

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **CROSSWAYS INFANT SCHOOL**

Thornbury, Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucester

Unique reference number: 109049

Headteacher: Mrs M E Smith

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie  
23482

Dates of inspection: 09 – 11 December 2002

Inspection number: 246192

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Knapp Road Thornbury Bristol
Postcode:	BS35 2HQ
Telephone number:	01454 867280
Fax number:	01454 867281
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Bevan
Date of previous inspection:	6 October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23482	Diana Mackie	Registered inspector	Art and design Mathematics Religious education Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
10329	Brian Sampson	Lay inspector		How high are standards?  b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27240	William Hooper	Team inspector	Design and technology English Information and communication technology Music English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
8056	Howard Probert	Team inspector	Geography History Physical education Science Educational inclusion Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Crossways Infant School is a popular school located in the small town of Thornbury, about 12 miles north-west of Bristol. Almost all pupils come from the immediate neighbourhood where there is mostly owner-occupied property. There are 163 pupils on roll. Of these, 55 are in the reception year. Children start school with a wide range of attainment but overall, attainment is above that usually seen for this age group. Four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below the national average. Few pupils are from minority ethnic heritages and very few speak English as an additional language. Ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs for learning, behavioural or physical difficulties. This is well below the national average. Just over one per cent of pupils have formal statements of special educational need.

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

This is a very good school which provides a high quality of education for its pupils. Current standards are above or well above expectations in all subjects by the end of Year 2, and pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. The curriculum is relevant and interesting and the quality of teaching is very good. The headteacher leads the school very well and she is ably supported by the committed and conscientious acting deputy headteacher. The governing body provides strong and supportive management for the school, and parents and the community contribute very significantly to the pupils' education. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Pupils' attainment is good or very good in all subjects and they achieve well by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning because of the school's very good provision for their personal development.
- The quality of teaching is very good and the curriculum is broad and interesting.
- Staff and governors care for the pupils very well and the school has very good relationships with parents.
- The headteacher provides very good educational direction for the school and the induction of new staff is excellent.
- The governors fulfil their duties very well and play a significant role in setting out priorities for school development.

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

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

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

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

Since the last inspection in October 1997 the school has made good improvement. The staff and governors have dealt with the key issues identified in the inspection report. The school now has arrangements for identifying and providing for the needs of higher attaining pupils to ensure that they are suitably challenged with demanding work. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is now carefully planned in line with national recommendations. In addition to these improvements, standards have risen in a number of subjects and the quality of the curriculum and teaching has improved.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	A*	B	A	B
writing	A	B	B	C
mathematics	A	C	B	C

**Key**

very high A\*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that, in 2002, the school's performance in comparison with all schools nationally was well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. When compared with schools in similar contexts, results were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. In teacher assessments in science, performance was average in comparison with all schools nationally. Over the past four years, the trend in the school's test results in reading, writing and mathematics has been upward, in line with the national trend. Current standards are well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing and science. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design and physical education are well above national expectations by the end of Year 2. Standards in religious education are well above the expectations outlined in the local agreed syllabus. In design and technology, geography, history and music, standards are above national expectations.

In the reception class, children make good progress and exceed the expected early learning goals in the six required areas of learning. From a good start, pupils achieve well throughout the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and want to learn. This has a positive effect on their progress and achievement.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils' very good behaviour ensures that there is a positive working atmosphere in lessons. At playtimes, pupils play happily together.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils become increasingly responsible, show respect for other people's views and are considerate for the needs of others.
Attendance	Good, and above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good



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

The overall quality of teaching is very good. During the inspection, nearly all of the teaching was good or better and well over a third was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In the reception class, children are taught very well so that they get a very good start to their schooling. Teachers are conscientious and they evaluate their work regularly to ensure that pupils progress effectively in lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic and they include a sense of fun to capture the pupils' interest. As a result, pupils are keen to learn, work productively and learn at a very good rate. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from the teachers' thoughtful questioning during discussions, when answers from all pupils are valued. Literacy is taught well and teachers ensure that pupils learn letter sounds and shapes so that they are able to sound out words in their reading. However, joined handwriting is not introduced soon enough, and ICT is not used as well as it could be in all subjects. Numeracy is taught very well and teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge in practical and relevant activities. Teaching assistants play a significant role in the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils from ethnic minority heritages achieve as well as their peers because the teachers promote equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve well over their time in school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good, with very good provision of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good, so that pupils make good progress with their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good, enabling pupils to integrate quickly into the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Teachers ensure that pupils know the difference between right and wrong and develop good levels of independence for their age. Pupils develop a growing awareness of the multicultural diversity of modern Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Child protection procedures are very good and health and safety issues are dealt with appropriately. Assessments of pupils' academic progress are good overall, and they are very good in English and mathematics.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. Information about school events is shared regularly with them. The school welcomes dialogue with parents and there is an 'open door' policy which gives them very good opportunities to discuss any concerns or ideas with the headteacher.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction and she is ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher. Subject co-ordinators, though a number of them are recently appointed, contribute significantly to the school's success.
How well the governors fulfil	Very good. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. They

their responsibilities	use their skills very effectively in the service of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Governors are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they plan conscientiously to effect improvements.

The strategic use of resources	Very good. Funds are used appropriately for the purpose for which they are intended. Governors manage the finances of the school very well. They ensure best value and give appropriate consideration to the effectiveness of their spending.
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Staffing levels are good. There are sufficient teachers to teach the National Curriculum effectively and pupils are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Professional training for staff is well organised and of very good quality. The quality of the accommodation is good and it is well cared for. The school is aware that the heating system in the computer suite is in need of a boost. Resources for teaching and learning are good overall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The children behave well and make good progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about coming into school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>	There were very few adverse comments.

The inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents. All of their positive comments were substantiated by the inspection.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance was above average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics in comparison with similar schools. Compared with all schools nationally, the school's results were well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. In teacher assessments in science, results at the expected level were average in comparison with all schools nationally. Since 1998, the trend in the school's results in reading and writing and mathematics has been upward, in line with the national trend. There has been no significant difference between the overall performance of girls and boys. Current standards by the end of Year 2 are well above national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics and above average in writing and science. The systematic monitoring of teaching and learning has had a significant positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, especially in literacy and numeracy.
2. Children enter the reception class with levels of attainment that are above those expected for their age, and by the time they move to Year 1 the children exceed the nationally agreed early learning goals in the statutory six areas of learning. They achieve well because of the consistent, high quality of the teaching and support that is based on secure understanding of the needs of young children. The planning of the curriculum is very good and staff create an encouraging atmosphere in which children learn systematically and happily.
3. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well from a good start. They develop their speaking and listening skills effectively and widen their vocabulary consistently in all subjects and express their ideas and views confidently. Specific subject vocabulary is taught well and pupils are encouraged to use this to ask questions, express their views and share their thoughts with other people. Pupils enjoy reading and have access to a wide range of texts enabling them to practise their skills in all subjects. As they read from enlarged texts in the literacy hour, they use illustrations to help them to understand stories. The step-by-step teaching and learning of letter sounds and patterns ensures that pupils make good gains in reading, writing and spelling. The school has done well in its drive to improve pupils' writing for a range of purposes, such as letters, lists and reports, but pupils do not use joined handwriting early enough.
4. In mathematics, most pupils use a good range of strategies to answer questions in mental arithmetic sessions. Pupils increase their mathematical vocabulary so that they express their ideas and show other pupils how they have worked things out. Pupils develop an increasing awareness of the use of mathematics in everyday life; for example in weighing, measuring and shopping. However, the development and use of mathematics in other subjects is not planned sufficiently to extend pupils' mathematical skills across the curriculum. In science, pupils benefit from the school's practical approach to the subject, and pupils quickly develop skills of systematic observation and recording. The school encourages them to learn through practical investigations so that pupils gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the world around them. Pupils know about fair testing and develop a growing understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. They record their work with increasing accuracy and independence. Their work in science enhances work in other subjects such as geography and design and technology. Through their scientific study, pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise.
5. Standards in ICT are well above national expectations. Most pupils are adept at using the keyboard for word processing and simple editing. They use simple drawing packages, drag images across the screen and locate them accurately. Standards are very good because of the use of new equipment, staff training and good leadership of the subject. Pupils are gradually gaining appropriate skills of sharing their ideas in a variety of forms, including text, tables, images and sound. The increased use of ICT in other subjects is an area for development.

6. Standards in design and technology, geography, history and music are above national expectations. In art and design and physical education, standards are well above those normally seen. Pupils create exciting and interesting work that is of very good quality. In religious education, pupils achieve well above the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Provision for pupils' understanding of a range of faiths is very good.
7. The school's commitment to inclusion ensures effective progress for all pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well based on their earlier learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to the targets set. Those pupils who are identified as higher attaining, gifted or talented are suitably challenged and attain high levels of attainment in several subjects. Teachers throughout the school make very good use of information from assessments to plan work that relates closely to pupils' learning. Pupils build well on what they already know, do and understand. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well, in line with their peers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress well and soon achieve as well as other pupils.

