

INSPECTION REPORT

WEOBLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Weobley

Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116746

Headteacher: Mr. R. G. Williams

Reporting inspector: Dr. Eric Peagam
14943

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th March 2003

Inspection number: 247680

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3- 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Burton Wood
Weobley
Hereford

Postcode: HR4 8ST

Telephone number: 01544 318273

Fax number: 01544 318896

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. M. Davis

Date of previous inspection: 24th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
14943	Eric Peagam	Registered inspector	Foundation stage Science History Physical education Special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
10329	Brian Sampson	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	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
11642	Carol Parkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Geography Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23733	Averil Anderson	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd.,
The Croft
Brierley Way
Oldcroft
Lydney
Gloucestershire
GL15 4NE

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Weobley is a slightly smaller than average primary school with a nursery, which provides education for girls and boys from 3-11, located in Weobley, a village near Hereford. At the time of the inspection there were 193 full-time pupils on roll including 19 children attending the nursery part-time. Attainment on entry varies but is overall in the low average range. Pupils come from a range of economic backgrounds and there is a below-average number currently eligible for free school meals. However, this is not a reliable indicator of levels of deprivation, since Government statistics indicate much higher levels and this is reflected in local authority rankings. There is a low proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average at 19 per cent but the number of pupils with statements is above average at 2.6 per cent. The school has a significantly higher than average level of pupil mobility, so that often considerably less than two thirds of the pupils completing Year 6 were in the school as under-fives. The school aims to enable its pupils to achieve the highest possible standards while retaining the valued characteristics and community ethos of a village school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Weobley is a highly effective school that serves its pupils and the community very well. It is a school with very many great strengths and very few, minor, shortcomings. It achieves good standards for pupils with a wide range of abilities, through a consistently high standard of teaching underpinned by a very good curriculum. The exceptional quality and the striking unity of vision and purpose displayed by the whole leadership and reflected in the very strong ethos in the school is translated into very effective practice by high quality management at all levels. When all these factors are taken into account, the school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision for under-fives is very good and prepares children very well for later school life
- The leadership at all levels is outstanding and very well supported by all staff in its aims
- Teaching is very good and supports consistently very good progress by the pupils.
- The school is highly successful in its aim to provide a caring, thoughtful community in which all feel valued
- Planning for improvement is very well managed; it is based on secure understanding of the school's performance and plans are very well implemented and monitored.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development very well

What could be improved

- There are no significant areas requiring improvement. Any minor shortcomings identified in this report, including the need for further training in music teaching, have already been identified and incorporated into school improvement planning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997 when it was found to be a good school. Most issues for action were based on minor shortcomings that had already been identified for implementation during that year. In addition, the school was advised to develop a homework policy and set targets to raise attainment in English and mathematics for infants. These have all been achieved but the school has, nevertheless continued to pursue improvement energetically and systematically so that it has made good improvement since that inspection. Standards have improved overall, along with the quality of teaching and this has been particularly true for pupils with special educational needs where the provision has been significantly enhanced. The school has moved into high quality purpose-built accommodation, which has had considerable impact on the facilities for learning. Additional accommodation for under-fives has been very effectively used to improve on the already good offer for them. Communication with parents is more effective and the school is involved in initiatives such as Family Literacy and Family Numeracy. Provision and use of information and communications technology (ICT) resources has dramatically increased and these play an important part in teaching and learning.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	D	B
mathematics	C	A	C	A
science	C	C	C	A

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

In this context, similar schools are those who achieved similar overall results at Key Stage 1.

The very good start that children under five receive is built on successfully in the main part of the school so that pupils achieve good overall standards and, for many, standards are very good. Although pupils' capabilities on entry are very variable, they are, overall, below average, particularly in aspects of language and for those pupils with significant special needs. As a result, by the end of Year 2, attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, is often still below average, although this has improved recently and last year, was above average overall. The small numbers involved in each year group, and other factors, including levels of mobility and the impact of varying numbers of pupils with special needs, means that attainment by Year 6 is also variable, both from year to year and between subjects. However, taking these fluctuations into account, the school has improved in line with the national average over the last five years, and the most recent results were broadly in line with that average overall. Work seen in Year 6 was mainly at the expected level, but results, especially in mathematics are likely to be lower this year than last. The school sets challenging targets for pupils based on very effective monitoring of pupils' progress and, based on these and on the measured progress that individual pupils make during their time at the school, achievement is good. A similar pattern is reflected in the remaining (foundation) subjects of the National Curriculum, with some work of very high standard being produced in most subjects. This is especially evident in physical education where pupils show highly developed dance and games skills, and achievement in swimming is consistently good. Pupils with special needs achieve very well as a result of the very close attention to their needs and the school is very careful to ensure that other minority groups including children from traveller families and those looked after by the local authority achieve as well as they should.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils respond to the very good ethos of the school by showing a high regard for it and being highly committed and responsible, including active participation in the school council.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good overall and in many contexts it is excellent. Pupils show very high levels of self-discipline and think constantly of the needs of others.
Personal development and relationships	The school is very successful in promoting pupils' personal development through both formal and informal approaches. Relationships within the school, including those between pupils are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory, being in line with the national average. There is no unauthorised absence

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	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.

Teaching is very good overall. It was at least good in the great majority of lessons seen, at least very good in about three-fifths of lessons seen and never unsatisfactory. At times it was excellent. This very high quality of teaching was seen in all classes and across a wide range of subjects. Teaching in English and mathematics is very good; sessions in literacy and numeracy are very well organised and contribute well to the development of these key-learning skills. Teaching is characterised by very high expectations and planning that addresses the needs of all pupils, including the highest attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Support staff make a very good contribution to the overall quality of teaching, both when working in class and when withdrawing pupils. Teachers have very good knowledge of their pupils and employ this knowledge very effectively in high quality oral work. They constantly assess pupils’ learning both within lessons and through their marking and use the information very effectively in planning the next steps. As a result, pupils of all abilities learn very well. They build consistently on secure foundations and are able to check what they have learned in lessons against what was intended. On occasion, teachers continue with the oral part of the lesson beyond the point where it is useful for the majority, and, at times, learning is insufficiently drawn together and lesson objectives are not robustly reviewed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very good curriculum that meets requirements very well. It is significantly enriched by extra-curricular activities and the use of the community, including a very good contribution from visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision for pupils with special needs ensures that the school meets a wide range of needs very well including those of children from a wider area.
Provision for pupils’ personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils’ overall personal development is very good. The school plans for and provides a very good range of opportunities and contexts within which pupils’ spiritual and cultural development is fostered. The consistent shared commitment to high standards of behaviour ensures that moral and social development are very well supported.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A significant aim of the school is to create a supportive and caring community that reflects the best traditions of the village school. In this it is highly successful and great care is taken to promote pupils’ well-being. Assessment and monitoring of academic and personal development are very good.

The school is highly successful in its aim to create a strong and effective partnership with parents. This results in a strong, mutually supportive relationship that makes a very effective contribution to the life of the school in terms both of the financial support and the involvement of parents in daily support of children’ learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
--------	---------

Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent leadership at all levels is based on a clear, shared vision that ensures that its aims are consistently and coherently pursued through well-defined strategic planning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body forms a highly effective and cohesive leadership group that fulfils its responsibilities very well. The very strong links between governors, parents and staff contribute very well to the community life of the school. There is a constant focus on what the school should do to improve its impact.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is extremely rigorous in its evaluation of its own performance, making very good use of all available performance data including tracking the progress of individual pupils. Very good use is made of LEA and national data to compare performance with that of other schools. Regular consultation with parents is used to enable their views to feed into planning.
The strategic use of resources	The school manages its finances very well and makes very effective use of the resources at its disposal, including staff. There is good emphasis on the use of price and value comparisons when making purchases and there are good systems to ensure and monitor the cost-effectiveness of spending decisions.

The school is very well accommodated in high-quality purpose-built new premises that provide very well for pupils' needs, both indoors and out. Careful planning for purchasing and the care taken of equipment and materials ensures that there are good resources available for all subjects. The school is appropriately staffed with well-qualified teachers, whose skills match the needs of the school very well. They are very well supported by good quality support staff, many of whom successfully fill multiple roles in the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress their children make • The quality of the teaching • The high expectations the school has for their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons

The inspection confirmed the high quality of teaching and learning and the high expectations within the school. Further information available within the school indicated that parents were not dissatisfied with the range and nature of extra-curricular activities, which the inspection found to be very good, but they would like a further extension. The breakfast club is highly valued and many parents would like to see an extension through an after-school club.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. **Children enter the school with a wide range of attainment and previous experience and some have good skills when they arrive.** However, overall attainment measured by baseline assessment fluctuates from year to year; while sometimes it is higher than the average for the county, it is often below and, averaged over the previous five years, it has been below that average. Overall levels of attainment observed in the Early Years classes are as follows:

	Nursery	Reception
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Below average	Meets expectations
Communication, Language and Literacy	Below average	Mostly meets expectations
Mathematical Development	Below average	Meets expectations
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Below average	Meets expectations
Physical Development	Below average	Meets expectations
Creative Development	Below average	Meets expectations

2. **In the subjects of the National Curriculum, as it to be expected in a small school, standards fluctuate from year to year.** This reflects a number of factors including levels of attainment on entry and the higher than average numbers of pupils moving in and out. However, given the numbers of pupils in Years 2 and 6 in any one year, the variations are not necessarily statistically significant.
3. In the Year 2 tests in 2002, reading scores were slightly below the national average, while writing and mathematics were above it. On the basis of a three-year average, standards were below average in reading and writing but above average in mathematics. While there are some gender differences, these are not significant.
4. In 2002, when the school is ranked against all others in terms of the numbers attaining the national benchmark (National Curriculum level 2) or higher in Year 2, the school is above the average for reading, among the highest five per cent for writing and in line with the average for mathematics as it also is when teacher assessments in science are compared. When the higher levels are examined, the school achieves average results in reading and writing while those in mathematics are well above average. This reflects an overall upward trend over the past five years which is in line with that nationally
5. When attainment is compared with schools judged to be similar, the proportion attaining the national benchmark or higher is above average in reading, in the highest five per cent of schools for writing and below average in mathematics. However, as the basis for determining similar schools is the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, which in the case of this school is an unreliable indicator, these comparisons should be treated with care. More reliable evidence, provided by LEA comparisons, shows that the actual progress made by pupils between baseline assessment and the end of year 2 is above the average for the county.
6. Results in national tests for Year 6 in 2002, indicate that overall attainment, measured by average points scores in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is in line with the national average. This reflects above average results in mathematics and science, but below average results in English. Over the last five years, results have risen overall in line with the national trend.
7. When the proportion of pupils attaining the national benchmark (National Curriculum level 4) or higher is compared with national figures, the school's results were in line with the average in all three subjects. However when high levels of attainment only are compared, while results are still average in mathematics and science, they are well below average in English
8. Over the previous three years there has been a similar pattern, but with better performances in mathematics contributing to overall results being slightly above average. Boys did slightly better than girls overall, but significantly better in mathematics. However, results do not show a consistent gender pattern.
9. When the actual improvement made by those pupils over their previous levels of attainment is compared to that made by other schools who had similar levels of prior attainment, the picture changes in that the results are well above average for English, where the greatest improvement was made and above average in mathematics and science for the proportion of pupils achieving level 4. The relatively small number of pupils achieving level 5 in

English means that, using the same basis for comparison, higher level results are average for English, while results in mathematics and science remain above average..

