's targets for testing in 2001 which, despite being lower than last year, are challenging for the year group concerned. Last year's good scores are the results of intensive staff training and rigorous implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In the light of the high proportion of pupils with special needs, they reflect particularly good improvement over the three previous years when results were consistently low.
80. Pupils with special educational needs are enabled to make good progress in their learning by effective small-group work, some of which takes place outside the classroom with the specialist teacher. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged well in class groups and also through weekly sessions in ability sets in Year 1.
81. Most pupils in Year 2 add and subtract numbers to ten. Many are gaining a secure understanding of the value of each numeral in a two-digit number. They are beginning to understand how to add two two-digit numbers together and record the stages of the calculation on paper. Some higher-attaining pupils combine the numbers mentally and explain how they arrive at the answer. In Year 1, pupils make reasonable estimates of numbers of objects before counting accurately. They order numbers to 20 practically and understand first to tenth.
82. Pupils use numeracy skills satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects, for example ages and dates of old toys in history, counting in music and country dancing, and sorting in science. They use measuring skills in design and technology. They use information and communication technology to practise developing skills, for example ordinal numbers in Year 1, and make graphs and pie charts.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good, a substantial improvement since the last inspection when half the lessons seen were judged less than satisfactory. The reduced number of activities is a particular improvement, and teachers are clear about what they expect pupils to learn in lessons. Strengths in the teaching, which promote good learning effectively, lie in its consistency, its emphasis on practical understanding, and the positive management of behaviour. In addition, the high level of support enables almost all groups to work directly with an adult - a further positive factor in promoting understanding. As a result, pupils work purposefully and remain on task. Teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve, including for behaviour, and set challenging tasks, suitable for different ability groups. However, evidence from samples of work indicates less challenge in shape and measurement activities. Teachers' structured questioning stimulates pupils' thinking or prompts recall of previous learning, and pupils are keen to answer. Teachers emphasise new vocabulary clearly, but opportunities are sometimes missed to invite pupils to explain their mathematical working. They model new strategies clearly, as in Year 2 when introducing partitioning, and evaluate pupils' response to tasks, amending future lessons appropriately. They make good use of games to motivate learning, sometimes with particular success, as with the robot in Year 1. Lessons are well structured, objectives are shared with pupils and tasks clearly explained. Plenary

sessions are generally used to good effect to extend learning. Teachers use well the information gained from systematic assessment arrangements to shape future lessons. They set half-termly targets for each group but do not make it clear enough to pupils themselves what they need to do to improve. The good homework arrangements include regular mathematics tasks to support learning in class.

84. Despite being new to the role, the subject leader has a good understanding of the needs of the subject as identified clearly in the action plan. Regular moderation of particular aspects of the mathematics programme assists teachers in accurate judgements about pupils' attainment and also provides a focus for monitoring. The excellent after-school maths club and successful Family Numeracy Group enhance learning in mathematics very well. These activities provide very good opportunities for parents and carers to become involved and are clearly enjoyed by all parents and children alike.

SCIENCE

85. Standards in science are satisfactory. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. However, there was a dip in the results for 2000 when the number of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was well below the national average. The school believes that this was due to inexperienced temporary staff in post at the time. The overall trend appears to be upwards with results predicted to improve in 2001.
86. In Year 1, pupils look at how humans grow and change from babies to children and on to adulthood. Most understand that grown-ups stop growing in height but that hair and nails continue to grow. They can explain some of the differences between a baby and a teenager. Pupils are fascinated by childhood photographs brought in by the teacher and engage in a lively, stimulating discussion on 'changes'. In Year 2, pupils sort food into the four main types. Pupils draw pictures of food into categories on a wheel. Higher-attaining pupils sort onto a food 'pyramid' and explain which food types the body needs more of. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs cut out pictures of food and sort them with assistance. Information and communication technology is used to support pupil's scientific learning, for example a computer-generated weather chart in Year 1.
87. Teaching and learning are always at least satisfactory. Often they are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and employ a variety of teaching techniques to facilitate learning. Introductions to lessons are concise. Explanations are clear and well illustrated by resources such as photographs and real food. Teachers make good use of demonstration to clarify teaching points, for example by practically comparing the heights of a child and a young person on work experience to make differences clear. Behaviour management is positive and all staff are consistent in its implementation. These strategies are generally quickly effective; however, occasionally the time needed to settle and focus a very small minority of pupils detracts from the good teaching and learning. Support staff work well with the teachers, encouraging the learning of groups and individuals as appropriate. Analysis of pupils' work shows that they make consistent progress and are covering the full requirements of the National Curriculum in science. Through experiments such as rolling cars down a ramp, the school has successfully begun increasing the oldest pupils' understanding of what constitutes a fair test. This was seen as a weakness in the last inspection.
88. Pupils are positive about science, they are interested and when questioned, for example about their favourite food, are keen to respond. Pupils enjoy the range of

