

INSPECTION REPORT

MORDIFORD CE SCHOOL

Mordiford, Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116832

Headteacher: Mrs J. Bourdon-Pierre

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Hulme
RgI's OFSTED Inspector Number: 3609

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 February 2003

Inspection number: 247701

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of children:	4 - 11
Gender of children:	Mixed
School address:	Mordiford Hereford Herefordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Philip Morris
Date of previous inspection:	28 February 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3609	Mrs M Hulme	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for the Foundation Stage; English; Music; Religious education.	What sort of school is it? School's results and children's achievements. How well are children taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9306	Mrs B Moore	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Children' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its children? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18344	Mr D Earley	Team inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Geography; Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to children?
29995	Mrs M Walker	Team inspector	Special educational needs; Science; Art and design Design and technology; History.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mordiford CE Primary school is a small village school in Herefordshire with 102 children on roll of whom 18 are reception age. The headteacher has been in post for almost three years and in that time the school has not only been removed from OFSTED special measures category but has been recognised by the local education authority as a successful school. The school serves the immediate village of Mordiford and a few villages nearby. Some families live outside the area but choose to send their children to this school. The school is now over subscribed. All children are white and at present none speak English as an additional language. There are 37 children who are identified as children with learning difficulties (35 per cent), which is above average and one has a statement of special educational need. The school caters for them with great success including those with emotional and behavioural problems. Currently there are 11 children known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Attainment on entry is broadly similar to that found nationally. Although the premises are elderly, some improvements have been made and there is now a rebuilding and refurbishment programme planned to update this school. It is well established within the village and highly rated by the local community.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership resulting in very good direction for the work of the school. In this she is very well supported by staff and governors. Overall, the teaching is very good. The committed teaching and excellent relationships support children's learning very well and is driving up standards. Children achieve well and make good progress, which results in them attaining high standards in National Curriculum tests by the time they leave school. In the junior classes there are good standards in music and religious education. Children enjoy coming to school and are pleased about the range of learning opportunities offered them. This is an exciting place to be. The strong and purposeful leadership of the headteacher results in a school committed to high standards. Value for money provided by the school is very good.

What the school does well

- Children achieve well and reach high standards in National Curriculum tests by the time they leave school and standards are improving in other subjects since the last inspection.
- The very good teaching is supporting children's learning very well and driving up standards.
- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher provides very clear direction for the work of the school and in this she is extremely well supported by the staff and governors
- The school plans well for improvement and ensures that priorities get the spending allowances they need.
- The very good support for the children's personal development results in them having very good attitudes to the school and their work and they behave very well.
- Parents have excellent views of the school and are very satisfied with the quality of education provided and the standards their children achieve.
- It takes wonderful care of its children whose welfare is of the utmost importance to the school.

What could be improved

- The premises because it lacks some essential facilities that hamper the quality of teaching and consequently children's progress.

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 February 2001 and has made very good improvements in a reasonably short space of time. All areas for further development have been tackled. Now there is better and more effective teaching and standards have improved. The deputy role in the organisation and management of the school has been extended and now includes a leadership role in school improvement. The governing body is now fully involved in the life of the school. Governors now have very good knowledge and expertise and carry out their responsibilities with dedication. The improved strategic planning now makes better use of data and the considerable information gathered from monitoring. The high quality leadership from the headteacher has resulted in rigorous systems being implemented that are effective. There is now a strong sense of direction and purpose throughout the school where all have a common vision in pursuit of excellence.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	D	A	A	A	well above average A above average B
mathematics	B	B	A	A	average C below average D
science	E	A	C	B	well below average E

The table above indicates that children achieve high standards in National Curriculum tests by the time they leave school. There have been great improvements to performance in the last three years since the headteacher took up her post. The current Year 6 children are achieving well and are reaching standards in English, mathematics and science that are at least typical for their age with some doing better. Given that they were underachieving at Year 4, this is very good progress and a testament to the very effective teaching and support that teachers and their assistants have provided. The school's targets for English in 2002 were met but although the targets for mathematics were considerably higher than the national average they did not meet the school's target. The targets set for 2003 are lower than last year to reflect the abilities and past history of this particular year group and seems a reasonable reflection on what children may achieve. All children in Year 2 reached the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2002 National Curriculum tests but few reached a higher level. However, these results were commendable because that year group had over 70 per cent of children who had learning difficulties. The children in the current Year 2 are achieving well and making good progress. At present the majority are reaching at least average standards in all three subjects for their age.

In the work seen during the inspection, children in the reception class achieve well and make good progress. Most will reach expected standards at the end of the reception year and the faster learners will have moved on to National Curriculum work. By Year 2 and Year 6 children are at least achieving the standards expected for their age in all subjects of the curriculum and in religious education. In all classes there are children doing better and in some subjects such as physical education standards are high. This applies to music and religious education in the junior classes. Children acquire good basic skills in English and mathematics and use them effectively in other subjects. Good practical and investigative skills are taught in science. Children are developing useful skills in information and communication technology, which are used effectively in other subjects to support learning. Children with learning difficulties make good progress because they get very good classroom support. Many higher attaining pupils do well because activities are extended and they are challenged with harder work. Achievement is good in the school overall and the underachievement of a few years earlier has been remedied.

CHILDREN' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good They are enthusiastic in lessons and make very good efforts because they want to please the teachers
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Children benefit from teachers' high expectations and any small instances are handled well so there is never a sign of disruption
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Staff give children considerable confidence and value their contributions. Children enjoy responsibility and carry out tasks well.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory because it is below the national average but action has already been taken to improve this.

Children come willingly to school. They work hard and take pride in what they achieve. They take a full part in school life because they know their work is valued and self-esteem is high. The very good behaviour is a key factor in the sustained work and very good efforts. Parents and children agree that there is minimal bullying and any instances are dealt with quickly and effectively. The excellent relationships that exist between staff and children have formed the foundation for learning and efforts are at least good and often very good. The school

is disappointed with the attendance rate because although children's achievement is good the school considers that an improvement to attendance would make it so much better.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of children in:	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.

Overall the teaching is very good. There were three excellent lessons and no unsatisfactory teaching. Although the teaching was good at the last inspection it has improved further in the last two years because the school has introduced a very good system of keeping track of observing lessons in order to improve them. All teachers and governors are involved in this process and both groups benefit from their experiences. The very effective teaching is resulting in very effective learning. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good and once they have achieved these essential skills, children are encouraged to use them in other subjects. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well embedded ensuring that children are given very good direct teaching in basic skills and this is reflected in all children reaching expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the national tests.

There are many strengths in the teaching that enable the needs of all children to be met. These include excellent relationships that encourage children to be effective learners, the expectation that children will work hard and achieve their best, very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects, the effectiveness of planning that ensures well directed and confidently taught lessons; the skilful use of questioning to clarify and build on what children already know and understand. There is very good provision for those with learning difficulties and the way teachers manage children, together with the contributions of teaching assistants results in very good behaviour. Resources are used well during lessons and no time is wasted. The wide range of ways that teachers collect information on children's progress and use it in planning lessons ensures that all children achieve success. No matter how good the teaching, their efforts are hampered by a lack of some facilities because of the premises and this restricts the progress that children can make in some aspects of their physical development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Curricular opportunities are very good and relevant to these children. Provision for activities outside lessons is very good for a school of this size.
Provision for children with special educational needs	The good provision ensures appropriate good quality support for those that need it and this helps children make good progress and achieve as well as they can.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Collective worship promotes spiritual development very well. Children know the difference between right and wrong and have a good understanding of the need for social responsibility.
How well the school cares for its children	Very good. Staff care greatly about children's welfare and provide the best possible support and guidance that they can.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. It values the contributions of parents to their children's learning and is keen to have them working in school. Parents have very good views of the school and are very well satisfied with the quality of education it provides. Improved provision for children with learning difficulties and in the reception class. There is one weakness in curriculum because of the restrictions imposed by the premises. New procedures are in place to improve the attendance rate but it is too soon to see results yet.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall, very good but that of the headteacher is outstanding. She provides strong and purposeful leadership and is effectively supported by staff whose management of their subjects and other aspects of the school is having a positive impact on standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This is very good. Governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and use a number of ways to keep themselves informed. They are very well organised
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is now a very good understanding of the school's performance. The improved use of analyses has helped the staff to understand what works well and why. Governors take a keen interest
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of resources including grants and other funding provided by parents to achieve high standards.

