

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CALLOWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stroud

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115570

Headteacher: Mrs Mary McLearie

Reporting inspector: David Westall  
2414

Dates of inspection: 11 – 14 March 2002

Inspection number: 221328

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Barrowfield Road  
Farmhill  
Stroud  
Gloucestershire  
Postcode: GL5 4DG

Telephone number: 01453 762962

Fax number: 01453 753916

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Adrian Norton

Date of previous inspection: 7 February 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2414	David Westall	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? Equal opportunities How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	Attitudes, values and personal development
22840	Sarah Foulkes	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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Naunton  
Nr Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL54 3AS

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

There are 184 pupils on roll, aged from four to 11 years. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, and the percentage identified as having special educational needs is also below average. No pupils speak English as an additional language. On entry to the school, there is a broad spread in pupils' standards but, overall, they are average.

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

This is a much improved school which is well placed to improve further. Good leadership and management by the headteacher make a significant contribution to the school's achievements; and the staff have good teaching skills and are strongly committed. Pupils make good progress in their learning, including in English, mathematics and science, as a result of effective teaching. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are a credit to the school, and a good partnership has been established with parents. While there is work to be done to improve the work of subject co-ordinators and to raise standards in art and design, the school's strengths greatly outweigh its weaknesses. Overall, it provides good value for money.

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

- The leadership and management skills of the headteacher are good and she provides the school with a clear sense of direction.
- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards are also above average in design and technology and in religious education.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their starting points on entry.
- The school is a caring community where pupils' welfare is a high priority.
- Parents hold the school in high regard.

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

- The monitoring roles of most subject co-ordinators need further development.
- Standards are too low in art and design in the older half of the school.

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

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

Overall, the school has made good progress since its last inspection, in February 2000, when it had serious weaknesses due to ineffective leadership. There was a lack of clear direction for the school's work, with little strategic planning. In addition, some staff and many parents had lost confidence in the leadership of the school. The current headteacher, who was appointed soon after the last inspection, has worked effectively with staff, governors and parents to rectify all of these weaknesses.

The last report also identified the need for more able pupils to be given more challenging work, and for the monitoring roles of subject co-ordinators to be developed. More able pupils are now making better progress as a result of work which is generally well matched to their

learning needs. However, while a useful start has been made in developing the roles of co-ordinators, most still do not monitor their subjects with enough rigour.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	C	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	B	A	A	
Science	C	A	B	B	

The table show the results of the statutory tests in 2001 were in line with the national average in English, but were below the results of similar schools. Inspection findings show that the school has worked effectively to raise standards in the subject, which are now above average in Years 2 and 6. The test results in 2001 in mathematics were well above the national average and the results of similar schools, while the results in science were above the national average and the results of similar schools. Inspection findings show that current standards in both subjects are above national expectations, overall, including in Years 2 and 6.

Standards are also above average in design and technology and in religious education. In music and physical education, insufficient evidence was available to judge pupils' overall standards but they achieve well in singing, across the school, and in gymnastics in Year 6. In all other subjects, standards are average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn and to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good, throughout the school day.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form very constructive relationships with adults and with each other. They work together amicably on shared tasks and respect each other's opinions. They respond positively to opportunities they are given to take responsibility and to show initiative.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in nearly all lessons observed and was good, and occasionally very good, in over half of all classes.

In the reception class, the teaching is particularly effective in enabling children to make good progress in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical understanding. The teacher also fosters children's personal, social and emotional development well. Children respond positively to her enthusiastic teaching style and high expectations, thriving on the encouraging feedback they receive.

In Years 1 to 6, the teaching is good overall, in English, mathematics and science and enables pupils to make good progress in these subjects. Across the curriculum, teachers generally have secure subject knowledge. However, evidence suggests some need to increase their skills in teaching art and design.

Throughout the school, lessons are characterised by very good relationships between pupils and teachers, an orderly atmosphere in lessons, clear explanations of tasks and effective use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding. Pupils like and respect their teachers and it is obvious that these feelings are reciprocated. As a result, pupils are keen to meet their teachers' expectations, listen attentively and concentrate on their tasks.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a sound range of worthwhile learning opportunities for its pupils, and meets statutory requirements. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being implemented well and are having a beneficial effect on pupils' standards. The provision for pupils' artistic development needs improvement in the reception class and especially in Years 3 to 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for these pupils and they progress well, as a result.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development, while the provision for their spiritual and cultural development is sound.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community where pupils' welfare is a high priority. Teachers know their pupils well and generally assess

	their needs accurately.
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### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has good leadership and management skills and provides the school with a clear sense of direction. Her effective analytical skills, together with her high expectations, contribute significantly to the school's achievements. She develops teamwork among staff and promotes constructive relationships with parents. The deputy headteacher is also highly conscientious, works effectively with the headteacher and fulfils her role well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school benefits from a committed governing body which ensures that statutory requirements are fully met. The governors with particular responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs are all well informed, and the chair of governors visits regularly to keep abreast with the school's development. Appropriate committees are established and help to guide the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher uses a good range of effective monitoring strategies to check the school's performance, particularly in English and mathematics. The governors evaluate the results of statutory tests thoroughly, and some visit to observe teaching in literacy and numeracy. While subject co-ordinators are beginning to develop their roles, most need to monitor the quality of teaching and learning with more rigour.
The strategic use of resources	The school budget is analysed thoroughly and financial planning is appropriately linked to the priorities identified in school improvement plan. Funds accumulated in recent years have been used wisely in the current financial year to improve learning resources, accommodation and staffing.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The vast majority of parents believe that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is a good standard of teaching;</li> <li>• the school is well led and managed;</li> <li>• their children make good progress;</li> <li>• the staff are easy to talk to.</li> </ul>	<p>A minority would like more extra-curricular clubs.</p>

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views about the school. Findings also show that the school runs a good number of clubs for pupils through the year.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. On entry to reception, children's overall standards are broadly average. As a result of a strong and effective emphasis on the development of their language and mathematical skills in this class, they achieve well and their standards in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematics, are a little above average, overall, on entry to Year 1. They also make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. In other key areas of learning, pupils make sound progress overall and demonstrate standards which are broadly in line with those expected nationally at the beginning of Year 1.
2. The results of the Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) for pupils in their final year at the school, in 2001, were in line with the national average in English but were below the average results of similar schools. In mathematics, the results in 2001 in Year 6 were well above the national average and well above the results of similar schools. In science, the results in Year 6 were above the national average and above the results of similar schools. The upward trend in the school's overall results in Year 6 in recent years is above the national trend. Inspection findings are broadly consistent with the 2001 results, but are a little more favourable in English and a little less favourable in mathematics and science.
3. In English, pupils achieve well, across the school, as a result of effective teaching. Standards have improved, since last year, due to the rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress, the setting of well judged targets for all pupils in English and the provision of work which is better matched to the needs of the more able pupils. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and in reading and writing so that, by the age of seven, very few pupils fall below the expected standard for their age, and a significant minority exceed this standard. Overall, pupils' attainment is above average in English in Year 2. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 5, and often make very good progress in Year 6, where English teaching is particularly effective. As a consequence, overall standards in English are above average in Year 6 which is an improvement on the average standards evident in the 2001 SATs results. Most pupils in Year 6 have a well-developed vocabulary, explain things clearly, speak up confidently in large groups and read aloud fluently and expressively. However, although most pupils read well, their individual reading sometimes needs to be enriched with more challenging texts. Their understanding of different forms of writing is secure. For example, they can identify the characteristic features of historical narrative related to content, characterisation, language and style. Most can then successfully adopt the same narrative structure, style and features in their own writing when they develop a story-line suggested by some detail in the original text. Most pupils achieve at least sound standards for their age in handwriting, presentation, punctuation and spelling. The more able pupils demonstrate standards which are above, and sometimes well above, average in these 'secretarial' aspects of their writing.
4. In mathematics, pupils also achieve well, and their standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of counting on, partitioning and doubling when they share their strategies for solving number problems, involving two digit numbers, in their heads. In Years 5 and 6, pairs of pupils can generate and solve number problems using number lines and calculators

accurately; and the highest attaining pupils can find the difference between two numbers, in their heads, working to two decimal places.

5. In science, pupils make mainly good progress across the school. In Year 2, standards have improved since last year and are above average. In Year 6, although standards are not quite as high as in 2001, they are a little above average overall. Year 2 pupils make good progress when learning about forces, and are able to create simple electrical circuits. They are able to decide, from illustrations, whether circuits will function, and most are skilled at using scientific language when communicating their ideas. For example: "The electricity can't flow properly because there is not a complete circuit. You need to connect the crocodile clip to the other terminal on this battery to make it work". In Year 6, pupils understand that light travels in straight lines and can explain why the size of a shadow increases as an object moves closer to the light source. These pupils also achieve well when using keys to identify animals and plants in a systematic manner.
6. Pupils generally achieve well in design and technology, and their standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. In geography, history and information and communication technology, pupils make sound progress and demonstrate average standards in Years 2 and 6. However, while standards in art and design are satisfactory, overall, by Year 2, they are below average in Year 6. In music, insufficient lessons were observed to judge overall standards, but it is clear that pupils generally sing well. In the lessons observed in physical education, Year 2 pupils demonstrated average standards in dance, while Year 6 pupils achieved above average standards in gymnastics. In religious education, pupils make good progress, across the school, and most achieve standards which are above average by Year 6.
7. The school has raised standards in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and religious education, across the school, since the last inspection; and there is also evidence of improvement in physical education in Year 6. Standards have otherwise been maintained. However, the school has made insufficient progress in raising pupils' standards in art and design in Year 6, which were also below average when it was last inspected.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make mainly good progress in their learning, including in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in work related to the specific targets in the individual education plans. When account is taken of their starting points, their standards in Years 2 and 6 represent good achievement, overall. When the school was last inspected, the most able pupils were often making insufficient progress because they were insufficiently challenged by their tasks. The school has rectified this weakness. These pupils generally progress well and demonstrate standards which are above, and occasionally well above average.