activities provided which are well matched to their abilities, thus extending thinking. Behaviour is good, particularly during group activities.

89. Co-ordination of the subject is good. A draft scheme of work linked to the topics has been written. The school is aware that it will need to be monitored to ensure that overlaps of work do not occur. Assessment is carried out well informally, through questioning and through a regular programme of assessment tasks. The results are used well to influence future planning for learning. Resources are sufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

90. The quality of the work samples seen, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are equivalent to those nationally expected for seven-year-olds, by the end of Year 2. The attainment was found to be below national expectations at the time of the last inspection and so this improvement in standards is good. Although no direct teaching was seen during the inspection, pupils develop skills and express ideas creatively in response to implied good teaching, and the use of a variety of tools and materials. For example, they paint sensitively, using dissimilar brushes of hogs hair or sable, to produce different strokes when interpreting Chinese cherry blossom. They refined their technique through practice before using it to decorate a fan and a parasol. They considered which pieces should be used for display and discussed why. The resulting very attractive displays give them encouragement and also recognise their achievements.
91. Younger pupils mix colours, using their hands, to make green from blue and yellow, for instance. They use wax-resist and a variety of printing methods to decorate giant Easter eggs. Some very good pattern work was based on Mehndi from Indian culture. Throughout the key stage, there is a good development of the awareness of colour and pattern, starting with Aboriginal-style work in the Foundation Stage.
92. Pupils make three-dimensional pieces and pay attention to design features, for example making a bowl suitable for holding a candle and then decorating it. Some pupils made models of a hedgehog and considered the texture of spines. There are opportunities to draw from life using natural objects, people and buildings. Groups of pupils have completed colour palettes of natural things found on a visit to the field centre. However, they do not keep individual collections, sketchbooks or a record of techniques they have learned. Printing work shows good progression and takes many forms including string, objects, fingers and bubbles. Pupils in Year 2 have produced very sensitive flowers and blossom using fruit and vegetables. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are capable of discussing what they like and do not like about it.
93. The main feature of the improvements, which have taken place, is the systematic way in which teacher-expertise has been enhanced. The co-ordinator was new at the time of the last inspection and she has been very effective in helping the staff to learn new techniques and develop their ideas. The process, which the school has been through to improve, is exemplary and is having a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The pupils are shown examples and artefacts from a well-chosen range of cultures: Aboriginal, Indian and Chinese. This widens their perspective, feeds their imagination and helps them to appreciate the contribution that different cultures make to the society in which they live. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of what the school needs to do, as the next step, and this will include pupils keeping a record of that they have done or found as well as teachers planning more detailed