The school has sufficient teachers and support staff who are deployed appropriately but the premises has weaknesses that hamper teaching and restricts the range of learning opportunities that can be offered to children. The headteacher inspires staff to recognise their strengths and make the best use of them. The headteacher and governors are keen to ensure that everyone in the school has the same hopes and aspirations and the school's aims and values are reflected in all that they do. Secure systems are in place to ensure that the financial and administrative work of school management is efficiently carried out. The school works satisfactorily to the principles of best value and decisions are made with improved standards in mind.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour is good• The school has high expectations of their children and expects them to do their best.• School is well led and managed• Teaching is good and helps children become mature and responsible• Comfortable with questions or problems• Children like school and make good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents wanted to see more homework

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. The range of homework is similar to that of other primary schools and used well to reinforce learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and children's achievements

1. Overall, the standards of work seen in lessons during the inspection are generally average for all subjects by Year 2 and Year 6. However, a number of children in each year group do better than this. Standards in physical education are higher than is usually expected for age. Standards in music and religious education are higher in the junior classes. Children's attainment on entry to school is broadly similar to that found nationally and by the end of reception year most will reach the expected standards for their age. All groups achieve well during their time in school. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the standards achieved are:

- the good progress made by children in the reception class that enables them to achieve the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning and for the faster learners to start the National Curriculum early;
- the sustained progress made by children from Year 1 to 6 enabling them to achieve the standards expected for their age in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education;
- the good use pupils make of their literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in other subjects;
- the use children make of the school library in developing their reading skills and love of literature;
- the high standards of presentation that support the accuracy of their work;
- children's growing practical and investigative skills in science;
- the progress made in acquiring skills with computers and in particular the ways they use the Internet to research information to support their learning;
- the use made of information and communication technology to support achievement in subjects across the curriculum;
- the rapid improvements to singing since working with a music specialist;
- the very good progress made in games, gymnastics and swimming, particularly the high quality performances that are the result of good specialist teaching;
- the very good progress made in understanding, from their studies of world faiths, what it means to belong to a religious group and how this has an impact on beliefs, values and the way people live.

Areas for development are:

- better organisation of outdoor play for Foundation Stage given improvements to the premises;
 - extending the range of gymnastic activities, given improvements to the premises for physical education.
2. Children in the reception class (Foundation Stage) get off to a good start in all areas of learning. They are making good progress towards the expected standards for their age and some have laid the foundation for the National Curriculum and are ready to start this work. They achieve well. The work planned for them is carefully matched to their stage of learning and the small

steps recommended in their curriculum. Standards in the areas of learning seen in lessons and in the analysis of work samples are shown in the table below.

Area of learning	Personal, social and emotional development	Communication , language and literacy	Mathematical development	Knowledge and understanding of the world	Physical development	Creative development
Expected standards for age	Most achieving expected standards	Majority achieve expected standards and some ready for National Curriculum	Majority achieve expected standards and some ready for National Curriculum	Most achieving expected standards	Achieve expected standards with exception of outdoor activities	Most achieving expected standards
Progress	Good progress	Good progress	Good progress	Good progress	Sound progress	Good progress

- In the physical development area of learning progress is satisfactory but not as good as the other areas because the premises lacks the appropriate facilities, outdoors and in the hall, hampers the provision that the teacher wishes to make. However, that provided in the classroom is good.
- Standards in National Curriculum subjects and religious education seen in lessons and in the analysis of work samples are shown in the table below.

STANDARDS ATTAINED	BY YEAR 2	BY YEAR 6
English	average	average
Mathematics	average	average
Science	average	average
Art and design	average	average
Design and technology	average	average
Geography	average	average
History	average	average
ICT	average	average
Music	average	above average
Physical education	above average	above average
Religious education	average	above average

- Results in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, show that children's attainments are below the national average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. However, when compared with similar schools (those that have the same percentage of free school meals) results are well below average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. It is difficult when analysing the results of small year groups because there is often considerable variation from year to year. Percentage is not the best measurement when one child is the equivalent of 11 per cent as it was last year. Despite the interpretation, all children reached the expected standards for their age but no one reached the higher level. Teachers expected these results because over 70 per cent of the class had learning difficulties and the children did well to achieve as well as they did.
- In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in the same year, results were well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. These were the same when compared to similar schools. These children had made outstanding progress in English and mathematics and very good progress in science since their results at Year 2. Teachers have worked hard with the current Year 6 to move them from the underachievement of 2000 to where they are now. Standards are mainly average in English, mathematics and

science but there are a significant group of children who achieve higher standards and who are striving to reach the higher level in the next National Curriculum tests this year. The headteacher has particularly supported this class because both Year 5 and Year 6 share a class and numbers are high. This would have limited the attention and support that one teacher could reasonably provide. The very good teaching of both teachers and the high quality assistant staff has combined effectively and the underachievement is remedied.

7. The targets set for Year 6 children's attainment in National Curriculum tests in 2002 were reached in English but not in mathematics. The school expected every child to reach the expected standards in English and they did but in mathematics just one child was unable to do this and it affected the school result by eight per cent. Even so the result was considerably higher than the national average. The targets set for 2003 are lower than last year to reflect the abilities and past history of this particular year group and is a reasonable reflection on what children may achieve.
8. Children with learning difficulties achieve very well. Most make good progress towards their own targets of their individual education plans, within their lessons or smaller focussed groups withdrawn for specific teaching. Sometimes this progress is even better. Their achievements reflect the extremely effective high quality support they receive in the many aspects of their learning, where activities are very suitably planned to meet their needs so well.
9. There are a few children identified as gifted or talented according to national guidance. The gifted children have very well developed learning skills. Those who have aptitude in English or mathematics are often given very challenging tasks such as Year 2 children devising and recording ways of solving problems in mathematics and they have personal targets based on their ability which they work hard to achieve and move on to the next challenge. Children achieve very well and make good and sometimes very good progress.
10. The main reason that children achieve as well as they do is a combination of two factors. These are the professional knowledge and expertise of the headteacher who provides firm direction for the teaching of the curriculum, and the very effective teaching of the staff, who encourage children to have very good attitudes to their work and consequently this results in the efforts that produce high standards.

Children' attitudes, values and personal development

11. This is a significant strength of the school. Relationships are excellent and children's attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good. This is an improvement on the previous report when they were said to be good.

Particular strengths in this area of school life are:

- children's interest and involvement in lessons;
- their enthusiastic support for school activities;
- the positive rapport in all classes between children and staff;
- the regard in which children hold staff;
- the care and respect with which children treat each other in the school and playground;
- the desire of all pupils to do their best in lessons;
- co-operation in pairs and groups.