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

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are keen to learn and usually follow every stage of a lesson eagerly. They listen to their teachers' instructions carefully and, with rare exceptions, they listen to one another. They concentrate during lessons, and they always try hard to apply what they have been taught. Most pupils are very well motivated indeed. They make the most of all lessons, and many take particular delight in lessons which are particularly challenging. For example, pupils leaving a very effective English lesson on the narrative structure of historical texts were heard to exclaim how good the lesson had been as they left the room. Many pupils confess to a preference for mathematics before all other subjects, particularly

older and higher attaining pupils. In addition to relishing academic work, many pupils are also enthusiastic participants in other activities available to them in school. For example, half the pupils between the ages of seven and 11 belong to the gym club, and many also participate in other sports and drama activities.

10. Pupils' behaviour is good. High standards of behaviour are the norm. With very rare exceptions, pupils take turns politely in discussion, can be trusted to work independently of their teachers when required to do so, and respond quickly to given signals, for example during physical education lessons. They move around the school in an orderly way, and they behave sensibly and fairly in the playground, observing others' need for space. When isolated incidents of bullying occur, it is the pupils themselves who report such misdemeanours, and they are entirely confident that any bullying will be dealt with swiftly by the school. No such incident occurred during inspection, and there were no signs whatsoever of oppressive behaviour of any kind. Pupils are helpful and polite, and they often have a very mature understanding for their ages of the difference between right and wrong. They enjoy religious education lessons and other lessons such as personal, social and health education (PSHE), where they learn about and discuss moral issues, and the impact of such lessons is evident in their own good behaviour. Very occasionally, in lessons where behaviour is not as well managed as it might be, a few pupils forget to wait their turn to answer a question and call out spontaneously, or take slightly longer than is necessary to respond to an instruction.
11. Relationships in the school are very good at all levels. Teachers provide positive role models through their own interaction with pupils, and these are reflected in pupils' consideration and support for others. They co-operate well over the use of resources, and they combine their efforts constructively to accomplish shared tasks. In religious education lessons, their contributions to discussions demonstrate the value pupils give to the principles of 'caring and sharing'; work on religious faiths such as Hinduism and Islam clearly shows the respect which pupils hold for cultures and beliefs that differ from their own. Demonstrating sensitivity and maturity beyond their years, many pupils readily draw parallels from religious teachings and their own experiences of life to formulate moral principles that will guide their own behaviour. Most pupils are very aware of the impact of their actions on others, and they behave accordingly. When pupils' achievements are recognised and rewarded in assemblies, the pupils in the audience are always warm in their applause, and when pupils with special educational needs make significant strides in their learning, their classmates' approval and pride are very evident. All pupils mix well together and there have been no racist incidents in the school. Pupils with disabilities are well integrated and supported by others.
12. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for routine jobs in class and for wider responsibilities in the school. For example, the senior members of the school council take their positions and responsibilities very seriously indeed. They know the limits of their authority and sphere of influence, but they try hard to represent the views and needs of pupils throughout the school fairly and energetically. They also take care to seek the views of other, quieter members of the council, before making any decisions. When given opportunities to use their initiative, pupils of all ages respond well, for example by organising activities to raise funds for charities or by painting murals in the courtyard area designated as a secure play area for reception children.
13. Attendance at the school is satisfactory, being in line with the national average. The level of unexplained absence is low and parents make appropriate requests for leave of absence for holidays in term time to be authorised. Registration procedures fully

meet requirements and the morning sessions are well used to provide a purposeful start to the day. Pupils are very punctual and sessions start promptly through the day.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all but one of the lessons observed and was good, and occasionally very good, in over half of all lessons.
15. In the reception class, the teaching is particularly effective in enabling children to make good progress in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. The teacher also fosters children's personal, social and emotional development well. Relationships between the teacher and children are very positive and this helps children to feel safe and secure from an early stage. Children respond well to her enthusiastic manner and high expectations, thriving on the positive feedback they receive. Good work habits have been established so children are able to work independently as the teacher supports small groups. The reception teacher plans conscientiously and the quality of her planning is mainly good, being appropriately based on national guidance. However, children would benefit from more work which provides the foundation for their historical understanding and the teacher needs to provide children with more opportunities to express themselves through a range of art activities, including drawing, painting, collage work and printing. Overall, however, reception children benefit from good teaching which enables them to make a good start at the school.
16. In English, in Years 1 to 6, the teaching is good, overall, and is never less than satisfactory. At its best, in Year 6, the teaching is intellectually challenging and enables pupils to work at the edge of their capabilities. Where the teaching is sound, in Years 3 and 5, teachers' own expertise in the subject is not quite secure enough for them to challenge pupils in this way, although their work is otherwise competent and enables pupils to achieve well in the development of routine skills. Since the last inspection, teachers have improved their assessment procedures in English, so that well judged targets are set for individuals and groups, and these enable them to achieve higher standards. In addition, teachers have focused on pupils' spelling and punctuation skills, to good effect. Strategies introduced to challenge the more able pupils have resulted in these pupils making better progress in English.
17. In mathematics, the teaching is mainly good across the school. A key strength is the secure planning and assessment structure which underpins the teaching; and, in Years 3 to 6, the setting arrangements help teachers to focus their teaching accurately. Teachers have mainly good subject knowledge and high expectations. The best mathematics lessons are challenging, move at a good pace and involve the direct teaching of small groups during the main part of the lesson. On occasions, however, teachers miss opportunities to model new methods of working to the class or groups when performing a more supervisory role or intervening with individual pupils.
18. In science, the teaching is mainly good and is otherwise sound. As a consequence, it enables pupils to make mostly good progress in the subject. When the school was last inspected, science teaching did not sufficiently challenge the more able pupils, but this is no longer the case. All teachers have secure subject knowledge, and ensure that scientific language is introduced and reinforced in lessons. Overall, teachers provide a good balance between work which promotes pupils' scientific knowledge and tasks which develop their investigative skills. However, sometimes

pupils in the older half of the school would benefit from more opportunities to devise and undertake their own investigations to test their ideas.

19. The quality of teaching is sound, overall, in information and communication technology and geography, and enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in these subjects. In the lessons observed in physical education and in religious education, teaching was mainly good. Insufficient lessons were observed to judge the quality of teaching in other subjects. However, evidence from pupils' completed work shows the teaching in history enables pupils to make sound progress while teaching in design and technology leads to pupils achieving well in the subject. In art and design, teachers in Years 3 to 6, in particular, would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and understanding, since pupils are making insufficient progress in this subject in the older half of the school. At present, key skills in art and design are not developed, progressively, as pupils move through the school, and teachers' expectations of pupils' potential standards need to be raised.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective and enables them to achieve standards which reflect their capabilities. Teachers are very aware of the range of needs presented by pupils in their classes and plan and teach accordingly. For example, they take care to involve pupils with special educational needs in all activities, and they value the contributions made by these pupils during discussions and during all class activities. In numeracy sessions, in particular, the grouping of pupils takes special account of different ability levels so that pupils with special educational needs benefit from work which is very well tailored to their specific learning requirements. In literacy sessions, group tasks are specially designed to build on the pupils' skills, and pupils with special educational needs also benefit from the focused attention of class teachers or of learning support workers. When the latter are involved, they are, like teachers, well informed about what the pupils are intended to do and to achieve. They are also very skilled in helping pupils to give of their best. Most importantly, perhaps, they play an important role in monitoring pupils' progress, a process which then serves to inform teachers when they next plan work for the pupils. Some pupils with special educational needs also benefit from short sessions when they are taught within small groups on work directly related to their individual education plans. These plans, drawn up by class teachers, sometimes in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), vary in terms of their quality and precision. While most targets are precise and achievable, some are too general and require improvement.
21. Across the school, lessons are characterised by very good relationships between pupils and teachers, an orderly atmosphere in lessons, clear explanations of tasks and effective use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding. Good use is usually made of homework to extend and reinforce what is learned in school. Basic skills are taught well and teachers are generally skilled at managing their classes. Teachers' lesson planning is mainly good, and clearly identifies what pupils should learn. Pupils like and respect their teachers and it is obvious that their feelings are reciprocated. As a result, pupils are keen to meet their teachers' expectations, listen attentively and concentrate well on their tasks.

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

22. Overall, the curriculum for children in the reception class is satisfactory and is particularly effective in developing children's personal, social and emotional skills and their early understanding of language and mathematics. A greater emphasis needs to

be placed on developing children's artistic and imaginative skills and their early understanding of the passing of time; and more resources are needed for their outdoor play. Overall, however, the reception curriculum provides a secure foundation for children's next stage of learning.

23. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad, balanced and relevant, and meets statutory requirements. Provision for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is good, and is an improvement since the last inspection. Across the school, the curriculum is securely based on national guidance for literacy, numeracy and most other subjects, and local guidance for religious education. However, provision for pupils' learning in art and design is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Long, medium and short-term planning for subjects is thorough and has been secured and enhanced through teachers planning together. Personal, social and health education is well promoted, and includes a satisfactory drugs education programme. The school now provides sex education, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There are a good number of extra-curricular activities on offer, including drama, recorders and various sports.
24. The school encourages community spirit and makes good use of offers of help; grandparents and friends of the school help regularly in classes and provide good role models for the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to think about their community through the donation of harvest gifts to the local elderly and by charity fund-raising. The vicar is a regular visitor to the school and pupils are asked to write contributions for the parish magazine. The local area is used satisfactorily as a resource in the curriculum, and pupils have recently visited the local church as part of their studies in religious education. Business links are less well developed.
25. The school has sound links with partner institutions. It provides accommodation for the local playgroup and there is close liaison on aspects of the curriculum for reception children. Pupils have a variety of opportunities to join with others in sporting, musical and drama activities, and staff benefit from occasional training sessions with teachers from other primary schools. There are close links with the feeder secondary school, and the oldest pupils make use of the specialist information and communication technology and science facilities at this school. The popular after-school gym club is also open to former pupils who are keen to maintain their links with Callowell.
26. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory and is mainly promoted through discussions in religious education, PSHE and assemblies, and through observations of the natural world. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong and all staff have high expectations of behaviour and work habits. These are reinforced through class rules and an effective rewards system. Pupils are actively encouraged to care for each other, to work and play together amicably, and to celebrate each other's successes. The school is also keen to gain the views of pupils and a school council has operated successfully since September 2001. A wide range of activities, across the curriculum, enables pupils to work in partnership and to support one another; and they are also given the chance to raise funds for different charities. Cultural development is satisfactory. Visits and visitors enhance the curriculum, for example in history, geography and religious education; and pupils can participate in local sporting and musical events and in the extra-curricular opportunities at school. These findings are similar to those at the time of the last inspection.



27. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to school clubs. Disabled access is provided to ensure that pupils can use the library and computer suite on the first floor. There is sound promotion, through religious education, displays and visitors to the school, of the multicultural diversity of society.
28. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy full access to the whole curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. Where necessary, pupils receive support in the form of special equipment and resources, as well as additional advice and support from specialist external agencies or individuals. In response to very specific individual needs, the school adapts its provision, for example by making it possible for pupils to work within a different age group or by making changes to accommodation. In a similar way, the organisation of teaching groups for mathematics represents an effective response to the needs of higher attaining pupils as well as those with special educational needs. When pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from class for specific support sessions, every effort is made by the school to ensure that their entitlement to the whole curriculum is not unduly prejudiced. In the case of very able pupils, teachers sometimes appropriately draw on content and concepts in the Programmes of Study designed for older pupils.

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

29. Callowell is a community where the importance of care and the fostering of high self-esteem underpin the good support that it provides for its pupils. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and relationships throughout the school are based on respect, encouragement and high expectations. The school has due regard for inclusion so that each child is valued and supported to enable full participation in all aspects of school life. Where necessary, adaptations are provided to allow disabled access to specialist teaching and resource areas on the upper floor. The good relationships fostered with parents means that they are prepared to share concerns or changes in circumstances with the staff. Pupils' progress is also regularly assessed and any change in performance is quickly identified. This combined knowledge ensures that staff are well briefed to provide sensitive, and well-focused support for pupils when necessary. Where appropriate, the school makes sound use of specialist support for pupils and is prepared to be flexible in order to ensure pupils' needs are met.
30. Arrangements for child protection are sound, with appropriate documentation being maintained. The need for training in awareness for all adults in the school has already been recognised and is planned in the near future. Pupils learn about strategies to ensure their personal safety, and checks are made on adults who may come into contact with pupils during the school day. The school makes appropriate plans for the education of children who are not being cared for by their natural parents. Pupils benefit from a well-planned programme for PSHE which includes the promotion of healthy eating and regular training in road safety. Sex education and awareness about drugs are appropriately taught. Each week pupils have the opportunity to discuss aspects relating to their personal development and feelings, and this helps them to articulate any worries and to develop positive attitudes to school.
31. The school is good at promoting high standards of behaviour. There is a consistency, across the school, in the behaviour expected and good practice in daily routines. Pupils are eager to earn merit marks for effort, achievement or particular acts of helpfulness, and are proud to receive certificates for this in weekly celebration assemblies. Good use is made of behaviour plans to help pupils to become more tolerant of each other; the expectation that pupils assess their own success in

meeting the targets set is good practice. Most children have attended the playgroup on site before starting school, so are familiar with the environment. Their ability to cope with school life is closely monitored, and the vast majority appropriately increase their attendance to full time after the first half term. Older pupils enjoy the opportunity to look after younger ones at playtimes and give them the confidence to talk about concerns either directly with adults or through the school council. Consequently, incidents of bullying are rare, quickly identified and dealt with effectively. There have been no exclusions.

32. The health and safety policy is implemented through regular site inspections by the governors and the caretaker, and risk assessments are undertaken. Pupils are regularly reminded about safe practice during lessons such as physical education. There are well-established procedures for medicines, accidents and emergencies and appropriate documentation is maintained. Fire drills are undertaken regularly and there is appropriate access to fire exits from all parts of the school. The investment in security fencing around the site has reduced the incidents of minor vandalism and provides a secure outdoor environment. The interior of the school has benefited from considerable refurbishment and is clean and tidy, and mostly attractively decorated.
33. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are mainly good, and the information gained has been used effectively to raise standards in English and mathematics. This is a strength in the school and is an improvement on the last inspection. Under the leadership of the headteacher, data from statutory and non-statutory national tests is collected from all year groups, and is used to set school and year group targets. Half-termly assessment reviews are also used to assess pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy, and the information gained is used to set and revise individual pupil targets. Discussions with pupils show that they understand their targets and know how well they are doing. In literacy, teachers have also worked hard to place all pupils on a professionally produced writing continuum so that their progress can be monitored in detail; and in numeracy, pupils are assessed and tracked against the key objectives in the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are also assessed as they complete units of work in science and the school is beginning to track their progress, across the school. In other areas of the curriculum, assessment procedures are still developing although teachers plan, assess and mark all work against the learning objectives for each lesson. There is a new assessment policy which includes sound guidance on marking. This will need to be monitored in practice to ensure that it is being implemented consistently.

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

34. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked effectively to improve the partnership with parents which had been identified as a cause for concern by the last inspection report. Their success is evident from the high regard which parents now have for the school and, in particular, for the leadership and management skills of the headteacher. There is an open and welcoming relationship with parents where concerns are shared and expectations are clear.
35. Parents have been kept fully informed about changes that the school planned to make, such as the introduction of mixed age classes for eight to 11 year olds. They have been invited to share in school celebrations and their help in smartening up the school buildings has given them a sense of shared commitment to improve. Teachers provide detailed information about what each year group will be studying; and information about the school and its activities is clear, friendly and

comprehensive. The attractive leaflet produced to promote the school also helps to foster parents' pride in Callowell.

36. Parents have regular opportunities, through the year, to talk about how well their children are getting on. Because children are organised by ability or in age groups for some subjects, care is taken to ensure that all teachers involved in teaching their children are available at consultation evenings. Annual written reports are particularly perceptive and specific about children's attainment, strengths and weaknesses and give clear indications about targets for improvements. Parents find the school staff easy to talk to and confidently use informal opportunities to talk about any concerns they may have.
37. For their part, parents are proud of the school and supportive of its activities. The vast majority provide good support at home for their children's learning. Some make a regular commitment to help in classes or accompany school trips; others share their skills with pupils in particular projects or curriculum areas. The flourishing Parents Association organises well-supported fund-raising activities for particular school initiatives or additional resources, and there are occasional self-help working parties to improve the fabric of the building. Parents with different religions or cultural backgrounds are invited to share their knowledge and customs with the pupils.
38. The school has established very positive links with the parents of children with special educational needs. The parents appreciate the school's efforts on behalf of their children and most attend, and contribute to, reviews of their children's progress. The school informs parents when their children's needs are first identified, and makes every effort to keep them informed of their children's progress and of any new targets that are set.

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

39. When the school was last inspected, in February 2000, the leadership and management provided by the headteacher constituted serious weaknesses. The headteacher was not effective in establishing a shared vision for the school's future, and the staff were frustrated by the lack of forward thinking. In addition, the inspection found there were many parents who felt uncomfortable about approaching the school to discuss issues of concern to them, and a significant number were unhappy about the way the school was led and managed.
40. Following the resignation of the last headteacher soon after the last inspection, the current headteacher became acting headteacher of Callowell, and was appointed to the permanent post at the school from January 2001. She has worked tremendously hard to provide the school with the leadership it required, and her achievements are impressive. She has quickly established a positive team spirit in the school, and is providing a clear sense of direction which is recognised and appreciated by all staff. She has a good range of strategies to monitor the school's performance, particularly in English and mathematics, and uses lesson observations, the scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' completed work, as well as the rigorous analysis of statutory and non-statutory tests, to identify strengths and areas for improvement. She has also been energetic in working with staff and governors to improve the school building and the learning resources, and there have been considerable improvements over a short period. Parents have quickly recognised the effective work of the 'new' headteacher and, in both the pre-inspection parents' meeting and in their questionnaire returns, registered their views that they believe the school is now well led and managed. Overall, the headteacher has good leadership and management

skills. Her strong commitment, energy and clear thinking contribute significantly to the school's achievements. The deputy headteacher is also highly conscientious, fulfills her role well, and works effectively with the headteacher to achieve school improvement.

