

INSPECTION REPORT

OVERBURY CE FIRST SCHOOL

Overbury, Tewkesbury

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116837

Headteacher: Mrs Val Wilkinson

Reporting inspector: Mr Christopher Gray
21037

Dates of inspection: 19-21 February 2002

Inspection number: 243539

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary
Age range of pupils:	4-10
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Overbury Tewkesbury Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL20 7NT
Telephone number:	01386 725235
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Worrall
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Christopher Gray 21037	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History Music	Results and achievements Teaching and learning School effectiveness and improvement Leadership and management
Roger Watts 9399	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Provision for pupils' personal development How well the school cares for its pupils Partnership with parents and community links Staffing, accommodation and resources
Lorna Brackstone 21872	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Art Design and technology Physical education Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Curriculum opportunities Assessment Financial efficiency

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Overbury CE First School is situated in the village of Overbury in Worcestershire, near Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire. The school is for children aged four to ten, and has 50 full-time pupils (26 boys and 24 girls). This is much smaller than most primary schools and is the same size as at the last inspection. In common with other statistics, children's attainment on entry varies from year to year because of the small number of pupils, but it is currently below the county average.

Most of the pupils come from outside the catchment area because many parents choose to send their children here rather than to more local schools. Two pupils are currently entitled to receive a free school meal, which is below average. The entitlement is thought to be greater, but the county provides no hot meal service. One pupil has a first language other than English, though he is not at the early stages of learning English. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need and, in percentage terms (2 per cent), this is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Overbury CE First is a good school which is justifiably popular with parents. Pupils work hard and have very good attitudes to their work. The standards they achieve by the time they leave the school are above national averages in English, mathematics and science. The overall quality of teaching is good. The school is very well led by the headteacher and the governors are effectively involved. The unit costs are high, in common with all small schools. Nonetheless, this school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average by Year 5
- The headteacher leads the school very well
- Small classes and good teaching mean that pupils make good progress throughout the school
- The school is a secure and happy community where very good provision is made for pupils' welfare and personal development

What could be improved

This is a good school where staff and governors have themselves fully analysed and addressed key areas for improvement, so there are no key issues. Minor areas for further development are:

- making pupils more aware of what they will be learning in each lesson
- encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's learning at home by giving them a clearer understanding of what is expected and how well it has been done

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. There were four key issues. One concerned improving the way pupils' progress is tracked throughout the school. There are now very good systems of assessment and teachers use the information very well when they plan for pupils' future learning. Two of the key issues concerned the curriculum. One was about the provision for the under-fives, which is now good. The other referred to schemes of work to guide teachers' planning in all subjects. These are now all up to date and are used effectively. The last issue required the headteacher to monitor teaching, learning and curriculum development. The headteacher now does this regularly and frequently and uses the process to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

In addition, the school has raised standards of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science, aspects of information and communication technology, art, and design and technology. The quality of teaching has also improved. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

STANDARDS

The number of pupils (seven) who sat the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 was too small to make national comparisons realistic, so these data are not published.

Children enter the school with attainment that is lower than the county average. In the Foundation Stage (Reception), they make good progress and are on line to achieve the expected levels in all areas of the curriculum by the time they begin Year 1.

By Year 2, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above the national average and standards in science are average. Pupils make good progress in the junior class and, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 5, their attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average. Pupils learn well because of the consistently good teaching in all classes.

Pupils' attainment by Year 5 is also above average in aspects of information and communication technology, and in art and design and technology at both key stages. Attainment in the other subjects is in line with national expectations by Years 2 and 5, though no judgements were possible in information and communication technology in Year 2, geography in Year 5 or music and physical education at both key stages because the inspection lasted for only two and a half days.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and take their work very seriously.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are responsible and self-disciplined and this makes an important contribution to their good learning. They behave well and considerately in the playground and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships within the school are excellent and form the foundation of a secure and happy community.
Attendance	Much better than the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 5
Quality of teaching	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.

Excellent relationships between adults and pupils form the basis of the good teaching in this school. Pupils and adults create a very good climate for learning. Because teachers trust pupils to work hard and be self-disciplined, they do their best, enjoy their work and make good progress. Teachers have pupils from a wide spread of ages and abilities in their classes and they ensure that all pupils' needs are met, because they use their detailed knowledge of individual pupils to plan challenging work for each of them. The teaching of English is very good across the school and pupils learn to use their literacy skills in many subjects. Mathematics is taught well and numeracy skills feature highly in every lesson.

Teachers' planning is good and includes a clear indication of what they intend pupils to learn in each lesson. Pupils would learn better in some lessons if these intentions were made clearer to them and then evaluated at the end of the lesson.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has planned an interesting and wide curriculum that is well suited to the mixed age classes. A good range of extra-curricular activities and very good links with the village and local community increase pupils' opportunities for learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive good support from teachers and assistants. Their education plans enable them to make good progress because they set out realistic steps for achievement.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The school takes part in the cultural life of the village and gives its pupils an understanding of cultures beside their own. The daily life of the school develops pupils' spiritual and moral awareness well. The school community provides a very good background for pupils to develop social awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The safety and welfare of pupils are among the school's chief concerns. There are very good systems for ensuring that pupils' learning builds carefully on what they already know.

Parents have very good views of the school because they receive good information about the progress their children make and about how the school runs. They know that the school has their children's welfare clearly at heart. Homework is sent home regularly, but parents at the pre-inspection meeting agreed that they would like a clearer understanding of what teachers expect.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher's leadership has played a vital part in the raising of standards and the very good improvement since the last inspection. She gives a clear lead and is well supported by the whole staff team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors take a full part in planning the school's development and discharge all their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and governors keep the quality of education under continual review and have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	The school has a good number of staff and uses them well to create effective grouping of pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory and the school copes well with the lack of a hall. Resources for learning are good. The good management of all these features shows that the school has a good understanding of the principles of best value.

The necessity to filter the village water supply to provide drinking water is an unfortunate drain on the school's finances.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What a few parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress • Behaviour in the school is good; the school is helping children to become mature and responsible • There is a good, caring ethos • The school is well led and managed and teaching is good • Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best • They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems • The range of activities outside lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the school works with parents and the information they receive • Information about homework

Before the inspection, two inspectors attended a meeting with 12 parents. The responses to 32 questionnaires (64 per cent of those sent out) were analysed. The inspection team endorses parents' favourable views about the school. The issue about how the school works with parents did not emerge at the pre-inspection meeting with parents nor during conversations with parents during the inspection. Inspectors found that the information supplied to parents is good. It is probable that parents had in mind the issue about homework which was expressed by many parents at the meeting, namely that they would like clearer information about what to expect and when. They would also like to know how well their children have done in the work. The school is planning improvements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 5, their attainment in English, mathematics and science is above the national average. Given their attainment when they start school in Reception, this represents good achievement. The school sets pupils challenging targets and they make good progress towards them.
2. Only seven pupils took the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and the numbers are similar each year. This means that, since one pupil represents over 14 per cent of the cohort, results can vary enormously from year to year. This makes it meaningless to look at trends over time or to make comparisons with national results. However, the school accurately assesses the capability of each pupil to ensure that teachers do all they can to help pupils reach their potential.
3. Children's attainment is assessed when they begin in Reception using baseline testing. This shows that, as a group, attainment on entry is below the county average in most years. Children with particular needs receive good support and teachers make realistic yet challenging predictions about the levels every pupil will reach by the end of Year 2. Results in the National Curriculum tests are compared with baseline scores to evaluate the amount of pupils' progress. Using voluntary national tests, the school assesses pupils' attainment at the end of each year and predicts where each should be in 12 months. Extra support is given where needed. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 5, the teachers know the levels each child has reached and the school can demonstrate that almost all pupils make at the least the progress expected of them. Many make more progress than this, and recent work with lower attaining pupils means that pupils of all abilities and both sexes make similar progress. There are no pupils whose command of English inhibits their learning.
4. Children in the Reception year make good progress. The teaching and curriculum provided in the mixed infant class are good and ensure that the youngest children receive the type of learning prescribed for them. Most are on line to meet the expectations of all the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1, and the few higher attainers will reach Level 1 in aspects of the National Curriculum.
5. In English, standards of attainment are above average in reading, writing, and in speaking and listening by Years 2 and 5. Pupils talk confidently in assembly and to the class and express their views carefully. They are good listeners and this promotes good learning. Most pupils enjoy reading and discuss their books well with adults. They make good use of the school library, even though the space it occupies is small. Pupils use their writing skills in most subjects and write for a variety of audiences in a range of styles.
6. Attainment in mathematics is above average in Years 2 and 5. Pupils have good number skills which they use in several subjects. Their knowledge of space and shape is well developed and enables higher attaining pupils to program a floor robot to draw two-dimensional shapes. Pupils in all classes display data on graphs, often using information technology. Junior pupils are beginning to understand simple probability.
7. In science, pupils' attainment by Year 2 is average and some pupils talk well about their scientific knowledge. They know about living creatures and divide them into categories. They study materials and identify what items in the classroom are made of. By Year 5, pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils design their own experiments and learn to report their results, displaying data in tables and graphs and on the computer.