There is one area for development:

- the attendance rate is below the national average and the school is keen to get this improved so has already put procedures in place to remedy but it is too soon yet to see a significant improvement.
12. Children are keen and enthusiastic about their work, listen to their teachers very carefully and are excited by new learning experiences. For example, in a science lesson when children were learning that some foods can be damaging to teeth they were completely taken aback to discover that a marble chip completely dissolved in vinegar.
 13. Children with learning difficulties have very good attitudes to their work. They are very responsive to their learning reflecting the strong and caring relationships that exist between themselves and all of the adults with whom they work each day. They are fully involved in all the activities offered by the school and the support they receive from other children and teaching assistants is a constant boost to their self-esteem. A high level of understanding and consistency of support provides extremely good guidance to those individual children with more challenging behaviour.
 14. Children's behaviour is very good in and around school. They are courteous and polite; they welcome visitors in a warm and caring manner. Staff, led by the headteacher, set an excellent example in their relationships with one another and with the children. They are very good role models and this is reflected in the way children relate to one another. Older children are especially caring with the younger children. Throughout the time of the inspection no apparent aggression was observed and there have been no exclusions. In lessons their good behaviour allows teachers to make full use of the time available and to challenge pupils in their learning.
 15. The personal development of children is very good. Children of all ages take on a good range of responsibilities that support the day-to-day life of the school. The members of the School Council hold weekly meetings to offer suggestions and promote ideas. For example, they suggested changes to the arrangements of the excellent breakfast club to ensure it runs smoothly. In an assembly children who have taken some responsibilities for road safety made a very confident presentation. Children are able to give articulate descriptions of their life in the school, talk happily about what they enjoy and show a good understanding of what is expected of them.
 16. The attendance level last year was below the national average and unauthorised absence was above the national level. The school, with the support of the Educational Welfare Officer, are doing all they can to remedy this and there now appears to be some improvement.

HOW WELL ARE CHILDREN TAUGHT?

17. This is a very significant strength of the school and one of the two main reasons that have led to such rapid improvements in children's learning and in driving up standards. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be good or very good with some lessons that were satisfactory. There was no satisfactory or unsatisfactory teaching during this inspection.

Strengths in teaching and learning are:

- the establishment of excellent relationships that encourage children to be effective learners;
- the very good knowledge and understanding that teachers have of the subjects they teach;

- the very good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy;
- the effective use teachers make of information and communication technology in other subjects;
- the effectiveness of planning that ensures well directed and confidently taught lessons;
- the skilful use of questioning to clarify and build on what pupils already know and understand;
- the very good provision for those with learning difficulties;
- the way teachers manage children who respond with very good behaviour;
- the way time and resources are used during lessons, ensuring that no time is wasted;
- the contribution made by teaching assistants;
- the wide ranging ways that teachers collect information on children's progress and use it in planning lessons and giving out tasks so that all children achieve success;
- the consistent approach to marking so that all children know how well they are doing and where improvement is needed;
- the way that teachers expect children to work hard and achieve their best;
- the way teachers work with parents and keep them well informed about their children's progress.

Areas for development are:

- extending the resources in the physical development area of learning for the reception class;
 - extending facilities in PE to enable a wider range of teaching in gymnastics as teachers wish.
18. As the teaching is predominantly very good, the quality of learning is similar. During the inspection all lessons were good or better and three lessons were excellent.
 19. The establishment of very good relationships between teachers and children has been a motivating force for improving learning. Teachers listen carefully to children who know their contributions are valued and this makes them eager to do their best work. Many children are prepared to make very good intellectual and creative efforts because in all classes they want to please their teachers.
 20. Teachers plan lessons effectively with clear objectives for what they wish children to learn. In all lessons these are shared with the children who then have a clear understanding of what they have to do and what the teacher wants them to accomplish by the end of the lesson.
 21. The pace of working is mainly good so lessons move on quickly, concentration is maintained and work is completed. Teachers plan lessons in ways that meet the needs of most pupils and group activities are generally appropriate for children's stage of learning. In this way the work set by teachers maintains interest and children get on with the activities they are given to do
 22. The very good teaching at the Foundation Stage in the reception class gives children a good start towards achieving the expected standards they need before embarking on the work of the National Curriculum. The good teamwork in this class is of particular note because the skills of the support assistant are used extremely well resulting in a most consistent approach to every activity.
 23. The strong sense of partnership between all those working to support the children with learning difficulties makes a very significant contribution to the progress they make and not least towards

each child's feeling of personal success and achievement. When all lessons are planned, very careful consideration is given to ensure that teacher's questions and the children's tasks are very suited to their needs, allowing them to achieve what is expected of them. Both teachers and the highly organised and very well prepared teaching assistants, make regular checks on children's learning co-operating closely to track how well the children are progressing. Children's individual education plans identify very clear, detailed and precise targets for improvement and provide a focus of the support for each child. Very effective use is made of the national support programmes in both literacy and numeracy.

24. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good. All teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. Teachers plan lessons in other subjects in ways that emphasise the use of literacy and numeracy skills. This is effective in reinforcing what has been learned. Teachers have a very good knowledge of how to teach basic skills.
25. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology in other subjects such as using sources of information from CD ROMS or the Internet for research in science or history. They are skilled at enabling children to use word processing skills in their writing in literacy and have shown them how to use computers for design in art and design and technology. Children now have a good understanding about the ways that they can use technology to support their learning.
26. A good range of methods is used in teaching. For example, the closing sessions of a lesson are used well to reflect on what has been learned and sometimes to introduce the area of work for the next lesson. When asked children can explain what they have learned and older ones have a very good idea of how well they have achieved and whether or not they could have done better. The quality of marking is generally good and makes a significant contribution to children's learning. The best examples set clear guidance and generally encourage high standards.
27. Teachers usually make very effective use of all resources available to them but in some subjects a lack of some essential equipment hampers efforts. For example, in physical education, the teaching of gymnastics is restricted by the inadequacy of indoor accommodation. At the Foundation Stage, children's progress in the physical development area of learning is hampered because they lack the climbing and balancing equipment they need outdoors.
28. Teachers use homework that relates to work undertaken in class, well to reinforce learning and consolidate what has been learned. All classes provide homework that relates to reading and spelling but other tasks are provided too.
29. Support staff are usually well briefed and use their knowledge and expertise well to support children's learning. In some classes the teachers ensure that their support assistant has written instructions for each lesson and knows how to make regular checks on children's progress during the lesson. This is particularly good at the Foundation Stage where there is a very experienced classroom assistant and the teacher has established regular teamwork in supporting children as they move towards attaining the expected standards.

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

30. The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities that meet the needs of all children, including those with learning difficulties and those who have been identified as gifted or

talented. Although there are no children in the school at present whose mother tongue is not English there is planning for them, which is updated each year for when they do join the school. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, which judged that the curriculum was well planned and organised effectively. The improvement shows the school has worked very hard to ensure that it is rich, broad, balanced and relevant to the children who are in school at present. Both staff and governors make regular checks to ensure that it meets all the requirements for the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. The very thorough lesson planning builds on children's previous learning in order to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding in a systematic way. Teachers make very good use of the national guidance in the schemes of work recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Only when all this is planned do they seek to add additional learning opportunities, such as personal and social education that includes sex education and knowledge of drug misuse, citizenship, visits to places of interest, clubs or that provided by others with expertise that will add to the whole range of learning opportunities.

Strengths in the curriculum are:

- the planning of the curriculum that makes it relevant to the children in this school;
- improved provision for children with learning difficulties;
- improved use of national guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum;
- the wide range of additional opportunities outside lessons;
- the very good provision for personal development;
- the effective provision for personal, social and health education;
- the very good relationships with other schools and the community that extend what this school can offer.