41. The headteacher has worked effectively with staff and governors to produce a school improvement plan which identifies relevant priorities until 2004. The school has benefited from guidance from the local education authority to create this important document. The plan is well organised, with an appropriate vision statement and clear aims. Detailed action plans show those responsible for initiatives in the current year, and how the initiatives will be undertaken, resourced and evaluated. When the school was last inspected, there was no overall school development plan. The current plan represents sound strategic thinking and is making a valuable contribution to school improvement.
42. The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school. Appropriate committees are established and help to guide the school's work. The results of statutory and non-statutory tests are debated thoroughly, and governors visit the school to see it in operation. The governors with particular responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs are all well informed, and the chair of governors visits frequently to keep abreast of the school's development. The finance committee ensures the school budget is analysed rigorously, and financial planning is clearly linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan. Following the last inspection, and the clear analysis of school needs by the current headteacher, funds previously accumulated have been wisely used to improve the accommodation, learning resources and staffing. The governors are aware that it is not possible to maintain the recent rate of expenditure in the next financial year, and have sensible strategies to reduce spending. They carefully consider the likely effects of spending decisions and are well aware that they need to ensure the school makes the best use of its resources. The principles of best value are, therefore, soundly applied. Overall, the governors have a secure knowledge of the performance of the school and know the challenges it faces. Statutory requirements are fully met.
43. When the school was last inspected, subject co-ordinators did not have an adequate understanding of their responsibilities, but the headteacher has ensured this is no longer the case. Indeed, in her own role as temporary English co-ordinator, she is providing a good example to teachers through her rigorous monitoring of teaching and pupils' achievements, and through her well-focused feedback which enables them to target areas for improvement. However, the monitoring roles of most co-ordinators are still at a relatively early stage of development. While all co-ordinators willingly respond to their colleagues' occasional requests for advice, check their planning and audit and organise resources conscientiously, most are not monitoring pupils' standards or progress with enough rigour. They are not examining examples of pupils' completed work systematically to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performances, and have very little experience of observing teaching in their subjects. The school has appropriate plans to rectify this weakness, which it recognises, and it is important that these be implemented successfully. Overall, a useful beginning has been made, from a low starting point, but there is still work to be done to ensure co-ordinators make a more significant impact on pupils' learning.
44. There are sufficient staff and they have the expertise and experience to cover the age and ability range of the pupils. Their knowledge of National Curriculum subjects is mainly good, although evidence suggests some would benefit from in-service training

to increase their skills in teaching art and design and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential achievements in this subject. Good provision is being established for teachers' professional development, and the school's performance management policy is being implemented effectively. Arrangements for the induction of the newly qualified teachers are good. Learning support assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning, and are well briefed by teachers.

45. The school accommodation is sound, and has been very considerably improved recently as a result of the efforts of staff, governors and parents, and the support of the local education authority. Classrooms provide sufficient space, and teachers take care to make their classrooms attractive through displays of pupils' work. A secure outside space has recently been appropriately created for use by reception pupils but this area has yet to be fully utilised. There is enough playground space and the good sized school field also includes a naturalised area which is a useful learning resource. Learning resources are sound, overall, although library books need to be increased, and reception children need more apparatus to promote their physical development during outside play.
46. The school has a detailed policy for equal opportunities and plans to organise further staff training in awareness when this policy is reviewed in the autumn term. There is careful monitoring of the attainment and progress of each child and this information is used to monitor the relative progress of particular groups of pupils such as non-white or the more able. All resources and books are checked to ensure they do not promote racial or gender stereotypes. The school is accessible to wheelchair users and has toilet facilities for the disabled.
47. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision are effective. The role of SENCO is held by the deputy headteacher whose oversight of provision also includes responsibility for more able pupils. She has substantial experience in special educational needs support, and she has established good working relationships with staff, inside and outside school, who work to serve the pupils' best interests. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, and practices are increasingly taking account of the guidance in the new Code of Practice. The special educational needs governor is well appraised of the school's systems and of provision. She visits the school regularly, keeps abreast of developments through discussion with the SENCO and through classroom observations, and contributes to the report on progress in special educational needs provision in the annual governors' report to parents. All statutory requirements in regard to special educational needs provision are met.
48. This is a much improved school, since the last inspection, and it is well placed to improve further. The good leadership and management skills of the headteacher make a significant contribution to the school's achievements; and the staff have good teaching skills and are strongly committed. Pupils make good progress in their learning, including in English, mathematics and science, as a result of effective teaching. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are a credit to the school, and a good partnership has been established with parents. While there is work to be done to improve the work of subject co-ordinators and to raise standards in art and design, the school's strengths greatly outweigh its weaknesses. Overall, it provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to improve, further, the monitoring and development of teaching and learning, and to raise standards, the headteacher and governors should:
- (1) develop the monitoring roles of most co-ordinators, particularly by increasing the rigour of their analysis of samples of pupils' work, from across the school, to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' standards and progress, and to target areas for improvement with more precision; (see paragraphs 43, 77, 83, 93, 97, 103 and 119)
  - (2) raise standards in art and design in the older half of the school by providing well-focused in-service training to enable teachers to improve their knowledge and skills in the subject and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential achievements. (see paragraphs 6, 9, 23, 84 and 87)
50. In addition to the key issues above, the governors should also consider the following, less important, issues for inclusion in their action plan:
- (1) provide children in reception with more opportunities to express themselves through work in art and design, and to develop their understanding of the passing of time; (see paragraphs 21, 51 and 58)
  - (2) improve resources for outdoor play for reception children in order to promote their physical development, and increase book provision in the school library. (see paragraphs 45, 63 and 71)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	21	21	1	0	0
Percentage	0	12	43	43	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	184
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	30

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

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

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*



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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	13	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	25	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	85 (93)	89 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	24	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (96)	89 (100)	89 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	12	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	16
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	24	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (79)	89 (83)	100 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	15	16
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	25	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (83)	96 (88)	100 (96)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	178
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108.5

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

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	419,074
Total expenditure	400,448
Expenditure per pupil	2,086
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,608
Balance carried forward to next year	61,234

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	184
Number of questionnaires returned	90

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	39	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	48	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	53	4	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	56	11	3	4
The teaching is good.	47	52	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	46	14	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	36	8	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	46	4	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	33	51	13	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	59	36	2	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	52	6	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	52	17	1	4

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

51. On entry to reception, children's overall standards are broadly average. As a result of effective teaching, and a strong emphasis on the development of their language and mathematical skills in this class, children's overall standards in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematics, are a little above average on entry to Year 1. They also make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development as a result of effective provision in the class. In all other areas of learning, children's progress is sound, overall. However, they require more opportunities to express themselves through art and design, and this restricts their creative development. Overall, however, the teaching in the reception class is good, and enables children to make a good start at the school.

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

52. The teaching in the reception class enables children to make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. It helps children to feel confident and secure, and they benefit from the caring attitudes of the staff who work with them. The atmosphere in the class is very positive, and it is clear that children enjoy the activities they are given. The teacher and support staff are very successful in promoting constructive relationships with all the children and provide them with good role models which have a beneficial impact on the way they respond to others. Children work and play together amicably, for example when role playing in the class café, using the computer, or testing different kinds of paper to decide the most suitable for a strong paper bag.
53. The teacher provides children with sufficient opportunities to develop their independence and to make choices. In addition, children learn to take responsibility for their actions and are taught the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in school. As a consequence, their behaviour is good, and they learn to listen to their teacher and to take turns during class discussions. Children persevere well with their tasks and are very keen to respond to their teacher's questions. As a result of effective teaching, children meet the expected standards for their personal, social and emotional development by the end of reception.

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

54. Children in the reception class make good progress as a result of effective teaching. They build well on the communication skills they bring with them when they start in the reception class and, by the time they move into Year 1, almost all have met the Early Learning Goals specified as targets for their learning.
55. The children are enthusiastic learners, always keen to take part in activities, and they take pride in their achievements. They learn to listen, take turns, and they follow all activities very closely indeed. Higher attaining children can recall rhymes and poems learned by heart and can recite them accurately, while their peers try hard to find, and explain, 'faults' in their performance, for example by spotting words that have been left out or changed. Most children in the class can build simple three letter words such as 'car' and 'cat' by combining phonemes, and many can distinguish, by sound and by name, the letters that represent the final sounds in such words. All children know that we read print from left to right across the page and, more significantly, that print

carries meaning. They enjoy listening to stories, talking about them, and retelling them in their own words. Higher attaining children can read simple texts independently. After hearing their teacher read the story of 'The Gingerbread Man', most children readily recall the main events in the story and can repeat the famous refrain 'Run, run, as fast as you can! You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man'. Higher attaining children are able to recount the story in great detail and to give explanations as to why the characters behaved in certain ways. They use words such as 'because', 'if' and 'then' to join their ideas, and they use descriptive detail to bring the characters and the events to life. When answering questions, most children speak in complete sentences, and their vocabulary is developing well. For example, when considering the language and format of a recipe for making gingerbread men, one child immediately identifies the fact that there is a list of 'ingredients', while another remembers that he used 'brown sugar' when he made his gingerbread man the previous day. Most children can organise diagrams showing the various stages of the making of gingerbread men in a logically acceptable order, and higher attaining children can write sentences independently to retell their favourite parts of the story. The writing of average attaining children is still 'emergent'. They form most letters accurately, make phonetically plausible attempts at spelling words and are clearly 'thinking in sentences', even if they do not yet use capital letters and full stops to show this. Lower attaining children are able to communicate their ideas for their teacher to scribe, and can then 'underwrite' her script fairly accurately.

### **Mathematical development**

56. On entry to the reception class, children show a broadly average understanding of early mathematics. They make good, and often very good progress, across the year and achieve standards that are a little above average as they leave reception to join Year 1. In the current reception class, the majority of children have already achieved most of the Early Learning Goals for mathematical development and some children work at an even higher level. This is an improvement since the last inspection, but also represents the variability in attainment that can occur between each intake of children.
  
57. Children can count reliably to ten, and to 20 and beyond; and most have an early understanding of addition. They have also acquired a good grasp of early mathematical language and use the correct vocabulary to describe size, shape and quantity. The teachers' high expectations and enthusiastic manner mean that these children are eager to learn, and try hard. For example, they are actively encouraged to contribute ideas for creating repeating patterns, and concentrate well when making a whole class circular pattern with cubes on the carpet. The teacher uses her voice very well to motivate and praise children, and to help them to develop their listening skills. Both she and her support staff have clearly developed a warm and trusting relationship with the class. This means that all children can suggest ideas confidently, knowing that their ideas will be valued both by the adults present and their peers. Good work habits have also been established so that these children can work independently as the teacher and other staff support small groups. For example, children create repeating 'wallpaper' borders or 'patterned' necklaces, on their own, while their teacher focuses on securing other children's understanding of simple directions. Meanwhile, a support assistant helps a small group to locate and match rubbings to patterns in the school environment. Overall, therefore, provision in the reception class provides a good foundation for children's future learning in mathematics.