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

8. The pupils have very good attitudes towards their learning. They show a high level of involvement, enthusiasm and interest in lessons, at lunchtime, in the playground, in assemblies and in school plays. This keen involvement in school life begins in the reception class; for example, in a literacy lesson when the children were practising the sound and shape of the letters X and Y. They were completely absorbed as they used their bodies to make the shapes of the letters and made the sounds.
9. The behaviour of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good overall, and it is never less than good. In lessons where the management of the children is particularly successful and the content is stimulating, pupils' behaviour is sometimes excellent. When going to the hall for physical education or to the computer suite, the children show consideration for other classes by moving quietly in the corridors. At lunchtimes, pupils talk to each other in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. The pupils are very polite. They stand back and open doors for adults and often ask if they can help visitors with directions. The school has had no exclusions within the previous six years, and there are no recorded incidents of bullying, sexism or racism. It was clear from talking to a group of pupils from Year 2 that they are well aware that they can avoid problems by not starting arguments. They also realise that people view the world in different ways, and their friends may not always agree with them.
10. Pupils with special educational needs demonstrate very good attitudes to school. The school's emphasis upon building self-esteem for all pupils helps to ensure that they are eager and enthusiastic to learn in lessons and after-school clubs. Pupils enjoy school and develop good relationships with their peers. The school's inclusive atmosphere ensures that pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are from minority ethnic heritages are welcomed and soon integrated into school life.
11. The personal development of the children and relationships between them and the staff are also very good. The children like their school and enjoy coming to it. They get on very well together and help each other. This was evident from a Year 2 literacy lesson in the computer room. The children were paired off - a more able pupil with a less able one - to design Christmas greetings cards. One pupil was very competently and skilfully teaching her companion to use the computer. She was very proud to show her ability and help her trainee at the same time. The children also like their teachers and this feeling is reciprocated. In a lesson on personal and social education, pupils in Year 1 were discussing how it makes people feel good to give to others. One little boy said to his teacher, 'I felt good yesterday when I gave you a big hug'. The school is very tidy and there are no signs of vandalism or graffiti. The pupils are given responsibilities relevant to their age and tasks are accepted willingly and completed well. For example, two pupils in each class are daily monitors and wear badges. Children also like the trust put in them to collect and take registers and lunch money to the school office.

12. Attendance at the school is good and above the national average for this type of school, as found at the last inspection. The great majority of the children come to school and into classes on time and most lessons commence promptly. The school has no long-term, unaccounted for, trends in pupils' absence.
13. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are very good and a significant strength of the school. This compares very well with the provision seen at the last inspection and contributes significantly towards the success of the children's learning. These facts are directly attributable to the high standards of the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

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

14. Learning is promoted very well and pupils are keen to do their best. The principal reason for this is the high quality of the teaching. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good or better in almost all of the lessons seen. This represents very good teaching overall and is a strength of the school. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. Examination of teachers' planning and evidence from pupils' previous work show that the high quality of the teaching is the major reason for the high standards achieved. Professional support from teaching assistants is of a very good quality, and they are deployed very well to work with groups of pupils. Teachers challenge pupils of all abilities with interesting and suitably demanding work, and plans set out clearly what pupils are to learn and know.
15. The high quality of the teaching begins in the reception class, where there is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of letter sounds and shapes, and numeracy is taught in a systematic way. Staff knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children are significant features in the high quality of the teaching in the reception class. The staff work as a team to plan and implement the interesting curriculum. At the beginning of each session, children plan what they will do during the imaginatively organised periods of activity. They choose from a given range of activities and record their choices on a wall chart. Children become increasingly responsible and independent because of skilful teaching.
16. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 build well on what children have learnt earlier. They listen well to pupils and respect their ideas. They ask probing questions to elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning and have high expectations during practical and written activities, but joined handwriting is not introduced soon enough. Most lessons move along at a brisk pace and pupils are expected to work hard and complete tasks. Because they know that the teachers expect them to produce their best work at all times, most pupils are productive and do their best in lessons. In all classes, the teachers' high expectations of good behaviour are reflected in the pupils' positive attitudes to getting on with independent tasks responsibly. Pupils are managed very well. At the beginning of lessons, teachers use very effective direct teaching to give clear explanations so that pupils know what they are to do and learn. In all classes, teachers use a range of methods to help pupils understand new work. Staff use resources very effectively in most lessons; for example, when they ensure that pupils have opportunities to work on computers to reinforce their learning. Teachers recognise that ICT is an area for further development so that pupils benefit throughout the curriculum.
17. Teaching is very good in mathematics, art, geography, physical education and religious education. It is good in English, science, design and technology, history, ICT and music. The literacy hour has been introduced effectively. As they read large texts with the teachers, pupils make good gains in their learning as they search for rhyming words or specific punctuation such as capital letters, full stops and question marks. Pupils are told clearly what they should be doing and learning in each lesson. As a result, pupils know what they are supposed to be doing and they get on with their work confidently. The review periods at the end of lessons are used very effectively to help pupils consolidate what they have learned and extend their understanding. The daily numeracy lessons have also been introduced well, and pupils benefit especially from the sessions of 'quick fire' mental arithmetic.

18. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively throughout the school. The consistency of lesson planning and the setting of targets appropriate to their individual needs ensure that these pupils get the types of help they need to access lessons and the curriculum. The additional help provided for pupils on school action plans, including those pupils with statements of special educational needs, contributes well to their good progress and enables them to take a full part in lessons. Teachers have demanding expectations of higher attaining pupils, who are challenged to perform at their best; as a result, these pupils retain their interest in school and are not bored. Teachers support pupils who speak English as an additional language very sensitively so that they soon achieve as well as their peers. Because of the very good teaching, pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well, in line with their peers.
19. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good in all classes and this provides an encouraging, purposeful and stable atmosphere for learning. Because they know the pupils well and assess their progress regularly, teachers are able to match work carefully to pupils' needs. Good questioning by teachers helps pupils to sort out their ideas and understand things more clearly. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is usually of a very good quality. It is very effective in helping pupils to improve the standard of their work. All pupils are encouraged to improve against their own previous best and, throughout the school, they become increasingly aware of what they are learning. Teachers set targets for pupils to improve their work. Homework is set in all classes, which helps pupils to practise what they have learnt in school and share their learning with their parents. Parents value the way teachers are always willing to discuss the children's progress in confidence and offer ideas of how to help them to improve.
20. The professional training of teachers and teaching assistants has raised the quality of provision for the pupils. Staff want to improve their performance and they welcome the feedback from regular monitoring of their planning and classroom teaching.

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

21. Curricular provision meets statutory requirements and is very good throughout the school, and shows good improvement since the last inspection. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced well. Religious education is successfully taught according to the local agreed syllabus. The school offers a very good range of interesting opportunities for pupils that motivate them so that they want to learn. There are good links between the subjects and learning in one is often used in a planned way to enhance learning in another. Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is very good so that they soon achieve as well as their peers. The computer suite has been a valuable addition to developing pupils' skills in using ICT. Resources are clearly set out and accessible and there is a good range of materials and equipment.
22. In the reception class, the six recommended areas of learning are planned imaginatively so that children gradually acquire skills, knowledge and understanding which give them a very good start to their education. The most recent curriculum for this age group has been introduced very effectively and staff use the 'stepping stones' of learning skilfully in their planning. There is appropriate emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and on communication, language and literacy.
23. The schemes of work for all subjects are firmly in place and members of staff are familiar with them, and have a clear knowledge of what they need to do to implement them so that pupils can gain the maximum benefit. Teachers work in close collaboration with each other and the subject leaders to ensure that this is maintained. ICT is not incorporated fully into all subjects so that pupils' very good skills can be used more regularly to enhance learning. Also, the development and use of mathematics is not planned systematically across the curriculum,
24. Personal, social and health education lessons are now part of the timetable of every Year 1 and 2 class. These lessons fulfil the need to include citizenship as part of the teaching of personal, social and health education. They are mainly in the form of 'circle time', when pupils sit in a

circle and discuss issues that relate to their social development in an informal manner. Pupils receive sex and drugs education through their science lessons and if any concerns arise as a result of these, parents are kept informed.

25. The provision for extra-curricular activities and visits is very good. There is a range of extra-curricular activities that is much better than that seen in many similar schools. There are musical and sports clubs, and at lunchtimes pupils take part in the computer club. The school has a very good programme of visits out of school to enrich the pupils' experiences and learning. Pupils visit local garden centres and supermarkets, as well as going further afield to a zoo and to Weston-super-Mare. Visitors to the school, such as musicians and drama groups, also provide interesting and stimulating experiences. The school places a high value on the benefit that pupils gain from exploring the many places of interest both in the local environment and further away. Visitors into school help with special projects. In addition, links with the community and local firms bring valuable skills and resources into the school.
26. The school has a strong commitment to equality in education and this is clearly laid out in a good policy document. All pupils are fully included in lessons and other learning opportunities regardless of background, gender or ability. The curriculum values the heritages of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Very effective planning for pupils in the early stages of learning English ensures that staff give very good support. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils' individual educational plans match closely to their needs and are reviewed regularly. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that all pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum. The individual education plans are supported by outside agencies and all who are involved with the pupils' continuing education.
27. The school has strong links with the junior school to which nearly all of the pupils go, and subject managers meet to ensure continuity in pupils' learning. There are good arrangements for pupils in Year 2 to visit the junior school in their final term and there is a clear system for transferring information about these pupils to their new school. Pupils from the local secondary school visit Crossways, as do pupils from a local special school, who take part in assemblies and other events. The school also has very good links with many of the nursery schools and playgroups that send children to Crossways. This provides staff with helpful information and helps to ease children comfortably into life at school.