Areas for development are:

- implementation of the plans to extend children's awareness of non-western cultures so that provision for children's cultural development is as good as other aspects.
30. The curriculum for reception children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is now very well planned and carefully based on the expected standards for all six areas of learning. The teacher plans for children to reach these standards in small steps and is successful in ensuring that by the time they leave the reception class, most will reach these standards and some will be tackling the early stages of the National Curriculum. This improvement shows that the school has extended the breadth of children's learning and improved its organisation and resources. However, a few improvements to resources are still needed.
31. The school ensures that all children are included in all subjects and the range of learning opportunities open to their age group and that everyone has an opportunity to succeed in them. Provision for children with learning difficulties has improved since the last inspection when it was good. It is now very good enabling them to take a full and active part in all aspects of the life and work of the school. In the many ways in which children are supported whether individually, within the class or when withdrawn for specific teaching opportunities, the standard of care, guidance and commitment is very high. The special educational needs co-ordinator works very closely with all those involved - teachers, support assistants, governors and outside specialist agencies to ensure that the specific needs of all the children are met and their progress

and level of support is checked regularly. In addition, by joining lessons in other classes she keeps up to date with children's individual progress.

32. The curriculum is enhanced by the ways that literacy and numeracy are taught and this is helping to raise standards. Effective use is made of literacy and numeracy in other subjects, often drawing on the skills of information and communication technology to extend learning. For example, in science children use graphs, tables and spreadsheets to record their investigations and present their findings using computers. They use computer programs to enhance their work on basic skills in mathematics. In history they extend their understanding of chronology by using time lines and write about life in ancient Greece. In geography map reading skills are linked to the knowledge of coordinates in mathematics and the Internet is used to research work on mountain habitats. In religious education children use their literacy skills when writing about their feelings for the Bible. In physical education there is effective use of speaking and listening skills to discuss how they might improve their performance.
33. The school makes very good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship. At whole class sessions teachers capitalise on such opportunities to develop co-operation, self-esteem and help children understand their feelings and emotions. Children have opportunities to contribute to the 'Mordiford Helping Hands' group, which is a form of school council where they bring their views and contribute to the life of the school. For example, improvements to the breakfast club provision were considered and acted upon as a result of suggestions from this group. Children enjoy helping with the smooth running of the school taking on such responsibilities as librarian, lunchtime helpers and assembly assistants. They care about younger ones and are keen to help them and thrive on the wide range of monitor responsibilities. In such subjects as science and physical education children are made aware of the need for a healthy life style. Children are taught about the good uses and the misuse of drugs in health education and science lessons. Sex education too is taught in these lessons with the support of the school nurse.
34. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities in order to enrich and extend the curriculum. These include, football, tag rugby, gymnastics club, homework and breakfast clubs, netball, rounders, cricket, skipping, music and a computer club. There are opportunities for younger children to take part in recorders and football. This is further enhanced by such opportunities to take part in competitive sports. There is a very good range of visits outside school. These include, local museums, art galleries, theatre visits, participation in Hereford Cathedral workshops and such places of interest as the Judges' Lodgings in Presteigne, Wyre Forest and Techniquet. In addition there are residential visits to places such as Bewdley where they take part in a range of outdoor activities and learn about living together. Visitors to the school further enrich the curriculum. For example, theatre companies, puppeteers, musicians and a visiting planetarium.
35. The school has very good links with the local community. They visit local businesses such as the Post office and representatives from the local tax office worked with older children as part of their work in mathematics. There are strong links with the local church, as part of religious celebrations and in work on history. The vicar visits regularly in order to take worship and support the teaching of religious education. Children participate in village charity events and enjoy the social occasions that make them an integral part of village life. Very good use is made of the locality for work in geography. For example, children considered how the environment might be improved and took part in a traffic census in the village. The school nurse, fire brigade and local police officers visit to talk to children. Qualified sports coaches and members of county sporting associations give additional coaching in games. Local artists and crafts people

such as potters and wall builders demonstrate their skills to children and the local museum services help to enrich work in history. For a school of this size, outstanding efforts are made by staff to maintain this wide range of activities.

36. The school has very good links with other schools. They work very closely with the community playgroup, housed on the school site. Staff discuss curriculum and planning issues to help with the continuity of education and ensure that children are very well inducted into the life of the school. There are extremely good links with the local secondary school and effective use of expertise, resources and staff from the secondary school contribute to such subjects as the use of computers, science and design and technology. In return teachers visit the secondary school to share their experience and expertise in the teaching of literacy. Arrangements for the transfer of children to their next school is very smooth, partly because children take part in an annual summer school at the secondary school. Many opportunities exist for children to take part in sporting events with other local primary schools. The local group of rural schools meets regularly to discuss such curriculum matters as the teaching of the youngest children and headteacher responsibilities. They share skills in the evaluation of children's work.
37. Overall, the provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Children have good knowledge and insights into values and beliefs because the strong Christian precepts which support the life and work of the school create an ethos where all are respected and where values and beliefs are appreciated. The school clearly meets the principles stated in its motto: 'treasure the individual'. Planned opportunities enable them to take part in moments of reflection, to be still and become deeply aware of feelings and ideas. During worship children join in sensitively with prayers and hymns. They write prayers and celebrate the successes of others. Spiritual development is further enhanced through religious education lessons. Children express wonder at aspects of the natural world. For example, they reacted with delight when the first spring flowers began to appear and were fascinated when teachers alerted them to the appearance of deer in the adjacent field. In science younger children responded with excitement when they realised the power of magnetism.
38. Provision for moral development is very good. The school has a very clear behaviour policy, which is used consistently throughout the school and reinforces the very good behaviour. Children have a very clear understanding of the differences between right and wrong. Adults in school provide very good role models in their relationships with children and in the promotion of fairness and honesty. There is a high expectation of good behaviour. This is enhanced by the assemblies, which contribute very well to children's personal development by considering issues such as personal responsibility. In religious education older children are helped to understand the differences between literal and symbolic truth. Children take the initiative to help each other and visitors unprompted by staff. Staff make time to discuss any issues of behaviour which might arise so that children have opportunities to reflect on their actions.
39. Provision for social education is very good. Children are taught from the earliest days in school about the importance of sharing and taking turns. They are encouraged to be polite and courteous. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities in residential experiences help children to develop their social skills and to understand how to live together. There is a strong sporting tradition, which encourages children to compete enthusiastically and fairly. The school council enables children to experience the process of election and to make a positive contribution to the school community. Relationships between children and staff are excellent. This helps to give children confidence and enables them to co-operate well together and to work collaboratively. For example, in a mathematics lesson

children in the Year 3 and 4 class co-operated well in their work on time using clock faces. In information and communication technology older children collaborated effectively in work on spreadsheets. There are opportunities for children to help to care for the elderly and for those less fortunate than themselves. For example, the school visits a local senior citizens' home at harvest and at Christmas. Children contribute to charities such as Operation Christmas Child, Children in Need and Blue Peter Appeals. Children take the initiative and organise their own fund raising events. For example, an older child engaged the support of other children and parents in organising a bring and buy sale to support a national charity.

40. Overall, provision for cultural development is good. The opportunities for children to develop an awareness of their own culture is very good because their involvement in village life helps them learn about celebrations and seasonal activities. Local artists visit the school and children sing and write poems for the village flower festival. They celebrate such events as Harvest Festival, Mothers' Day and Christmas. Children take part in Easter egg hunts. The school has visits from theatre groups such as the English Shakespeare Company. Children learn about traditional playground games from visiting instructors. They visit local museums and art galleries. In literature, music, dance and art they learn about their own and other cultures. Overall, provision for children to learn about the richness and diversity of other cultures is satisfactory but the school recognises that more could be done and has plans to further develop its provision in this area. At present, children learn about celebrations and traditions of world faiths other than Christianity. They celebrate Divali and listen to stories from other cultures, including those from a visiting storyteller. In assembly they hear stories about people's lives and about books from a wide range of different cultures. Children have opportunities to take part in French club and as part of their work in geography and history children learn about other cultures in different times and places.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS CHILDREN?