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

58. Evidence from planning, displays and children's work shows that children have sound opportunities to develop their understanding of early geographical and information and communication technology skills. They watch and record differences in the weather and identify key features in the local area. Linked with their work in mathematics, children begin to develop a sense of direction and find patterns in the school environment. They develop early 'mouse' skills on the computer and use them to draw and paint simple pictures and repeating patterns. Opportunities to acquire an early understanding of the passing of time are less developed than at the time of the last inspection. Although some activities have resulted in children exploring related issues informally, for example when discussing grandparents in a topic on 'Ourselves', there is no secure long-term plan for how this area of learning will develop across the year.
59. Religious education is taught as a discrete subject in all year groups, including the reception class. Even here, children show themselves capable of applying what they learn about religion to their own experience of life. For example, while all can readily recall the Bible stories they have heard, many can also work out for themselves, and explain, the 'morals' and 'messages' behind the stories. They know, for instance, that the story of the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand' shows how Jesus cared for others and how the boy who offered his loaves and fishes knew the importance of 'sharing' and of 'being a good friend'. They give telling examples from their own lives of times when 'being a friend' has not been easy, but, as one child says, to the obvious approval of her peers, "You need to share to enjoy things". The children's understanding of this principle is fully reinforced when they share the chocolate cakes brought in by their teacher and cut into pieces to ensure that everyone has an equal share.
60. Children make sound progress when using construction kits to create simple models, and have ample opportunities to learn to use scissors, and to learn basic techniques for joining paper and card. Their scientific understanding is promoted effectively when they learn how paper is made and undertake simple experiments to discover the best kind of paper to use for a strong paper bag.

## **Physical development**

61. Children in the reception class benefit from suitable opportunities to develop their manipulative skills. For example, they use 'Small World' components to recreate a story setting, draw and colour their favourite parts of the story, measure, pour and mix ingredients, then mark and cut out their own gingerbread man.
62. Appropriate use is made of the hall for physical education, and this involves the children in more formal activities which prepare them well for the curriculum in Year 1. In this context, the standards they attain are mainly for their ages. For example, when they play 'traffic lights', skipping, hopping and jumping around the hall, most children show good control and co-ordination and are able to stop quickly in response to a given signal. They show a good level of awareness of their own space in relation to others, and they are able to control the speed and direction of their movements. They move safely along benches, looking carefully ahead, and they bend their knees to jump, landing safely on a mat. When necessary, they use their arms well to achieve a balancing position.
63. An outdoor area suitable for less formal, imaginative play, for example using large wheeled toys and climbing apparatus, is being developed but is not yet in use. The

school accepts that this is currently a weakness in its provision but already has a programme in hand and expects a designated area to come into use in the summer term. At present, there is insufficient apparatus and large toys to promote children's physical development through outside play.

### **Creative development**

64. Children make sound progress when engaging in creative role play, using the class café and through 'small world' play. They achieve well when learning a range of different songs, and their singing is enthusiastic and confident. Children also make good progress when playing untuned percussion instruments, and learn to vary the dynamics of the playing. The teacher motivates children very strongly during music lessons and the sessions are much enjoyed. However, while the school's provision for children's creative development is satisfactory, overall, there is scope for improvement. At present, there are insufficient opportunities for children to express themselves through art and design, and there are few examples of the bold and vibrant art work which is usually typical of children of this age. The teacher appropriately recognises this as an area for future development.

### **ENGLISH**

65. In the national tests (SATs) in reading and writing for pupils aged seven in 2001, the school's results were below the national average and also below the results of similar schools. In the English tests for pupils aged 11, the overall results were in line with the national average but below the results of similar schools. In both age groups, the proportions of pupils attaining standards above that normally expected of pupils of the same age were comparatively low. The school has undertaken a rigorous analysis of pupils' performance in the tests, and has already introduced sensible measures to ensure that all pupils, including the more able, attain the standards of which they are capable. Both inspection findings and school data show that there are some significant variations in the overall attainment of different cohorts, and to some extent these accounted for the disappointing results last year. Inspection findings show that pupils of all abilities make good progress over time in relation to their starting points and capabilities; and are more favourable than the 2001 SATs results. As is the case nationally, pupils tend to do better in speaking and listening and in reading than in writing. That said, the standard of written work produced by the highest attaining pupils in each year group is well above average for their age, and some of their writing it is quite outstanding.
66. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and in reading and writing in most lessons, so that, by the age of seven, very few pupils fall below the expected standard for their age, and a significant minority of pupils exceed this standard. Overall, their standards are currently above average, in Year 2, as a consequence.
67. Teaching rightly emphasises the interrelation of skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing, and, as a result, discussion becomes a powerful medium through which pupils' skills as readers and writers are also enhanced. For example, pupils in a Year 2 lesson listen to, then discuss, the story of 'Jamil's Clever Cat'. With very few exceptions, the pupils can talk in an informed way about the theme, the characters and the events that take place. They speak clearly and audibly, and in some cases elaborate on their ideas at considerable length. They can predict 'what might happen next', and they can explain how the characters feel at various points in the story, often using inference to work out 'hidden meanings' such as these in the text. They use



evidence and phrases from the text to support their views of what the author 'intends', and they are able to distinguish between the use of the past and present tenses of verbs. Many of the higher attaining pupils are quick to suggest ways in which their teacher might improve a simple story opening. For example, they suggest opening sentences which reflect their knowledge of literary language, and they are able to draw on their previous knowledge of stories to suggest descriptive detail that might be added. Their use of language is precise, and is clearly designed to achieve specific effects. When writing independently, most higher attaining pupils use dictionaries and thesauri competently and, as a result, their word choices are often 'adventurous' and well chosen. They link ideas together fluently and logically in well-structured sentences, sometimes using words such as 'meanwhile' and 'finally' to move their stories on. They bring interest to their writing by varying sentence length and by using complex sentences appropriately, and they are already able to match the style and form of their writing to its specific purpose, whether in English or in other subjects. Their writing is usually well structured, and it is clear that they are writing with a reader in mind. The written work of average and lower attaining pupils has many good qualities. As in the work of higher attaining pupils, the standard of handwriting, spelling and punctuation is generally good, and it is clear from the interesting content that these pupils enjoy communicating their ideas through writing. However, many of these pupils have not yet learned to take sufficient account of the reader when they write: sometimes they miss out words or information that a reader needs to make sense of their writing, sometimes ideas are not developed in sufficient detail, and sometimes the writing is not organised in the most logical or effective order for its purpose.

68. Pupils make good progress overall in Years 3 to 5, and often very good progress in Year 6. Overall standards are above average in Year 6, with few pupils failing to reach the expected standard and a significant minority exceeding the standard. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. It is not unusual for some of these pupils to make up lost ground and to achieve the standards appropriate for their age. Most pupils in Year 6 have a well-developed vocabulary. They have acquired a wide general vocabulary and they use subject specific terms related to language and to their work in other subjects quite naturally in discussions. Almost all pupils explain things clearly, speak up confidently in large groups, and read aloud fluently and expressively. However, although most pupils read well, their individual reading sometimes lacks breadth, and the books they are given to read in school are not always sufficiently challenging. With a very few exceptions, however, pupils understand the texts they read in English lessons and in other subjects. They can locate information in books using an index, make notes, and present their findings in a suitable, new format if required. While their research skills are well developed, pupils have not yet been taught to use the Dewey system in order to find books in the library. In English lessons, their understanding of different genres and forms of writing is secure. For example, they can identify and describe the characteristic features of historical narrative related to content, characterisation, language and style. Most can then successfully adopt the same narrative structure, style and features in their own writing when they develop a story-line suggested by some detail in the original text. Most pupils attain at least the appropriate standards for their age in 'secretarial' aspects of their writing such as handwriting, presentation, punctuation and spelling. Higher attaining pupils achieve standards of technical accuracy which are above, and sometimes well above, the average for their age. The relative weaknesses in the writing of some pupils of average and lower attainment are mainly related to structure, organisation, grammar and overall cohesion. In addition, not all pupils recognise when the use of written Standard English is required, for example in more formal contexts. As a result, they sometimes use colloquial terms inappropriately. It is

weaknesses such as these which largely account for the fact that some pupils in Years 3-6 do not achieve the same high results in writing as they do in speaking and listening and in reading.