10. Standards observed during the inspection in National Curriculum subjects and religious education are as follows:

Subject	By Year 2	By Year 6
English: talking /listening	Meets expectations	Meets expectations
reading	Meets expectations	Meets expectations
writing	Meets expectations	Meets expectations
Mathematics	Meets expectations	Below expectations
Science	Meets expectations	Meets expectations
Design and technology	Meets expectations	Meets expectations
Information technology	Above expectations	Above expectations
History	Meets expectations	Meets expectations, some good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Very good	Very good
Music	Meets expectations	Meets expectations
Physical education	Meets expectations, good in dance	Good
Religious education	Good	Good

11. **Pupils achieve well overall as a result of good and often very good progress.** This is reflected in most subjects although in music, where the new scheme of work has not yet sufficiently bedded in, progress in some classes is satisfactory rather than good. Pupils make particularly good progress in personal social and health education which is not only taught as a separate subjects but is very well promoted in other subjects such as religious education and literacy as well as being constantly reinforced through formal and informal interactions throughout the school day.
12. **Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress** as a result of the way in which the school ensures they have equal access to the curriculum and through the good level of assistance they receive from both teaching and support staff. The school has acquired a reputation for effective support for pupils with particular communication and language difficulties and provides very well for the additional pupils that this attracts
13. **Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its results relative to the national expectations** and has worked hard to ensure that all pupils are enabled to reach their potential through careful assessment and planning to meet individual needs. There is a very effective tracking system to ensure that pupils are achieving their targets and this, rather than the fluctuating overall attainment outcomes, provides good evidence of the success that the school achieves. Challenging targets for the school are set each year, which are based on identification of what could be achieved, and these inevitably fluctuate from year to year. In 2002 the school failed to reach its targets, particularly in mathematics, although it achieved them in science. For 2003, the school is on course to meet the targets, which are lower in English as a result of taking into account the numbers of pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. **The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are all major strengths** of which the school can be justifiably proud. These compare very favourably with the standards witnessed at the previous inspection.
15. The majority of the pupils show a great deal of pride in whatever they do. In lessons they concentrate very well and are extremely interested in what they are studying. During a Year 1 art lesson, in which the pupils were learning to weave a variety of shaped and coloured materials around metal looms, they produced some very imaginative and attractive designs. Their imaginations were fully engaged as they adjusted and interwove the wefts, within the spokes of old bicycle wheels, metal grids and wire mesh.
16. **The pupils' behaviour is very good**, particularly in lessons where the discipline and management are firm and the content stimulating and on occasions behaviour is excellent. At lunchtimes, playtimes and walking around the corridors to assemblies or physical education the pupils show a great deal of self-control. The pupils are proud of their school. No graffiti, rubbish or vandalism was seen during the visit. There has been one short-term exclusion in the twelve months preceding this inspection. No bullying or any type of oppressive behaviour was witnessed during the inspection and the school is keen to point out that this is usually the case. . The pupils

have an excellent understanding of how their actions can impact on others. They realise that negative actions can be reciprocated, leading to constant conflict. On the other hand they also realise that if you show friendship this will, more often than not, be returned. This is a very friendly school where the pupils' respect for feelings, values and beliefs is excellent. From their lessons in religious education and particularly their study of other religions and faiths they realise that not everyone, even within their own community, has necessarily been brought up with the same outlook on life.

17. **The personal development of the pupils and relationships within the school are excellent.** The pupils get on extremely well together. Boys and girls volunteer to partner each other in lessons. On a Reception class study walk to a local beauty spot, boys and girls walked hand in hand, helping each other along a busy road. The pupils use their initiative well and show a very high standard of responsibility in jobs allotted to them. The school's council, although not having been formed very long, functions most democratically. At the beginning and end of lessons the pupils know whose turn it is to issue or collect books, inspect the pencil boxes or put up the chairs and everything seems to work like clockwork. At lunchtimes, older pupils look after younger ones in a most caring way. The pupils really respect and look up to their teachers. They know that they can turn to them for anything and receive a sympathetic ear or a loving hug. Relationships between staff members are also excellent.
18. **Attendance at the school is still well in line with the national average** for this type of school as it was at the previous inspection. The majority of pupils come to school on time and lessons commence promptly. There are no long-term absences unaccounted for.
19. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are very well enhanced by the school's very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this contributes very significantly towards the success of the pupils learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

Teaching is very good overall. It was at least good in the great majority of lessons seen, at least very good in over a half of lessons seen and never unsatisfactory. At times it was excellent. Very high quality teaching was seen in all classes and across a wide range of subjects.

20. Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is never less than good and is usually very good. At times it is excellent. The teaching that the children receive is characterised by very good teamwork between all adults concerned and draws on high levels of expertise and experience.

21. For pupils in the infant and junior departments, teaching observed in each subject was as follows:

Subject	Years 1 and 2	Years 3-6
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good
Science	Good, often very good	Good, often very good
Design and technology	None seen	None seen
Information technology	Very good	Very good
History	None seen	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Very good	Very good
Music	Good	Good
Physical education	Very good	Very good
Religious education	Very good	Very good
Personal and social education	Good in other subjects	Good where seen

Teaching is characterised by very high expectations and planning that addresses the needs of all pupils, including the highest attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

22. In all subjects, teachers plan very carefully, drawing effectively on the school-wide schemes of work and matching work carefully to individual pupils' needs. A common feature of the very good and excellent teaching is the very high expectations that teachers have and this is reflected in challenging tasks and good pace in lessons. Pupils with identified special needs are very well catered for through teachers' awareness of what is in their individual education plans (IEPs) and through the targeted support offered by support assistants. Teachers plan well to ensure that, as well as providing suitable challenges for the majority of the class, those who are capable of achieving more highly are given good opportunities to take their learning further.

In a literacy session in Year 1 based on the story of Goldilocks, the teacher provided work at five different levels of difficulty encompassing a very good range of activities, including writing, group discussion, a well-structured learning game, independent role play and using the computer to write 'books' following a fairytale theme. As a result, all pupils were enjoying their work and many were showing an impressive level of independent working. The high expectations were underpinned by the very effective use of questioning to ensure that pupils were thinking deeply not only about the details of the story but also about the moral and social implications of Goldilocks' behaviour. Pupils with special needs worked very effectively with individual support and were enabled to play a full part in the lesson. At the end of the session, it was clear that pupils had learned very well and some were sufficiently stimulated to volunteer to take unfinished tasks home for homework.

Teaching in literacy and numeracy is very well planned and contributes well to the development of these key-learning skills.

23. All teachers show great commitment to the development of the key skills of literacy and numeracy and plan well not only for the dedicated daily lessons, but also for the use of these skills in other subjects. This is evident in those subjects such as history where writing plays a key part in recording and demonstrating understanding or where data handling or use of co-ordinates are important as, for example in science or geography. However, the commitment to key skills goes further in that, for example, from the most basic level, counting and the language of size and position is consistently promoted in physical education activities, while, at the same time, the regular use of the whiteboard in the hall to record the lesson objectives and the key features of the lesson makes very effective links between the physical and literacy requirements of the subject.

24. Within the dedicated lessons, teaching is usually at least good, often very good and excellent at times. In addition to the lesson already described, there are numerous examples of well-planned and very effectively managed learning experiences based on a common and predictable pattern.

In an excellent numeracy session in Year 4, where pupils are revisiting the subject of shape and organising data by sorting according to characteristics using different diagrammatic forms, the lesson begins with a very strong introduction that clearly establishes the objectives. Work carried out the previous day on Venn diagrams is reprised along with the difference between a Venn and a Carroll diagram. Pupils recall that different forms are used according to whether there is a straight 'yes/no' choice, or there are overlapping answers. The lesson has relentless pace, but no opportunities for making teaching points are missed; pupils' vocabulary is constantly extended and they are helped for example, to understand that in this context, 'straight' and 'curved' are exclusive criteria. After individual investigation work, a very well structured plenary session helps pupils to realise that these systems can be used for handling a wide range of data. During the lesson, pupils make very rapid gains in understanding and become confident in handling the concepts.

Support staff make a very good contribution to the overall quality of teaching, both when working in class and when withdrawing pupils.

25. The very good partnership that exists between all staff enables each adult in the school to make a very effective contribution to pupils' progress. This is very noticeable in the Early Years classes, where the adults play seamlessly interchangeable roles in supporting and extending children's learning, but is also evident throughout the rest of the school. In many lessons, individual pupils or small groups of pupils with special educational needs are either worked with separately or successfully supported enabling them to participate in the main lesson. In other contexts, they are provided with opportunities to extend their basic literacy or numeracy skills through working in small groups outside the class. These sessions, which are very well planned to complement what pupils are learning in class, are very well managed and pupils clearly enjoy the experience. However, the contribution of support staff is not confined to learning support for the less-able pupils.

In a literacy booster session run by a support assistant, pupils who are expected to attain above national expectations are exploring 'The art of persuasion'. The lesson is managed with great skill by a staff member who has great talent for drawing ideas from the pupils. The very good range of language she uses is consciously intended to extend their vocabulary and understanding and new expressions learned are carefully consolidated. As a result of the very good pace sustained, pupils are kept on their toes and there is an excellent buzz about the lesson.