### **Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

28. Overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good with many strengths. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual education and the provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection.
29. The school holds an act of collective worship each day, and this regularly provides a serene period to enrich pupils' personal development. In the assemblies observed, there was an explicit reference to a deity and time for quiet reflection and sharing of values. The school is successful in developing an environment within which pupils grow and flourish. Religious education plays a part in this, as do the other opportunities which the school provides, such as singing solos in assemblies, and sharing experiences in personal, social and health education lessons.
30. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils have a clear understanding about right and wrong and the school operates as a well-ordered community where pupils know what is expected of them. There are occasions when issues are discussed in personal, social and health education lessons, and this helps to reinforce the moral development of pupils. Pupils have been involved with the negotiation of rules for each class and this has strengthened their understanding of the need for a common code of conduct.
31. Provision for social development has many very good features. Adults set good examples in their relationships with each other and with the pupils. This is reflected in the pupils' attitudes towards the staff and towards each other. Teachers and other staff members value each child and work

effectively towards developing high self-esteem. There are also satisfactory opportunities for pupils throughout the school to work together in subjects such as music and design and technology. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and belongings from an early age. There are opportunities for pupils to use their initiative. Pupils undertake additional responsibilities such as acting as helpers by ringing the bell at the end of break time and taking registers to the office. There is an awareness of the needs of others, and pupils are involved in several charitable initiatives, including distributing gifts after the Harvest festival and filling shoeboxes with presents for children in Eastern Europe

32. There is very good provision for the pupils to develop culturally. The school places great value on the arts, and pupils have good opportunities to experience music, drama and poetry, from visitors to the school, as well as in their lessons. Pupils learn about their local culture through visits to local churches and other places of interest. The school has good displays that celebrate the diversity of cultures represented both inside and outside the school community. Pupils have the opportunity to study world faiths in religious education and they show respect for artefacts from other religions. The school is successfully preparing pupils for life in the culturally diverse society in Britain.

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

33. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of its pupils. These procedures compare well with those reported at the last inspection. They are a considerable strength of the school and ensure a loving and secure atmosphere within which the children's learning can flourish. The headteacher is the named and trained person responsible for child protection. She has ensured that all staff receive relevant training and pertinent aspects are part of the induction of staff new to the school. The school has an up-to-date written policy and there is very good liaison with the local Department for Social Services.
34. Procedures to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils are very good. The school has an experienced, named person and a specific governor to monitor health and safety issues and they have ensured that there is an up-to-date, written policy. With the school caretaker, they check the whole school site regularly and take the necessary action to deal with maintenance and safety. The school carries out and keeps good records of detailed risk assessments and tests of fire-fighting, portable electrical and physical education equipment. Fire drills are carried out every term and clearly recorded, and escape routes are clearly marked and accessible. The school has caring and efficient routines for recording and dealing with accidents and the administration of medicines. There are several trained first-aid personnel and each member of staff has a confidential list of certain pupils' specific ailments.
35. The school makes very good use of outside professional help, such as the school doctor and nurse, educational psychologist and a number of therapists. The police and fire brigade talk to the children about stranger danger, road safety and their jobs in general. The school has an appropriate policy for pupils' use of the Internet to ensure that they are not exposed to unsuitable material. There are two current problems of which the governors are well aware - there is no toilet for the disabled and no heating system in the computer suite. There are plans to rectify these problems and add other relevant and necessary facilities, such as wash-down facilities.
36. Registers are well kept and the school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Registers are returned to the school office both morning and afternoon for checking. Parents are made very well aware of their relevant responsibilities, and holidays in term time are kept to a minimum. When a child is unexpectedly absent, the secretary tries to contact their home by nine-thirty on that day. The school has an effective lateness routine and good use is made of the educational welfare officer to work with any families who have problems in getting their children to school.
37. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating bullying are very good. The school has a written behaviour policy, with realistic rewards and sanctions. Pupils negotiate their own class rules in September and know that there are also permanent, whole-



school rules. There are regular occasions in assemblies when pupils who have tried hard to improve their work or behaviour are praised. If pupils exhibit consistently poor behaviour, parents are asked to come into school and individual educational plans are written to help their children to overcome difficulties. The school also has a separate anti-bullying policy and the children say that, because they talk about bullying in assemblies and at 'circle time', they are given the confidence to report incidents of oppressive behaviour to an adult. All staff are highly experienced at recognising potential incidents and are able to 'nip them in the bud'.

38. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting the personal development of pupils. The curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good, and there is strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Citizenship is an increasing feature in the curriculum, as pupils become more responsible and recognise the need for planning and organisation. All teachers know the children very well and regularly report to parents. Pupils gradually build up personal files which include pieces of their best work, regular stories about themselves and certificates of achievement, won either in school or within the community. These profiles are taken to the pupils' next school to be added to. During the inspection, children brought in swimming certificates to be presented at morning assembly and later placed them in their profiles.
39. The school has a very small percentage of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, but help for them is dealt with very effectively and there are clear guidelines for staff. Only a few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Although there is no need for extra support in the current year, the school has access to linguists from the local education authority who can translate documentation and support the language development of these pupils. Staff are aware that focused help is necessary and that questions must be framed in a way that encourages pupils to develop their spoken English. The school monitors the progress of pupils from minority ethnic families to ensure that they achieve in line with their peers.
40. The monitoring of academic progress is very good for pupils with special educational needs. Carefully agreed targets, that are subject related, specific and measurable, ensure that the work builds in small steps and contributes to good progress. The review process is thorough and keeps all the interested parties, including parents, fully informed about progress. Pupils are withdrawn for additional support during lessons in literacy and numeracy, and the school ensures that pupils do not miss assemblies or lessons in the foundation subjects.
41. The school has a well thought-out policy to ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Every pupil is involved and encouraged to participate in all curricular and club activities. Effective use is made of teaching assistants to provide help for pupils with specific special educational needs within subjects; for example, when pupils need help with reading in history, measuring in science or getting ready for lessons in physical education. Significant efforts have been made to improve the physical environment to allow access for pupils with physical disabilities. For example, ramps have been provided at each side of the school and doorways have been widened to allow wheelchair access. However, there is no disabled toilet or shower facility.
42. The school's procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. In the reception class, staff use the system organised by the local education authority to assess children's attainment. In Years 1 and 2, the school's assessment procedures are very good in literacy, numeracy and ICT. They are good in science. In literacy and numeracy, teachers assess the attainment and progress of pupils in Year 1 through the use of nationally recognised tests. In Year 2, teachers administer the statutory national tests and assessments in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In addition, teachers maintain folders which include annotated pieces of work to demonstrate the progress of each pupil. The school participates in the South Gloucestershire Assessment for Learning Project, and this helps teachers to have a wider view of how information can be used to raise standards. Information from assessments is used well in the planning process for literacy and numeracy. Teachers use a helpful 'traffic lights' system to evaluate lessons and plan work for groups of pupils - 'red' means more help is needed, 'green' means steady to go with more challenge, and 'yellow' means more consolidation is needed to be

sure new material has been absorbed. Following this helpful process, lesson objectives incorporate targets for specific groups of pupils.

43. In the foundation subjects, teachers are well aware of the levels of the National Curriculum for all subjects. They assess pupils and record progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding at the end of each topic and report to parents at the end of the school year. The specific levelling of each pupil's attainment against National Curriculum standards at the end of Year 2 varies between subjects. In some subjects, such as art, subject managers collect samples of annotated and levelled work. This reference material promotes consistent standards and helps teachers to provide increasingly accurate information to send to the junior school.

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

44. From views expressed at the parents' meeting, in the returned pre-inspection questionnaires and in discussions during the inspection, an overwhelming number of parents consider that this is a very good school. Parents say that their children like the school, behave well, make good progress and are expected to work hard, achieve their best and become mature and responsible. Parents also say that the school is well led and teaching is good. They feel confident in approaching the school with a problem or suggestions and are kept well informed of their children's progress. They judged that the school provides the right amount of homework and an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. The inspection team agrees with all of these views.
45. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Each family receives a copy of the school prospectus, an annual governors' report and a copy of their child's yearly academic report. All three documents comply with statutory requirements and pupils' reports clearly state what the children can do and set realistic targets for them. Parents are impressed at the detail and personal nature of these reports and say that they can always recognise their own children in them. In addition, parents have three termly meetings in school when they can talk to teachers. All parents welcome the informative and interesting monthly newsletter and particularly appreciate the occasional workshops which help them follow and understand the curriculum; for example, the school's system of teaching letter sounds and shapes was explained. The school has an 'open door' policy, allowing parents to talk to the headteacher or any member of staff on any subject. Parents new to the school receive an informative welcome booklet. Families who speak English as an additional language are welcomed into the school and there are appropriate arrangements for providing school information in other languages when this is necessary.
46. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress. They are provided with opportunities to become involved in target setting in literacy and numeracy. They also meet teachers to discuss individual education plans and the progress made by their children. Many parents are involved in school to help with reading.
47. The contribution that parents make to children's learning, both at school and home, is very good. The school has so many parent volunteers that it has to timetable them, particularly in Year 1, and a high level of parental support was evident during the inspection. The parents are very versatile; they help with reading, numeracy and sport. They also help with events such as school concerts and trips and jobs such as cleaning musical instruments. Parents appreciate the home and school reading book and welcome the dialogue with the class teachers. Helpful current information on homework is available from the school and all parents are given useful booklets with advice on how to help children with reading, spelling and mathematics at home. The home-school agreement has been well accepted by the parents.
48. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. The school is indebted to its very energetic and highly motivated Parent Teachers Association. By arranging various social events and sponsorships, the association has raised considerable sums of money which are used to further their children's education. It has enabled the school to acquire extra computers, a video camera, play equipment and a safety surface in the playground.

49. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's links with its parents is very good and compares very well with that of the last inspection. Partnership with parents is another of the school's many strengths and contributes considerably to the success of its children's learning

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

50. The headteacher provides very good educational leadership for the school. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators. The school has clear aims which are evident in all aspects of school life. There are well-understood guidelines for the inclusion of all pupils in all school activities, and racial harmony is valued and promoted. The governors, staff and parents want the pupils to achieve their best in terms of academic performance and personal development, so that they are prepared for later life as well-rounded people. Because the school is not afraid to face up to dealing with aspects which need improvement, weaknesses are soon dealt with. Very good leadership and management have been maintained since the last inspection. Teamwork between staff is strong, so that they share expertise and good practice. The subject co-ordinators, some of whom have been recently appointed, take responsibility for monitoring standards and sharing ideas or new information which might benefit the pupils and raise standards further. They also produce annual plans for the development of subjects. The school achieved the 'Investors in People' award in 2002 for its comprehensive work on whole staff development.
51. The governors fulfil their roles very well. Through regular evaluation of the school's activities, they form a clear picture of where there are strengths or areas for development. They readily compliment staff on improvements because they recognise the effort which has gone into achieving them. This sense of unity, in the interest of pupils, means that there is a constant but supportive drive to maintain the high standards now expected of the school. Information is gathered through monitoring at a number of levels. Co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning, pupils' work and, increasingly, classroom teaching and learning. In literacy and numeracy, monitoring has been helpful in ensuring that the new national strategies are well established. The headteacher monitors lessons to ensure that agreed ways of teaching are being implemented. Governors monitor teaching and curricular provision through visits to classes, reports from the headteacher and discussions with her and with other staff. Teachers value the feedback from these monitoring activities because they want to improve their work. Performance management is well embedded, and teachers benefit from having time to discuss their work in delegated time when they can reflect on their achievements.
52. The process of school self-evaluation is strong. Priorities are clearly identified for inclusion in the school's development plan, and they are clearly directed towards improvement in pupils' academic attainment and personal welfare. The development of staff expertise to meet the new challenges in education is included in the plan, and the costs of development are carefully linked to the school's budget. Challenging targets are set at a variety of levels – for individual pupils, year groups and for the whole school – to improve academic standards. Progress against these targets is monitored by the staff and governors. Targets are shared with parents, too, so that they can help their children achieve them. A measure of the school's success in professional training for staff is in the very high quality of its work with teachers new to the profession. Guidance of excellent quality helps these members of staff to take on the responsibilities of class teaching through a systematic programme of support.
53. Financial management is very good. Governors have clear plans for the use of the balance carried forward. These include provision for staffing and improvements in the environment. Educational priorities are very well supported, with benefit to the pupils clearly in mind. Specific funding is spent appropriately for aspects such as special educational needs. ICT is used very effectively for administrative purposes and information is made available for governors so that they have a clear picture of the current financial situation. Governors consider best value; ensure that the school gets good value for money and evaluate spending against the benefits to the pupils. The school administrative assistant manages the day-to-day administration of the school very well so that teachers can get on with their work undisturbed.

54. There is a good number of teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that all pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and religious education. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed very well, and support for pupils who are in the early stage of learning English is well organised. Resources for teaching and learning are good overall. They are satisfactory for design and technology and very good for ICT. The accommodation is good and well maintained. The governors are aware of the need to improve the heating arrangements in the computer suite and to provide toilet and washing facilities for the disabled.
55. Bearing in mind the pupils' good achievement, the high quality of teaching and curricular provision, the very good leadership and management and school's very good capacity to improve further, the school provides very good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. There are no significant weaknesses in the school but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor issues for improvement, all of which are recognised by the school, should be considered by the governors and staff as the basis for an action plan:
- The earlier introduction of joined handwriting (*Paragraphs 3, 16, 74*)
  - The creation of a specific plan to use and develop mathematics in other subjects (*Paragraphs 4, 23, 79*)
  - The further development of ICT in all subjects (*Paragraphs 5, 16, 88, 97, 110, 115*)
  - The improvement of the heating system in the ICT suite and specific toilet provision for the disabled (*Paragraphs 35, 54, 110*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	14	22	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	38	59	3	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 two percentage points

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	163
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
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	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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)**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	21	25	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	23	23	24
	Total	42	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (92)	91 (94)	96 (94)
	National	84 (84)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	19	20
	Girls	24	23	24
	Total	44	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (94)	91 (92)	96 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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



**Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

**Exclusions in the last school year**

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
156	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	27.1

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	147

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	409784
Total expenditure	403903
Expenditure per pupil	2639
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,900
Balance carried forward to next year	33781

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

163

Number of questionnaires returned

57

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	28	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	37	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	42	5	0	2
The teaching is good.	75	21	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	49	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	23	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	37	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	36	2	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	21	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	30	0	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	30	0	0	5

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

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

57. Children in the Foundation Stage of education are taught in two reception classes. From a good start, children achieve well in the six nationally agreed areas of learning for young children. These are:
- personal, social and emotional development
  - communication, language and literacy
  - mathematical development
  - knowledge and understanding of the world
  - physical development
  - creative development
58. Most children are likely to exceed all of the goals by the time they join Year 1. Curricular provision and teaching have improved since the last inspection, when planning did not take sufficient account of the curriculum specifically for children of this age. Staff use effective strategies to ensure that children with special educational needs are identified and supported as soon as possible. Children who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to be actively involved in all activities so that they pick up and use the new language throughout the day. The teachers work very well with the teaching assistants so that there is a team approach which ensures teaching of very good quality. Assessment of children's attainment and progress is used very well to inform the planning of activities. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly to maintain and support the high quality of provision.

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

59. Children soon settle into school routines and show increasing levels of independence. The staff establish clear routines and plan well to include this aspect of children's learning throughout the day. In all activities, children are expected to behave appropriately, share equipment and show consideration for one another. Their self-control strengthens and they gradually develop an understanding of what is right and what is wrong. Most children express their ideas and views and staff are sensitive and helpful as they listen to what children have to say. Children enjoy coming to school and are keen to join in activities. They concentrate for increasing lengths of time, behave very well and make very good relationships with one another and with staff. They play happily with older pupils in the playground and respond well to the simple but clearly explained classroom rules. Children move around the school sensibly as they go to the school hall for assemblies and physical education lessons.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The staff introduce the children warmly and sensitively to school so that they are soon well integrated into school life. Children are helped to understand their own feelings and those of others, and they become increasingly confident in asking for help when they need it. Staff have a very good knowledge of the needs of young children. They take time to talk to children and use praise effectively to raise the children's self-esteem. Relationships between staff and children are very good, and every child is valued. The happy and purposeful atmosphere in all classes motivates children to want to learn. The staff encourage children to be independent and increasingly responsible; for example, when they help to clear away activities or get ready for outside play. Children get a good start to their education.

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

61. Children soon learn to settle down quietly and to listen attentively in story time. Staff provide a wide range of opportunities for children to talk and to communicate and they extend the range of their vocabulary in a widening range of situations. Children begin to use appropriate vocabulary, particularly in mathematics and literacy lessons. They handle books and turn pages carefully and

enjoy reading. Children gain an increasing understanding of how print carries meaning and that it is read from left to right. Very good teaching of letter sounds and shapes begins as soon as children start school. Most children recognise letter shapes and sounds and 'read' stories successfully by referring to the pictures. More able children blend sounds together confidently to form words and begin to read simple books with repetitive texts. There is a good range of attractive story and non-fiction books in the reading corner, and children develop a love of literature, which makes them want to learn to read. Children enjoy writing and their pencil control is good for most children by the time they move to Year 1. By the end of the reception year, higher attaining children write simple sentences independently and show a clear sense of narrative in their writing.

62. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Activities are planned and prepared very well so that children can get on with their learning at a very good rate, and staff are ready to intervene and help children as necessary. Staff use every opportunity to develop children's language. In discussion periods and well-focused literacy activities, staff engage with children very well and bring a sense of fun to children's learning. Children listen attentively because they know that the teachers are likely to ask questions and will expect good answers. The teachers introduce the literacy hour very well. They are skilful in engaging children's interest throughout the lesson and ensuring that children who have reached the expected learning goals for their age are challenged with more demanding work.

### **Mathematical development**

63. Children have a wide range of sorting and matching experiences and develop an appropriate vocabulary to express size, shape and colour. They join in number rhymes and songs and begin to add and subtract numbers up to ten. They are clear about the meaning of 'one more' or 'one less', and more able children develop a good grasp of simple number operations such as addition and subtraction. Children play purposefully with sand and water and develop mathematical language such as 'full' and 'empty'. They develop a greater understanding of sequence and order as they play with well-chosen puzzles and games. Effective teaching in small groups helps children to learn at a good rate. Children develop an understanding of measures such as weight and length as they play with balances and compare heights. They consider ideas such as 'heavy' and 'light', 'tall' and 'short'. Mental strategies are developed very well as children are encouraged to think hard before they answer questions during the first part of numeracy lessons. They use their mathematical language effectively to support their work in other subjects; for example, in a scientific activity when children sorted leaves of different shapes and put them into sets.
64. Teaching is very good and staff use an appropriate mix of direct teaching, questioning and stimulating activities to promote children's learning. Elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are introduced sensitively so that children are well prepared for work in Year 1. Children learn through well-planned practical work and by talking to adults. Teachers assess children's attainment and progress very well so that they are able to plan challenging work. Mathematics is a popular subject in the school and this popularity begins in the reception class where staff enthusiasm, even in simple counting activities, encourages children to think that mathematics is fun.