41. This is a great strength of the school and an aspect that it does very well because all staff care greatly about children's welfare and ensuring that they have the best possible support and guidance in all they do. There are excellent procedures in the school for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. The promotion and keeping track of behaviour is excellent.

Other strengths in this area are:

- the promotion of self-esteem for all children in every area of school life;
- the provision for children with learning difficulties;
- the high expectations teachers have of children;
- the very good management of children;
- the ways that new children are helped to settle in and the support for eleven-year-olds moving to the secondary school;
- very good use of praise at the appropriate time;
- the regular checks on children's progress;
- a great deal of information is gathered and used very well in lesson planning and to set individual and group targets for improvement.

There is one area for development:

- to continue the procedures already implemented to encourage those parents who do not fully observe the need for their children to be at school as frequently as possible.

42. The care of children in this school is excellent. Staff understand the children well, their care ensures that children are happy and secure. All staff know the procedures to be followed to ensure that children are very well protected and are vigilant, carrying out their responsibilities very well. Social inclusion is a strong feature in the school and is promoted in an atmosphere where everyone is valued and allowed to take part in the wide range of activities. Excellent procedures are in place to promote all the related matters of health, first-aid and safety and security to a very high level. Parents talk of their great appreciation for the ways that their children are cared for and supported. For example, they value the breakfast club where 40 children are provided with a practical yet essential start to the school day that they need if they are to make their best efforts, concentrate well and finish the tasks they are given.
43. The educational and personal support and guidance for all children is outstanding. This is developed through the teachers' very good knowledge of the children. The ways used to keep track of children's academic performance and personal development are excellent. There are regular checks on progress, good marking of work to know what children understand, checks to decide what to teach next and children are encouraged to develop and discuss their ideas and to make suggestions through their involvement in the School Council. Consequently, whatever their ability, children are given tasks that are suitable for each child's need and teachers quickly spot those in difficulty and provide encouragement.
44. All staff work hard to ensure that everyone in the school community is valued. This consistent approach ensures the very good behaviour of children and the elimination of oppressive behaviour. This is reinforced by, for example, the awarding of 'thank-you tickets' to children for their response to one another and to adults. The strong Christian ethos, which is an important part of school life and reflects the school motto of 'treasure each individual', ensures the good and caring behaviour.
45. The provision for children with learning difficulties is very good and the special educational needs co-ordinator spends endless time trying to ensure that every child who needs it has the highest quality of support. Problems are identified very quickly, starting at the Foundation Stage and the regular checks on each child's progress helps teachers provide the right sort of work. Tasks that can be done in different ways and targets that help children progress in small steps are effective ways of supporting those with learning difficulties. Those adults who assist teachers play an important part in this very good provision because they have the expertise and experience to know just how much help is needed. The very effective support children receive makes a very positive contribution to children's well being, and enables them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. This is a significant strength of the school. Parents express excellent views about the school and are very satisfied with the quality of education it provides and the standards that their children achieve. Consequently the partnership between them and the school is very effective and most think of the school as an exciting place for their children to be.

Particular strengths include:

- the number of parents trained in classroom support who help in the school on a regular basis;

- the very many ways that parents are involved in the life of the school and make concerted efforts to raise funds through a range of community activities that support the school;
 - the determined efforts of parents to make sure the school is able to help them keep their children healthy;
 - the quality of information provided for parents about their children's progress;
 - the open working partnership with the parents of children with learning difficulties that involves them in all aspects of the provision and values their contributions;
 - the ways that parents contribute to their children's learning in school and at home;
 - the level of trust that parents have in the headteacher and staff.
47. Throughout the inspection parents took every opportunity to express their views of the school, which are excellent. These views were confirmed in the response to the parental questionnaires and views expressed at the pre inspection meeting. Over 50 per cent of parents returned questionnaires. Of those who did return them there were 100 per cent who considered that the school was well led and managed, the school had high expectations of their children and the behaviour in the school was good. A very high percentage also thought the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. They expressed strong appreciation for the many ways that staff care for their children and are not at all surprised that their children like school and find it a happy and secure place to learn.
48. The quality of information for parents is very good. The school provides effective opportunities for discussions with parents when children start school and again when they are leaving. Useful booklets and the prospectus provide valuable information and constant reminders about what they should do if they have concerns or queries. The majority of the parents attend meetings about children's progress. Children's reports are very detailed and give a clear indication of their progress and what they need to do to improve further. Parents sign reports and some make written comments. Parents get on well with all staff and can talk with them informally about their children whenever they visit the school. Parents told inspectors that rarely is there an incident when they do not feel comfortable discussing a problem with the headteacher and that she has the unique quality of making them feel at ease, whatever the situation, and always resolves things that worry them most. Parents consider that the staff are a helpful and supportive body who are always willing to listen to their views. Those whose children have learning difficulties care strongly about this help because they are involved in reviews of progress and in the targets set for their children. This works so well that children achieve success and their self-esteem grows.
49. The school very successfully encourages an open working partnership with the parents of children with learning difficulties fully involving them in all aspects of the provision and valuing their contributions. From the earliest stages the parents are fully consulted and always kept very well informed of their children's programmes of learning and level of support. They receive copies of their individual education plans, which identify how parents can help at home. At the termly consultation meetings with teachers, parents are able to discuss the progress made by children towards their targets before future goals are set. When a statement of special educational need is awarded parents' views are actively sought, contributing to the decisions made at the annual review meeting they attend.
50. Teachers work closely with parents and assist them in the many social and fundraising activities organised by the Friends of the School group (PTFA). This very active group raises considerable funds, which benefit children, for example, in providing transport for educational visits and the bus to take children swimming. Their awareness of the need to keep children healthy resulted in the provision of drinking water so that children can have a drink when they

wish. They agree with staff that no child shall be excluded from an activity merely because a family cannot afford to contribute and some funds are set aside for this purpose which ensures the inclusion of all children in the range of activities.

51. In addition to the help given in school parents provide effective support to their children's learning at home. Some listen to reading in school but almost all carry out this task at home. At the parents' meeting prior to inspection there were positive comments about the usefulness of reading diaries in which both parents and teachers commented on progress. They encourage their children to use the book club at school and some children talked about the use of public libraries, particularly that parents took them to the mobile library that visits the village. Those parents who have children with learning difficulties discuss how to help and support their children. The home and school agreement is currently being updated to include attendance and punctuality because there have been problems in the past but most parents talked to were of the opinion that children need to come regularly otherwise they find it difficult to catch up and can become dispirited. The range of homework and amount is generally acceptable to parents and the recent implementation of a Year 5 and 6 homework club is proving to be successful. Many parents encourage their children to be involved in clubs, particularly those that are not part of the National Curriculum such as hockey, French and instrumental tuition.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. Overall, the quality of leadership and management is very good. This quality has been maintained but there are improvements to some aspects within it. The quality of the headteacher's leadership and management is outstanding and is acknowledged by teachers to be the key to the dramatic turn round of the school. Governors play a very effective and full role in the strategic management of the school. The school's strategies for self-evaluation are very good, giving strong support to improving standards and effective teaching that results in effective learning. Overall, the school is very effective, providing very good value for money.