Teachers have very good knowledge of their pupils and employ this knowledge very effectively in high quality oral work.

26. In all classes, it is very evident that teachers have a very good knowledge not only of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses, but also of their characteristic learning styles. This knowledge is very well used in the oral sessions that most lessons begin with, to ensure that all pupils understand what is expected, but also to enable pupils of all levels of ability to participate in the oral work.

In a Year 2 religious education lesson, pupils are helped to retell the story of Naaman through good use of directed questioning, reflecting the fact that the story was clearly very well taught the previous week. The teacher initiates a discussion about how Naaman must have felt about having a bad skin disease and uses this to encourage pupils to talk about what they have been embarrassed by. The teacher is very sensitive to individual pupils' feelings and concerns and steers the discussion carefully to ensure that all remain comfortable with it. As a result of the very good relationship of trust and knowledge in the class, the discussion is very fruitful and leads on to the conclusion that looking different does not make a person different inside. This prepares them very well for the written task that is to follow.

Teachers constantly assess pupils' learning both within lessons and through their marking and use the information very effectively in planning the next steps.

27. In the great majority of lessons, teachers carefully monitor the learning that is taking place to ensure both that the current lesson objectives are being addressed and that pupils' prior learning is sufficiently secure to enable them to build on it. This is managed through observation but also, very effectively by the use of oral questioning to assess the degree of understanding pupils have and to reinforce their learning by encouraging them to think more deeply about things. There is a very effective common marking policy that is well used by teachers to check pupils' understanding through written work and to offer guidance as to how they should deal with any weaknesses. The information that this provides also enables the teacher to plan lessons that will address and areas where a number of pupils are having difficulty.

In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils are practising interpreting and evaluating data from a statistical survey on the life expectancy of smokers. The survey relates well to the subject matter in science, but the particular activity has been chosen because the teacher has discovered through marking previous work that this is an area that needs development. Examination of the pupils' books shows clearly how and when this assessment was made, based on the fact that the diagnostic marking had thrown data interpretation up as a common weakness

As a result of the quality of teaching they receive, pupils of all abilities learn very well. They build consistently on secure foundations and are able to check what they have learned in lessons against what was intended

28. Learning in lessons is consistently very good, reflecting the excellent relationships that exist in the classroom and the enthusiasm for learning that teachers engender or, in many cases, build on. One of the most significant features of pupils' learning is the extent to which they are enabled to be confident about what they know and have learned. Teachers take great care in assessment to ensure that previous work is secure and frequently check this at the beginning of subsequent lessons, before moving on. Lessons have clear objectives that are shared with pupils at the outset of the lesson and reviewed with them at the end. In the best lessons, pupils are invited to consider the extent to which they have met the objectives and to identify what they need to do next. This enables them to have a clear understanding of the extent of their learning and to take responsibility for securing or extending it.

In a very well prepared Year 3 art lesson using screen-printing, the teacher's very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject are very well deployed in extending pupils practical skills in printing as well as their appreciation of pattern. The teacher confidently intervenes with very good questioning about how the pupils intend to improve and extend their work, drawing on their knowledge of colour and use of shape. Not only does this have a very good impact on pupils' creative efforts, it enables them to develop considerable pride in their work through knowing what they have achieved and how their work has improved.

On occasion, teachers continue with the oral part of the lesson beyond the point where it is useful for the majority and, at times, learning is insufficiently drawn together and lesson objectives are not robustly reviewed.

29. Although teaching always reaches at least a satisfactory standard in a few lessons the quality falls below the generally higher level because teachers adhere to their original plan beyond the point where the activity has ceased to engage a significant part of the class. This sometimes occurs when introductory oral sessions succeed in making the teaching points for most pupils more quickly than expected and, as a result, they lose focus and become inattentive while the needs of slower learners are being met. On other occasions, the lesson covers a lot of ground and the learning is not sufficiently drawn together to enable the pupils to have a clear focus on what has been learned. On these occasions, the review of the lesson objectives is either muddled or incomplete, especially when activities in the lesson have diverged from those planned.

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

30. **The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils and improvement since the previous inspection is good. At that time, although the range of learning opportunities was broad and balanced, there were some**

weaknesses to be addressed. The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements, provides religious education and also cultivates very well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and all pupils have appropriate access to the curriculum because of high quality planning, sensitive and well-informed support and effective assessment.

Notable strengths in the curriculum are:

very good planning throughout the curriculum;

very good links with other subjects;

the school's own adaptation of the curriculum to meet the needs of its pupils.

31. **The very high quality of the curriculum provided in the nursery and reception classes gives children of different abilities and experiences the opportunity to achieve as well as they can and widens their knowledge very well.** Work in the Reception class is planned effectively to help children to reach the early learning goals so that they are suitably prepared for school when they join Year 1. The staff in the two classes plan well together to help children develop their skills and knowledge stage by stage and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Children's progress is evaluated thoroughly and purposefully so that individual work is planned to improve their progress, and the provision for their personal and social development is very good.
32. **The curriculum is very well planned throughout the school to make sure that pupils build on skills they have learned previously in different subjects and do not repeat work at the same level.** Subject managers plan links between their subject and others, for example, information technology and numeracy with science; this gives pupils an opportunity to practise their skills and to apply them usefully to another subject. Subject-specific vocabulary, mathematical knowledge and opportunities to use computer software are especially well identified and used in curriculum planning. The different elements of subjects are carefully noted and planned; these might be, for example, looking at colour and pattern, learning about differences and similarities in the work of artists and using different materials in art. This careful attention to detail and consistency of planning is clear throughout the curriculum.
33. While the school has made use of elements of the national guidelines for the curriculum, it has developed many of its own areas for study, for example, in geography. This means that teachers have written and chosen a curriculum suited to their pupils, and have very good knowledge of what is to be taught. The school uses a commercial scheme for music, suitably adapted for the pupils and this provides a very good framework for teaching, especially for those teachers who are not music specialists. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' success at school.
34. **The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal and social development** and the curriculum for this is planned with the same high quality attention to detail as that seen in other subjects. Drugs education is taught through literacy and other subjects and discretely, in its own right. Arrangements for sex education are suitable. There is a school council and this meets regularly and plays an effective part in school life. Homework is well planned and useful.
35. **The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** The nature of the curriculum and the way it is planned gives rise to many valuable opportunities for pupils to discover new and surprising information for themselves through their own research, and to be presented activities to make them wonder how and why certain events or reactions take place. For example, Year 6 pupils glazed and fired clay models and were amazed by the resulting change in the colour and texture of the material. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and makes a notable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The quality of the presentation of collective worship is very high. Music monitors choose and manage the music, and several pupils said that they recognised and learned the names and styles of composers as a result. On one occasion, the idea of making a promise and keeping it through commemorating that promise with a gift was demonstrated with great clarity, and provoked much thought and discussion amongst the pupils. Another time, pupils were reminded of what had happened on that day many years ago, for example, the death of Queen Elizabeth 1, and this helped pupils to become aware of and wonder at the passage of time.
36. Teachers take every opportunity to extend pupils' knowledge in a very natural way and the very well planned curriculum helps them to do this. Moral development is taught throughout subjects, the way pupils are managed and supported in class and the good example teachers and other members of staff set. Pupils are well aware of what is or is not acceptable behaviour and the personal, social and health curriculum they receive at school is very effective. They have many opportunities to fundraise for charity and become aware of the needs of others, and to work independently and in groups at school.

37. **The school makes very good provision for activities outside school**, such as musical activities, the computer club or football, as well as the school's residential visit to Brecon and these give pupils many opportunities for social development. Cultural and multicultural development are very good and occur naturally as a result of the school's high quality curriculum and links with other groups. There is a long-standing link with a village in Tanzania, and the staff take every opportunity to invite visitors to school to discuss their work and different experiences. All the different subjects are used effectively to teach their different cultural components. For example, in geography, pupils learn the history and customs of their own village as part their understanding of the effect its position and nature has had on its development.
38. The curriculum is very effective and is a strength of the school

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. **Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good.** The information obtained is used very well in planning future lessons, for example, in an English lesson many pupils had muddled 'are' and 'our' because their pronunciation of both words is very similar. During the next lesson time was spent discussing this with the pupils and giving them strategies to help them remember which spelling was correct. Teachers and classroom assistants continually assess pupils' work and record their findings. This is done informally as well as formally with end of term and end of year assessments. Work is assessed and graded in line with National Curriculum levels of attainment and staff moderate work together to ensure that all teachers are using the same standards and criteria. Thus co-ordinators are confident that accurate judgements are made.
40. Very good use is made of targets set for individual pupils, both in Individual Education Plans and within specific subject areas. These targets are assessed regularly and in some classes individual English targets are written and assessed weekly. The assessment of these very personalised targets is a powerful tool in pupils' continued improvement in all areas of Literacy. As well as national standardised attainment tests at the ages of seven and eleven years pupils between the ages of eight and ten undergo nationally recognised assessment tests. All the information obtained is used very well to assist in long term planning as well as in day-to-day lesson plans.
41. **The school has very good procedures for child protection and ensuring the welfare of its pupils.** Overall these procedures compare well with the high standards witnessed at the previous inspection and are significant strengths of the school. They ensure that the school provides a very caring, progressive and safe environment in which the children can learn and play, thereby supporting standards very well.
42. The school's named and trained child protection person ensures that all staff are well aware of their relevant responsibilities. A very good liaison is maintained with the local social services and all incidents are well recorded and any relevant documentation securely locked away. The school has a clear, written policy. Children who are looked after by the local authority, as well as traveller children, come under the responsibility of the child protection person, and the interests of these children are well catered for.
43. The named health and safety person and governor regularly inspect the premises and ensure that, risk assessments are carried out at appropriate times. Risk assessments for visits out of school are also up to date. All fire, physical education and portable electrical equipment are checked and evacuation exercises are carried out every term and documented. All escape routes are accessible and well marked. The school has clear and caring routines for reporting accidents and the administration of medicines. There are sufficient, trained first-aid personnel. Very good use is made of outside professional help, such as the local police, who talk about alcohol and drugs misuse and 'stranger danger' and the school nurse who deals with sex education. The school ensures that its pupils do not have access to, undesirable Internet material.
44. **The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance.** Registers are well maintained, parents are made well aware of their responsibilities and good use is made of the educational welfare officer.
45. **Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good whilst those for eliminating oppressive behaviour are excellent.** The school's detailed, written, behaviour policy contains realistic rewards and sanctions. All pupils are aware of these and the procedures work effectively as is evidenced by the very good behaviour. The bronze, silver and gold awards, as well as stickers presented at the special award assemblies are highly and proudly coveted by the pupils. Poor behaviour results in a home/school behaviour book and parental involvement. The school has an effective written anti-bullying policy. Pupils are given the confidence to report incidents by discussion in assemblies, and circle time whilst staff are experienced at recognising potential situations and nipping them in the bud.
46. **The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting the personal development of its pupils;** these are well reinforced by the frequent, very good personal, social and health education lessons. All staff know the pupils very well and due to the school's open procedures they can discuss any problems or otherwise