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

65. Children gain a broader knowledge of the world in a wide range of interesting ways. Through practical experiences which encourage them to observe closely and extend their vocabulary, children gain increasing skills of observation for later work in science. Their knowledge of plant growth develops well as they plant seeds and care for them. Children gain increasing skills in fixing components together and making models of everyday objects as they play with a good variety of construction kits and train sets. Through stories and rhymes, art and craft activities and role-play, they learn about the world around them in imaginative ways. Very good levels of staff intervention help children to extend their vocabulary and understanding of a variety of situations in the world outside school. In the role-play area, children pretend to visit the baby clinic. They make telephone calls and weigh the babies. Children go to use the computers confidently and use the mouse and keys effectively to move and drag images across the screen. Children

develop early mapping skills when they look at the area around the school. They gain a greater understanding of the passing of time and historical enquiry when they research their own lives and those of their families and look at pictures and artefacts from Victorian times.

66. Teaching and learning are of very good quality. Staff prepare stimulating activities which are appropriate for the age group. Lessons are well planned and learning is based firmly on experiences which are relevant to the children's daily lives and interests; for example, when children designed an adventure playground. At Christmas time, children sorted 'shiny' and 'sparkly' materials. The teaching assistant encouraged the children to use their senses to describe the materials. A child said, 'I like this because I can make a noise with it'. The school environment is used well to enhance children's learning about the natural world, and staff recognise that the local area provides a rich source of experiences. The staff's subject knowledge is very good and the school's resources, such as construction kits and computers, are used very well. In ICT, lessons are taught well and the teacher uses the interactive whiteboard effectively to explain new techniques; for example, when pupils entered details such as their shoe sizes and the colour of their eyes into the computer. This was in a lesson about similarities and differences.

### **Physical development**

67. Children enjoy outdoor play with older pupils and they have regular physical education lessons in the hall. They have appropriate control of their movements and are well co-ordinated as they dance, run, jump and move around in the hall and the outside play area purposefully. They ride and push wheeled toys confidently and develop increasing control of pencils. Manipulative control improves and this has a positive effect on writing, craft and technology skills, and most children develop good pencil control by the time they join Year 1. They achieve very well and become increasingly confident. In the computer suite, children show good levels of control as they manipulate the mouse to give instructions and respond to signals.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Staff ensure that children have regular exercise and that activities are planned well for children to develop appropriate co-ordination and control. The outside areas are well supervised and there is a well-organised range of activities each day. Physical education lessons ensure that children benefit from carefully structured activities, including dance, ball skills and gymnastics. In a well-planned dance lesson, the teacher ensured that the children acquired and used specific subject language as she talked about 'starting shapes' and 'travelling' as the children created a dance. In painting, writing and constructional activities, staff provide appropriate resources for children to gain experience in holding and using a good range of tools and materials. Construction kits are set out attractively so that the children want to use them to build with bricks and use their manipulative skills to create roads, vehicles and high towers.

### **Creative development**

69. Children use a wide range of media, including paint, crayons, pastels and collage, to make pictures with a range of textures. Their paintings are bold and colourful and their imaginative portraits executed. They illustrate their written work with lively drawings and extend their experiences in art and design; for example, when they explore colour, shape and tools in computer drawing packages. Children benefit from the strong artistic influence in the school and their imagination is developed well. Manipulative skills are practised as children gain experience with malleable materials such as dough. The staff encourage children to use their imagination in drama; for example, when children pretend to be grown-ups in the role-play area and imagine that they are doctors, nurses and parents in the baby clinic. In music lessons, children develop a sense of performance as they respond to the teacher's instructions and create 'sound stories'. Children's performance in singing improves as they join with older pupils to sing in assemblies.
70. Teaching is very good and children are supported well by all staff. Creative activities are linked effectively to other areas of the curriculum; for example, when children paint self-portraits when they are learning about 'ourselves'. A significant feature of the very good teaching is the way in which children are encouraged to evaluate their work; for example, when they considered how they might have improved the calendars they had made. In a stimulating and interesting music lesson, the teacher encouraged children to value the importance of silence. As a result, the

children kept their instruments still until it was their turn to perform. Staff planning is of very good quality. Each activity has a clear focus to enhance pupils' learning; for example, when there are basins in the sand tray to encourage children to make Christmas puddings, and when

the teacher worked with children to create the Nativity scene from blocks. Staff ensure that children's attainment and progress are measured and recorded simply. This information helps the teachers to plan effective lessons which extend children's learning.

## **ENGLISH**

71. The results of the National Curriculum tests for 2002 show that pupils in Year 2 attained standards in reading that were well above the national expectation and above those reached in similar schools. The standards in writing were above the national expectation and were close to the standards in similar schools. These standards are very like those seen at the last inspection and those reached in recent years. There is no significant difference in the attainment of pupils from different ethnic groups or of boys and girls.
72. The standards in speaking and listening are well above the national expectation. By the end of Year 1, many pupils show increasing confidence in speaking and begin to use more formal speech patterns. Younger pupils are given opportunities to practise these skills in their literacy lessons. Older pupils make good progress as a result of the well-planned activities that teachers incorporate into their lessons. An example of this was seen in a very good lesson in Year 2, when pupils were encouraged to discuss two versions of the Nativity story. Most pupils spoke in complete, well-structured sentences. They listened attentively and answered in a way that showed that they had understood what had gone before. In this lesson pupils also showed that they used their literacy skills to help with their work in science. Pupils are happy about discussing their work, and can express themselves clearly. Teaching assistants play a valuable part in working with groups of pupils; they clarify questions, explain new vocabulary and encourage pupils to offer answers.
73. Standards in reading are currently above national expectations and are on course to be well above this by the end of the year. Younger pupils develop skills that help them to read the text. Pupils in Year 2 read many words confidently, and talk about their reading books. The more able pupils in Year 2 use a variety of strategies to work out words that they find difficult, such as using their knowledge of letter sounds and shapes and using clues from the context. Many pupils read expressively as a result of the good models that teachers provide in shared reading sessions. Pupils in Year 2 are clear about the difference between an author and illustrator and fiction and non-fiction. They know how to find information by the use of contents and index pages. However pupils in this age range were not always confident about using their knowledge of the alphabet to find books or information. Even the pupils with sound standards of decoding words were less good at interpreting the meaning of the text in anything more than a literal way. Pupils enjoy reading and read both fiction and non-fiction texts. The reading records for pupils foster links between home and school effectively by getting parents and carers to add comments which help children to develop their reading skills. There is a library that is used for quiet reading in free time. It is an attractive and welcoming space. There is a good range of material and the books are colour-coded. Class libraries provide extra reading books. Overall, pupils who have special educational needs or English as an additional language make satisfactory progress as a result of the support for reading.
74. The samples of pupils' written work seen during the inspection show that the standards attained in Years 1 and 2 are above the national average. More able pupils in Year 2 are producing work that is already approaching Level 3. They organise ideas into grammatically correct sentences and show an increasing understanding of speech and question marks. In a display of creative writing on the theme 'Autumn', pupils created a mood and setting by imaginative language choices, using phrases such as 'under my feet are crunching leaves and acorns'. Although most pupils have legible handwriting there are few pupils in Year 2 who use joined handwriting consistently. The school is now placing greater emphasis on introducing this at an earlier stage. Most pupils spell short common words and longer regular words correctly. The school places

great emphasis on the learning of letter sounds and shapes and teachers regularly set lists of spellings for pupils to learn. Many pupils take these home and parents and carers make a good contribution to their learning. When words are incorrectly spelt, the majority of pupils manage a version that is phonetically sound. Teachers take opportunities in other subjects to encourage pupils to increase their technical vocabulary and their use of spoken English. There were some good examples of this in ICT lessons, where teachers used terms like 'return key' and 'menu' and encouraged pupils to use them. This was also the case in music, where the teachers were careful to use the correct names for percussion instruments as a natural part of the teaching. ICT is used well in the teaching and learning of English. By the end of Year 2, pupils already do simple editing, word process pieces of writing and present work attractively, using a variety of fonts.