69. The teaching of English is good overall, and is never less than sound. At its best, in Year 6, the teaching is intellectually challenging as well as technically very competent. Where the teaching is sound, in Years 3 and 5, teachers' own expertise in the subject is not quite secure enough for them to challenge pupils in this way, although their work is otherwise competent and enables pupils to make good progress in more routine skills. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is very effective and, as a result, pupils are given a very secure foundation in initial literacy. Common strengths of the teaching, in all years, include thorough planning, good organisation and management of pupils, tasks and resources, and effective differentiation of group-work so that pupils work at appropriate levels on tasks. Support for special educational needs pupils is good throughout the school. All teachers take care to include these pupils appropriately at every stage of the lesson, and their progress on assignments is monitored thoroughly, whether by class teachers or by well qualified learning support workers. The impact of good teaching is reflected in the overall good progress made by pupils of all abilities throughout the school.
70. Since the last OFSTED inspection, the school has worked very hard, and with marked success, to address weaknesses identified at that time. Pupils' progress is now monitored very rigorously indeed. Target setting for individual pupils, as well as for year groups, is helping to raise standards as measured by the 'value added' to pupils' performance in relation to their starting points on entry to the school. Sustained attention to spelling and punctuation has resulted in significant improvements to these aspects of pupils' work. Strategies introduced to challenge the more able pupils are now largely successful, and some of these pupils produce work of an outstanding quality for their age. Extended writing is established in all age groups and in all appropriate subjects.
71. The headteacher is currently undertaking the role of literacy co-ordinator. She is effective, and has been able to build on the very sound procedures and policies put in place by the post-holder who is currently absent on sick-leave. She has made a particularly significant contribution to the assessment procedures and systems for monitoring pupils' progress, and has also made a substantial investment of funds in order to improve reading materials within the school. Classroom resources for English are now satisfactory overall, although the library and its stock remain areas which the school appropriately plans to enhance when funds allow. Information and communication technology is used to good effect within English, particularly to support the drafting and editing of written work. The headteacher has monitored teachers' planning, observed lessons, reported her findings to staff, and introduced sensible measures such as target setting and marking to learning objectives. The literacy governor is pro-active and effective in her monitoring role. Together with other governors, parents and other adults in the community, she makes a useful contribution by hearing pupils read. The pairing of pupils from Year 3 to 4 and Years 5 to 6 classes as 'Book Buddies' gives some pupils help and encouragement to read more.
72. In order to improve teaching further and to pursue the high standards of attainment by pupils on which the school has rightly set its sights, it would now be helpful for all teachers to pay increased attention to the weaknesses identified above in pupils' written work; to broaden the range and depth of pupils' personal reading; and, to teach

pupils how to use the library when the new systems and resources proposed are in place.

## MATHEMATICS

73. In the 2001 national tests, Year 2 pupils achieved standards that were below the national average and the results for similar schools; and Year 6 pupils achieved standards that were well above the national average and the results for similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards are a little above average as pupils enter Year 1. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, then make mainly good progress, across the school, and attain above average standards in Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when standards were average.
74. In Years 1 and 2, work in books shows that pupils attain well in all aspects of mathematics and take a pride in their work. Pupils are clearly enthusiastic mathematicians and respond positively when challenged to solve mental calculations and share their strategies. In Year 1, for example, pupils joyfully demonstrate their knowledge of doubles by jumping on the spot as 'Jumping Jelly Beans'. In Year 2, pupils show a good understanding of counting on, partitioning and doubling when they share their strategies for solving number problems involving two-digit numbers in their heads. Pupils are also well motivated when working together on shared tasks. For example, Year 1 pupils enjoy their timed challenges when learning about units of time; and Year 2 pupils can sort, classify and organise information about liquorice allsorts into block graphs, both on paper and through using a Starting Graphs program on the computer. Occasionally, however, some older pupils lose concentration when the task is too easy.
75. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to enjoy mathematical challenges. The setting arrangements enable them to experience focused work in smaller teaching groups, and this has a beneficial impact on their progress. All pupils are well motivated and are keen to contribute in whole-class discussions at the start and end of lessons. These sessions show that pupils have acquired good mental calculation strategies and can explain the processes they have used articulately. In the main part of lessons, pupils settle well and work hard to consolidate and extend their learning. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils support each other well when matching equivalent fractions or learning decimal notation. In Years 5 and 6, pairs of pupils can generate and solve number problems using number lines and calculators accurately; and the highest attaining pupils can find the difference between two numbers in their heads, working to two decimal places.
76. Evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and the lessons seen shows that teaching in mathematics is mainly good across the school, although there is scope to improve elements of some lessons. A key strength in mathematics is the secure planning and assessment structure which underpins teaching in lessons. Long, medium and short-term planning is thorough and securely linked to the National Numeracy Strategy. All teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy learning objectives well to consolidate and challenge pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding and to match work to the needs of all learners. In Years 3 to 6, the setting arrangements make a valuable contribution to improved standards and learning, and help teachers to focus their teaching more accurately. The half-termly assessment reviews also enable pupils to move between sets, where necessary, and lead to the revision of pupils' individual targets across the school. All these procedures provide a secure foundation for teaching and have helped to raise teachers' expectations. Teachers mainly have good subject knowledge of mathematics and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work habits. In the best lessons, teachers use good interactive strategies and a brisk pace to involve

pupils actively in the whole-class sessions at the start and end of lessons. These teachers set challenging questions and engage pupils in a range of activities to consolidate and extend learning. The best lessons also involve the direct teaching of small groups, by the teacher or support staff, during the main part of the lesson. This strategy would enhance other lessons where some teachers perform a more supervisory role ie they intervene on a one-to-one basis rather than focus on teaching or modelling new methods of working. The least effective teaching occurred in a lesson when insufficient challenge and pace led some pupils to go off-task and make little progress.

77. The school uses test data well to set year group targets in mathematics; and the results of half-termly assessment reviews are used effectively to set individual pupil targets and to track pupils' progress. As a result, the school is steadily raising standards in mathematics for all pupils. This achievement was well recognised by the local authority, leading to the headteacher sharing the school's strategies and successes at a recent headteacher conference. The co-ordinator is rightly pleased with these improvements and is developing sound strategies for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. An improvement to his current procedures, however, would be to record and analyse findings from observations, planning and work sampling more systematically.

## **SCIENCE**

78. On entry to Year 1, the scientific knowledge and understanding of most pupils are broadly average. The results of the statutory teacher assessments in Year 2, in 2001, were below the national average in relation to the proportion of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected level, and were also below the average results of similar schools. The results of the statutory tests in Year 6, in 2001, were above the national average and the average results of similar schools.
79. Inspection findings are more favourable than the teacher assessments in 2001 in Year 2, and show that overall standards in the current Year 2 class are above average. In Year 6, although current standards are not quite as high as in 2001, they are a little above average, overall. These standards in Years 2 and 6 represent mainly good achievement by pupils in relation to their starting points in Years 1 and 3, and are an improvement since the last inspection when they were average.
80. In Year 1, pupils are aware of a range of different sources of light and sound; and make good progress when conducting simple experiments to discover that sounds are heard more quietly as the distance increases between the sound source and the ear. They can describe the basic properties of materials, for example in relation to their roughness or smoothness, and the more advanced learners are able to describe materials in relation to their rigidity and flexibility. Year 1 pupils also achieve well when comparing the suitability of salt, flour, rice and beans as fillings for music shakers in order to make the best sounds. In Year 2, pupils can describe how some materials are changed by heating or cooling, and make good progress when learning that some changes are reversible and some are not, for example that ice will change back to water but toasted bread cannot be changed back to its original state. They achieve well when learning about forces, and are able to create simple electrical circuits. They are also able to decide, from illustrations, whether circuits will function, and most are skilled in using scientific language when communicating their predictions. For example: "The electricity can't flow properly because there is not a complete circuit. You need to connect the crocodile clip to the other terminal on this battery to make it work".

81. In Year 3, pupils achieve well when conducting experiments to test the relative hardness of different materials, and to discover whether puddles will drain away at different rates in different levels of soil. During the inspection, they made good progress when predicting which rocks will absorb water, and demonstrated a sound grasp of the importance of fair testing when using syringes to apply a measured amount of water to a range of different rocks to test their hypothesis. Year 4 pupils are able to conduct systematic investigations to test the thermal insulating properties of different materials, and make sound progress when learning that some materials dissolve in water, while others do not. In Year 5, pupils are aware of the dangers of drugs and have a good awareness of the need for a balanced diet. They use appropriate scientific vocabulary when identifying some of the main organs in the human body and know where they are located. In a lesson observed during the inspection, pupils made satisfactory progress when learning about the growth of plants and their life cycles. In Year 6, pupils are aware that light travels in straight lines, and know how shadows are formed. They also know that the size of the shadow increases as an object moves closer to the light source, and can explain why with reasonable clarity. During the inspection, effective teaching in Year 6 enabled pupils to make good progress in using keys to identify animals and plants in a systematic manner. Pupils make sound use of their mathematical and information and communication technology skills during science lessons, for example to plot line graphs to show the results of their investigations into shadows and light sources, and to record changes in the weather, including windspeed and temperature, on a database.
82. The quality of teaching in science is mainly good and is otherwise sound. As a consequence, pupils make mostly good progress in their learning in the subject. When the school was last inspected, the more able pupils made insufficient progress, but this is no longer the case. Teachers' planning is good, and all teachers are making effective use of the scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to ensure that individual lessons form part of a coherent programme for the development of pupils' scientific knowledge and skills. Teachers clearly identify the learning objectives of their lessons, reflecting the emphasis the headteacher has given to the development of this important feature in their planning. All teachers have secure subject knowledge in science, and their instructions and explanations are clear. They ensure that scientific vocabulary is introduced and reinforced in lessons, and pupils usually respond well by using scientific terms during discussions and in their writing. Teachers organise their science lessons effectively and have very positive relationships with their pupils. As a consequence, pupils feel secure, and are confident enough to say if they do not understand ideas. They listen to their teachers attentively, concentrate on their tasks in science lessons and persevere well. Overall, teachers provide a good balance between work which promotes pupils' scientific knowledge and tasks which develop their investigative skills. Tasks are usually sufficiently challenging for all pupils, although sometimes pupils in the older half of the school would benefit from more opportunities to devise and undertake their own investigations to test their ideas. At present, investigations are sometimes too prescribed by teachers and this restricts pupils' opportunities to use their initiative.
83. The science co-ordinator has a sound overview of teachers' planning, and willingly provides advice to her colleagues. She is highly conscientious, and supports the good work of the Year 6 teacher by also teaching the Year 6 class on a weekly basis in science. She has analysed pupils' statutory test results in science carefully and has recently talked to pupils from all classes about their science work. She