with parents daily. Personal progress is recorded in annual academic reports. Records, including specific certificates and pieces of work are maintained in each pupil's personal file.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. **From meetings with parents and from comments on returned questionnaires it is clear that the parents know this to be a very good school.** Specifically they like the high expectations that the school has for their children, the progress that their children are making and the overall high quality of teaching. A significant few did say that, although they were not dissatisfied with activities outside of lessons and in fact they valued the Breakfast Club highly, they would also like to see an After School Club introduced. The inspection confirmed parents' very positive views of the school.
48. **The quality of information that the school provides for its parents is good and compares well with that of the previous inspection.** An updated prospectus and an annual governors' report are provided. Both documents currently have minor omissions of which the school is now aware. Their child's annual academic reports cover all subjects of the curriculum and are easy for parents to understand. However, although they usually state what a child can do they do not always set specific targets. In addition parents receive a regular and very informative newsletter, a home/school agreement, containing the homework policy, and also enjoy regular 'meet the teacher' evenings. The school has held various curriculum evenings on: numeracy, literacy, information and communications technology and medical problems. An open door policy ensures that parents can meet the head teacher and staff at virtually any time within the school day.
49. **The school appreciates the very good contribution that parents make towards their children's learning.** Several parents come in regularly and help with reading, art, visits and sporting events. Some mothers have enjoyed this so much that they have trained as classroom assistants. The school never has any problems recruiting parent governors. At home parents appreciate the two-way communication provided by the home/school reading books.
50. **The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good.** The extremely energetic Parent/Teachers Association raise very considerable sums of money from sponsorship and arranging social events. Such funds have helped considerably towards, new playground markings, the Roman garden and swimming trips. Parents also find that information given to them on the next term's work is a great help and a significant proportion of parents help with reading, mathematics, projects and topics as a result of this
51. **The overall impact of the school's links with its parents are very good and a strength of the school.** Such strong links contribute significantly towards the success of their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. **The school is excellently led and managed by the headteacher, very ably supported by a very effective deputy headteacher.** There is a shared commitment at all levels of management to improve and succeed; all members of staff have a common vision. That there are no major key issues for action in this report is indicative of clear educational direction. The school continues to successfully maintain the ethos of a 'village school' whilst at the same time enabling its pupils to achieve the highest possible standards.
53. **The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties and in shaping the direction of the school is excellent.** It has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors are very familiar faces in school. They monitor teaching and learning in lessons as well as providing guidance and support in many ways. The level of their enthusiasm and support for staff and pupils alike is exemplary. One governor even came in to school during the inspection to do playground duty at break times to ensure that staff were able to relax.
54. **Monitoring and evaluation of the of the school's performance is carried out very effectively, both in the planning stage and in the teaching of lessons.** All levels of management are very well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and take effective action to consolidate and increase the strengths while doing their utmost to improve any weaknesses. The moderating and levelling of sample work across the school is a good example of this. It is done, for example in English, by all staff who work together in a very unthreatening way which ensures that teachers understand exactly what is needed. Evaluation of national tests is very efficient and effective. Where results show differences between groups of pupils these are looked at and possible reasons found and acted upon. A present example of this is the discrepancy between girls and boys within some, but not all, classes.
55. **Developments are very well supported by detailed financial planning and the school's improvement plan links educational priorities to the budget most effectively and efficiently.** Administration and financial procedures within the school are very good. The principles needed to ensure that the school receives value for money are

very secure and appropriately carried out. The school compares itself to similar schools as well as its own past record. It consults parents and the community and constantly challenges itself to see how it can improve the service it provides for pupils; for example, in looking into the provision of an after school club similar to the breakfast club. When purchasing new resources of whatever kind the school encourages healthy competition between its suppliers. The school is currently carrying forward grant-related funding for the development of outdoor play areas, which accounts for the current balance.

56. **The school is adequately staffed overall to support the number of pupils on roll, but teachers have a minimum of non-contact time to undertake their management duties.** Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of all subjects. This is borne out by the very good teaching and learning observed across the school and teachers' enthusiasm for their work. This enthusiasm is shared by the learning support assistants who provide an excellent support to pupils and teachers. There is a real element of teamwork throughout the school.
57. **Accommodation and resources are good.** The playing areas are very attractively laid out with a choice from a variety of activities. The living willow tunnel, seats and 'igloo' are especially popular with pupils. The wildlife pond is attractive and provides a very good resource for lessons. It is adequately fenced off. Inner courtyards are attractive and used well. The construction of a Roman garden in one courtyard is a masterstroke of inventiveness. The pupils are enjoying creating it and it is very attractive to look at. The relatively new building is very well used. It is kept impeccably clean by the school caretaker and cleaning staff. The many high-quality displays are bright and cheerful. They celebrate pupils' work as well as providing incidental learning for pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to maintain the high standards in the school and to continue to build upon previous improvement, the governors, headteacher and staff should continue to refine and develop self-evaluation and planning for improvement, including the implementation of issues already identified for further improvement such as teachers' skills and confidence in music.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

60

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	29	18	6	0	0	0
Percentage	7	51	31	11	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR- Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10	183
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR- Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		29

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	94.9
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	11	13	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	10
	Girls	11	13	12
	Total	22	24	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (82)	100 (79)	92 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	10
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	22	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (79)	92 (89)	92 (86)
	National	85 (84)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	16
	Girls	10	8	11
	Total	24	22	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (70)	73 (93)	90 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	15
	Girls	8	10	9
	Total	20	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (81)	80 (85)	80 (96)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	212
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	26	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	44	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	49	3	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	63	6	0	2
The teaching is good.	58	40	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	43	15	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	35	6	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	46	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	41	44	12	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	47	41	5	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	47	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	36	22	10	3

Other issues raised by parents

Additional comments were received from 12 parents, mostly amplifying their positive responses to questions. There were very few negative comments. Where these occurred, they were individual in nature and not widely supported.

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

Standards in the nursery and reception class are very good

Teaching by all adults involved is consistently good or very good and excellent at times so that children learn very well.

Learning activities are very well planned and children make very good progress in learning through play.

Children are very well cared for and there are very good systems for assessing and recording the progress they make.

The Early Years provision is very well managed by a highly experienced and capable co-ordinator, who is highly regarded in the County for her skills and knowledge.

Facilities and resources for learning are very good and make a very effective contribution to children’s learning.

59. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained and enhanced the good provision for children in the nursery and reception classes which is now very good overall. Both for the children who attend the nursery in the mornings and for the full-time reception children, the school provides a very good curriculum that addresses the Early Learning Goals for these children very well and prepares them very effectively for the National Curriculum. Children arrive with a range of attainments but the overall level is generally slightly below average. They make very good progress across the whole range of learning and a majority achieve or exceed the expected levels in most areas. A number of children have entered school with poor communication skills and the school has as a consequence become involved in a number of national initiatives. The school has also participated in the Early Effective Learning Project.

60. The progress made by children in each of the areas is as follows:

	Nursery	Reception
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Very good	Very good
Communication, Language and Literacy	Very good	Very good
Mathematical Development	Very good	Very good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Very good	Very good
Physical Development	Very good	Very good
Creative Development	Very good	Very good

61. The curriculum is very well designed to provide formal structured learning as well as opportunities for learning through play and what is offered to each child is carefully matched to their needs and stage of development. Very good liaison between the nursery and reception teachers ensures that their planning is coherent and provides a secure basis for children to build on previous experiences, reinforcing their learning where necessary but without undue repetition.

62. All adults play an important part in providing and monitoring these experiences and this contributes very well to both the overall very high quality of teaching and the flexibility of what is offered. There is a very good system for noting and recording progress and achievement by children during play sessions, particularly in the nursery and all adults contribute consistently to this.

Examples of incidental learning assessed through play activities.

A piece of paper dropped on to the table as Z was cutting ‘look, a triangle’ he said.

K identified all the letters of her name, picked them from the puzzle and spelled it out.

Sh found ‘Sh’ when playing with the ‘abc flip -ups.’

L recognised the tune from the ‘Nutcracker’ when it came on the CD.