75. The overall quality of teaching is good and all of the teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. Over time, good teaching has helped pupils achieve well. Teachers use skilful questioning to ensure that pupils understand their work. Praise is used well to show pupils that their work is valued and to encourage higher standards. Teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy closely in their planning and this ensures that pupils cover the various writing styles that are needed for the National Curriculum. Teachers mark the pupils' work thoroughly, make regular comments to encourage and instruct and give effective points for improvement. Relationships are good and teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. As a result, pupils work hard, show interest and sustain their concentration throughout the lesson. Pupils co-operate well in paired and group work and the subject makes a good contribution to their social development.
76. The experienced subject leader guides the teaching and learning of literacy in the school well. She looks at teachers' plans for the subject, scrutinises samples of work in each year group and monitors classroom teaching and learning. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the levels of the National Curriculum and this is helpful in assessing the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Assessment procedures are of very good quality. The school has developed a system of setting individual targets for pupils and this is now well established. All pupils have a notebook with samples of their work and a record of the levels of the National Curriculum that they have reached. This helps pupils to have a sound grasp of their progress and is a valuable record for parents and carers. There are good resources for the subject. The school is well advanced in developing the use of ICT to support literacy. Pupils in both year groups use computers to draft and re-draft work. Much of the use of ICT takes place in the computer suite, and pupils also use the classroom computers for individual or paired work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the effective arrangements for their support. Sometimes small groups of these pupils are taught outside the classroom for some of the lesson. There is good communication between the teaching assistants and class teachers so the planning for these sessions takes account of the main focus of the work that the rest of the class is doing. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to the other pupils, and again, the arrangements for their support are entirely appropriate.

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's results were above average in comparison with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected standards was above the national average. Overall, pupils are on course to attain standards well above national expectations by the end of the school year. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils at all levels of ability are being monitored and supported to do as well as they can. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
78. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are confident in adding and subtracting small numbers mentally and adding two numbers together, using numbers up to 100. They know multiplication tables for two, five and ten, and higher attaining pupils already have a grasp of those for three and four. Pupils add together numbers over ten in groups of three and multiply small numbers. Most pupils recognise that subtraction is the inverse of addition. They recognise and name a range of shapes such as rectangle, circle, triangle and hexagon and identify the number of sides and corners in



each shape. Pupils benefit from regular practical work which makes mathematical ideas relevant; for example, when pupils in Year 1 made graphs about Christmas presents. Higher attaining pupils solve simple problems mentally and determine which mathematical operation to use. They know the number of sides, edges, surfaces and corners possessed by cuboids, cones and spheres. During Year 2, pupils extend their knowledge of number and can sequence numbers to 100 confidently. Higher attaining pupils develop a clearer understanding of place value and know that three-digit numbers represent hundreds, tens and units.

79. The use of mathematical language is reinforced very effectively in all classrooms. This is enhanced during investigations in mathematics lessons. Speaking and listening skills are developed well, and this is especially helpful for pupils who speak English as an additional language. ICT is being used with increasing effectiveness, and there is a satisfactory range of software to support teaching and learning. Mathematics is developed in other subjects but it is done incidentally and there is no obvious plan for its inclusion.
80. Pupils enjoy mathematics and have positive attitudes to the subject. Teachers include a 'fun' element so that pupils look forward to the lessons; for example, when pupils in Year 2 timed how many times they could take their sweatshirts on and off in a minute. The teachers' use of ICT also stimulates pupils' interest; for example, when teachers work with pupils to sort and order information on the interactive whiteboard and create interesting graphs. The ethos of the school and the quality of relationships have a major impact on pupils' attitudes in lessons. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages are keen to do well and they contribute well to discussions. Pupils' relationships with teachers and teaching assistants and with each other are very good. They are attentive, well behaved and work effectively both individually and when they are working co-operatively in groups. In Year 1, a group of higher attaining pupils organised themselves very well to create a graph from information they had collected. They made sure that there was a manager, a scribe and a monitor to ensure that the work was done systematically and completed in the allotted time.
81. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Work is planned well to meet the differing needs of pupils, and teachers review previous lessons well so that pupils build effectively on what they already know. This enables pupils with special educational needs to make very good progress and achieve very well. Lessons are well structured and learning objectives are shared with pupils in each lesson. Pupils behave very well because the teachers manage them skilfully and avoid criticism. Teachers engage well with individual pupils during activities. They spend time in sorting out pupils' problems and ensuring that new learning is fully understood. At the end of each lesson, teachers reinforce what has been taught and this provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they have learned. Written work is usually well recorded by pupils and is constructively marked by the teachers. Teaching assistants are deployed very well in lessons. They plan with the teachers and make a major contribution to the quality of provision. Regular homework is provided for pupils, who benefit from extra practice and consolidation of current work.
82. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and teachers have adapted very effectively to the new way of teaching. Much of the work on data handling takes place in other subjects, particularly science. The assessment of individual pupils' attainment and progress is well established and detailed analyses of the results of assessments and the school's performance in national tests are carried out. The results of analyses are used to refine the curriculum, adjust teaching methods and set individual targets which are discussed with pupils. Literacy is promoted well as teachers encourage pupils to use correct mathematical vocabulary and to tease out the mathematical processes needed to solve problems written in words.
83. The headteacher currently co-ordinates the subject and provides very good leadership. She visits classrooms to observe teaching and learning and to monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work, and reports regularly to governors on the progress made with the action plan for mathematics. There is a named governor who links with the co-ordinator and has an up-to-date picture of the development of the subject, which she shares with other governors. Mathematics is well resourced. There is a wide range of attractive materials in every classroom to support effective teaching and learning, and teachers create attractive and stimulating displays which consolidate and extend pupils' learning.

## SCIENCE

84. Pupils are on course to achieve standards above those expected by the end of Year 2. In national tests over the last three years, there have been slight differences between results which can be accounted for by the different abilities in the various age groups and the small numbers of pupils being assessed from year to year. For example, in 2001 the standards of achievement in science were above the national average. The findings of the inspection confirm these results and indicate that the standards achieved at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and improved. Last year the school placed considerable emphasis upon the importance of science as a subject but the improved teaching and planning has not yet had time to impact fully upon standards. All pupils make good progress. There were no significant differences between the progress and achievement of boys and girls.
85. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made studies of physical processes and recognise similarities and differences associated with them. For example, they explore devices that use batteries and begin to recognise a simple circuit and how it works. In one lesson observed during the inspection the pupils made their own circuits involving lighting up Rudolf's nose in time for Christmas. They were able to answer questions about the sources of the power and explain what happens when you break a circuit. Higher attaining pupils were able to draw a circuit independently and label the various parts. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress. Teachers are thoughtful in the way they include items from other cultures to raise the self-esteem of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, the class explored the properties of sound, using an interesting range of musical instruments. Pupils were able to describe how some instruments, like the recorder, made sounds by blowing and others by hitting or shaking. One higher attaining pupil talked confidently about vibration and explained how different sounds can be made by hitting some instruments hard or softly.
86. A scrutiny of previous work shows that pupils also make studies of life and living processes. In their studies of human beings they gain knowledge about healthy living and what humans need for life. In all this work on electricity, sound and healthy living, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and there were examples of relating their science studies to data handling in mathematics. Pupils present their work in a variety of interesting ways. They employ their literacy skills well to record investigations and use their artistic skills effectively to illustrate their work with lively drawings. Numeracy is promoted effectively as pupils collect information, create graphs and interpret findings.
87. The overall quality of teaching and learning in science is good, with examples of very good teaching. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Clear subject guidance helps teachers with their planning. Last year the school organised a 'Year of Science'. This not only enhanced the understanding of teachers it also raised the importance of science in the minds of pupils and parents. A good feature of the work is the emphasis on scientific enquiry, which requires the systematic collection of evidence to answer questions and develop thinking to establish cause and effect. Teachers use question and answer sessions skilfully and ensure that pupils of all abilities contribute at an appropriate level. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with appropriate targets and support and higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged.
88. The relationships between teachers and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves are very good. The curriculum is based on national guidance which underpins the progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers make assessments informally to ensure that lessons are planned to match pupils' needs and teachers are refining the formal levelling of pupils' attainment and progress against the standards of the National Curriculum. The recently appointed co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the use of ICT in science throughout the school and is planning to review and update the scheme of work. She has spent the first term monitoring the planning of work across the school, and her role in monitoring teaching and learning is the next step in developing her management of the subject.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

89. Pupils in Year 2 are on course to achieve standards which are well above national expectations for their age by the end of the school year. Standards have risen since the last inspection.
90. Pupils achieve very well during Years 1 and 2. This reflects teachers' very good planning that enables pupils to develop skills in a systematic way. Pupils become increasingly skilled in using a wide range of techniques and materials including pencils, crayons, charcoal, paints and fabrics. Their observational drawings and work on pattern become more detailed as they grow older. Pupils are encouraged to observe carefully before they do very good drawings of faces, with detailed features. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils draw very detailed pictures; for example, after a visitor had brought creatures into school, they drew owls, with well-executed feathers and other features. Picture-making progresses very well throughout the school. Three-dimensional art is developed through pottery and model making. In religious education, pupils made pottery candle-holders during a topic about Divali. In another topic, pupils made exciting, bright models of dinosaurs from cardboard and decorated them very well with painted features and patterns.
91. The school makes excellent use of events such as the 'Year of the Arts' to enrich pupils' artistic experiences. Pupils enjoy the subject and are inspired to do work of high quality. Spiritual and cultural development is promoted well as pupils reflect on the beauty of the world and the way great artists have depicted it. Pupils work together very well to create larger pieces of work, such as one which depicted wildlife and showed well drawn and painted reptiles, birds, fish, mammals and insects. Such displays enhance the school environment and link well with learning in other subjects such as science. Events such as the recent visit of a Hindu parent are used effectively to emphasise art from a range of cultures. The self-esteem of pupils from minority ethnic groups is raised when they see that their cultures are valued. Pupils are inspired by examples of great works of art in posters displayed around the school. Higher attaining pupils have opportunities to practise and display their talents, and pupils with special educational needs in language gain self-esteem and success in a subject which does not rely on their ability to read or write. Literacy is developed well in art and design as pupils extend their vocabulary of colours, materials and techniques. Mathematical shapes and patterns are developed as pupils explore texture and design. Pupils' competence in ICT is extended as they explore the use of shapes, lines and colours in computer drawing packages.
92. Few lessons were observed, but from the high quality of the work seen, it is clear that teaching is very good. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is very good and techniques are taught very well so that pupils are able to express their ideas in many ways. Teachers encourage pupils to use their imagination and explore materials and colours to create interesting effects. Pupils who speak English as an additional language express themselves freely in a subject which does not require words, and they achieve in line with their classmates. The teaching and learning of art and design are led very well by the enthusiastic co-ordinator. The scheme of work is based on national guidance and emphasises features, such as observational drawing, which are strong in the school. Resources are good and teachers make good use of the school grounds for sketching. Teachers' planning and pupils' finished work are monitored. Pupils' attainment and progress are assessed effectively each term and teachers share this information with parents in the pupils' annual reports.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. Little teaching of design and technology was seen during the inspection. However, the work seen in these lessons, available records and interviews with staff demonstrates that pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is on course to exceed national expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils use tools and join materials in a variety of ways appropriate to their age. They put forward ideas and recognise that the products they are making have to meet specific needs. Many use labelled sketches and written notes to communicate the details of their designs. These standards are similar to those seen at the last inspection.