8. Attainment in information and communication technology is average overall by Year 5, though the work pupils have done in control technology is above expectations. Insufficient evidence was available for a judgement to be made on standards by Year 2.
9. In religious education, pupils attain standards which are in line with the agreed syllabus by Year 2 and Year 5. They are developing a good understanding of aspects of Christianity and are beginning to look at other religions such as Islam and Judaism.
10. By Years 2 and 5, pupils' attainment in art and design and technology is above average. Attainment in history is in line with expectations across the school and in geography, it is average by Year 2. No judgements were possible for geography by Year 5 or music and physical education in either key stage because of insufficient evidence.
11. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. All pupils who find learning difficult have individual education plans that include measurable targets specific to their needs. Teachers plan effectively to enable the pupils to achieve these targets and as a result they make good progress in their learning. Arrangements for supporting pupils with statements are effective and ensure that they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and have improved since the previous inspection. In the opinion of parents, virtually all children enjoy school and this is borne out by conversations with pupils. They appreciate the efforts of the staff to give them an exciting and rewarding experience. When they come into school in the morning, they quickly and eagerly start some productive activity and are ready to begin formal learning as soon as required. After lesson introductions, they start their individual or group work promptly because they enjoy it and are keen to learn more. They concentrate well and work hard to solve problems, even when the task is not totally clear to them. When asked to work with limited or no direct supervision - for example, in a science lesson when they had to survey materials in different parts of the school - they do so conscientiously. They are enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom, taking a strong part in extra-curricular activities.
13. Pupils behave very well both in lessons and in other activities around the school. Teachers occasionally need to use a quiet word in lessons to keep pupils focused on their activity but generally they spend very little time on this and can concentrate fully on their teaching. This makes a very strong contribution to the good rate of learning seen in the majority of lessons. Pupils' behaviour as they move around the school and in assemblies is also very good. Even the very youngest children sit quietly and listen attentively in assemblies. Pupils eat their lunches in a civilised and sociable way. They have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind school rules and fully accept their validity. There were no exclusions of pupils from the school last year. Pupils treat all the things they work with and the property of others with great care. Books and other resources are valued and treasured.
14. The personal development of pupils is very good, leading to excellent relationships within the school. There is a relaxed atmosphere, which can be felt right from the start of the day when parents come in with their children. Pupils treat each other with care and respect because all staff are excellent examples in their dealings with pupils. Pupils willingly take responsibility for small jobs around the school and, on many occasions, volunteer to do things before being asked. In class, the strong rapport between adults and pupils is a very noticeable feature of almost all lessons. Pupils are confident that the teachers are there to

do their best for them and they, in turn, respond by giving of their best. Within lessons, pupils show respect for those younger or less able and help them when necessary with sensitivity. In the playground, pupils of all ages play well together and older pupils respect the needs of the younger ones. There are very few even minor incidents and these are generally accidental. Within lessons pupils work well to support each other, discussing problems and making suggestions to each other about improving their work. They do this in a way that reflects ease and confidence in this mode of working. They recognise that, though others might hold beliefs different from theirs, they should be tolerant. Their awareness of the impact of their actions on others develops well as they get older and is demonstrated in the lack of bullying or social exclusion within the school.

15. The overall attendance last year was very high in relation to the national average for primary schools and there is no unauthorised absence. Very few pupils arrive after the official start time and most are in lessons by the time the teacher calls the register.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching in the school overall is good. A number of excellent and very good lessons were observed and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was satisfactory overall with no very good or better teaching and 7 per cent was unsatisfactory.
17. The excellent relationships between adults and pupils are the foundations of all that the school does. Teachers and all other adults in the school treat the pupils with great consideration and respect. This builds up considerable self-confidence in pupils and they respond with warmth, enthusiasm and politeness. Thus, teachers can spend almost the whole of their time teaching, rarely having to remind pupils of how they should behave or to get on with their work. An example of how the quality of relationships produced good learning was seen in a music lesson for older juniors. The lesson was a short one and followed on after the numeracy hour. As pupils were finishing the whole-class session on the carpet, the music teacher arrived with a keyboard. Within less than a minute, pupils had put their books away and settled in their places, whilst the teacher set up the keyboard and an overhead projector. The lesson was to sing a song called *Country Life* in four parts. The verse began 'Oh how peaceful living in the country, Far away from the noisy town' whilst three other groups were to sing parts representing the noises made by cows, cockerels and donkeys. Although the pupils had had only a brief chance to learn the song in a previous short lesson, by the end of this session the song was performed competently. All pupils were singing with enthusiasm and this was possible because the teacher could trust them to take the work seriously. His sense of humour and enthusiasm inspired them to do their best.
18. Another important feature of the good teaching in this school is teachers' provision for the spread of ages and abilities in each class. In the mornings, pupils are split into three groups for literacy and numeracy: Reception and Year 1, Years 2 and 3, and Years 4 and 5. In the afternoons, there are two classes, one for the infants and one for the juniors. An excellent lesson for infant children exemplifies how well teachers organise their lessons. The lesson was based on the term's history topic, *My home in the village*. All pupils have looked at different types and styles of house. Year 2 pupils worked as a group to sequence a set of drawings of dwellings, from caves to high-rise flats. They used their mathematical knowledge to sequence dates, including those before Christ - the teacher took the opportunity to explain how dating works. Working then on their own, pupils decided on the sequence of a smaller set of houses. They knew which type would still be in use today and which belonged to past eras, such as stilt houses. Pupils in Year 1 were making models of mud huts from coiled clay and stick roofs. They knew that they were from long ago, 'before granny even existed'. Reception children were provided with a related activity, but one much more suited to the type of learning needed in the Foundation

Stage. They were in two groups in the playground (with adults), constructing shelters - one from cardboard boxes, the other from a large construction set. At the end of the lesson, the teacher took the older pupils to see how they had done. Careful questioning gave the youngest children confidence to describe their shelters to the whole class.