J expressed his needs using a full sentence when he said ‘I need a rolling pin’

63. Children benefit from the very good facilities and resources that are available which are very well managed. The arrangements to support educational and personal development are very well co-ordinated by the Early Years’

curriculum leader, who brings considerable specialist knowledge to bear and is very effective in identifying children's needs and the best way of addressing them. As a result, the provision is seen as a good place for a number of children with special educational needs, who are supported very well. A number of important initiatives are making a good contribution; for children with delayed language or social skills there is 'Teaching Talking'; for children who need specific support in early reading there is the 'Codebreakers' programme, while the school has introduced 'Family Literacy' and 'Family Numeracy' sessions for families where parents need help in providing their children with basic skills support. As a result, children with special educational needs make progress that is as good as other children across all areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children settle in well and are secure, happy and confident when coming to school. They participate fully in all the activities around them, both in the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Although their attainment is initially well below expectation for their age, particularly where they have experienced a degree of rural social isolation, they make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and engage well in joint play and learning activities, as well as showing confident, independent working, for example, on the computer.
65. Well-established routines, based on a consistent timetable provide a structure within which the children begin to exercise choice and independence. From the beginning, in the nursery, children make choices about activities and select the appropriate cue card as a reminder of what they have chosen. When pursuing these activities, they work well independently, as when painting on the computer or as they play successfully in groups with the farm animals or build a railway network. They share resources and take turns as in the very successful role play in the 'garden centre' where children 'buy' the equipment they will need for planting and looking after seeds. Role-play, including dressing up, plays an important part in their social and personal development as well as reinforcing their learning about other aspects of life, as when they dress in holiday clothes and set off with their suitcases, or dress for a wedding. On 'World Book Day, they dressed as a group to perform 'Old MacDonald' in the whole-school assembly.
66. They are very well supported in their social development by the role models provided by adults and the well-judged interventions that adults make to help them to remain focussed. Adults place great emphasis on reinforcing appropriate behaviour so that children learn and understand the differences between right and wrong, through awareness of how other people are affected. The very good relationships that develop are very effective in helping children to relate successfully to each other, which they do with increasing confidence. By the time they are in the Reception class, pupils undertake an expedition to Castle Green, showing good regard for the safety rules that have been agreed. They relate positively to people they meet, including a boy with a ferret, of whom they ask appropriate questions. When a mother brings her baby, they gather round and ask sensible questions, listening carefully to the answers.
67. Children develop an understanding that culture and practice differs in other places. For example they know that people in other countries speak different languages and demonstrate this in the Reception class when they answer the register in French or German. They understand and participate in celebrations such as the Chinese New Year, when they learn to wish one another 'Kung Hei Fat Choi'. They recognise religious practices from other cultures when they make diva lamps to mark Diwali.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Although some children are confident and articulate speakers when they arrive, many come with language skills that are below average, including a small number with significantly delayed language. Higher-attaining children are outgoing and loquacious and take great pleasure in talking about what they are doing. Others, however, have difficulty with articulation as well as with the social component of communication; they do not look at the person talking or to whom they are talking and are reluctant to converse other than in monosyllables. All children develop oral skills very effectively as a result of the planned and unplanned opportunities to talk and listen. They contribute to discussion, initially by answering questions put to them by adults but increasingly organising ideas and communicating them. In the nursery, adults model language very well each morning as they involve the children in discussion about the activities they are going to carry out. Children engage in discussion while role-playing and comment on their activities. One says: 'look at my lovely picture of the babies. I cut it out'. Another remarks: 'I've worked with the farm for a very long time'. When they play together with the train, they use them to construct and agree a story. Where children are not so confident with language they show understanding when they demonstrate rather than articulate answers, as does one child who is exploring how a belt buckle and buttons work.

69. Children listen with enjoyment and interest to songs, joining in with familiar words and join with the teacher in making up a song about the caterpillar, set to a familiar tune. They are familiar with counting songs and nursery rhymes, which they join in with confidence and enjoyment.
70. Children show good interest in books and know that print conveys meaning as it represents words they already know. When adults are working with children on literacy activities, they make very effective use of questioning to focus children's attention, and learning is very well supported by resources. When a group are reading about a hungry caterpillar, the teacher has prepared models of each of the foodstuffs that are consumed each day so that children are helped to make the connection between two-dimensional pictures and three-dimensional objects. They show their ability to sequence events in a story by placing the objects in the correct order. At other times, they retell familiar stories to the rest of the group. Children begin to understand the difference between stories and factual texts. They look at gardening books and seed catalogues as part of their garden centre project as well as making use of lists and labels to provide information. In the Reception class, children get to grips with reading, recognising signs such as 'open' when they share the reading of 'The Toy Shop' with the teacher. They sound out the letters of a word and learn that some letters are not sounded.
71. Early writing skills develop as children make purposeful and regular marks and patterns using crayons and paint. They go on to write their names in the sand and begin to form letters using chalk and marker pens. They draw pictures and write sentences about how they have grown and changed compared with babies. In the Reception class children copy words from a list on the wall. They learn to write simple words using their knowledge of phonics as they list words they know ending in 'at'

Mathematical development

72. Mathematical development is very well promoted through a range of activities that help children to approach the world of numbers, time and shape with confidence as well as enjoyment. The mathematical content of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' is explored as children work out how long each stage in the story took, showing awareness that days are collected together into weeks. They learn to recognize and write digits, including zero and know these can be grouped together to make larger numbers. They understand that objects can be compared for size and notice that some of the seeds they are planting are bigger than others. They sort items by size and length, match objects to numbers as when they count bulbs into pots. They develop an awareness of the language of position and show an awareness of change over time as they sequence pictures showing plant and animal growth.
73. By the time they are in the Reception class children handle numbers confidently. When the register is called, the teacher asks how many there would be if there were one more or one fewer. They count confidently up to and down from 10 when they stand in a circle and perform number games with great enjoyment. In addition to counting, they make body shapes that reflect the growth and decline in the numbers as they count up and down. They sing 'There were ten in a bed' recalling the number left each time one rolled out.
74. Children learn to recognize regular plane shapes as when a child in the nursery observes that he has made a triangle. This is reinforced in the Reception class when children identify the two and three-dimensional shapes used to make up a penguin to illustrate the story they are reading. They show understanding of money when they 'buy' and 'sell' in the 'garden centre' and operate the 'Weobley Travel service' office, selling and issuing holiday tickets.
75. Children who need additional support in developing numeracy skills are very well supported by the Family Numeracy sessions in which parents are provided with support and guidance in helping their children to progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Through the consistent encouragement to explore and show curiosity that children receive from all adults, their knowledge and understanding of the world develop very well. In the Nursery class, children design and build a pram, showing awareness of the basic construction principles involved. In the Reception class they use a range of construction materials and shape and join materials in a variety of ways.
77. Children show good awareness of growth and change as they relate plastic animals correctly to their young and explain the stages by which frogspawn develops into frogs while a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. They sort clothes into those suitable for a baby and those suitable for them, showing awareness of how they have developed and grown. They know that there are many things they can do that a baby cannot. They learn about life processes when they plant seeds indoors and out and discover some of the conditions required for growth, and support this with their work on their garden centre. Through this, they become aware of the environment and how they need to take care of it. On a visit to Castle Green, Reception children listen carefully to the sounds

they hear and identify natural and man-made sounds such as the wind in the trees, sheep on the hill, a dog barking and a bus.

78. Children use a computer competently to achieve a desired effect. They use the mouse to select and manipulate images on screen to access the text and sound effects when using a 'talking book'. They use a simple graphics programme to paint a picture of a flower. They instruct a programmable toy to carry out a set of predetermined movements. They examine other aspects of technology when they use an overhead projector to explore shapes, shadows and patterns and compare old-fashioned with modern cameras.
79. Children begin to develop investigative skills through experiments with floating and sinking objects and finding out what can be done with magnets. Children in the reception class experiment with ice to learn about freezing and melting. They know that water changes to ice and back again when it is cooled and warmed.
80. They extend their knowledge of the past when they visit the site of an old castle and when, in looking at Australia as part of a Commonwealth Day project, they learn about the original inhabitants. They examine similarities and differences between some of the animals found there and those they know. As part of the whole-school project, they enact life in a Victorian kitchen, being aware of what was used then.

Physical development

81. Very good focus on developing children's gross and fine motor skills and co-ordination ensure very good support for their physical development. The staff make very good use of the facilities and resources available for indoor and outdoor play with large toys, and apparatus is very well used to develop confidence and skills.
82. In a session in the hall children show good spatial awareness and agility as they travel around the room using different sized steps in high and low positions. They change from wide-open shapes to curled in shapes and adapt their movements accordingly. They move with confidence and show awareness of safety and the needs of others, confidently changing direction to accommodate each other. They are increasingly developing control and co-ordination as they demonstrate an acorn steadily and gradually growing into an oak tree. They participate in athletic activities, including sports days, where they show their skills in balancing, moving in and out of hoops and other spaces, carrying an egg on a spoon as well as running races.
83. Children develop good manipulative skills as they use construction equipment, using a ring spanner to tighten nuts and bolts. They learn how to handle garden tools successfully and safely. Their fine motor skills are further developed as they learn to manipulate small objects, including implements for writing, drawing and painting. When modelling, they handle large lumps of clay and use small objects to stamp and print shapes and patterns. They increasingly gain control over buttons, zips and other fastenings as they become better at dressing and undressing themselves.

Creative development

84. Children are provided with a very good range of opportunities for creative activity and are given very good encouragement to explore and experiment. As a result, their skills and knowledge develop very well. They draw and paint using a variety of materials, including the computer and increasingly show the ability to represent or reproduce objects and patterns. They know their basic colours and choose which they think will best suit their intentions. They make long wavy line patterns with paint, working together on a very large sheet of paper. They make collages by cutting and sticking shapes from different materials. Children in the Reception class reflect their work on Australia by making very impressive aboriginal dream pictures and follow this up by painting stones to represent aboriginal slates. They explore different ways of using materials when they blow paint bubbles on to paper to make patterns and use wax crayons on textured paper to create low-relief patterns. They undertake simple observational drawing using chalk and pastels.
85. In both classes, children participate in and enjoy musical activities. They sing simple songs together from memory and listen to music, recognising familiar pieces, as when one child recognised the tune from the 'Nutcracker' when it came on the CD. They copy and invent rhythms in hand movements and using instruments. When using an instrument such as the 'rainmaker, children reflect on the sound as one says it sounds like the sea while another said it was like water. They dance and paint to music, reflecting the rhythm in their movements.
86. Children develop their imaginative skills through play and through use of materials for modelling. They listen to music and talk about what it makes them think of, leading on to structured role-play. They show great inventiveness in pressing materials into service to act as props and explain what each is meant to represent. The great range of experiences that they are offered enables children to respond in a variety of ways, using different senses to interpret those experiences. They compare Caribbean fruits, finding a coconut to be hairy and a sweet

potato to be lumpy and bumpy, while a melon was rough but smelt delicious. One child described lavender as being like 'chewing-gum grass' while another found similarities between ginger and pepper.

ENGLISH

87. **Standards in all aspects of English are in line with national expectations. In comparison with similar schools, standards achieved by pupils at Weobley are above average. This is a very good achievement since very many pupils arrive at school with a low level of speaking and listening skills. All pupils, including higher achievers and those with special educational needs make very good progress over time. Teaching is of very high quality, the curriculum is very well planned and the subject is very well managed.**

Strengths in the subject are:

the leadership and management, including monitoring;

the consistent and unified approach to the teaching and use of literacy;

the quality of teaching.