Strengths in leadership and management are:

- the headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership;
 - the shared commitment of all staff to improvement is excellent;
 - the governors are very perceptive about their role in moving the school forward;
 - the very good planning for improvement;
 - the excellent reflection of the school's aims and values in its work are clearly expressed in the behaviour, attitudes and values of children;
 - the very good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of children and provide the curriculum required;
 - the school has effective ways of keeping track of observing lessons in order to improve them;
 - the very effective teamwork that ensures a consistent approach to all they do.
53. The headteacher has a clear vision of the direction that she expects the school to take to ensure a high quality education for all children. She is a firm and caring leader with a very good level of professional knowledge and expertise and she has used these attributes very effectively to develop and mould team attitudes and values so that all staff shares her understanding of what children can achieve. She sets a good example to others through her own teaching skills and takes particular care to ensure that all members of the school team, including the governing body, are consulted and involved in every aspect of the management of the school. She began to respond to the recommendations of previous reports before she took up her post and consequently the school came out of further measures in less than a year. She has built on the

improvements identified in the last report and has been effective in attending to the weaknesses that still needed attention.

54. Although the dramatic turn round of the school is acknowledged by key staff to have come about because of the leadership skills of the headteacher, she ascribes it to the co-operation, skills and commitment of the team. Her considerable skills in managing people have succeeded in empowering others whatever their role and now they value one another and feel valued themselves. The strength lies in open and honest relationships that result in very good opportunities for encouragement and support. For example, lunchtime supervisors were encouraged to become more positive in encouraging children to resolve disputes, co-ordinators were supported in writing policies and a teaching assistant supervised breakfast club supported by the very effective cooking of the cleaner in charge.
55. The deputy headteacher has a significant role in school management and is effective in overseeing routine management and pastoral care. This has now been extended to a leadership role in school improvement and as co-ordinator of the Foundation Stage she has established an appropriate curriculum based on the six areas of learning, ensured that play activities help learning, uses a whole range of information gained from observations of children to ensure that appropriate tasks are provided and that regular checks on children's progress ensure that most will reach expected standards by the time they leave the reception class. The deputy headteacher is fully supportive and effective in this role although her range of responsibilities in other areas is considerable. Co-ordinators are in place for all subjects of the curriculum and they have a clear understanding of what their work involves. As a result, their contribution is positive and supports both staff and children's development successfully. They, and the deputy headteacher, scrutinise teachers' planning of lessons on a regular basis and every teacher has had opportunities to observe and advise colleagues at work. The deputy headteacher writes a commentary on the planning each term that offers advice and suggestions as well as giving praise for effort. The comments are sensitive and supportive and other teachers value this contribution to their work.
56. The management of the school's special educational needs provision, which is very effectively led by a knowledgeable and extremely hard working co-ordinator is very good. Her working knowledge and experience of what is involved in her particular area of responsibility has identified and implemented clear procedures to ensure that this aspect of leadership runs smoothly and effectively. This has resulted in teachers being familiar with the requirements of the new code of practice and the policy. They make sure that targets in children's individual education plans are reviewed on a regular basis. In working very closely with all those involved, including teachers, support assistants, governors and outside specialist agencies, she ensures that the specific needs of all the children are met and that their progress and level of support is checked regularly. She has regular discussions about progress with the governor for special educational needs and they both ensure that parents are kept fully informed of how well their children are learning.
57. The headteacher and governors are keen to ensure that everyone in the school has the same hopes and aspirations and the school's aims and values are reflected in all that they do. Teachers have a clear understanding and expectations of what children of different abilities can achieve in English, mathematics and science and this is reflected in their planning of work. Teachers place considerable importance on the need to develop everyone's self esteem resulting in children who feel happy and comfortable about coming to school. There are secure systems in place to ensure that new staff are introduced quickly and professionally to school routines. They talk about helpful information provided by friendly and supportive managers.

58. The governing body does a good job in fulfilling its responsibilities for ensuring that the school runs efficiently for the benefit of all children. Governors make regular and recorded visits to the school and are aware of the main strengths and weaknesses and thus are in a better position to make informed decisions. Individual governors have specific responsibilities linked to curriculum that necessitate talking with subject co-ordinators about what is happening and how they can help. In addition they have committee responsibilities and all these are carried out successfully and with enthusiasm. They regularly report back to the fully governing body on what they have achieved and observed in classrooms and they are keen to improve their governing skills further by attending various courses suited to their specific needs. The chair of governors shows much dedication and commitment to his role and provides an excellent example for other governors.
59. The governing body has a very good understanding and knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses through involving itself in gathering first hand evidence of the school's performance. Of particular note is the training provided by the headteacher to extend governor understanding of what they see happening in class and many observations of teaching have now been made by governors who work alongside children and discuss the outcomes of lessons at the end with the teacher. The records of such sessions show that at least once a term every governor observes a lesson, there is a consistent approach to what they do but most importantly it involves them in school life, and provides a greater knowledge on which to base judgements and make decisions.
60. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and try hard to ensure that they carry out all their statutory responsibilities. This is now very good. When weaknesses have been found, action has been taken and the problem remedied. This was the case recently when the checking of registers by the Education Welfare Officer found one aspect that needed attention. The headteacher acted swiftly and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have been improved and implemented. The school prospectus makes very clear how important it is for children to come to school regularly but there has been too little time since the implementation to see a great improvement in the attendance rate as yet.
61. The school improvement plan is well focussed and identifies the priorities for the school. It is a key tool used by the headteacher to monitor her effectiveness as a head, and the effectiveness of the deputy headteacher, special educational needs co-ordinator and subject co-ordinators.
62. The school is making good use of new technology although at present there is no information and communication technology suite.
63. The headteacher inherited a deficit budget when taking up her post and the school has cut back where it could to get the financial situation on an even keel. Secure systems are in place to ensure that the financial and administrative work of school management is efficiently carried out. This is due largely to the effective management of the office by the financial administrator and the appointment of a governor whose experience in finance has proved to be invaluable in the effective monitoring of the budget. All resources, specific grants and other funding are used correctly. The last official audit of the school's finances has been responded to satisfactorily. The school works satisfactorily to the principles of best value. Comparisons are made with other schools to judge their own performance. The system of monitoring and evaluation allows the school to challenge what they are doing and its effectiveness. Consultation on spending decisions involves governors and staff. Although there is a desire to move towards consultation with parents and children the chair of finance committee says that there has been too many 'must do' priorities before they can move to that yet. The new building programme indicates

that some capital must be retained for site improvements. The finance committee is rigorous about getting best value for money on contracts but not just the cheapest option. Staff development necessitates the best nature of training.

64. The numbers, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff are generally sufficient. Teachers are deployed appropriately and the match of staff to co-ordinator roles is good. The implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has been successful in providing a structured and effective programme of learning that has a positive impact on the quality of both teaching and learning. The professional development of staff continues to be given a high priority. The monitoring of teaching and learning was introduced by the headteacher and now subject co-ordinators have observed lessons in their own subjects and all teachers have had opportunities to see one another at work. Now they want to try teamwork with two teachers observing together and then comparing observations to get consistency of this activity well established. Assistant staff are well trained and value it because they can see how it has improved what they do.
65. The accommodation is satisfactory but there are two main weakness that hamper teaching and children's progress. There is no designated outdoor space for the Foundation Stage to involve themselves in activities related to physical development as recommended in their curriculum. The size of the hall makes physical education difficult to teach, particularly for the oldest children and in one aspect – gymnastics, teachers cannot safely include all the activities that they would wish.
66. Overall, the learning resources are good for most of school's curriculum and in some subjects are very good. However, there are some shortages in such subjects as music and religious education. The co-ordinators for these subjects have identified what is needed but these are costly and in the meantime they improvise or borrow.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. Many improvements have been made to this school in the last few years very successfully and even now the further development needed has been planned which leaves no significant issues for additional work. However, there is one aspect that the school should improve if it can and since a new building programme is planned the headteacher, staff and governors should try to:
 - **Improve some aspects of the premises (*hall and outdoors*) relating to the teaching of physical education and the physical development area of learning thus ensuring that teachers can offer children a full range of learning opportunities as they would wish and extend the progress children could make.**
(See paragraphs: 3, 27, 30, 65, 68, 78, 79, 150)