steps in learning skills, which build to a final project.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Standards are satisfactory throughout the school. They are better now than in 1997 when the school was last inspected. The issue raised then of improving the teaching of designing has been addressed. Pupils are now demonstrating the ability to produce progressively more complex design work, as shown in plans for new playground equipment in Year 1 and for Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory in Year 2.
95. Throughout the school, pupils learn a wide range of skills, for example for assembling, joining, and combining materials. Through systematic teaching, they are competent in the use of a range of different tools and techniques. All classes have a display of different fixings and materials, which help pupils make informed choices. Many of the necessary skills are successfully introduced through topic work. For example, pupils in Year 1 construct a working pulley system between the lighthouse and the cottage from the story of 'The Lighthouse Keepers Lunch', and design and make Christmas cards. In Year 2, pupils design and make a chocolate machine with a conveyor belt system for Willy Wonka. Higher-attaining pupils have good ideas and draw designs that reflect this. Pupils list some of the tools they will need and their purpose, for example a saw for the wooden parts.
96. Teaching and learning in design and technology are good. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to achieve, understand what they need to do and what they will learn. They make good use of whole class discussion to extend pupils' thinking. For example, a Year 2 class built up a resource list, classifying items and exploring alternative materials for a specific purpose such as plastic rather than glass. Pupils enjoy the challenge of designing and making. They are keen to contribute ideas and work co-operatively as groups. Year 2 pupils use appropriate technical language such as building, joining and fixing.
97. Homework is used to support classroom activities and is appropriate to the children, for example in Year 2, collecting the materials listed for the models. Parents, who have been given training, provide good support with a range of food technology activities, which further extend pupil's experience. Good use is made of adults within the community to inspire pupils in this subject, for example a local headteacher demonstrating his handmade moving wooden toys. Participation in an annual 'county challenge' for all school age pupils, sponsored and judged by business, has provided a superb focus in this subject both for staff and for pupils and has greatly contributed to the rise in standards.
98. The subject is well co-ordinated. The scheme of work is now securely in place and its use is ensuring continuity and progression. The school knows the policy needs reviewing and has scheduled this for next term. Basic resources are in place, but there is a shortage of some tools following a burglary, limiting practical work in the short term, pending replacements.

GEOGRAPHY

99. From the two lessons seen, both in Year 1, and looking at samples of pupils' work across the school, indications are that standards in geography are in line with what is to be expected, as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to use skills of geographical enquiry to make appropriate deductions about holiday suitcase items and possible destinations. They have a simple understanding of

clothing and equipment requirements for hot and cold places. Evidence also shows further appropriate learning in Year 1 about other places, through a visit to Gloucester docks and canal. In Year 2, pupils' work shows suitable early fieldwork skills in their plans of the school playground and routes from home to school. They learn about basic physical features such as valleys and hills, features of seaside, town and country, and talk about reasons for the location of places. They show some understanding of pollution. Across the key stage, pupils use effectively their developing writing skills to support learning in geography. They use information and communication technology to support learning in geography, for example making weather charts linked to work at home.

100. From lessons seen, work samples and planning, indications are that teaching and learning are good. Through good quality questioning, teachers encourage pupils' discussion about different places, what might be needed and why. Pupils are keen to contribute, using their own experiences. Resources are well prepared and presented in a lively way to stimulate pupils' interest and curiosity. Strategies include a game approach, which is used effectively to encourage pupils to recall learning from the previous lesson. All pupils, especially those with special educational needs and those withdrawn for short periods for extra literacy, are integrated well. A strength of the teaching lies in teachers' consistently positive behaviour strategies which successfully ensure that pupils are well behaved and remain on task, including those with identified difficulties. An overall strength is the provision of a wide range of direct experiences for pupils, including using the school grounds and locality, resources, visits and visitors. Multi-cultural artefacts from a range of different countries are used to good effect to enhance and extend pupils' learning about other places. However, because geography is mainly taught in blocks as part of half-termly topics, there are times when little geography is taught, for example in the spring term for Year 2. Opportunities are missed during these times to cover 'stand-alone' aspects, such as the development of skills, to maintain the pace of pupils' learning in the subject. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural and social development, for example through its aims to understand and respect how other people live, clearly evident in displays and fund-raising events.
101. The experienced subject leader has a clear understanding of its needs and development. Systematic assessment procedures suitably inform future planning. Since the previous inspection, the place of geography in the curriculum has been maintained well.