88. The school is making a determined effort to improve literacy. All pupils have individual targets in literacy for each term. The oldest pupils often have a smaller, almost weekly, target that emphasises particular aspects that need working on. Targets are also set across the school. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English are improving well. With poor attainment on entry, a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a significantly higher than average level of pupil mobility this represents very good progress.

89. From the well-below-average level of skills on entry to the school, pupils make good progress and attain standards of reading are very close to the national average by the age of seven. Pupils generally have a sound grasp of letter sounds and this helps them to tackle words unfamiliar to them. They get excellent support from teaching assistants who support them in small group work. Pupils enjoy reading and often can be seen looking at books which are attractively displayed in each classroom. Pupils then read with increasing accuracy and some eleven-years-olds give a considered response to books they have read and give good reasons why they enjoy particular authors. Older pupils are good at finding information they need from different sources including CD-ROMs and they often choose to read a wide selection of fiction and poetry. The reading skills of the average and above-average pupils are sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with most texts. The school makes good use of Additional Literacy Support and Booster Classes to support pupils for the Key Stage 2 Tests. The regular daily opportunities for individual and guided group reading are excellently managed. These sessions enable pupils to improve their reading skills and to develop an enjoyment of reading.

90. Writing shows good achievement by all pupils, especially lower-attainers in the younger classes. The higher-attaining seven-years olds write well. They are particularly good at rewriting stories that they have been told or read by teachers and often show good understanding of plot and characters. They also write imaginative poems. Stories about an imaginary monster showed imagination and a good use of adjectives to make the monster more scary. The work produced by most eleven-year-olds is competent and at best exciting. It includes some examples of extended writing, which show extensive understanding of the ways characters can interact in a lively and entertaining plot. Pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences, for example, factual articles about Tudor monarchs, peace poems, short stories, critiques about authors such as Shoo Rayner and personal accounts of how it felt to be one of 'the six hundred' riding into the valley of death. They use these different forms of writing very appropriately. **By the ages of seven and eleven they have a sound knowledge of grammar and punctuation and have most of the writing skills they need**

91. Standards of handwriting are good because it is well taught from the start with very regular very short practice sessions in almost all lessons where pupils are writing. Spelling is good across the school, again because it is well taught from the start. Pupils are shown helpful ways to remember words they have difficulty with, for example, because of the local accent the spelling of 'are' and 'our' was constantly muddled, this was discussed and the best way to overcome the difficulty was found.

92. The quality of teaching is invariably good or very good and occasionally excellent. Lessons are stimulating and grip pupils' interest and imagination very quickly. The variety of activities within lessons ensures that pupils do not become bored; in fact lessons are often over all too soon. Teachers have encompassed the National Literacy Strategy very effectively, they use the format but are not afraid to extend or change it as necessary for a successful lesson. All elements of it are well covered which gives a good structure for learning and teaching. Planning is very thorough so both teachers and pupils know exactly what to do and rounding off sessions are well used to reinforce the key learning points of the session and to make links with what the pupils will learn next. Pupils are very used to working individually, in pairs or small groups. Many opportunities for discussion

are provided and the very good management of these greatly enhance pupils' progress in speaking and listening.

93. The management of English is very good. The co-ordinator has observed teachers, both in Weobley and in other schools, and provides feedback to her colleagues. She also systematically evaluates colleagues' planning and effectiveness and leads the staff in moderating and levelling samples of pupils' writing, which helps focus teachers on expected standards. The English department including the library is well resourced. The library is bright and welcoming. It is open plan and situated in the middle of the school. It is well used by pupils who enjoy browsing through the contents. The system of cataloguing books is clear, simple to use and very age appropriate.

MATHEMATICS

94. **At the time of the previous inspection, standards in mathematics were about average when pupils were seven and above average when pupils were eleven. The results of national tests in 2002 indicate that standards are average when pupils are seven and eleven when compared with all schools but they are above average when compared with similar schools. Teaching in mathematics, provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. The leadership and management of the subject, and the tracking of pupils' progress are outstandingly good. Despite the lower attainment when compared with national standards in the junior department, there has been good improvement in assessment, teaching and leadership and management since the previous inspection.**

Strengths in the subject are:

the leadership and management

assessment to help teachers identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses in mathematics teaching.

95. At the end of Year 2 in 2002, the number of pupils attaining the national benchmark was in line with the average for England, but below it in comparison with schools in similar circumstances. However the proportion attaining higher levels was well above average. For pupils in Year 6, results were below average when compared with all schools, but when compared with similar schools they were above average. The school has a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs and below average attaining pupils. While these pupils achieve well and make good progress towards their targets, their attainments are below average standards. Higher attaining pupils continue to reach high standards in mathematics.
96. Inspection findings indicate that pupils in Year 2 are broadly in line with national standards but as a group, pupils in Year 6, are working at standards below the expected level. This is, in part, because of the number of pupils who come and go from the school, with subsequent disruption to their education, and because of the number of pupils with special educational needs. Overall, pupils make good progress in mathematics.
97. Children enter school confident in their ability to learn mathematically and to use computers. In Year 1, pupils learn to sort blocks in different groups and record the results as bar graphs, some on computer. They learn to count backwards in tens, and to add and subtract ten from numbers under one hundred, using the hundred board to help them if they find themselves in difficulty. In Year 2, pupils use multiplication to calculate multiples of two, three, four and six. Pupils work with varying complexities of numbers in different ways, depending on their grasp of the calculation. While some pupils break down two towers of three, other pupils are multiplying nine times eight successfully. Pupils also learn how to reverse the process, so they learn that twenty divided by five equals four, while four times five equals twenty. There is a very wide range of attainment in the class and teaching manages this well by providing suitably graded work for pupils of all abilities, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils also learn how to add using tens and units. Pupils in the junior school steadily improve their basic skills in numeracy, and make good progress in mathematical language, the use of information technology to use mathematical knowledge in different subjects such as science and their ability to handle and present data. This is because of the very good quality of teaching and the careful planning of the use of language and information technology. By Year 4, pupils recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and begin to use Carroll and Venn diagrams to sort information. Pupils begin to recognise that equilateral and isosceles triangles are not the same and can explain the difference. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a very wide range of attainment. A small number of pupils in each class attain very high levels in mathematical skills and have additional support to ensure they continue to achieve well. They recognise and know the names of different angles, can explain how to calculate area and angles, work out fractions and describe how they record their findings from different subjects using pie and bar graphs. Pupils

say they find division and decimals difficult. The school uses Springboard and booster classes to help pupils of all abilities to achieve as well as they can. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have maintained their enthusiasm for the subject and remain very eager to learn despite finding the work demanding. Their work is challenging but because it is presented at the appropriate level and the teacher knows very well what kind of help they need, pupils work hard and persistently to improve their standards. For example, in Year 6, about a third of the class find recognising the equivalents of imperial and standard measurements very difficult but they make good progress because very good teaching helps them to maintain their very positive attitude to their work.

98. Teaching, including marking and the provision of work for pupils of different rates of learning is very good. The subject manager has set a very high standard through the rigorous use of assessment, the thorough review of the subject and in-service training to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and this has already improved pupils' achievements.

SCIENCE

99. **As at the previous inspection, standards are in line with those expected in both the infant and junior departments. Teaching and learning are never less than good and often very good, so that pupils make good progress. A very well planned curriculum ensures that all aspects of the subjects are well covered. The subject is well managed and good resources, including ICT are used well.**

Strengths in the subject are:

the very good curriculum;

teachers' subject knowledge;

the encouragement given to higher attaining pupils as well as those with special educational needs.

100. Standards in science as measured in the national tests in Year 6, have consistently matched or exceeded the average levels for schools in England since the previous inspection, showing a steady improvement in line with that average. In 2001, an average number of pupils attained the expected levels with a similarly average proportion attaining higher. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show results consistently above average in terms of pupils attaining the expected standard, but below average in terms of those attaining higher. When the school's results are compared with those for similar schools, pupils' attainments by the time they leave are above average.
101. Pupils acquire good knowledge and understanding of science and progressively develop investigational skills through first experiencing and then constructing experiments.
102. In the Infant department, the youngest pupils learn about physical processes when they explore aspects of light and sound. They know, for example that light is necessary for them to see things and that it can come from a variety of sources. They discover that the amount of light reflected depends on how shiny or dull a surface is. They know that we use our ears to hear sounds and that the nature or intensity of a sound can make it pleasant or unpleasant. They discover that this response can be affected by the associations it brings so that what is an unpleasant noise to one, may be an evocative sound to another, as for example, a racing car engine.
103. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop an understanding of health and growth processes; they correctly label a diagram of the human body, showing the names of the different body parts. They know which processes are common to all living things and identify the main stages in plant and animal growth, including humans. They understand the importance of diet and know that food can come from a variety of sources and consists of different types of nutrients, such as fats, protein and carbohydrates. In addition to exercise and food, they learnt about the part medicines play in helping to keep the body healthy, as well as the dangers they can present if not taken under proper supervision. They talk about occasions when they have needed treatment and are aware of the various people who can help them to get well when they are ill.
104. When looking at processes, they know that pushes and pulls are kinds of force and that water and air can be used to exert a force. They understand some of the properties of magnets, including the different effects of like and unlike poles. They know that many processes produce waste products and that this creates a problem for the environment if they are not carefully managed.
105. As they move through the school, pupils increase the breadth and depth of their knowledge and understanding, following a carefully constructed programme. They learn about changes in materials, establishing that some are temporary but others are permanent. They examine ways in which materials can be combined and the methods required to separate them again. They know that they can separate particles of different sizes using a sieve, and examine the best materials for separating sand and water, explaining the similarities and differences in the problems. In Year 5, pupils apply their knowledge of a range of effects and processes to successfully separate a

mixture of sand, sugar, iron filings and pebbles. They record the results of experiments clearly; higher-attaining pupils devise their own methods of recording.

106. Older pupils return to the issue of healthy living when they examine the effects of smoking on the human body. They respond very sensibly to the experimental smoking machine that the teacher sets up in the playground and examine the residue from a single cigarette. They examine the results of a survey of life expectancy among smokers and non-smokers and draw appropriate conclusions from the statistics
107. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how lenses work and how the components of white light are separated by a prism. They classify materials and objects according to whether they are transparent, translucent or opaque. They conduct experiments to demonstrate that air is real and that it has an effect on the speed at which objects fall, by examining the effects of having different sizes of parachute.
108. Pupils show a keen interest and enjoy science. The good and very good learning seen in lessons is reflected in the quality of the work seen in pupils' books, with evidence of very good levels of effort evident. Pupils work well together in groups and share ideas during investigations. Learning is very well supported by the good knowledge teachers have of the subject which enables them to use skilful and probing questions to judge the level of pupils' knowledge and to develop their thinking skills. Teachers are well supported by the subject co-ordinator.