19. Teachers' careful planning means that all pupils' needs are met. Pupils sit in groups, which teachers often base on prior attainment in the subject. An excellent mathematics lesson for older juniors gives a good example of how effective this is. Year 4 pupils were learning to recognise right-angles and Year 5 were learning about the sum of angles on a straight line. A group of younger, lower attaining pupils worked with the classroom assistant to reinforce clockwise and anti-clockwise turns and relate this to turns of a quarter circle. Other Year 4 pupils were given angles made up of several right-angles and some halves. They had to identify the number of right-angles and higher attaining pupils were asked to translate this into degrees. While this was going on, the class teacher worked with Year 5 pupils on the sum of angles in a straight line. Using an overhead projector, she gave a clear and effective explanation. This enabled higher attaining pupils to go onto the carpet to program a floor robot to draw an equilateral triangle, for which they needed to understand the external angles involved. Other pupils worked on calculating angles in a straight line, with the support of the class teacher. All pupils demonstrated excellent learning in this lesson because they started the work at the level they had reached previously. To do this, the teacher used her thorough knowledge, gained from marking and assessment, of what her pupils could do.
20. Teachers' planning centres around learning objectives - that is, what the pupils are intended to learn by the end of the lesson. These are sometimes made clear to pupils, but not in all lessons. When pupils know what they are expected to learn, it enables them to assess how far they have succeeded in a lesson and helps them build up a picture of their own learning. Teachers' marking is generally thorough and gives pupils pointers for improvement, though marking in mathematics is not consistent across the school. Homework is set frequently and connects with important skills taught in class. However, parents at the pre-inspection meeting felt they would like more guidance about what to expect and some indication of how well the work had been done.
21. The teaching of Foundation Stage children is good. A key issue in the last inspection was to broaden the curriculum for the youngest children and this has been done well. The example quoted above shows how skilful the teacher is in providing good opportunities for Reception children whilst also challenging Year 2 pupils.
22. Skills of literacy and numeracy are given high prominence in the teaching. English is taught very well. Good use of analysis of pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching by the headteacher have raised standards successfully in writing. Praise is used well to encourage pupils' confidence and promote their learning.
23. The teaching of mathematics is good. Pupils of all abilities are well challenged and teachers use the available adults to produce effective grouping. Greater use could be made of the learning intentions at the beginnings and ends of some lessons, and marking is not as careful in all three groups.
24. Science teaching is good in the infant class and satisfactory in the juniors. Good use of grouping presents suitable challenge for all pupils, though the juniors sometimes have to copy too much text into their books. More sharing of lesson objectives with pupils would help those who find it difficult to get going on devising an investigation.
25. Teaching is good in both classes in art. Timetabling arrangements meant that there was too little evidence in design and technology, geography, history, information and

communication technology, music, physical education and religious education to make overall judgements on the quality of teaching.

26. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and this enables them to make good progress in their learning. Teachers plan and review the targets on the pupils' individual education plans, which are effectively monitored by the special needs co-ordinator. Tasks are well matched to enable pupils to achieve their targets and new ones are appropriately set. Teachers make good use of the learning support staff, who are extremely well briefed before lessons. Many of the learning support staff have the teacher's lesson plans and effectively record the progress that is made by the pupils during the lesson. They have a very clear understanding of the needs of the pupils they support and are fully involved in planning tasks and targets on the individual education plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures extremely well that the learning support staff work with pupils to meet their specific needs.

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

27. At the time of the last inspection, a key issue for action identified the development of whole-school schemes of work for each subject to ensure that the work planned was more progressively challenging. In addressing the issue of improving the curriculum, the school was also required to broaden the curriculum for those under five so that more opportunities for children could be provided to develop their skills of independent enquiry, decision-making and physical development. The school has addressed both these key issues well and, throughout the school, all aspects of curriculum provision have significantly improved. The school fully meets statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education.
28. The lessons planned for the children in the Foundation Stage take full account of the requirements for this age group. The teachers provide a range of activities across the six areas of learning, and the quality and range of experiences for children in Reception group are good. From Year 1 to Year 5, the teachers have plans of work that enable the pupils to learn and make progress in a structured way in all subjects. A rolling programme has been organised which enables all pupils, regardless of background, sex, ability or learning needs, to experience a sequence of rich and varied activities in a supportive atmosphere. All pupils have access to all the activities of the school and take a full part in lessons and in after-school activities.
29. Teachers exploit well the links between subjects to ensure that work is presented in an interesting way. This contributes strongly to the pupils' very good attitudes to school and to learning. The school has carefully considered how best to teach the different subjects over a year and time is well allocated so that all the National Curriculum is covered. This ensures a good, rich balance between subjects, which inspires the pupils and keeps them involved in what they are doing.
30. The school uses the national strategy for teaching literacy very effectively. The literacy hour is well established and has a very strong influence on the work in other subjects. Strong teaching during the literacy hour ensures that pupils demonstrate high levels of confidence in speaking and in using reference materials in the library. The introduction of the national strategy for the teaching of numeracy is having a good impact on pupils' learning. Teachers make good opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in subjects like science, history and design and technology.
31. The majority of parents are very appreciative of the range of activities provided for pupils outside the school day, and the inspection team supports the view that provision is better than is usually found in similar-sized schools for pupils of this age. After school clubs such

as art, football and environmental studies, together with opportunities to participate in an orchestra ensure that pupils' tastes are well catered for. The range of activities, together with the richness of the taught curriculum enhances pupils' lives considerably. The opportunity for older pupils to experience a three-day residential stay at Malvern Outdoor Centre for Years 4 and 5 is much appreciated and supports their physical development very well.

32. The school shows a strong commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils, and every pupil is encouraged to take part in the full range of activities offered, both in and out of lessons, regardless of sex or social circumstances.
33. The provision for personal, social and health education in the school is very good. At the time of the last inspection the programme was satisfactory, but the co-ordinator has now established a full and clear plan, which ensures that these important issues are well covered. Throughout the school there is good and regular attention to matters of healthy eating, taking medicines and keeping fit, which is well linked to other subjects like science, physical education and design and technology. Tolerance and respect are strongly promoted across the curriculum, and the specific teaching of health related issues, including drugs and sex education are also considered. This makes a significant contribution to the programme for developing a healthy and safe life style. The strong commitment to high quality relationships and caring which is evident in school ensures that the high emphasis on personal and social development permeates the whole curriculum.
34. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school is fully committed to inclusion and this is evident in the high priority placed on special educational needs in the school to ensure that the individual needs of the pupils are met. Most pupils receive very good support in the classroom either from the teacher or from the learning support assistants to enable them to receive the same curriculum as the rest of their class, through activities appropriate to their needs.
35. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school is well integrated into village life and pupils benefit from local celebrations such as bonfire night and maypole dancing. The latter event is incorporated into the physical education curriculum. The cricket club provides coaching in the summer and a local man coaches football in a lunch-time club. The history and geography curriculum gain from the guidance of a local historian in the local area study and residents talk to pupils about their experiences in the Second World War. There are thriving, very constructive, links with other local schools to provide mutual support for staff and enrich the curriculum. Staff share training and work assessment moderation, for example. Pupils take part in joint sessions with other schools, for example in sport and mathematics. The 'multi-cultural week' planned with other schools, provides experiences for pupils that a small school on its own would have difficulty in providing. When children start in Reception, they are helped by the links built up with local nurseries and playgroups to smooth their induction, and similar links with the middle school help them when they leave.
36. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school promotes good spiritual awareness in its pupils. During the inspection, this was seen principally in assemblies, which are a calm and thought provoking experience. Pupils are asked to reflect on the theme and how it relates to their own lives. In this, they are well guided by the teacher leading the assembly who balances the needs of the wide age range attending. Older pupils have thought about the reasons for prayer and have devised their own grace, which they use for the whole school at lunchtime. There is a spiritual ethos in many lessons, manifested in the way staff respect pupils and cater for their individual needs.

37. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The consistently applied behaviour policy encourages pupils not only to behave well for reward or fear of sanction, but also because they enjoy approval. Even the youngest children know the reasons why, for example, they should take it in turns to speak and not hurt each other. They are taught to differentiate right from wrong. Pupils discuss the reasons for setting rules and guidelines, which they see as producing an orderly society, as well as respecting the feelings of others. Because of this, there is a very good level of self-discipline, which increases as pupils grow. Staff provide very good role models and are respected by pupils. Pupils are taught to respect the values and beliefs of others. Whilst the school has good specific procedures for dealing with bullying, these are largely unused because of the very positive caring ethos developed.
38. The school provides very well for pupils' social development. The personal, social and health education programme is integrated into the overall curriculum so that pupils experience social development in the context of the rest of their studies. In addition, staff use 'circle time' - a session in which all the pupils in a class are encouraged through games to discuss feelings towards themselves and their fellow pupils - to promote self-esteem and care for others. The daily whole-school assemblies foster a commitment to the school community amongst all pupils. They teach them the value of being a useful member of that community and, by extension, of society as a whole. Pupils are encouraged to undertake responsibility, both individually and collectively. Older pupils' personal confidence is further enhanced by the residential trip to Malvern.
39. Pupils gain a good awareness of their own and others' culture through lessons in several subjects, such as history, geography, art and music. For example, the food and farming topic is brought alive by a visit from a local farmer, which is very much part of their own culture. The school plays a major part in the May Day maypole dancing, with pupils learning and performing traditional dance patterns. Pupils visit local theatres and art galleries and take part in music festivals. Pupils spoke appreciatively of the large wall hangings that they have made with support from a community art project. Pupils study aspects of other cultures through the geography and religious education programmes and through 'multicultural weeks' organised with other local schools. This allows the school to explore these cultures across subjects of the curriculum, as in African dance. There are few books in the fiction library representing stories from, for example, Africa or South Asia, which could improve further pupils' awareness of the cultures of other groups in Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school has very good procedures for ensuring that its pupils are well cared for and the effectiveness has improved since the previous inspection. Staff are trained in first aid and take good care of pupils who are ill or have accidents at school. Staff and governors carry out systematic health and safety risk assessments and equipment checks and the school is a safe environment. Staff are aware, through written assessments, of what precautions to take in subjects such as design technology or when going outside school with pupils. Child protection procedures meet local guidelines and the designated teacher has been trained in their use. The school has no current cases but is confident that it would receive good support from welfare agencies.
41. Staff use their very good knowledge and relationships with their pupils to monitor their personal development, and comment in the pupils' reports. If there are particular concerns, these are recorded in a pupil's personal file. Staff manage pupils' behaviour very well, based on a policy that treats each pupil as an individual and emphasises reinforcing good behaviour by praise and reward. The absence of bullying is a consequence of the school's appropriate emphasis on a caring environment. Very good discussion of interpersonal relationships takes place within lessons when pupils talk about

their feelings, thus promoting their self-esteem. Staff complete registers correctly and monitor attendance satisfactorily.

42. The school provides very good support and guidance in raising pupils' achievement throughout the school. Teachers use their assessment of progress in lessons and at the end of the topic, to set targets for individual pupils to improve. They use their knowledge of the pupils' attitudes, levels of maturity and special needs to match the work they do with what the pupils have learned before and need to learn next in order to make further progress.
43. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and have improved significantly since the last inspection. Children are assessed during their first term in Reception. The data gained from this baseline assessment is used very well for teachers to plan from and is used to predict potential problems as the children move on to the National Curriculum in Year 1.
44. There are very good assessment tasks for English, mathematics and science and these are used regularly by teachers. Results are very effectively analysed by the co-ordinators to support teachers in setting both group and individual targets for the pupils. These targets are proving to be extremely useful in raising standards. Teachers share the targets with parents at the start of every term and review them during parents' consultation evenings. This enables parents to support their children in their learning. They are also used very well to plan activities to meet the needs of pupils of all ability groups and to focus on areas for development across the school. For example, the school has recently been focusing on raising attainment in writing.
45. **There are very good portfolios of pupils' work and these are used extremely well to assist teachers in accurately assessing the levels reached by each pupil. This is another very good record of individual pupils' progress. The school has introduced assessment procedures and records for all other subjects of the curriculum. This information is being used effectively to guide teachers in planning future work for the pupils. Most curriculum co-ordinators have a portfolio of samples of pupils' work and this is effective in supporting teachers in becoming familiar with the National Curriculum levels expected of pupils in Years 2 and 5. The overall use of assessment to guide teachers with curriculum planning has improved significantly since the last inspection.**
46. The school is effective in identifying pupils with learning difficulties soon after entry into reception and this has a good effect on the progress pupils make. The school uses its assessment procedures very well to identify pupils who need additional support and to ensure their needs are met. Teachers review pupils' targets, which are of good quality, on their individual education plans each term and wherever possible the parents are involved. The special needs co-ordinator receives information about any child new to the school and is able to identify any concerns. These are shared with the pupil's teacher and the necessary support given to ensure that the pupil is given good care. Annual reviews of the Statements of Special Educational Need are appropriately completed and all agencies involved with the pupils either attend the review or submit reports.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents are generally very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. About two-thirds of parents responded to the questionnaire and the views they expressed were very favourable. The only minor concern was how closely the school works with parents. A relatively high proportion of parents attended the meeting before inspection, and they were also very enthusiastic about the school and had few concerns. Discussions with

parents during the inspection were very helpful but could shed little light on the issue of working with the school. These positive views are confirmed by the inspection.

48. The school's links with parents are very effective. The quality of information the school gives parents is good. When children start in the reception class, the school provides parents with information telling them about how their child will be taught and gives advice on supporting this at home. Parents find this very useful. They are kept well informed of what is happening in school with regular, attractive newsletters and curricular information is given each term. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and give good information about what the pupil has achieved that year and the effort they have put in. They also give a good insight into the pupil's personal development and some targets to aim for in the following year. Parents are further able to support their child through extensive discussion with the class teacher each term. In addition, the open nature of the relationship between parent and teacher allows informal discussion should any query arise between formal meetings.
49. Parents have a good impact on the progress of their children at school and at home. Most parents support their child's learning by hearing them read at home and enter into a fruitful dialogue with the teacher in the reading diary. However, this evidence also shows that a few parents do not give sufficient regular support. Many parents support homework, although some feel they are not sufficiently well informed about when it should be done. The school has issued an appropriate home-school agreement and most parents have completed and returned it. There is a strong 'Friends of the School' organisation that raises very substantial amounts for the school, organises social events and supports other activities arranged by the school. Funds have been used to provide many facilities - for example, playground equipment. Some parents help within the school, for example with hearing pupils read and in practical lessons.
50. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the special needs process. The targets, on the individual education plans, are discussed and reviewed during parent consultation evenings. Parents are also invited to attend or contribute to the annual reviews for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need and this enables them to give effective help at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher's very good leadership is exemplified by her realisation, soon after her appointment, that the action plan from the last report would have to be rewritten, because the key issues remained largely untackled. Working with governors, she produced a good action plan which has successfully addressed all the issues. Her leadership has produced a united staff team who share her aim of raising standards while providing a secure environment for the pupils. The detailed work on curricular planning has been very effective in raising standards in many subjects.
52. Very good management is seen in the way the headteacher organises staffing to produce three classes in the morning for literacy and numeracy, so that classes are small and teachers and assistants are able to work with individuals and groups of just a few pupils. A regular programme of lesson observations by the headteacher and the use of pertinent objectives in performance management have effectively enabled staff to develop the less secure areas of their work. The burden of paperwork on the headteacher of such a small school is considerable. The headteacher has one day each week to carry out managerial duties. She is well organised, but the amount required of her by central and local government is disproportionate to the number of pupils.
53. Governors take their role in forward planning and monitoring standards seriously and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They worked with the headteacher on the revised action

plan and set up a school development committee, which keeps a watch on the progress of initiatives. They realise that statistics from National Curriculum tests have little meaning in such a small school and make a regular study of the value-added data provided by the local education authority. All governors visit lessons and the governing body has recently produced guidance to standardise the way a focus for these visits is chosen and how information from the observations will be given to the rest of the governors.