94. Pupils in the Year 2 classes have made table-mats this term. They were aware that these mats had a specific function and discussed how to achieve this. They then used their skills of measuring, cutting and joining to make the mats. Finally, they decorated them and the finished products were attractive and carefully made. As pupils in Year 1 created Christmas cards they used hole punches confidently and added ribbon effectively to create decorative borders. Girls and boys both enjoy the subject and take pride in their work.
95. From the range of evidence collected, it is clear that the quality of teaching is good. Teachers are clear in their aims, manage resources well and make good use of questions to stimulate pupils to come up with ideas. All pupils achieve well because of the systematic teaching of skills. Teachers encourage a co-operative ethos in the classroom and the subject makes an effective contribution to the social development of pupils, who are enthusiastic about the subject  
  
and talk about it in positive terms. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers because of the purposeful working atmosphere and very good levels of racial harmony in the school.
96. The school has successfully incorporated its own scheme of work, including the study of food technology, with parts of the nationally recommended scheme. Teachers follow the scheme well and ensure that pupils build up skills systematically. Pupils' progress in acquiring skills is recorded at the end of each topic, though their attainment is not levelled closely against the National Curriculum. The headteacher is the acting subject leader until a new appointment is made.
97. There are good displays in the classrooms that celebrate the work that pupils do. The assembling of a photographic record of the work of pupils is now established and this is a valuable resource. This is being done with digital cameras and photographs are put in design and technology folders. Apart from this, the use of pupils' very good skills in ICT to support their learning in design and technology is underdeveloped. Pupils with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language have full access to the subject. Specific vocabulary is taught well, and this benefits all pupils.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

98. Pupils are on course to attain standards above those expected by the end of Year 2. They make good progress overall, and there is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls. Although only one lesson was seen during the inspection, the school was able to provide a good range of pupils' work. Additionally, teachers' planning was carefully examined, together with the school's plans which include what is taught and how this is done. This evidence shows that the good standard achieved at the time of the last inspection has been maintained and that the school has made good use of local authority guidance and in-service training for teachers to achieve this.
99. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 study geography as part of termly topics, including 'All about me', 'Movement', 'Water', 'Food' and 'Living things'. Learning is made relevant for pupils. For example, pupils in Year 1 have been learning about the peoples of the world and looking at a world map. Pupils recalled members of their families who live in other countries. They wrote, 'My uncle lives in Spain', 'My granddad lives in Canada' and 'My friends live in California'. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages contribute well during such activities. Good displays of maps and pupils' work reinforce pupils' understanding of the wider world. Teachers also reinforce pupils' learning by ensuring that a good range of books is available to illustrate the lives of children in other parts of the world. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported very well to ensure that they participate fully in lessons and soon achieve as well as other pupils in the class.
100. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils looked at a range of maps and considered their usefulness. They studied a map of the area around Thornbury, one of Gloucestershire, and another of France.

Higher attaining pupils were quick to identify that the milkman and the bus driver could use the map of Thornbury and the map of France would be useful on holiday. The teacher provided good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. By the end of the lesson, the pupils drew maps to show Father Christmas the location of their houses so that he knew where to deliver presents. They included simple keys so that he could clearly identify the major features of the town as he flew through the air on his sleigh. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. Because the topic was relevant, they behaved well, worked hard and made good progress in their ability to draw maps and understand how they can be used. Good resources were available to support and enrich pupils' learning, and the teacher managed the lesson at a good pace. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported with adult help and adapted materials. All pupils use their literacy skills well in geography, both for collecting information and recording their work.

101. The teaching of geography is very good. It is enhanced through well-planned visits to interesting sites. On one such visit, pupils considered similarities and differences between places and looked for answers to questions about Weston-super-Mare. The travels of Barnaby Bear, a teddy bear, are charted as pupils take him on trips with their parents; for example, he recently visited Wales. Pupils develop an increasing awareness of the effects of human behaviour on the environment. They were amazed that the average family creates a ton of rubbish each year. Scientific aspects of geography are taught thoroughly. Pupils learn about the weather and make charts to record the different kinds of weather experienced over a few weeks. This enhances pupils' skills in numeracy. Mathematics is also well promoted during work on direction in simple map-making. Work is linked effectively with other subjects; for example, when pupils extended their skills in art and design and ICT to draw pictures of snowmen. Increasingly, pupils use ICT to find information and look at maps.
102. Teachers assess pupils' progress at the end of each topic and report to parents annually. The recently appointed subject manager has monitored teachers' planning and will monitor classroom teaching as part of a rolling programme of subject monitoring in the school. There is a need to update ICT programs and resources for the subject.

## **HISTORY**

103. Little teaching was observed during the inspection, but there was sufficient evidence made available by the school to show that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection when they were judged to be in line with national standards. Pupils make good progress. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages achieve in line with their peers.
104. The work is developed through the study of termly topics; for example, 'Ourselves', 'Our school' and 'Past and present'. Pupils begin to answer questions about the past from simple observations. Displays of their work show how they have studied a good range of periods in history. They have learnt about dinosaurs, castles, and life in Victorian times. The study of famous historical figures such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale helps children to understand some of the events in British history. Teachers make learning relevant for pupils; for example, they got them to compare their school uniform with the dress worn by schoolchildren in Victorian times. Pupils write lively accounts about earlier times; for example, they wrote about the hard life of a young Victorian who ate porridge, cooked on a coal-burning stove and wrote with chalk on a slate at school. Pupils know about the history of Bonfire Night and the treason of Guy Fawkes. Good links are made with literacy as pupils look for information in books and on computers and write interesting accounts.
105. The range of evidence demonstrates that teaching is good. In the lesson in Year 1, the teacher used interesting artefacts skilfully to develop pupils' techniques of observation. Pupils considered the appearance of old and new toys. They drew on their own experiences and decided which of the toys they play with today and which were from earlier times. Higher attaining pupils were very discerning; they recognised that some new toys looked old through use and some old toys

looked new because they had been kept in good condition. A good feature of the lesson was the discussion about ways of finding out about old toys. Pupils knew that they could look at books in the library, look on the Internet or in CD-ROMs and could talk to their parents about the toys they used to play with. The lesson was well planned and the teacher effectively used questions and answers to involve all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in the discussion. The lesson motivated pupils, promoted their enthusiasm for history and harnessed their curiosity. Pupils demonstrated a growing understanding of the distinction between past and present.

106. Resources are adequate, but the newly appointed subject manager has a clear plan for the development of the subject and acknowledges the need to develop resources to support and enhance the work on topics and to improve resources for ICT. She also recognises the need for more books and children's historical fiction to enrich work in the subject. The monitoring of teaching and learning is part of the school's rolling programmes to ensure good provision in all subjects. The subject manager monitors pupils' work and teachers' plans. Assessments of pupils' progress are made at the end of each topic and reported to parents at the end of the year. The scheme of work is based on national guidance and provides opportunities to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

107. Standards in ICT are set to be well above national expectations by the end of Year 2. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The use of the computer suite and systematic curricular planning in ICT, together with increasing use in other subjects, contribute to this. The planning ensures that pupils experience all areas of ICT required by the National Curriculum.
108. Pupils learn the necessary skills to enable them to use computers for practical purposes such as word processing and handling data. By Year 2, pupils are confident and quick in their use of the keyboard, the mouse and menus. They alter the size, colour and font of their text and print it out. They enter data and display their results in different forms, such as graphs and lists. Pupils also use computers to control a robotic toy. More able pupils make accurate predictions about the likely result of the instructions that they enter. There is no difference between the performance of girls and boys or pupils of different ethnic backgrounds.
109. The overall quality of teaching is good. ICT is taught very effectively in weekly literacy and numeracy lessons in the computer suite. Skills are then practised and reinforced through the use of computers in the classrooms. Lessons are well planned and teachers are confident in their grasp of the subject. The usual pattern of literacy and numeracy lessons is used effectively in the computer suite. Firstly, teachers make sure that they explain clearly what pupils are going to learn and frame suitable questions that encourage pupils to think about how computers can help them. Then pupils work at tasks on the computers to practise newly learnt skills. Lastly, the teachers review what had been done in the lesson and share pupils' work with the class. Teachers are positive in their relationships with pupils and remind them about how they should take turns as they share computers. Pupils usually work in pairs in the computer suite and this co-operative style of working makes a good contribution to their social development. This is a subject that pupils enjoy and they have very positive attitudes to it.
110. The accommodation and resources for ICT are very good. The school now has a higher ratio of computers to pupils than the current government target. This is much better than the situation at the last inspection. The computer suite is equipped with an interactive whiteboard that is a valuable teaching aid for demonstrating computer skills to the whole class. The computers themselves are up-to-date and the available software is good. The computer suite is well laid out and has now been in use for several months. It was constructed by covering an open central courtyard. Although it provides a large pleasant area, it is not well enough insulated to provide comfortable conditions in cold weather. The school is aware of this and has plans to install some form of heating. All classrooms have several desktop computers that can be used during the day. The use of ICT in literacy and mathematics is increasing as teachers become more confident in their grasp of the software available. The school recognises that the use of ICT in other subjects

is the next area for development, especially as staff expertise and pupils' skills have developed so well recently.