ART AND DESIGN

109. **Standards achieved in art and design are very good throughout the school, they are well above those expected. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when they were judged to be good. Teaching and learning are very good and the subject is very well led**

Strengths in the subject are:

*the very good teaching, including that by support assistants;
teachers' very good planning;
very good leadership.*

110. By the age of seven, pupils experiment with a variety of materials making a collage that they have previously designed. They look carefully at different pieces of fruit and discuss the differences between them and what materials will look most effective. They further explore and investigate materials by weaving, concentrating on producing unique designs that are different to their neighbours. Whether working in groups or pairs pupils work well together, discussing their ideas and coming to joint decisions. Evidence of working in the style of Arcimboldo produced some exciting portraits using fruit and flowers.
111. By the age of eleven pupils have built on the very good teaching throughout the school and produce a range of work using a variety of media. These include high quality Raku pottery, which when finally glazed and finished caused one pupil to exclaim "This is probably the best thing I've ever done in my life!" Pupils understand what happens to their pots when fired and glazed and explain the process well. They continue to use sketchbooks, create collages using a wide range of materials, paint in the style of Picasso and link their art work to their studies of the Tudors and the Egyptians. The art club members produce some fine work, studying and creating works inspired by Henry Moore and Monet.
112. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. Observed lessons, pupils' work and displays around the school indicate that lessons are well planned, work is appropriate to the needs of all pupils and the very good quality teaching means that the skills required in drawing, painting, making patterns, pottery and designing different effects is very good. Very good discussion means that pupils reflect on what they have learned before and decide which materials to use for the best effect. The skilled work of learning assistants and the excellent relationships mean that pupils behave well, feel successful and so want to do their best.
113. Very good subject leadership means that teachers are supported very well in what to teach and strategies for lessons.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. **Standards of work in design technology are in line with national expectations. No judgements could be made about teaching and learning overall. The curriculum is good, the subject is well led and there are good resources.**

Strengths in the subject are:

the quality of the artefacts that pupils produce;
the development of skills for evaluation.

115. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection but evidence obtained from past work, displays and photographic evidence indicate that lessons are well planned and work is appropriate to the needs of all pupils.
116. By the age of seven pupils are designing and then creating items from their designs. They make puppets, for example of Incey Wincey Spider, which have moving parts and create cloaks for their dolls and teddy bears in the style of Red Riding Hood.
117. By the age of eleven pupils are designing and making flip flop slippers for themselves and evaluating the design and workmanship afterwards. This includes drawing up the pattern and making a prototype out of 'J' cloth before sewing the finished article using fur fabric. Pupils also design, make and evaluate what constitutes a healthy sandwich. There is very good cross curricular work in this subject, for example, making life size Roman shields and a range of Egyptian headdresses and jewellery.
118. The curriculum is well designed to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered and teachers get good support from the co-ordinator. Resources are good, enabling the whole range of design and technology to be covered.

GEOGRAPHY

119. No geography lessons were available in Year 2 or Year 6 during the inspection but one lesson was seen in the junior school, a discussion was held with Year 6 pupils and there were many good displays of pupils' work about the school. From this information it is clear that pupils make good progress in their development of geographical skills and knowledge and that attainment is good by the time pupils reach the final year in the junior school. The geography curriculum is very good and gives particular clarity to the subject and supports the school's aims well. Teaching is at least good and the subject is very well led. This is an improvement overall since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

the very good curriculum;
teachers' very good planning;
very good leadership.

120. The quality of pupils' work shown in displays and books, pupils' good geographical knowledge and their high degree of interest, indicate that teaching throughout the school is at least good. In the infant department, history and geography are taught together to help pupils develop a sense of time and place successfully. As a result they begin to develop early mapping and observation skills, to use appropriate language and know their own surroundings. Through this they have a better understanding of the seasons and weather, how they come to school and the wider range of people who help them, apart from their families and people at school.
121. Class 1 learns about Canada, and its mounted police and maple syrup. In Class 2, pupils learn about South Africa from questioning a visitor to school about transport, how a meal might consist of butternut soup and that houses are usually different from those seen in Britain. In the junior department, pupils in Year 3 use travel guides to recognise temperatures and rainfall at different times of year in countries they might visit. This is made into a practical and useful activity when the teacher directs them to plan a perfect holiday by finding out this information, and pupils take part with relish. Pupils' geographical vocabulary is stretched because it is taught specifically and they are encouraged to use the atlas's index effectively. Links with literacy and information technology are very good.
122. Older junior pupils work on an extensive project about their village and compare it with an urban area in South Wales. In Year 5, pupils compare their own surroundings with an African village settlement. This way they can research their own surroundings first hand and combine their geographical, social and historical knowledge successfully. Further up the junior school, pupils learn about China, India and Commonwealth Day. Their knowledge includes flags, nations' symbols, flora, fauna and climate as well as an increasing understanding of the effect of landscape features such as mountain ranges and rivers. By the end of Year 6, pupils know that different sorts of fish and plants live in salt and fresh water, and higher attaining pupils know how meanders and ox-bow lakes come to be formed. They enjoy their field trip to Brecon in particular and described vividly

how they saw eroded limestone. “When you touch it, it’s all soft.” They know and use the word “erode” correctly develop their understanding of the links between weather, crops and rainfall, and improve their map reading skills by following clues.

123. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils also make good progress and achieve well. This is because of the very good quality of the curriculum, the strength of its planning and its links with information technology. The geography curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils’ awareness of other countries and the way people live. Pupils have very good attitudes towards the subject. They find it very interesting and useful, and they enjoy finding out information first hand in particular. Pupils learn very well from the school’s high quality provision and its strong links with other curriculum areas. The subject provides a great deal of new and interesting information for pupils and they find this rewarding.

HISTORY

124. **It was only possible to observe one lesson in history during the inspection, but on the basis of this lesson, analysis of pupils’ work and discussions with pupils, as well as examination of displays around the school, the school has maintained standards since the previous inspection. Pupils attain in line with expectations in both the infant and junior departments and, by Year 6, many achieve good standards as a result of good progress arising from consistently good teaching and a well-constructed curriculum that takes very good account of National Curriculum requirements. The subject is well managed, and resources are well chosen and effectively used including ICT.**

Strengths in the subject are:

the very good curriculum;

the use of visits and visitors;

the very good use of resources.

125. In Year 1, where history is studied alongside the development of literacy skills, pupils learn about local and national history and begin to develop an appropriate sense of chronology. Year 2 pupils have a good grasp of ‘then’ and ‘now’ as it has affected the locality as is shown in their study of the ‘Great Fire of Weobley’ which they know occurred in the lifetime of many of their grandparents or great grandparents. They compare the village with how it was before the fire and imagine what it would have been like to experience the fire.
126. Younger junior pupils develop good historical enquiry skills as part of their study of the Romans. They consider how evidence of how they lived has come to us as they explore the topic of clothing. They recognise that the Romans were around for a long time and that fashions would have changed during that time. They know that very little actual clothing is likely to have survived and that they need to look for evidence at such enduring artefacts as contemporaneous carvings or mosaics. They are aware that the map of Europe has changed significantly since Roman times and identify the provinces that now form part of France and Germany. They use their knowledge of the different lifestyles and customs of Romans and Celts to assign characteristics and social patterns to each, considering how they regarded each other. They think carefully about what they expect to experience and learn from a visit to the roman museum at Caerleon. They have planted a Roman garden and identify the plants that would have been grown by them. They have used their modelling skills very effectively to produce replica shields, as well as a clay bust of Julius Caesar and a replica of the Gorgons head found at Bath. They recall with pleasure making a model of the Roman army in pottery, each contributing a soldier. They are now engaged in constructing a mosaic in the Roman style.
127. As pupils move through the school, their historical skills develop further and are consolidated through a range of learning experiences. They explore the life and culture of the Aztecs, showing good understanding of the structure of society and the differences between groups within that society. They look at the Aztec calendar, which they are able to contrast with the Roman model and make very convincing replicas of religious artefacts. Year 6 pupils study the Ancient Egyptians, producing newspaper reports of the discovery of Tutenkhamun’s tomb and considering the meaning and purpose of the artefacts and writings contained in it. They make very effective use of ICT in producing ‘PowerPoint’ presentations of ‘How to make a Mummy’. Their understanding of local history is again reinforced when they re-enact a day in the life of a Victorian school.
128. Although very little teaching was seen, what was seen was good and the evidence of marking and annotation in pupils’ folders indicates that teaching is of a consistently high standard. Teachers make very good use of a range of artefacts to illustrate each period and very good opportunities are presented for pupils to make their own. The school draws very well on local historical resources, in addition to the Great Fire as an example of events since the 1930s, the school uses the old castle as part of a project on invaders and settlers and the

historical buildings to examine the Tudor period. Pupils' learning is very well supported by visits to museums and places of historical interest and by visitors to the school who talk about their experiences.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The previous inspection found that pupils' attainment at the top of the infant and the junior school were broadly in line with nationally expected standards and that their progress was satisfactory. This inspection finds that standards of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have improved. Attainment and progress are good in Year 2 and Year 6. The school has moved to new premises and has an ICT suite where pupils are taught discrete skills to be used to improve their knowledge and skills in other subjects. The curriculum is very good with all elements of the subject being effectively planned and delivered and the subject is very well managed. Teaching and pupils' attitudes to their work are very good.

Strengths in the subject are:

teaching;

subject management;

links with other curricular areas;

the opportunities it provides for independent learning.