recognises there is scope, however, to develop her monitoring role, particularly by analysing samples of pupils' work, from across the school, with sufficient rigour to identify strengths and areas for development, and by observing lessons. There are plans to provide the co-ordinator with opportunities to observe lessons, and this reflects the school's awareness of the importance of monitoring teaching and learning. Resources for science are adequate, overall.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84. Pupils make spasmodic progress in art and design, across the school. Their progress is adequate, overall, in Years 1 and 2, and enables them to achieve standards which are broadly satisfactory for their ages. However, in the older classes, pupils' progress is mainly unsatisfactory and their standards are generally below national expectations, including in Year 6.
85. In Year 1, pupils make adequate progress when creating collage pictures and have produced interpretations of landscapes in the day and evening which represent satisfactory achievement. However, their clay tiles which, collectively, form an image of the local church, are above average. In Year 2, pupils make satisfactory gains when using information and communication technology to create pictures which reflect their discussions about the work of Mondrian, and demonstrate sound standards when using viewfinders to enable them to focus their drawings on specific elements of the classroom environment.
86. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' drawing skills are generally below average for their ages, and evidence suggests pupils need to develop their observation skills when interpreting the natural and made world. However, they achieve sound standards when creating pictures of Henry VIII and his wives. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' sketch books show they continue to make limited progress in developing their drawing skills, and their achievements are restricted when they are required to copy Victorian paintings on A4 sheets of paper. In a lesson observed in Year 6, pupils demonstrated satisfactory making skills when creating papier-mâché masks but made little progress in developing their artistic understanding.
87. Insufficient lessons were observed during the inspection to make a secure overall judgement about the quality of teaching in art and design. However, evidence from the evaluation of pupils' completed work strongly suggests that teachers in Year 3 to 6, in particular, would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and understanding in the subject. At present, key skills in the subject are not developed, progressively, by pupils as they move through the school, and teachers' expectations of standards often need to be increased. While the school has introduced a scheme of work, provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, since the last inspection, its impact is often restricted by weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge.
88. The co-ordinator has only very recently taken responsibility for the subject and, understandably, has yet to develop her strategies for monitoring and developing art and design. Resources have been improved but are currently only barely adequate. Although the local area have a good range of practising artists, some of whom might be willing to work with pupils in the school, there is no evidence that this potentially valuable resource has been utilised to benefit pupils' learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

89. Pupils generally achieve well in design and technology, across the school, and their standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were average in both Years 2 and 6.
90. In Year 1, pupils make good progress when learning to join materials, including fixing two-dimensional cardboard shapes to three-dimensional shapes. They are able to use paper fasteners to enable the legs and arms of their paper puppets to move, and achieve well when creating pictures which move as a result of a simple sliding mechanism. They consider, with great care, the best designs for a house for the mice in their storybook, and have sensible strategies for making their designs, using card and paper. In Year 2, pupils have made model vehicles from recycled materials and construction kits which incorporate axles and demonstrate good making skills. They have created their own designs for hand puppets, after studying the construction of commercially made products, and make good progress when learning to make and use paper templates to ensure they cut their fabrics accurately. Pupils have practised their sewing skills carefully before stitching the seams, and have used wools, buttons and threads imaginatively to create the paper faces. They are able to make sensible judgements about the success of their finished products, which represent good achievement for Year 2 pupils.
91. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good progress when designing and making their own simple money containers. They also achieve well when designing and making model rockets, lighthouses and torches which incorporate electrical circuits. Some designs are particularly detailed and carefully conceived, and their finished products which mainly use recycled materials, are above average for their ages. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have designed and made model shelters, after discussing the need to create shelters to protect parents as they wait to collect their children from school. Pupils have clearly enjoyed creating their model shelters, made from card and wood, and they demonstrate mainly satisfactory skills. However, these pupils have also designed and made slippers, and these are clearly above average. They have looked carefully at the construction of slippers and shoes, created their own templates to ensure their completed products will fit them well, and have evaluated the suitability of a range of materials before deciding which to use in their slippers. Two of the pupils' most successful slipper designs have been made up by a commercial shoe company, through the support of a parent, and these serve well to celebrate pupils' good achievement.
92. During the inspection, only one design and technology lesson was taught, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, the lesson seen, in Year 1, was taught well and it is clear from pupils' completed work that the teaching generally enables pupils to make good progress in design and technology, across the school. Discussions with pupils show they are enthusiastic about the subject, and all teachers ensure that pupils have ample opportunities to develop their design and technology skills. Effective use is being made of the good scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to promote continuity in pupils' learning and to provide a good range of challenging tasks.
93. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has audited and organised resources efficiently. She has a sound overview of teachers' planning in the subject, and willingly provides advice to her colleagues, for example to the newly qualified teacher presently on the staff. However, she appropriately recognises that she has yet to establish procedures for monitoring pupils' standards, or the quality of their learning, with sufficient rigour, including through the systematic analysis of samples of pupils' work. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.





## **GEOGRAPHY**

94. Evidence from pupils' books, teachers' planning and the lessons seen shows that, across the school, all pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards in their geographical knowledge and skills. Some higher attaining pupils also demonstrate high literacy standards in their responses to tasks. At the time of the last inspection, learning was judged to be satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6.
95. In Year 1, pupils can draw their route to school and learn about their local area. They are keen and interested in lessons, and confidently offer sensible solutions to the problem of how to make the road outside the school safer. Year 2 pupils can talk enthusiastically about their study of the Isle of Struay and how it differs from Stroud. Older pupils, in Years 3 and 4, express informed views on environmental features in the locality, can explore and collate information on the amount of rubbish thrown away each week and devise a recycling plant. Following a recent visit to Whiteshill village, they can suggest sensible symbols to represent key features observed; and develop a sound understanding of symbols on an Ordnance Survey map. In Years 5 and 6, pupils can explain their own and others' viewpoints when exploring arguments 'for' and 'against' the proposed building of a fast-food restaurant in the area or foxhunting.
96. From the few lessons seen, and from analysing work and planning, teaching in geography is securely sound, with some good features. In the best lessons, teachers motivate pupils well and provide interesting tasks for them to engage in. In Year 1, for example, questioning is used well to draw out pupils' ideas and the teacher has gone to considerable trouble to photograph examples of traffic controls. These are used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest before they draw and label their own ideas. In one Year 5/6 class, too, the teacher captures pupils' interest by allowing them to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through the preparation of a radio broadcast script.
97. The school makes good use of visits to support geography and provision is mainly sound, although there is still a need to update some resources. Planning is now better established than at the time of the last inspection and is securely linked to a national scheme of work. Its impact on standards and learning, however, has yet to be evaluated. The co-ordinator has begun to revise documentation for geography and plans to do more. Overall, however, her monitoring role needs further development. For example, by analysing pupils' work to identify strengths and areas for development in teaching, learning and standards; talking with pupils alongside their work and teachers' planning; recording, analysing and evaluating findings systematically; and using the information gained to inform her action plan.

## **HISTORY**

98. Only one lesson in history was taught during the inspection. It is, therefore, not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in history. Judgements are based on an analysis of planning and pupils' work. This shows that, across the school, all pupils make satisfactory progress in history and achieve the expected standards in Year 2 and Year 6. This reflects findings in the last inspection.
99. In Year 1, pupils explore 'then and now' through studies of toys and household objects. They draw, label and describe objects carefully and create an attractive book of 'Victorian Objects at Home' after studying artefacts from the local folk museum. The higher attaining pupils can locate key words in the text and help their teacher to

create an index. In Year 2, pupils can write persuasively about the conditions that Florence Nightingale experienced after watching a video, looking at pictures and discussing their feelings about life at the time with their peers.

100. In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop a sound understanding of life in Tudor times. They experience life at the time from a visit to school by Tudor characters and from visiting a local museum. In response, they draw and describe artefacts and the key features of Tudor houses, and higher attaining pupils can write interesting leaflets of life at the time. All pupils develop a sound understanding of the key events in the lives of Henry VIII and his wives.
101. In Years 5 and 6, pupils study aspects of Victorian life and produce sound recollections of the life of a child in the 1840s. Their written accounts show empathy and understanding, and this is secured through a visit to the local folk museum and a Victorian Day in school. Their studies also show they can make sound comparisons of the life of rich and poor people; identify advantages and disadvantages or industrial changes, and explain consequences.
102. Evidence from planning and from pupils' work suggests that provision and teaching in history is satisfactory. A national scheme of work underpins the planning; and visits and visitors are used well to support particular study units when appropriate. The school has a small resource of artefacts and documents to support history, and augments this by using a local museum loan service.
103. The co-ordinator updates documentation, oversees resources and produces an annual action plan and summary statement for history. Her monitoring role is at an early stage of development, however, and needs to improve in line with her role for geography.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

104. An analysis of pupils' work in books and in their individual computer folders shows that pupils mainly make sound progress in information and communication technology and achieve average standards, across the school. This is similar to the findings in the last inspection, although it is clear that information and communication technology is an improved and improving subject.
105. In Year 1, pupils confidently make choices, when using the Colour Magic program, to 'stamp' animal motifs on screen, 'paint' a surrounding context and print their work. Year 2 pupils can compose letters linked to literacy; draw outlines and use 'flood-fill' and spray tools to create pictures linked to their work on 'The Great Fire of London'; and can input information accurately to generate block graphs linked to their analysis of packets of liquorice allsorts in mathematics. In Years 3 and 4, pupils create their own wrapping paper designs; emulate the work of the painter Seurat to create their own impressionistic paintings; and have acquired many of the key skills to produce and improve word-processed texts. They confidently use a 'decision tree' program to sort and classify rocks following work in science. In Year 5, pupils can use 'Number Magic' to input the weather information they have collected during science lessons to produce a spreadsheet and graph of wind-speed, wind direction, rainfall and temperature. The oldest pupils, in Year 6, can locate, select and print information from websites, for example, on key events in history and linked to their studied of the solar system in science. Pupils in both Years 5 and 6 can also plan a class party successfully by 'browsing' a supermarket website and generating a costed spreadsheet.