54. Together, the headteacher and governors keep the school under constant review and so have a thorough picture of what the school does well and what could be improved. An example of this is the work in the last school year to raise standards in writing, which was shown by an analysis of pupils' work to be weaker than reading. This covered the content of writing as well as aspects such as spelling and handwriting, and the results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests demonstrated that the initiative had been successful. Another example, which also shows how the school strives to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential, is the study of how lower attaining pupils achieve. The headteacher looked at pupils' work over a number of years, which suggested that lower attaining pupils made less progress in their time in the school than average and higher attaining pupils. To improve this, staff and assistants worked to produce better learning activities for lower attaining pupils, supported by new resources for teachers and pupils. Value-added data shows that lower attaining pupils are now progressing at a similar rate to other pupils.
55. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and all the paperwork is extremely well organised. The requirements of the Code of Practice¹ are fully met. There is an interim special education needs policy, which endorses the school's commitment to the full inclusion of all pupils. The special education needs co-ordinator very effectively monitors the targets on the individual education plans and the overall provision for pupils with special educational needs. The governing body are well informed about the special needs provision in the school through the headteacher's report and also from questions answered by the special needs co-ordinator at governors' meetings.
56. Financial planning is well linked to the educational priorities that are identified on the school development plan and have been agreed by both staff and governors. This document provides good strategic management for the future. It addresses well the areas for development and fully reflects the aims and values of the school. The resources of the school are used well. All funds, including specific grants, are carefully matched to the priorities that have been identified in the plan. There are clearly identified routines, which are well established, and which enable the headteacher and governors to monitor the deployment of resources. They also help them to establish best value principles when measuring improvements in the quality of teaching, standards achieved by the pupils and when purchasing resources.
57. Day-to-day financial management and administration of the school are very good. Routine administration procedures operate efficiently and unobtrusively. The school secretary gives very good support to pupils and staff. Appropriate use is made of information technology systems to maintain financial control and accountability and to produce school information.
58. Provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is generally good, although the accommodation is cramped. There is a good number of teachers, who are well qualified to teach the curriculum and have good knowledge of the subjects they manage. Additional teaching staff allow the pupils to be split into smaller groups in the mornings for literacy and numeracy, and to give some time for the headteacher to pursue her

¹ [Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.](#)

management tasks. Each class has a learning assistant, who gives good support, either to groups of pupils or to those with specific educational needs. The accommodation has been extended and the classrooms are generally large enough for the teaching groups. There is plenty of open space around the school but there is no hall. Nevertheless, the school makes efficient use of what it has and uses the village hall for physical education. The outside area has been made more interesting for play and study by the addition of a garden and pond. Learning resources are good in almost all subjects and the school complements them by sharing the resources of other schools.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. Staff and governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and have already addressed the major areas for improvement. There are therefore no key issues for development. The following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- * make pupils more aware of what they are going to learn in a lesson, so that they can judge the extent of their learning by the end;
(Paragraphs 20, 82, 87)

- * endeavour to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning at home by giving them fuller guidelines as to what is expected and more feedback on how well the homework was done .
(Paragraph 20)

(Numbers in brackets indicate a reference to the main paragraphs where the issues are discussed.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
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	2	6	8	2	0	0	0
Percentage	11	33	44	11	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

The number of pupils (seven) who sat the 2001 National Curriculum tests was too small to make national comparisons realistic, so these data are not published.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	40
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y5

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.9
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR– Y5

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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	2000/01
	£
Total income	149,805
Total expenditure	150,425
Expenditure per pupil	3,419
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,943
Balance carried forward to next year	7,323

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	50
Number of questionnaires returned	32

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	22	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	41	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	44	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	47	6	3	6
The teaching is good.	66	25	3	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	38	9	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	19	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	53	28	16	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	44	47	3	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	34	0	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	25	6	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. Children start school in a class that consists of a mixed group of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The Reception children follow the Foundation Stage curriculum, which is a step in education preceding the National Curriculum in Year 1. Children are admitted into school in the year in which they will have their fifth birthday. The vast majority of children start on a full-time basis. At the time of the inspection there were ten Reception children in the Foundation Stage class.
61. In the Reception, Years 1 and 2 class there are a full-time teacher and a part-time trained assistant. Most children have attended playgroups before they start school. Very good induction procedures ensure that children quickly settle into the routines of the class. Children and parents are invited to attend school on a number of occasions. This ensures that good links have been established and that they are well prepared to start school.
62. The school closely follows the Early Learning Goals, the nationally recommended Foundation Stage curriculum in Reception. This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or *stepping stones*, from which both progress and standards can be measured.
63. Although attainment on entry is below the county average there are a small number of children who start school with appropriate personal and social skills, well-developed speech and a clear knowledge of the world around them. The vast majority of children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all areas of learning and achieve the final *stepping stone* in all the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage by the time that they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Children who start school with higher levels of skill exceed the final stage of the Foundation Stage and work within the National Curriculum. The information collated from initial assessments is used effectively to provide appropriate support. For example, children with special educational needs are identified as soon as they start school.
64. Adults responsible for the Reception children work very well together and teach effectively. They plan activities with a clear focus on children's individual learning needs and provide a range of stimulating activities in all areas of learning. Adults give clear instructions and this encourages the children to listen carefully. Very warm relationships and effective use of praise motivate the children and engage them in learning. This promotes their self-esteem and confidence.
65. The indoor area provides a stimulating environment where there is a good range of learning resources that are used well to extend the children's learning. Although there is not a safe and secure outdoor area, the environment outside is used very well to stimulate learning during parts of the school day.
66. In the previous inspection, weaknesses in the planning for this specific age group were highlighted. With the introduction of the Foundation Stage, there have been good improvements made since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. The very good range of experiences that are provided within the Foundation Stage curriculum ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. It is evident from both the planning and the organisation of the classroom

that teaching in this area of learning is of very high quality. Every opportunity is planned to encourage excitement, motivation and confidence. The children respond well to structured sessions with their teacher and in whole school assemblies where they sit quietly for a short time. They also work well independently at the computer, at the writing table and at specific activities planned for them. During these independent sessions they confidently try out new activities and ideas and speak together in familiar groups. They are respectful of each other and treat other children and all adults with courtesy. This is particularly evident in the role-play area where differing groups of children successfully play together as postmen, circus-performers or employees at a garden centre. They also dress independently in role to suit the particular theme and all children manage their own personal hygiene.

Communication, language and literacy

68. The very good quality teaching within this area of learning ensures that all children make good progress. All adults skilfully interact with the children and the provision of very suitable activities ensures that most children achieve the final step of the Foundation Stage. A small number of higher attaining children exceed the expected level by the time that they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum. All children speak audibly and take turns to talk in a large group situation. They listen carefully to each other talking and respond sensitively to what they hear. This is evident during sessions when the children sit together in a large group. They know that they must talk only when they are holding a specified object and carefully listen to the news and views of others. The children respond with a developing awareness of new vocabulary. For example, one child talked of her pet who was poorly but clearly explained to the class that 'medication' had been bought for it. This provided a new word for many of the children in the group. All children identify the initial sounds of all letters in the alphabet and link words to particular objects. For instance, they know that the word 'doll' begins with a 'd' and relate a fan to the letter 'f'. These good levels have been attained because the adults plan high quality activities with very good use of resources. The children remember short pieces of repeated text such as from one of their popular books 'Run, run, as fast as you can - you can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man'. The vast majority of children know that print carries meaning and turn over the pages of books with confidence. Higher attainers recognise simple words and discuss characters in their favourite books. Lower attainers look at the pictures to help them understand the story-line. Developing knowledge of letter sounds helps the children to spell their name and write short words both on paper on and using a magnetic board. The provision of a very comprehensively equipped writing corner encourages children to write for a wide range of different purposes. For example, they write lists and letters with a range of writing utensils that includes the use of a large typewriter. This has a very positive effect on their learning.