129. When children join the school from the reception class, they are already confident and competent for their age in their use of computers and other equipment. In Year 1, pupils are able to use computers in their mathematics lesson to construct bar graphs to represent numbers of bricks they have sorted in to different colours. They work accurately and co-operatively in pairs at a good pace to complete their work well. They learn to use and add to word banks to help them with independent writing.
130. In Year 2, pupils learn early programming and control by using a floor turtle to do practical work, after planning and discussing a map for it, and using a screen turtle. Pupils learn very quickly and grasp ideas easily. By the first year of the junior school, pupils use fonts of different type and colour, and print sizes to present their work. They learn a suitable format and the necessary procedures to send to and receive email communications from a partner school in another part of the country.
131. In Year 4, pupils learn to use the undo key and to analyse and modify their own work, and in Year 5, pupils learn to use spreadsheets. They also use graphics. By Year 6, pupils can make power point presentations, begin to write their own programmes and sequence events, for example making traffic lights flash in different orders and intervals. Year 5 pupils use the internet with ease to research information in preparation for their visit to Caerleon, and in Year 6, pupils have their own files to store their work in different subjects.
132. Teachers are confident and competent users of computers and other equipment and set pupils a good example. Cameras, scratch pads, white boards and other equipment are all used in a matter of fact way to help pupils research and present their knowledge effectively through all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils treat equipment very well and are eager to learn. The purpose and use of equipment and the training of staff is very well directed by the subject manager, and makes a significant contribution to pupils' education.

MUSIC

133. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' standards in music were judged to be good. There were limited opportunities to assess pupils' overall levels of skills, but on the evidence available, standards are in line with those expected at both key stages. Teaching is good overall, but not all teachers are fully conversant with the scheme of work in operation. The curriculum is very good and the subject is very well led

Strengths in the subject are:

the curriculum;

the knowledge of the subject manager;

the number of pupils who play instruments.

A weakness is:

the school has not provided recent training for non-specialist teachers to maintain their subject knowledge.

134. Pupils in Year 1 have a good idea of recording their music in a visual form as they play percussion instruments to their drawn symbols. They listen carefully to the words of a new song and try to remember new words and tunes. They learn quickly and perform confidently as a group, joining in with the song's chorus boisterously. They make very good progress in listening and performing.
135. Year 3 pupils work together well in groups when composing, for a range of percussion, denoting the sounds made by their instruments with a range of symbols and shapes. They use variations in the notation to indicate different volume levels. When they play the music back, they wait for the conductor and take it in turns to play, listening carefully to each other. In Year 4, pupils recognise that music from different countries may have certain national characteristics. For example, when they hear very rhythmic guitar music, they suggest South America, Greece, Africa and Spain as its place of origin. When Indian music was played, pupils suggested a number of eastern countries including India. Year 6 pupils in discussion name the different groups of instruments in the orchestra, are aware of a number of different composers and name them readily, and can talk about simple compositions. They have not yet used formal notation although some of them read music in their individual instrumental lessons and band practice. They beat time and some know how to represent different dynamics.
136. Pupils are very interested in music and enjoy it but become restless when work becomes repetitive or does not move fast enough. They appreciate the music played in assembly very much and enjoy the school's music clubs and opportunities to perform in plays and concerts. Links between music and other subjects, such as history, geography and information technology also improve and extend pupils' knowledge.
137. Pupils with special needs make similar progress and have the same opportunities to learn as others. Higher attaining pupils are keen to talk about their work and achieve well. Pupils' attitude to music is very good and they are eager to learn. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show that they have a good knowledge of different instruments, listen keenly, are keen to perform and are self-critical.
138. The very good curriculum put in place by the subject manager ensures that teachers know what to teach and that pupils' musical skills are developed systematically as they go up the school. The school retains its commercial Lively Music scheme, with its own adaptations to make it suitable for its own pupils, and the music curriculum is very well planned throughout. Many valuable opportunities are made for pupils to extend their musical knowledge during the school day through the range of subjects in the rest of the curriculum, collective worship and the school's clubs and other activities. The school has not made music a priority although its provision is to be reviewed in the next academic year.
139. Teaching is strongest where subject knowledge is good and moves at a strong pace, keeping pupils fully stretched. Where teaching pace is slower and less confident, the pupils do not learn so quickly. Overall, pupils make good progress in their appreciation of music, and the school makes good provision through its class and individual lessons, its clubs and other opportunities, for pupils to perform and listen.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. **As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils attain in line with expectations in the infant department and above them in the junior department. However, in dance, standards for both groups are above those expected. Teaching and learning are never less than good and, in the great majority of lessons, they are very good. The curriculum is well planned and the co-ordinator is developing very good links with other schools and the community through participation in an LEA programme.**

Strengths in the subject are:

the wide range of activities covered;

the high quality teaching especially in dance;

the curriculum links that extend and enhance pupils' opportunities and experiences.

141. Pupils in Year 1 build very well on the physical skills they develop in the nursery and Reception classes. They show good skills in creating and changing body shapes both when stationary and when moving around. They show good spatial awareness and the higher-attaining pupils have established a secure pattern of starting and stopping each movement sequence in silence and with a formal, still stance. When transferring their sequences to different levels on the large apparatus, they show good recall of the safety rules as they demonstrate a good range of wide, narrow and curled shapes, which they adapt imaginatively to different sets of apparatus.

142. In a lesson in dance, they respond very well to the teacher's encouragement to improvise a dance movement to reflect the different conditions encountered on a 'Bear Hunt' They take a range of standard poses offered and adapt these to provide continuity for the repetitive parts of the story while showing imagination in responding to the conditions. They make very effective use of the basic travelling movements they have learned, making different body shapes, and moving in high, medium and low positions. They show a developing ability to evaluate their own and each other's work identifying areas for improvement, which they then put into practice.
143. By Year 2, dance skills have been developed to the point where they take a series of movements and build them into a sequence, both individually and working in pairs. They use variations of bouncing, freezing and melting drawing very effectively on their secure knowledge of balance positions using large and small, single and multiple body parts. When individuals are selected to demonstrate very good movements, the other pupils look carefully to identify what makes them particularly good. They move on to develop movements in pairs based on stretching, flopping and floating, experimenting with a range of movements until they are satisfied with the one they are going to use for the dance. They make symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes with their partners, smoothly transforming one balance position into the next. Their performance and confidence visibly improves during the course of the lesson.
144. By the time they are nearing the end of the junior department, pupils relate dance sequences to music as when Year 5 pupils improvise a group dance to symbolise 'fire' as part of a sequence exploring the four elements. During the lesson, they show a good range of ideas, building on previous work and incorporating imaginative movements based on perceptions of jagged and angular motion. When each group performs, the dance is of high quality and the rest of the pupils assess the performance using agreed criteria: 'did the performance flow? Are all the children dancing?; Does the group make good use of space?; Can the observers see what is being represented?' Pupils observe carefully and identify that good dances are characterised by pupils relating well to one another. In one very good dance, pupils form two groups; the 'flames dance wildly at first but with clear purpose, developing both individual and interrelated patterns, growing and then slowly subsiding, while others, forming the combustible material, slowly diminish and die as they are consumed. The whole is very evocative of a fire blazing up and then gradually subsiding and pupils have planned the choreography very well.
145. Pupils throughout the school show a developing awareness of the importance of warming up before activities and preparing to relax afterwards and take these seriously. They understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and know that activity is necessary to promote health and fitness. By Year 5, pupils are able to structure the warm-up for the class. When practising skills for games, they make sure they have warmed the muscles they are going to use. Pupils show great enthusiasm for games and work very hard at football and netball tactics, showing good skills in passing, receiving and shooting. When practising for rugby they carefully place and pick up the ball on the run, while in rounders, they work hard to improve accuracy in throwing the ball and learning to keep their eye on it when catching or hitting it. In all these practices, pupils work very well in pairs and groups, recognising that, for example, good catching is assisted by good throwing.
146. Pupils make very good use of the opportunities for swimming and work hard to achieve a range of certificates. By the time they leave, most, if not all are able to swim at least 25 metres and many achieve much more.
147. Teaching is securely based on very good subject knowledge and the co-ordinator supports this well. She is strongly committed to the LEA School Sports Co-ordinator Scheme, which aims to link provision and opportunities between schools, including the secondary schools and the community. The good facilities that the school has are significantly enhanced by the opportunity to use those of the adjacent secondary school, for example for tennis, and there are good curriculum links between the two schools. The curriculum is very well structured to ensure the full range of experiences and skills are covered. Extra-curricular opportunities for participation in sport and improving techniques are very good. Pupils' learning, which is also very good, is very effectively underpinned by their obvious enjoyment of the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. **Standards achieved in religious education are good over time and learning within lessons is very good and occasionally excellent. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory. The quality of teaching is very good The subject is well led, the curriculum is good and resources are of a high standard**

Strengths in the subject are:

the quality of teaching;

the improvement made since the last inspection;

the links to pupils own lives and experiences.

149. By the age of seven, pupils understand the meaning of friendship and articulate how to be a friend and how they can help their friends. They know and understand the similarities as well as the differences between the celebration of the Christian Sabbath and the Jewish Shabbat and the special symbols found in a Christian church and a Jewish synagogue. They discuss various stories from both the Old and the New Testament, for example, Jesus and Zachaeus, with considerable understanding and understand that the Ten Commandments were a set of rules given by God. Using this information they make their own rules and give their reasons, for example, “No fighting in case you get hurt”.
150. By the age of eleven pupils have experienced many aspects of major world religions, with the emphasis on Christianity. They have a good basic knowledge of the life of Jesus, his teaching and miracles performed. They know that Jesus often spoke in parables and look for their hidden meaning with interest, for example, in the story of the Good Samaritan. Pupils compare religions and articulate the similarities with considerable wisdom, for example, the helping of people in trouble, given codes of conduct and the importance of prayer. They know and understand the meaning of the Lord’s Prayer and state with conviction their favourite section of it and why.
151. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good with variations at Key Stage 2. Both attainment targets are very successfully addressed within lessons. Very good use is made of the high quality Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education. Teachers use this as a basis for their planning and often expand it where they feel it advantageous so to do. The best lessons involve pupils discussing stories or prayers and, for example, the Christian Lord’s Prayer or the Hindu story of Rama and Sita, relating them to their own lives and reflecting upon the ‘moral’ involved. These worthwhile discussions are encouraged by teachers’ skilled use of questioning and suggestion to help pupils think and reflect about the topic of the lesson. This was especially noticeable in a lesson about the Lord’s Prayer. All religious education lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as do the high quality Assemblies to pupils’ religious education.
152. The subject is well led; staff are well supported by the co-ordinator who monitors planning and some teaching. Resources are of a high standard and include quality artefacts of all major world faiths