HISTORY

102. Standards in history are appropriate for the pupils' ages, maintaining the position at the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 show awareness of the past through the collection of old toys from their families, giving simple reasons about why they are old. They show an emerging sense of personal chronology as they distinguish between child, teenager and grown-up. They use everyday words to talk about the past. In Year 2, pupils find out about the past through looking at photographs, artefacts and pictures. They compare old and modern equivalents, such as worktables in school now and desks when the school was built, paper now for writing and slates previously. They are motivated effectively by a collection of personal items, and talk in an extended way about what they reveal about the person they belong to. For homework, some pupils interview grandparents about their childhoods. Pupils in both year groups make good use of speaking and listening skills, and also developing writing skills, to support learning in the subject.

103. The quality of teaching and learning in history is good overall. Sometimes it is very good when objects particularly fascinate pupils and relationships with the teacher are very good. Overall, artefacts are used well to enliven the past and stimulate pupils' curiosity and sense of enquiry. As a result, pupils are interested and become involved. They question effectively to draw out pupils' thinking and ideas and encourage them to make connections between objects, for example comparing relative ages. Positive behaviour strategies ensure that pupils almost always settle and behave well and conform to agreed classroom codes, including pupils with identified difficulties. On occasion, however, when the previous lesson over-runs, pupils are tired and restless, teaching is rushed and learning in this subject is consequently hindered. History makes a good contribution to personal development through teachers' sensitive handling of special objects and the way they clearly value what pupils have to say.
104. The subject leader has a secure understanding of the needs and development of the subject, including imminent plans to monitor teaching and learning. The curriculum is appropriate and systematic assessment arrangements are in place. Visits and visitors enhance learning about the past, as well as museum artefacts and those brought from home. The Edwardian school building is used to good effect. Parents are clearly interested and involved. They make good contributions, as do grandparents as part of the Grandparents topic in Year 2. Evidence shows the school's appreciation of their support through the Annual Grandparents' Party.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

105. Provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly since the last inspection. As a result, pupils have made good progress and now achieve the nationally expected standards for seven-year-olds. The improvements have resulted from a careful analysis of the school's practice and the identification of the subject as a priority area for development, together with effective leadership from the co-ordinator and the willingness of staff to change and improve their own skills and practice.
106. By the end of the key stage, pupils produce graphs and pie charts using data collected about their pocket money. As yet, they are unable to say which type of chart best shows their results. They have also kept a diary of weather over a period of time from observations made for homework. Good use of computers is made everywhere for labels and borders, where pupils change the size and type of fonts. The networking facility and imminent arrival of email have necessitated pupils learning how to log on and off the system. One class made a very good set of instructions for shut down, using skills learned in a literacy session, to test out whether they knew all the steps. They had only missed one dialogue box at the end. The teacher took every opportunity to show them short cuts and new ways as they tried out their list. This success clearly gave the pupils confidence and boosted self-esteem because they had worked it out for themselves, with judicious help from their teacher. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were unable to use the computers alone but now the youngest children have dexterity and the ability to navigate the various programs on offer. This means that the skill level is rising all the time as pupils go through the school.
107. Pupils show an increasing awareness of when it is more effective to use a computer to produce printed text. But, as yet, they do not have enough opportunity to consolidate their word-processing skills or to use information and communication technology as a really effective tool for editing and improving writing, because there

are not enough computers. Word processing shows clear development from writing personal names, annotating a drawing, to factual writing. Pupils also use technology to control a Roamer robot and practise 'people logo', where a person moves according to instructions given. Software used also supports subjects such as mathematics. For example, pupils used a program called 'Whale of a Tale' to support the work they were doing about ordinal numbers. They were fascinated by the facts, the program and the mathematics they were doing. They also have good opportunities to learn about technology when using tape-recorders or listening centres. On occasions, teachers use television very effectively for an end-of-lesson session to consolidate work on phonics.

108. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' confidence and competence are much improved since the time of the last inspection through a rigorous process of staff training. The subject leader is now a trainer herself in the government's scheme, and staff have completed the first section. As a result, understanding, confidence and use of information and communication technology have improved, so that the staff have the skills required to teach the pupils. They demonstrate programs effectively to the whole class and provide opportunities for pupils to practise. The quality of learning in this subject is good, particularly when pupils have the opportunity for hands-on experience. Pupils enjoy using the computers and trying out new skills.
109. The subject leader manages the subject very well and receives good support from the headteacher and governors, and willing co-operation from all members of staff. A folder of work undertaken shows the involvement and assistance given to other staff. They are now more confident to make good use of information and communication technology for other purposes, such as preparing work for pupils, improving worksheets, and to enhance displays, as with the sensitive use of Aboriginal figures dancing around the border of the pupils' work. The school's resources have improved significantly over the last two years, and all pupils have access to a well-specified computer and other peripherals. However, the number of computers that are available still requires very careful management to ensure that all pupils have sufficient opportunity to learn information and communication technology skills.

MUSIC

110. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach standards that are expected for the age group, in all aspects of the subject. They sing well, in tune and with good intonation, showing a good sense of the mood, for example in assembly times. They also sing with a good sense of performance as they practise hymns. Pupils develop musical notation appropriately, through the key stage, from playing from symbols the teacher has devised to playing their own music from their own notation. Although no lessons of composition were seen during the inspection, discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoyed their lessons playing the instruments and making their own sounds and patterns. Here, too, they had a good sense of performance and decided that 'instruments can make the difference'. Their personal development was enhanced by the responsibility they were given to act as conductors of their groups as they made a fair copy of the group piece and led the performance. The pieces had been recorded but pupils were not aware of any discussions, afterwards, to decide what was good or not so good. This means that valuable opportunities are lost for pupils to consider how they can improve what they do.

111. Pupils show very good self-control as they play untuned percussion, taking turns to play their instruments, starting and stopping the playing according to appropriate signals from the conductor. They play with a good sense of beat and rhythm. The responsible attitudes to playing and to the instruments themselves are linked to the good, positive teaching that gives pupils opportunities to experiment and to develop the significance of playing as part of a group. This also occurs in the extra-curricular recorder club, where pupils watch and copy the teacher's technique and phrases. Pupils' playing position is hindered through the lack of music stands to hold the music correctly.
112. Pupils' listening skills are developing well. Teachers choose interesting music for them to evaluate. This forms part of a comparative study of forties, fifties and sixties eras and how music has changed to become what they know now. This link with past times is very effective because they have discussed it with parents and grandparents too. They listen intently to the 'big band' sound of Glenn Miller and the 'rock-'n-roll' of Buddy Holly and form very strong opinions, which they articulate very well. They know which they prefer and why (most like Glen Miller best). They pick out the various instruments to make comparisons. They clearly understand that different feelings can be evoked by different music. The quality of discussion is good and includes times to reflect on feelings.
113. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has good ideas of where the subject needs to improve next and has helped staff to become more aware of their own capabilities. The quality of the in-service training she has done with them is demonstrated by the improvement in the overall quality of teaching. In the previous report, teaching was satisfactory but this inspection found it to be never less than good. Teachers work confidently with their classes, questioning pupils effectively, and pupils respond well by listening and concentrating. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are more able develop the self-confidence that comes with feelings of success in music and this helps many pupils to have a more positive attitude to school life. They said they liked it and the feelings they had listening and playing. Resources are generally good. However, the range and quantity of tuned instruments is insufficient to allow pupils to consider pitch and tune in enough detail in their composition and playing.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

114. Standards in physical education are satisfactory throughout the school, as at the time of the last inspection. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. Teachers are aware of the more able pupils in their classes and encourage them to extend themselves fully whilst supporting and encouraging the less able, for example when jumping off a box in a Year 1 gymnastics lesson.
115. Pupils in Year 1 work enthusiastically and hard in gymnastics, developing their skills in transferring body weight. They jump from two feet to two feet and transfer weight from hands to feet during floor work. They are then able to develop these skills on the apparatus. In Year 2, pupils learn to develop skills of balance and make body shapes. They make a variety of interesting body shapes and then link them to form a sequence.
116. Teaching and learning are good overall. Sometimes teaching is very good with clear subject knowledge, a brisk pace and good progression within the lesson so that skills are developed and extended effectively. Teachers explain clearly and make good use of demonstration by themselves and pupils to illustrate what they are teaching. Teachers discuss with pupils about their hearts beating faster after exercise and

about the importance of stretching muscles carefully, making pupils aware of changes taking place to their bodies during exercise. The occasional lesson lacks pace which means that not as much is gained by the pupils.