Mathematical development

69. Much emphasis is given to the practical teaching of mathematical development and the quality of teaching is good. High quality input ensures that all children make good progress, including those with special educational needs. A small number of higher attaining children clearly recognise numerals up to 10 and use them to subtract and divide. They have an awareness of numbers up to 20 and add on digits within a sequence. These children will exceed the expected level by Year 1 of the National Curriculum. The average attainers recognise numbers up to 10 and are learning to write them with developing confidence. They match groups of objects to the correct number and understand if one set has more than another one. These children are working at the expected level for their age. All children in the Foundation Stage talk about and recognise mathematical language such as 'bigger or smaller' and 'more or less'. They identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as triangles, squares, circles and rectangles.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. The vast majority of children achieve the final step of the Foundation Stage. This is because the quality of teaching is good in this area of learning and sessions are carefully planned to ensure that the children gain plenty of practical experiences of the world around them. Children talk about the type of house they live in and notice such features as chimneys, doors and windows. They know which villages their friends live in and make good links with their mathematical development when they create pictographs to illustrate this. They learn about their own culture and beliefs. For example, they develop a suitable awareness of the nearby church and celebrate special events such as Shrove Tuesday and Lent. They also learn to appreciate the beliefs of others through the celebration of Divali and Hanukkah. The high quality adult input has a good effect on the children's learning and a wide range of resources develops their knowledge and skills. For example, the children were observed identifying and sorting a range of different materials. They looked closely at the similarities and gained a sound understanding of the differences between metal, wood and plastic. They also observed the materials and looked to find how they were used around the classroom. The children use a wide range of construction equipment to build houses and vehicles of all shapes and sizes. They also create objects using recycled materials that have been painted, then cut and glued together for effect. For example, the children made a three-dimensional street with houses, using a range of old boxes and packages. Adults make good use of the computer to develop the children's use of everyday technology. For example, all the children competently 'dress a teddy' on screen and develop their control techniques by matching pictures to letter sounds.

Physical development

71. Despite the lack of a dedicated outdoor area for the Foundation Stage, children make good progress in this area of learning and achieve the expected levels by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum. This is because the quality of teaching is good and carefully meets the needs of each individual child. All the children move safely around the classroom and show a suitable understanding of space in relation to one another. In the playground outside they move with developing control and travel under and over various pieces of equipment. Their weekly swimming sessions also have a positive impact on their physical development and most of the children gain good levels in water confidence. Very thorough planning ensures that the children gain experience in handling and using small equipment. They confidently work with malleable products such as clay and skilfully roll out, cut and shape it. Children use scissors with suitable control and awareness of safety.

Creative development

72. By the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum the children have attained the expected levels in this area of learning. This is because the quality of teaching and learning are consistently good and often very good and this enables all children to progress well in relation to their prior attainment. Children with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons. The children recognise and use different colours. They enthusiastically paint pictures of themselves and of other people familiar to them. These pictures and paintings include some simple recognition of facial features. They use a wide variety of different materials to make collages and the higher attainers are developing a good awareness of drawing skills. For example, different shades of pencil were used to create a picture showing a head with long hair. All children in the Foundation Stage enjoy role-play and they co-operatively act out scenes in a 'greengrocer's shop' and 'estate agent's office'. They know a number of nursery rhymes and sing enthusiastically.

ENGLISH

73. Overall standards in Years 2 and 5 are above national averages. All pupils, including those with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. Attainment in speaking and listening is above the national average in Year 2. Pupils listen carefully, are keen to answer questions and contribute to discussions. For example, pupils in Year 1 listened attentively to 'The Gingerbread Man' and confidently referred to the repetitive line 'You can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man'. During role-play activities in Years 1 and 2, pupils pretend to be postmen and confidently discuss how much it might cost to send a parcel to Australia. In sessions where the pupils sit in a circle to discuss issues they confidently express their feelings and describe special events in their everyday lives. These good standards in speaking and listening are maintained as pupils progress through the school. In Year 5, the pupils talk and listen confidently in an increasing range of situations. For example, they discuss two contrasting texts written about evacuees during the Second World War and participate fully in class discussions. They talk about their work, listen with concentration, question the ideas of others and respond well to differing opinions.
74. Reading standards are above the national average in both Years 2 and 5 and pupils achieve well. Most pupils are able to use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. In Year 2, they talk confidently about the stories and predict what might happen. Higher attainers describe their favourite book and give their opinions about the type of book they enjoy reading. For example, one pupil explained the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and stated why he preferred to read non-fiction books. Older pupils understand how the library is organised and know the purpose of index and contents pages in a book. They express their preferences in reading and read a variety of texts, mainly accurately and fluently. The higher attainers have a good understanding of the plot and characters in the story and their significance. Lower attainers talk about the text less confidently. In Year 5 pupils compare and contrast the works of a single author and are beginning to give examples to justify their views. Some of the pupils are confident independent readers and express real enjoyment in reading for pleasure. They know how the newly furnished library is organised and understand the use of index, contents page and glossary in non-fiction books.
75. Attainment in writing is above the national average in Years 2 and 5. Pupils make good progress in their learning because of the particular whole-school focus on writing and consistently high quality teaching. Pupils experience a good range of writing for different purposes including instructions, describing characters and settings, flow charts, creative writing and retelling stories. Most pupils are beginning to demonstrate awareness of audience and use interesting vocabulary in their writing. In Year 1, pupils begin using capital letters and full stops correctly. By Year 2, average and higher attainers write detailed stories that have a suitable beginning, middle and end. For example, they write a story beginning, 'Once upon a time, there was a house on the edge of a forest', which is correctly punctuated and is written in a neat style of handwriting. Higher attainers use speech marks and this enlivens their writing. By Year 5, pupils write in a well organised, clear and imaginative style using basic punctuation accurately. Higher attainers are developing their use of paragraphs in their writing and clearly understand the importance of chronological order. They confidently write for a variety of different purposes and make good use of a wide range of vocabulary when writing poems, letters and formal reports. For instance, they write poems about different colours and describe blue as 'the sky elegantly dancing across the sun and its rays'. Good use is made of their information and communication technology skills when they edit and publish the finished work. Average attainers add suffixes to words to change them from verbs to nouns and higher attainers confidently change simple verbs in sentences to make them more expressive. Handwriting is usually legible, neat and joined. The school has successfully improved the quality of writing since the last inspection.

76. The overall quality of teaching is very good. The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher, who is also the co-ordinator, has been effective and teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Lessons are well planned and this has a good effect on pupils' learning. Tasks meet the needs of the different ability and age groups and enable pupils with special learning needs to work successfully towards achieving their targets on their individual education plans. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good and the excellent relationships ensure that the pupils generally respond with very positive attitudes to their work and show high quality behaviour. Teachers question well to promote discussions and to assess understanding. Resources are appropriately organised and teachers use a very good range of strategies in their teaching. For example, the Year 2/3 teacher used music very well to set the scene of a Russian folktale. This really captured the interest and imagination of the pupils. In a lesson in Years 4 and 5, the teacher read a poem with very clear expression. Challenging questions were set and the teacher encouraged all pupils to respond to them by skilful interaction. In very good lessons, the pace is very good and praise is used extremely well to raise pupils' self-esteem, enabling them to achieve very well in the lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teachers praised pupils highly when they remembered their letter sounds correctly. Lower attainers are supported well by classroom assistants. Assessment procedures are very good and are used effectively to support teachers' planning. The pupils have individual targets that are also shared with their parents. Because of good marking, pupils know what they can do and what they need to do in order to improve their work. This has a good effect on individual achievement and the raising of standards.
77. The management of English is very good and the co-ordinator is working hard to support colleagues in raising standards in English across the school. The co-ordinator analyses test results to set targets and information is used well to support the school's development plan. Resources are good and the recently refurbished library is attractive and is beginning to be used effectively by all pupils. The development of literacy skills is having a strong impact on attainment in English and these are used well to support other areas of the curriculum, such as history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

78. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 5 is above national averages. This shows good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was broadly in line with expectations at both key stages. The two principal factors in improvement are the good teaching and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
79. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of place value and sequence numbers beyond 100. They add together and subtract two sets of two-digit numbers mentally and on paper and higher attaining pupils write sums with much bigger numbers. They know and use multiplication tables facts. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of fractions and share items of food at an imaginary party. Higher attaining pupils have a grasp of simple equivalent fractions. All pupils have a good knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and use standard units to measure length to the nearest half centimetre. They display data on a block graph and higher attaining pupils understand the use of a Venn diagram.
80. By Year 5, pupils' understanding of place value is well established. Most pupils know how to multiply by 10, 100 and 1,000 by moving columns. They use a variety of written methods for the four rules of arithmetic and higher attaining pupils understand a method of long multiplication. Pupils know how to manipulate the decimal point when dealing with compound metric measures. All pupils understand reflectional symmetry and use protractors to construct and measure angles. Most understand why the angles in a straight line add to 180 degrees and higher attaining pupils use a programmable robot to

draw shapes, showing their grasp of the concept of external angles. Pupils also construct and interpret block graphs, including some produced on computers, and higher attaining pupils understand a line graph. In work on probability, average and higher attaining pupils distinguish impossible, possible, likely and certain and use concepts such as mode.

81. Pupils use numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils used their good grasp of place value in history, when sequencing by date a set of pictures of houses. In science, older pupils collect data about the use of materials around the school and display the results in tally charts and in block and pie graphs, using computers. In a cross-curricular lesson, Year 5 pupils took wartime rations in imperial measures and converted them into metric equivalents. Others wrote word problems using rations and the rate at which the food might be used up.
82. The quality of teaching across the school is good overall. An excellent lesson was observed for the oldest pupils, and this is described in paragraph 19. Strengths of the teaching are the provision for pupils' differing abilities, based on a good understanding of their previous attainment, gained from marking and assessment. Support staff are used well to work with small groups and are well briefed. This means that all pupils are fully included in the lessons. Relationships are such that teachers can work with one group, trusting others to get on with their own tasks without wasting time. Lessons are very well paced, with a swift move from mental work to group activity, in which adults support groups in turn. Whole-class sessions at the end of the lesson are used well to recap on learning, though this would sometimes be more effective if more use were made of reminding pupils of the lesson objectives. Most of teachers' marking is thorough, though it is not so for all groups.
83. The headteacher is the co-ordinator and has a clear knowledge of all pupils' progress from regular testing and tracking. She observes her colleagues' teaching and keeps a close watch on the quality of their planning. This monitoring of all aspects of the school's work in mathematics has helped to raise standards. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and parents at the pre-inspection meeting reported that their children enjoy mathematics.

SCIENCE

84. Pupils' attainment by Year 2 is in line with the national average and, by Year 5, it is above. This shows good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was average at both key stages.
85. Year 2 pupils have studied plants and animals as part of the topic, *My home in the village*. They learnt about where animals live, how they differ and where there are similarities. In their present work, they understand how materials can be grouped and that heat can alter them. For example, they describe how a metal can be bent with a little heat or moulded if it is melted.
86. By Year 5, pupils have experience of conducting experiments which they have designed themselves. They write them up afterwards and average and higher attaining pupils make a clear distinction between hypothesis and result. In studying light, most pupils know that a shadow is blocked light and that a reflection is bounced light. They undertake work with a mirror to extend both their understanding of light and their knowledge of symmetry from mathematics. All pupils have a grasp of what makes a gas different from a solid or liquid and they explain it in terms of particles. Pupils use computers to record their work in text and graphs and to store information in a database.
87. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory for Key Stage 2. Younger children are given work which is well matched to their age and ability. For example, while

Year 2 pupils were talking about heating materials, younger pupils were sorting materials into different categories. At Key Stage 2, the teacher groups the pupils according to their prior ability. However, some of the work in pupils' books consists of quite lengthy copying from a common text, which inhibits their ability to express their own understanding. A strength of the teaching at this key stage is encouraging pupils to design their own investigations, though lower attaining pupils sometimes need more guidance. Reference to the learning intention would enable them to see their way more clearly.

88. The subject is well managed and has a good system of assessment, in common with other subjects. The co-ordinator reviews teachers' planning and has an overview of standards through pupils' portfolios. Monitoring of teaching is done by the co-ordinator and the headteacher.

ART AND DESIGN

89. At the time of the last inspection, attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 5 was in line with national expectations. Standards in art throughout the school are now above national expectations and the achievement of all pupils is good. Good planning ensures that teachers follow a full and detailed programme, and good teaching ensures that pupils develop their skills logically and build securely upon what they already know. Teachers value pupils' work highly and this is reflected in the good quality display around the school, making it a bright and attractive environment in which to work. Portfolios of work, the current displays, photographic evidence of work and pupils' sketchbooks indicate that art makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school. Every pupil is encouraged to be sensitive to detail, enjoy the pleasure of special moments of reflection and to value beauty in the world.
90. By Year 2, standards of work are higher than found nationally. This reflects a good level of learning that successfully extends and refines what has been introduced in the Foundation Stage. Pupils use a wide range of materials and techniques. When painting, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 use primary and secondary colours well and paint carefully, selecting and using a range of brushes, depending on the scope of the work. For example, their paintings of houses are extremely detailed. Good use is made of shading when they sketch and pupils achieve a high degree of accuracy. A wide range of techniques - such as printing, painting, pastel work and pattern work - are well developed so that they can be readily used in other subjects. Detailed drawings, such as features found in the local church, begin to develop pupils' observational skills to a high degree. Patterns are recreated on the computer and work in history, geography, science and religious education is enhanced by pupils' delightful drawings and paintings.
91. Standards achieved by Year 5 are also good. Sketchbooks show evidence of progress in the development of ideas, and examples of finished work show that these initial ideas have been carried through to a high standard in the finished pieces. For example, wax crayons have been used to good effect in a piece of work to support pupils' historical studies; red and yellow crayons were drawn thickly over paper, black wax was rubbed over these colours and then scraped out to depict a night-time scene during the Blitz. Pupils talk about their use of a variety of materials like pastels, charcoals and paints with reference to achieving high quality results and improving their work. Their observational drawings - for example of garden tools - show skilled use of shading for effect. In all their work, there is clear evidence that a high level of involvement and enthusiasm from both teachers and pupils has fostered these more advanced techniques.
92. Good quality teaching is evident through analysis of pupils' work, displays and photographic evidence. Resources are also of good quality and entirely appropriate to the task. Pupils enjoy art and experience a high level of satisfaction in completing tasks and this is owing in no small measure to the high level of teachers' expertise and extremely

high expectations, with planning for lessons supported if necessary by the co-ordinator's input to ensure high levels of challenge for all pupils.

93. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She is extremely knowledgeable and shares this knowledge and expertise generously, supporting other staff well. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development and art plays a very valuable part in enhancing pupils' enthusiasm for and delight in learning, which reflects the high ideals of the school well. The use of art from well-known western and non-European artists, and opportunities to work in a similar style, ensure that art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection, but it is evident from looking at teachers' planning, examples of completed work, pupils' design sheets and talking to pupils, that standards attained by pupils in Years 2 and 5 are above national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were in line with national expectations. The school provides pupils with interesting and worthwhile experiences and covers all aspects of the subject.
95. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 enthusiastically make shadow puppets and moveable cards. They make moving joints using metal pins on a simple body shape and have created an elaborate mural using various weaving and sewing techniques. The pupils have carefully used the correct design process to make a coat for 'Joseph' as part of their religious education studies. To make these good quality garments, the pupils have worked successfully with a range of materials and then joined them effectively. They have also made very attractive glove puppets from materials which they decorate and, when they finish, they evaluate the success of their design. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 have successfully made purses. They used a design sheet to list the materials required, described the methods to be used and produced a sketch of the purse to show how they wanted it to look and how it actually worked. Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils use numeracy skills in their work when measuring and make torches after first evaluating commercial products to see how they were designed. Their work is prominently displayed in the school, which raises the profile of the subject and shows that their efforts are valued. Food technology is included in the curriculum. Pupils make cakes and bread at various stages in their time in school. The use of control technology to operate models made from construction kits is developed well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.
96. No overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning could be made. However, teachers plan their lessons according to the scheme of work, and the quality of the finished products shows that pupils learn the correct 'design-and-make' skills effectively. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work and are proud of their efforts. There are procedures to assess pupils' understanding and skills, and the information gained is used for future planning. The co-ordinator has very recently taken over management of the subject but already has a clear view of standards throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

97. Evidence from pupils' past work and from the one history lesson observed in the infant class shows that pupils' attainment in history and geography by Year 2 is in line with expectations. By Year 5, attainment in history also meets expectations, but there was not enough evidence to make a judgement about attainment in geography. This picture is much the same as at the last inspection.

98. Infant pupils have been following a topic called *My home in the village*. In geography, they look at the area around the school and how it could be made safer. They draw sketch maps of the main street in Overbury, showing the school and some of the cottages. In history, they look at the different types of dwelling over the ages.
99. Year 5 pupils have been studying the Second World War. They learn about its effect on the Home Front, such as rationing, 'Digging for Victory' and the building of Anderson shelters. A prominent feature of their classroom is a fascinating display of artefacts from the period, which pupils have brought from home. Good use was made of these in a science lesson when the teacher asked pupils to consider the materials some of them are made from. Pupils have a good understanding of their use and why they were needed. Planning documents show that the National Curriculum for geography is also fully covered.
100. It is not possible to make overall judgements on the quality of teaching in history and geography. The lesson seen in the infant class was excellent and included teaching for Reception children. It is described in the teaching section in paragraph 18. The headteacher co-ordinates both subjects well. She has a good overview of teaching in her capacity as head and is building up portfolios of all pupils' work to show the levels they attain. The only resources gap is an up-to-date set of atlases.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. Pupils' overall attainment is in line with national expectations by Year 5 and some aspects are above expectations. This is a similar picture to that reported at the last inspection, though the subject has developed considerably in that time both nationally and in this school. The provision for control technology has improved. There was insufficient evidence to make judgement about attainment by Year 2.
102. Year 5 pupils have experience in all strands of the subject. They use word processing to produce work in history, combining text, graphics and pictures. They format text colour and size and save and retrieve their documents. Work in control technology is at a standard above what is expected for Year 5. In mathematics, pupils program a floor robot to draw an equilateral triangle, extending their understanding of angle. In science, they use a microscope through the computer and, later this year, they will use sensory equipment to measure pond temperatures. When working on light in science, pupils learnt to program a machine to spin a disc which they had coloured, to illustrate how white light is made up. Pupils use the Internet to search for information for history and science and are learning to send e-mails. Pupils handle data in mathematics and science and produce graphs. They also have some experience of spreadsheets and databases.
103. No judgement on the quality of teaching can be made since no direct teaching was observed. Information and communication technology skills are taught weekly to whole-class groups and computers are used in many lessons, as pupils' past work shows. The subject is managed well by a part-time teacher, who is also responsible for music and religious education. He prepared a successful bid for national funding and he and the headteacher have ensured that all teachers have the necessary expertise. There is ample provision of up-to-date equipment and older machines are due to be replaced. All machines are soon to be networked - at the moment, only two have an Internet connection. An overview of standards and teaching is gained on the co-ordinator's behalf by the headteacher.

MUSIC

104. A judgement on pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching across the school cannot be made, because only one short lesson for Years 4 and 5 was observed. This was a singing lesson and is described above in paragraph 17. Pupils sang well in four parts, with good attention to rhythm and tempo, though they need more encouragement to observe the full value of notes at the ends of lines.
105. Singing was also heard in assemblies. As the school has no hall, these take place in the largest classroom, which has a false ceiling. This means that the room lacks the acoustics of a hall and makes the singing seem a little subdued, which it is not. In one assembly, the pupils sang a Jewish traditional song with very good accompaniment from members of the school orchestra, who played flute, violin, keyboard, xylophone and unpitched percussion. At the start and end of assembly, pupils listened to a recording of music composed and performed by groups of older pupils. This made a strong contribution to the atmosphere and to pupils' self-esteem.
106. The subject is managed well by the part-time teacher. He has revised the curriculum and ensures that the full spread of the subject is taught. Timetabling arrangements mean that Years 4 and 5 have two 20-minute sessions a week plus a full hour every second week.
107. The school makes good provision for pupils to experience music-making during the year. There are concerts at Christmas and in the summer, as well as music festivals held jointly with other local schools. Tuition is available on the clarinet and violin and extra-curricular activities are run for pupils to learn the guitar and recorder. The latter instrument is taught on a voluntary basis by a parent to all pupils from Year 2 up.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. It was not possible to make a judgement about overall standards or the quality of teaching, as there were no lessons taking place during the inspection other than swimming. All pupils swim for two terms each year and records show that most achieve the expected standards by Year 5.
109. Teachers' schemes of work indicate a clear focus on learning intentions for pupils that are in line with statutory requirements. Planning is good and achieves the necessary balance between gymnastics, dance, swimming and games. This is an improvement in provision since the last inspection. Teachers compensate well for the lack of a hall by using village facilities. The headteacher, in her role as subject manager, has worked hard to provide a wide range of different and interesting activities for all pupils including specialist tennis and cricket coaching. Additionally, a range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110. Standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 5 and pupils in both key stages make good progress in their learning. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
111. By Year 2, most pupils understand that the church is a very special place for Christians. They know what to find in a church and describe objects such as the font, chancel and vestry. They consider Judaism and understand that the Ten Commandments in the Bible are a set of rules for Christians as well as Jews. They have a sound understanding of some of the celebrations that are important to Jews and are able to name important articles used in a synagogue.

112. By Year 5, the pupils know and understand in more detail the practices and customs of people of faiths as well as Christianity. They begin to identify similarities and differences between religions. For example, they study initiation ceremonies, such as baptism, and learn of its Muslim equivalent. Most pupils know that the Bible is a sacred book that forms the basis of Christianity and recall that the Five Pillars symbolise the beliefs of Islam. They are also able to name the major celebrations of Christianity and discuss the significance of saints. Pupils also reflect on their own feelings by writing their own prayers and this makes a strong contribution to their spiritual development.
113. No overall judgement on the quality of teaching can be made since no lessons were observed. Evidence from the pupils' work indicates that teachers plan their lessons well and have good subject knowledge. It is clear through discussions with pupils that teachers' skilful questioning promotes discussion, effectively capturing the interest of pupils.
114. The subject is well led and managed by a part-time teacher, who has successfully raised the profile of religious education in the school and ensures that the subject is taught for an appropriate amount of time each week. Samples of pupils' work and teachers' planning are monitored but no observations of lessons have taken place. The local agreed syllabus is supported by good quality input from the diocesan adviser. Resources, shared amongst the local cluster of schools, have improved significantly in quality since the last inspection. The school also makes good use of artefacts borrowed from the diocesan adviser and the village church is used well to support pupils in their learning. Visits to other places of worship, such as the synagogue in Cheltenham, are used well to promote the learning of other faiths.