111. The subject leader has only recently taken over the post, but has made a good start. She has enthusiasm for the subject and advises colleagues effectively. The nationally recommended scheme of work provides good support for teachers when planning lessons. There is a very good system of assessment. Each pupil has a workbook containing samples of work recording and describing the levels of the National Curriculum that have been reached. This gives parents and carers, as well as pupils, a clear indication of progress. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported appropriately and have full access to this part of the curriculum. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

## **MUSIC**

112. Few music lessons were seen during the period of the inspection. Taking into account the evidence from these lessons, discussion with relevant staff and available records, it is clear that pupils reach standards above those expected nationally. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 sing in tune and with expression, and some explore the way that sounds can be combined and they comment on the effects achieved. In assemblies the pupils sing with a sense of the shape of the melody and have an evident enjoyment in music making. There are regular singing practices for all pupils. Pupils enjoy these and quickly develop their ability to sing tunefully. There is also an annual production for each year group. There are visits from musical groups and instrumentalists and the school values music and music making.
113. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the period of the inspection, all of the teaching seen in music lessons was good or very good. In a very good lesson in Year 1, on providing an accompaniment to a short story, pupils suggested how percussion instruments could provide the desired effects. Pupils followed simple notation and watched the 'conductor' attentively so that they could come in on cue. This enhanced pupils' skills in numeracy, as they looked for repeated patterns. They listened carefully to their own and others' playing. In this lesson the teacher took care to use the correct names for the various Latin-American instruments. This developed pupils' skills in literacy by extending their vocabulary. Girls and boys make similar progress in relation to their prior attainment, as do pupils of all ethnic backgrounds. Pupils respond well to music lessons and the co-operative work that they do in groups or pairs fosters their social development well.
114. The subject manager has been in charge of music for ten years. She has enthusiasm for music and shares this with her colleagues. She is aware of the difficulties experienced by non-specialist teachers of the subject and supports colleagues by helping them to be fully aware of appropriate work for each age group. The school uses the national scheme of work and supplements it by commercially produced materials. This ensures full coverage of the topics prescribed by the National Curriculum. Planning for the subject is effective. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers are clear about how the units of work relate to the levels of the National Curriculum.
115. Resources for music are very good in both quality and quantity. There is a large set of instruments so that all the pupils in any class can each have an instrument to play. Further resources that are kept in a central accessible location can supplement this. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are helped appropriately and have full access to this part of the curriculum. Teachers regularly use cassette recorders to record class and group work, and the school is exploring a range of CD-ROMs to provide suitable programs for the development and use of ICT in music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

116. By the end of Year 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs and ethnic minority pupils, are on course to achieve well above average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be above average. The school has good facilities and resources for physical education and extensive use is made of the school hall and outdoor areas. A very good feature of the subject is the excellent way all pupils change into appropriate clothing for physical education lessons. The school has taken account of national guidance and teaches the main areas of games, gymnastics and dance. There is no provision for swimming.
117. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. Two lessons involved Year 1 pupils doing gymnastics and, the third, Year 2 pupils learning about dance. In all these lessons pupils learn the importance of warming up at the start of the lessons. They understand the importance of heart beat and become aware of body changes as they become more active. Similarly, at the end of lessons there were cooling down activities before returning to their classrooms. In one of the lessons, Year 1 pupils were learning to refine a sequence and evaluate their performance. The pupils were enthusiastic and eager to complete their tasks efficiently and made the maximum effort. They listened attentively before developing a three-stage sequence involving a jump, a roll and a balance. They explored the skills required to complete a roll - for example, tucking in their heads. Boys and girls were equally effective in managing and completing their sequences. They understood the importance of health and safety factors as they got out and used the apparatus.
118. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils were learning to respond imaginatively to the music of the 'Sugar Plum Fairy' as they developed their dance skills. They entered the hall in an orderly fashion before playing a warm up game. They participated with enthusiasm and a sense of fun. During the lesson, they watched and described the work of other groups. Most of the pupils responded imaginatively with control and co-ordination, using different parts of their bodies. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress with their control and co-ordination of movement. Mathematical skills were enhanced as pupils created attractive patterns of movements.
119. The quality of teaching observed was very good. Careful planning and effective demonstrations reflect good subject knowledge. Teachers manage resources and pupils well. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to evaluate their performance. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and their good behaviour enhances the quality of their learning. This enables them to make good progress in lessons. There is no significant gender difference in pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language also make good progress.
120. The subject co-ordinator has recently been appointed. Already, she has monitored the planning of lessons across the school and she will monitor teaching and learning as part of the school's development plan for all subjects. The curriculum is based on national guidance and teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons and give an overall view of the work done during the year in annual reports to parents. The school also provides opportunities for pupils to join a dance club. This enhances their skills and allows them to follow up an interest in the subject.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

121. Pupils achieve standards well above those expected in the local agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2. Although little classroom teaching was seen, evidence was gained from a range of sources - pupils' written work, class displays and photographs were scrutinised, school planning was examined and discussions took place with the subject co-ordinator and pupils. Standards have risen since the last inspection, largely due to the improved provision of opportunities for pupils to learn about a wider range of faiths. They now learn about Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam.
122. In Year 2, pupils know that the Bible is important to Christians. They gain a sound understanding of the principal Christian festivals such as Advent, Christmas and Easter. Pupils have visited the village church and are becoming more aware of the way people worship and behave in a range of faiths. They know that Sunday is a special day for Christians and that, for a Hindu family, the



festival of Divali is special. Pupils know stories from the Old and New Testaments. They begin to understand the idea of symbolism in different faiths; for example, when they look at how candles are used in festivals such as Divali and Christmas. As pupils discover the patterns of festivals in a range of cultures, they recognise the mathematical sequence which is common to all; for example, the seasons and the cycle of life. In class discussions, pupils begin to examine their own feelings; for example, pupils in Year 2 talked about the giving of gifts. They recognise that gifts are signs of love and affection. School assemblies make an effective contribution to the curriculum for religious education, especially at Christmas, when the Nativity is movingly presented by pupils in Year 2 for the school and the community. The inclusion of drama and music in such presentations extends pupils' skills and helps pupils who speak English as an additional language to understand and enjoy religious education.

123. Evidence from a range of sources demonstrates that teaching is very good. Pupils are taught through imaginative links with all five senses – they see, hear, touch, smell and taste in lessons which are full of interest. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from this practical approach, as they deepen their understanding without recourse to literacy, which they often find difficult. Planning is very good and teachers develop the work over a period of time. Teachers assess pupils' progress at the end of each half-termly topic and use assessments to inform future planning. For example, if pupils have not grasped an idea clearly enough, it is 'revisited' and reviewed at a later date. A significant feature of the teaching is the way topics are linked to the pupils' own lives. For example, when the principal rules of religions are discussed, teachers talk about school rules and how these are necessary for a harmonious society. Special times in the pupils' lives are explored, and teachers reinforce the idea that these occasions, such as baptism and marriage, are celebrated in other religions. Boys and girls both contribute well to discussions.
124. Teachers invite parents to talk to the pupils about a range of faiths. A Hindu mother showed pictures and told pupils about special food eaten during Divali. She made burfi – Divali sweets – and created beautiful Rangoli patterns. The pupils made divas – small candle-holders – from clay, and decorated them attractively. Through such activities, pupils develop a growing understanding of how religion plays an important part in many people's lives. This prepares the way for them to develop tolerance and understanding. The self-esteem of pupils of other faiths is raised as they see that their religions are respected. The subject manager monitors the teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure that the agreed range of experiences from the local agreed syllabus are taught to all pupils
125. The co-ordinator manages the subject very effectively. There is a detailed and helpful programme of work which follows the local agreed syllabus for religious education and gives very good support for teachers. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly against the requirements of the curriculum. Links with other subjects are very good. Literacy, oracy and drama are developed well, and art and design is included in most topics. The use of ICT to find information, take photographs and present pieces of pupils' work attractively enhances both the teaching and learning of religious education. The school has assembled a good range of resources and books to support and enrich pupils' learning in the subject, so that pupils can handle artefacts and consolidate and extend their learning through looking at books on the various topics being studied. For example, pupils in Year 2 have been learning about Judaism, and the teacher has displayed a number of books and artefacts for pupils to explore.