117. Lessons are well organised and managed, making maximum use of time. Sometimes previous activities over-run, resulting in lessons becoming shortened, adversely affecting learning opportunities. Teachers use a good range of organisational strategies, for example playing a piece of 'Glenn Miller' music, challenging pupils to be ready before it finishes. Support assistants are well deployed so that pupils are able to have maximum interaction with adults, thus maximising their learning. Occasionally pupils get too close to each other on the apparatus and need to be reminded about safety. All staff use consistent and positive behaviour management so lessons are orderly and pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected. They respond well to this, remaining involved throughout the lessons, keen to contribute their ideas and trying their best.
118. The lessons taking place during the inspection were all gymnastics but during the year pupils participate in the full range of activities. Since the last inspection, dance has been a focus for development. Teachers' skills have been developed with work being based around a published audio resource. Staff are now supplementing this with other resources to further develop learning. Dance work gives pupils the opportunity to collaborate in groups and evaluate their performances, a weakness raised in the previous inspection. Dance is being promoted by Year 2 pupils' attendance at a local dance festival and a series of workshops organised for the summer term. Games provision has been enhanced by the acquisition of a large bag of small equipment. Staff have all been trained to use this specific equipment. The curriculum is very much enhanced by the wide range of out-of-school activities, including country dancing, football and tennis.
119. Co-ordination of the subject is good. Planning is monitored, lesson observations have been carried and teachers have regular discussions, continually striving to further improve learning. Regular assessment of skills, knowledge and understanding is used in the planning of future lessons. Resources are satisfactory but the school is aware that storage needs to be looked at as a matter of priority, to ensure that equipment is maintained in a good state and is accessible, but does not impede access to and from the building.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. In lessons observed and from looking at samples of pupils' work, it is clear that standards in religious education are securely in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 1 remember aspects of Bible stories, for example the miracle of the healing of the ten lepers. Evidence shows that they learn about basic aspects of Judaism through making collages of Menorah candles and writing poems about Hannukah. They gain a simple understanding of the symbolism of Christingles in the Christian faith. Pupils in Year 2 build well on previous learning about Judaism and make good gains about aspects of the synagogue, a Jewish home, and clothing. Some higher-attaining pupils begin to make links between different faiths and recognise similarities. Pupils' developing skills in writing, and also speaking and listening, make good contributions to learning in this subject.
121. The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is good. Sometimes it is very good when the teacher's subject knowledge is strong, and stimulates pupils very well to make connections with previous learning about other religions. Different faiths

represented in the classroom by pupils and a student teacher are included sensitively and to good effect to enhance learning. Other general strengths lie in the way teachers make the teaching relevant and practical. For example, one teacher provided bandages to enliven a dramatic story-telling of the ten lepers. The pupils became fully involved, tying bandages on 'poorly parts', and wriggling fingers, toes and noses. The teacher successfully captured interest and attention, and promoted learning in a relevant and effective way, encouraging pupils to reflect on the story and suggest things for which they might be thankful. Teachers build securely on pupils' previous learning and experiences, as when skilfully using pupils' own special things to lead into learning about things that are special to Jewish people. As a result, pupils handled a variety of artefacts with care, respect and a good level of interest. Teachers use a good range of positive behaviour strategies, which are almost always successful in maintaining attention and promoting settled behaviour, including for pupils with identified difficulties. The good level of classroom support contributes effectively to establishing a purposeful working atmosphere.

122. The well-informed subject leader has a secure understanding of the needs and future direction of religious education, including arrangements to monitor teaching. The appropriate curriculum is enhanced by visits, visitors, artefacts and also learning about festivals of different religious faiths such as Chinese New Year and Diwali, as well as major Christian festivals. Assemblies also make a good contribution through the telling of Bible stories, and saints' days are explained and celebrated. The school is very keen to include members of the school community from different faiths, as well as Christians, to become involved and share aspects of their customs and beliefs with pupils.