106. Evidence suggests that the quality of teaching in information and communication technology is mainly satisfactory, although there is scope to improve elements of some lessons. Teachers' planning is sound and is based on a national scheme of work. Recent training has clearly increased teachers' subject knowledge, and this will improve still further as the planned staff development programme proceeds in the future. Some teachers are clearly more confident than others, however, and progress in lessons is sometimes enhanced by the skills that pupils bring from home rather than the teacher's expertise. Some teachers also need to audit pupils' knowledge of information and communication technology more accurately since several pupils were observed to have insecure basic keyboard skills when inputting information. For example, some pupils in Years 3 and 4 did not know how to use the shift key when generating questions for their 'decision trees'. Some pupils also had to wait too long for help at their computers when instructions from the introductory demonstrations were unclear. This was not entirely a weakness in teaching, however. It is partly because teachers find it hard to model activities with complete success in the cramped conditions of the information and communication technology suite. This inevitably means that some pupils find it hard to see and recall the processes involved accurately. This situation will hopefully be improved once the planned purchase of an interactive whiteboard has been made.
107. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology has secure subject knowledge and is actively improving teaching, learning and standards through her thorough action plan. She has previously observed lessons, and checks planning and pupils' work. Although some examples have been kept and levelled against National Curriculum expectations, the sampling of work needs to be more rigorous. The recently introduced 'skills booklets' also need to be monitored to ensure that teachers have accurately assessed pupils' basic skills. Overall, therefore, the work of the information and communication technology co-ordinator is making a positive impact on raising standards but needs to develop more systematic procedures for collecting and analysing findings to identify key areas for development.

## **MUSIC**

108. Only two music lessons were taught in Years 1 to 6 during the inspection, and it was only possible to observe one of these, in a Year 5 and 6 class. While singing in assemblies was also heard, and some recorder playing, it is still not possible to make a secure judgement about pupils' overall standards in the subject or the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, it is clear that pupils generally sing well, and they make good progress in this important element of the subject. On occasions, their singing in assemblies lacks the full commitment of all pupils, particularly in reaching the high notes, but this was only evident once during the inspection. In the main, pupils sing enthusiastically with secure control of pitch and dynamics, and with clear diction. They achieve well when singing songs in parts; groups maintain their parts independently of the parts taken by one or two other groups – and the singing in the Year 5/6 lesson was particularly impressive. In this lesson, pupils were able to recognise and maintain a simple beat, and made good progress when learning to accompany their singing with body percussion and with untuned percussion instruments. Recorder groups are taught, mainly at lunchtime or after school, and their performance during a lunchtime session and in an assembly suggests they achieve well.
109. The music co-ordinator has good subject expertise and is highly committed. She teaches nearly all classes in Years 3 to 6, while class teachers work with their own groups in Years 1 and 2. In the lesson observed, taught by the co-ordinator, she

succeeded in motivating pupils strongly to do their best and enabled them to make good progress. Her own enthusiasm for the subject was infectious, and pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. She involved all pupils well and they listened to her attentively. She provided pupils with pertinent guidance to improve elements of their singing and made good use of the time available in the session.

110. A useful scheme of work promotes continuity in pupils' learning in music; and pupils benefit from performing in school concerts and with pupils from other schools in the locality. There is an appropriate range of resources for music, and instruments are mainly in good condition.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111. Evidence from the lessons observed shows that pupils in Year 2 attain broadly average standards for their age in dance, whilst the standards attained in gymnastics by pupils in Year 6 are above average for their age. No games lessons or swimming sessions were seen. Nevertheless, all pupils are said to meet the expected standard in swimming by the age of 11, and many do much better. Records show that many pupils achieve success in local swimming galas and in competitive team sports against other schools. These facts, and the strength of pupils' interest in the various sports clubs, strongly suggest that pupils generally enjoy physical education and do well. At various points in the school year, pupils benefit from clubs and extra-curricular activities in gymnastics, badminton, football, netball, rounders and athletics. Pupils in Year 6 undertake adventurous outdoor activities each year, for example at the Water Sports Centre in South Cerney, and there are plans for Year 5 to undertake adventurous activities during a visit to the Forest of Dean.

112. Pupils in Year 1 achieve well in gymnastics. They are well disciplined and well co-ordinated in their movements as they travel around the hall, whether on the floor or on the apparatus. They listen carefully to instructions, observe others' need for space, and interpret directions imaginatively and safely when instructed to travel along benches and across mats and to hold a balancing position at a given signal. They have already learned to set out and put away the apparatus, and they take pride in doing this responsibly and well. Pupils in a Year 3/4 class achieve broadly average standards in gymnastics. As with the younger pupils, they show good co-ordination and control in their movements and the work of certain groups is particularly imaginative when they demonstrate sequences of bridging and sliding movements. When asked to comment on others' performance, they do so perceptively. However, their work sometimes lacks pace and polish, and this detracts from the otherwise good standard of their performance. In Year 6, attainment in gymnastics is above average. Pupils respond quickly and perform movements with precision and certainty. Established routines such as putting out apparatus are accomplished quickly and safely, so no time is lost. They are very aware of the criteria by which performance in gymnastics is measured, and they are therefore able to give highly informed evaluations of others' work, for example of a successful, or a not-very-successful, forward or backward roll, of a handstand or of a cartwheel. They learn through practice and through observation, and they work hard to refine and improve their own performance. The highest attaining pupils perform fluent sequences of complex actions involving balances and holding positions.

113. In the only dance lesson seen, in Year 2, pupils learned a sequence of movements in order to perform an Indian dance traditionally performed to celebrate springtime. Most pupils controlled their movements well and gave a sensitive interpretation of the dance. Higher attaining pupils recalled movements in the sequence correctly without

being reminded, but others did not concentrate as well as they might and, as a result, overall standards were broadly average in the lesson. Pupils of all ages can explain the effects of exercise on the body and know why it is important to warm up and cool down before and after sustained physical activity.

114. The quality of teaching is mainly good, and was very good in the lesson seen in Year 6. In the best lessons seen, teachers challenge pupils to reach high standards not only in physical performance and behaviour, but also in the evaluation of work as it progresses. They know what pupils are capable of achieving, and they help them to attain high standards by working on, and improving, their performance. All teachers plan their lessons well, and all remind pupils frequently about the need for safety. All give pupils appropriate time to practise, demonstrate and refine their own patterns of movement, as well as to follow instructions. They give pupils helpful feedback about their performance. Most promote pupils' developing independence by giving them real responsibility for setting up and putting away equipment safely. Where teaching was judged to be sound rather than good or better, teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance were not quite high enough, and, as a result, lessons lacked pace and rigour.
115. The subject co-ordinator works particularly hard to ensure that pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular sporting activities. His efforts are clearly welcomed by pupils, many of whom speak enthusiastically about physical education, and in particular about gymnastics. He monitors teachers' planning and gives advice on request, but as yet has had no opportunity to monitor teaching. Although there is no formal action plan for physical education, it is clear that resources are being updated. Existing resources are satisfactory, well organised and stored so as to be readily accessible when needed.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

116. Although few religious education lessons were seen, there is substantial additional evidence in the form of pupils' written work to show that pupils make good progress throughout the school. By the time they are 11, all pupils meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, and most attain standards which are above average for their age. As well as teaching pupils about religion, teachers also place appropriate emphasis on what is to be learned from religion. It is in the latter of these two aspects of their work, in particular, that pupils of all ages reveal levels of perception and understanding which are unusually mature.
117. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about Hindu family worship. In so doing, they are quick to draw parallels with celebrations and family ties in their own lives. They can explain how, during the festival of Raksha Bandhan, sisters show affection and respect for their brothers by making small gifts called 'rakhi', and they recognise that this practice is in many ways similar to the giving of 'Mother's Day' cards and gifts, or birthday presents. In a very good lesson in a Year 3/4 class, pupils revealed their detailed knowledge of the events of Holy Week and of Easter traditions through drama. Afterwards, in reflective mood, they turned their thoughts to Jesus and to his feelings, giving perceptive explanations of how he was able to accept his fate and forgive those who betrayed him. Pupils in a Year 5/6 recognise and explain significant differences between Christianity and other religions when they consider the implications of the Easter story and Christ's resurrection; and, in another context, pupils in Years 5 and 6 identify the same theme of forgiveness in the story of 'The Prodigal Son'.

118. Evidence from the lessons seen and from pupils' written work testifies to the generally good quality of the teaching of religious education. Teachers are skilled at finding methods that engage pupils' interest and that bring the subject to life. They manage to make quite complex ideas accessible, and they often use very practical examples to help pupils understand abstract principles. In particular, they ask challenging questions which compel pupils to consider how 'lessons' learned from the study of religion apply to their own experiences of life. In other lessons too, for example in PSHE and in English, and through assemblies and other daily routines, teachers take opportunities to reinforce the moral principles learned in religious education. As a result, religious education has a significant impact on pupils' moral development and on their behaviour, and a positive impact on their spiritual development.
119. The co-ordinator for religious education has monitored teachers' planning and is well appraised of work in the subject throughout the school, even though she has had no time to monitor teaching in a direct and more formal way. Since the last OFSTED inspection in 2000, she has written a sound policy statement and has updated the scheme of work to reflect the new locally agreed syllabus. She has been responsible for building up a collection of suitable resources for the subject, and she has begun to collect samples of pupils' work from different year groups. In developing her role, she will need to focus on the quality of teaching in each year group and to ensure that the less confident teachers receive the support they need to match the high standards of the best teaching seen.