When governors write the action plan consideration should be given to one minor issue:

- **Continuing the procedures already implemented to improve the rate of attendance.**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and children	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	19	10	0	0	0	0
Percentage	9	60	31	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's children

Children on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of children on the school's roll (FTE for part-time children)	0	102
Number of full-time children known to be eligible for free school meals		11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of children with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of children on the school's special educational needs register		37

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of children
Children who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Children who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered children in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	7	2	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of children at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of children at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (88)	100 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of children at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of children at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (88)	100 (88)
	National	85 (85)	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered children in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	7	5	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of children at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	6	7
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	12	11	12
Percentage of children at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (88)	92 (76)	100 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of children at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	6	7
	Girls	3	5	4
	Total	8	11	11
Percentage of children at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (82)	92 (76)	92 (82)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of children***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of children on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	84	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of children per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	12

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of children per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of children per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	288,081
Total expenditure	256,812
Expenditure per pupil	2761
Balance brought forward from previous year	9336
Balance carried forward to next year	32923

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	101
Number of questionnaires returned	59

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	36	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	56	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	47	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	44	12	0	2
The teaching is good.	73	25	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	31	5	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	15	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	19	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	63	24	8	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	73	27	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	37	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	29	7	0	2

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

68. Children enter the reception class with a broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding. This year the teachers' assessments of what children know, understand and can do show that when they enter school their attainment is broadly similar to that found nationally. This is in line with that of the previous inspection. The teacher builds upon this work in class 1 and by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage in the reception class, the majority of children are attaining most of the expected standards for their age in all six areas of learning with the exception of some aspects of physical development. All children are laying the foundation for the National Curriculum and the faster learners are almost ready to begin that work. Most children are familiar with the routines of the literacy and numeracy sessions and will be ready to participate fully in these when they enter Year 1. Overall, children achieve well and make good progress. Those with learning difficulties are identified early and appropriate support is given so that they too make good progress towards the targets identified for them.

Strengths in the Foundation Stage are:

- the range of well planned activities that ensure most children will reach expected standards by the time they leave the reception class;
- the effective links with the community playgroup that works on the school site;
- the excellent relationships that help children feel secure and happy;
- the early identification of children's needs that ensures those who need support receive it and that the faster learners are challenged and extended;
- the attractive and well organised classroom that creates a stimulating place for children to learn;
- the very good knowledge and understanding that the teachers have of the areas of learning;
- the excellent teamwork of the teacher and her assistant ensure that there is a consistent approach to all they do.

Areas for further development are:

- improving the outdoor area to make better provision for children's physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Children generally make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Their concentration spans are often short when they start school but most soon learn to sit quietly when appropriate and because they find the tasks interesting they make good efforts. Some of those already five concentrate well and maintain attention for considerable periods of time. The majority of children adapt their behaviour to different situations, such as register time and play, they work successfully as part of a group or class, taking turns and sharing and have formed good relationships with adults and one another. They understand that there are acceptable ways of behaving if the class is to work harmoniously but occasionally a few children have to be reminded. They know that some behaviour is right or wrong and are beginning to understand why this is so. They learn to look after their personal needs and belongings. There is no private space allocated to attend to medical or personal needs but adults manage to do such tasks without upsetting children.

70. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is very good. The teacher has a good knowledge of this area of learning and plans for its development as part of the activities. There is a consistent approach by the teacher and the support assistant so children know what an adults' response is likely to be. Good use is made of stories to emphasise the need to show tolerance and care for others and what is right and wrong behaviour. Adults are vigilant and quickly notice if any child is the cause of unhappiness in others. Such incidents are handled well by adults and help children to have a sense of what is fair. Adults are particularly good at creating a feeling of openness so that children learn from one another and each other's family experiences. They try to strengthen the impressions that children have of their own cultures and faiths. Children have a growing understanding that people have different views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect. Resources to raise children's awareness of ethnic diversity are not always available.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Children readily talk with others and most are prepared to take turns in conversation. They use both written and spoken language in their play and respond to what they have learned by relevant questions. They are mainly confident when speaking to others but some are not and take time before they feel secure enough to even respond to a smile and friendly greeting. Many now show some awareness of the listener, for example, greeting visitors, using "please" and "thank you" and responding to registration politely. The majority are learning to read and use their knowledge of alphabet letter sounds when trying to read unfamiliar words. They read the days of the week and quickly draw the teacher's attention to a missing letter when, for example, she makes a deliberate mistake and omits the 'a' from the word *Monday*. They work well in pairs co-operating in the task of word matching. When reading together as a whole class they make good use of picture clues and some familiar words to understand the story. They know how to find the title and author. Most children listen attentively and show by their answers to questions that they have listened and understood what they have heard. Children enjoy listening to and using language.
72. The teaching of the communication, language and literacy area of learning is very good. Lessons are planned in line with the goals children are expected to reach and due regard is given to the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy guidance so that children are gradually prepared for these sessions when they reach Year 1. The lesson planning builds on previous learning. The teacher and her assistant have a good understanding of how children learn which is demonstrated in the way they talk with them, the very good relationships and interesting activities. The support assistant particularly makes time to listen to children and talk with them. This gives them opportunities to respond and demonstrate what they can do, raising children's self esteem. For example, when learning to write alphabet letters they used white boards where errors could easily be removed. They were confident at 'having a go' and most made good attempts although a few still had poor eye and hand co-ordination. The teacher gives emphasis to reading with words and captions around the classroom on every topic and there is a comfortable, cosy book corner that encourages children to go and look at books. This works well and children were seen pretending to read a story to a friend or were role playing at mother and reading to a doll.

Mathematical development

73. Most children are now at the stage where their counting is more reliable and they count forwards and backwards from any starting point. Using large cards 0-10, they take part at putting them into order successfully but some still need support. As they become familiar with

terms such as 'more than' or 'less than' they use a fan of numerals and select the appropriate answer. When asked what is meant by 'more than' a few children gave very articulate responses but others found this more difficult although they clearly understood and carried out the task correctly. Children are eager to respond and sometimes find it difficult not to shout out the answer. When counting on from a given number they use white boards to record their response as a simple addition. For example, they start at 2 and using a dice, add 4, which is then recorded as $2+4=6$. They can reverse this by writing $6-4=2$ having counted back from six. Their writing of numerals by more able children is usually accurate but there are some reversals and some children spot these and correct them.

74. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. The basic skills are taught well and there is a focus on achievement through practical activities and on using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. The teaching is effective because there are clear explanations, effective questioning and practical investigations. Both adults work well as a team and they sensitively support reinforce and extend children's responses. Both adults are good at observing children and even during lessons make quick notes about children's progress. This information is used very well because the teacher is willing to make changes to lessons to give children confidence when they achieve success. Occasionally there is some recording of work using worksheets that shows that children are not ready for this because they lack the control to write and although this is not unusual for this age more time is needed to help them improve these skills before they attempt to record their efforts. The National Numeracy Strategy does not emphasise recording at this stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children have many opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They learn about other people and features of the natural and man-made world. They readily talk about where they live and their families. They find out about past and present events in the own lives and those of their families and through activities such as dressing up, acting out and tasting food. They talk about days of the week and the weather. Children examine foods and talk about the countries they come from. They are learning the use of bar codes on food items that may be found in the supermarket. Good use is made of the senses when they handle vegetables they are preparing to make soup. They extend their vocabulary as they learn the names of vegetables such as celery and turnip and experiment with tools to peel vegetables and examine what they look like when cut up.
76. Children build and construct successfully with a good range of materials, for example plastic and wooden bricks. They shape dough and join materials like paper and textiles to make a variety of models. They use a computer mouse to control icons on a screen and some who have computers at home are very competent. One child who had been most reluctant to use the computer experienced the joy of success when producing a picture of a snowman and her comments made the teacher aware that she had listened to instructions and remembered some terminology although previously reluctant to take part. Children have a growing awareness of such cultural events as Christmas and Harvest.
77. The teaching of this area of learning is good. The teacher has high expectations of what children can achieve and uses her knowledge and understanding effectively when working with small groups. This task is more difficult when she lacks the skills of the teaching assistant although there is some support from parents who are well briefed about the activities and what learning is expected. There is always a focus on safety so that children can learn to handle equipment with care. She is very aware that not all can work at the same speed or maintain

their concentration for as long as others and modifies or extends tasks as needed. In this way every child achieves success but faster learners get more work done than others.

Physical development

78. Children have opportunities to use a range of small equipment. They handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. There are opportunities to cut and stick and make models, use writing tools, construct with small bricks and in doing so children extend their co-ordination and control. However, a lack of some essential resources makes it difficult for the teacher to provide for this area of learning as well as she would wish. There is no designated outdoor space for this age group as recommended in the Foundation Stage curriculum and since the hall is small and without climbing apparatus the facilities that this age group require for physical development cannot be met fully. The outdoor play relies on teachers sharing playgroup equipment, which is not always appropriate for the reception age
79. The teaching of this area of learning is good in those aspects seen. However, discussion with the teacher confirmed that large-scale movements such as climbing over, under, through, around and between using large apparatus such as climbing and balancing equipment is not possible. The wet or very cold weather prevents any attempts at outdoor work but the teacher tries to provide appropriate physical challenges when working with the whole class on the playground. Staff hope that this situation may be resolved when the plans for the new building programme are finalised.

Creative development

80. Children make good progress in their creative development. They paint and draw, make patterns, use play dough to create, make and experiment with musical instruments, sing and play percussion instruments. They explore colour and texture and children made good efforts to paint pictures of the enormous turnip inspired by the story. There are good opportunities for using imagination in role-play and stories because the class has good resources. For example, children engage in imaginative and role-play based on their own first hand experiences or co-operate as part of a group to act out a story. Children have memorised songs and are confident at singing in the whole class group. They talk about the way that music makes them feel – happy and excited. They have learnt a new song and are learning that sometimes voices need to be soft and sometimes louder. In their singing they are recognising repetition such as a chorus.
81. In the one lesson of creative development observed the teaching was very good. Planning had built carefully on previous work and there was a clear explanation of the tasks. The teacher moved from group to group commenting and asking questions to probe understanding and check progress. The lack of a teaching assistant did affect the learning because the children did not always have the support of an adult when they needed it and some did not make sufficient effort because the teacher had to work with every group not just an individual. The teacher worked very hard and although the learning was good it could have been better with additional support.

ENGLISH

82. In lessons and in samples of written work the standards in English for the current Year 2 and Year 6 children are at least in line with those expected for the age group although some of them achieve standards that are higher than those expected of seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds.

All children, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well and make good progress. The progress made since the last inspection is good. Despite the number of children with learning difficulties the Year 2 children did well in their National Curriculum tests to reach the expected standards in reading and writing and by Year 6 they achieved high standards in the national tests.

Strengths in the subject:

- teachers' very good knowledge of the subject that supports children's learning and drives up standards;
- the many ways that adults support those children with learning difficulties;
- the use of essential English skills in other subjects;
- the very good leadership in the subject that ensures teachers have the advice and support they need;
- the ways that the headteacher provides stimulating and challenging work in assisting the class teacher of Year 6 children overcome the underachievement they have experienced;
- the use of early and additional literacy sessions by well trained support assistants;
- the very good teaching of alphabet letter sounds that help children make sense of unfamiliar words when reading;
- the emphasis teachers put on well presented work and the effective use of information and communication technology for that purpose;
- the effective marking comments that help children understand what they do well and where further improvement is needed;
- the ways that children use the library and the Internet to find out information which results in better skills at making notes and organising writing in different forms for different purposes.

83. In small schools there can be great variation between the national test results in one year and those in another because of the small numbers of children involved. However, the findings from this inspection are similar to the results of the last National Curriculum tests but this year some Year 2 children are expected to reach the higher level. In the 2002 national tests the Year 2 children all achieved the standard expected of the age group in both reading and writing but none reached the higher level in writing and only one in reading. However, this was a tremendous achievement given that over 70 per cent of the class had learning difficulties. The Year 6 children did well in English when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools and achieved high standards. However, this year's Year 6 children were seriously underachieving when at Year 4 and have made very good progress to be where they are now.
84. At Years 1 and 2, children contribute confidently to class discussion and their responses show they have listened carefully. They respond particularly well to the 'bag of treasures' activity that involves one child bringing some special object and the others can ask questions to discover why that object is special. Their speech is clear and understandable but occasionally they miss out an important word, such as a verb and this produces problems in their writing. Activities such as writing a flow diagram are helping to correct this because they have to put the words for a sentence in the correct order and check that it makes sense. Children are now becoming more confident users of language. By Year 6, they have learned to listen very carefully and make contributions that are responsive to the ideas and views of others. At every lesson they are extending their knowledge of words and using vocabulary appropriate to the topic being discussed. For example, in a lesson drawing on a history topic, 'Theseus and the Minotaur' they use such words as *impressions*, *heroine*, and *imagery* with familiarity and understanding. Several children, particularly the higher attainers, are now using features of Standard English vocabulary and grammar.

85. By Year 2, children achieve well and make good progress with their reading. The majority of children read fluently and understand what they read. They have committed to memory a good store of 'key' words and they use knowledge of letter sounds when working out unfamiliar words. They understand how speech marks help the reader with expression and better readers applied this skill effectively when reading to an audience. Most have a love of books and know how to use the library, particularly talking about what they do when the mobile library visits the village. The use of reading diaries helps parents to see how they are progressing and comments from teachers or parents go back and forth, building up information about children's strengths and weaknesses. Reading improves further and is good by Year 6. Children read aloud, prose and poetry, fluently with very good expression. Most children show enjoyment of reading. The average and above average readers know what they like but are also familiar with a wide range of writers from Shakespeare to J. K. Rowling and Tolkein. They describe the plot and characters within the story and talk about what makes them select an author. For example, when comparing authors, one reader said, "her ideas are a tiny bit better and she holds me in suspense a little bit more". They are encouraged to look up unfamiliar words in dictionaries and their answers to questions show secure understanding of the text. They are now inferring and deducing the meaning of unusual words and phrases from the context of the passage being read and this helps fluency. All readers, including those who read more slowly have acquired the skill of reading by scan and skim techniques and this is used regularly, particularly when seeking information. This skill helps them to work hard and fast.
86. By Year 2, children organise their writing into sentences, are learning to use adjectives effectively and spelling skills are developing well. They write the story of Cinderella in sequence and punctuation in poems and stories sometimes goes beyond capitals and full stops. Story writing is clear and organised and those about 'Owl Babies' used capital letters, full stops, speech marks and good descriptive words. Such phrases as, "one dusty and gloomy night" and the use of capitals to make an impact such as, "WHATS ALL THE FUSS ABOUT" made the stories more interesting to the reader. Some diary writing is good but occasionally children have settled for just two short sentences when they might have extended it. They sound out letters as they print the words and this helps them to spell words correctly. Printing is legible and, generally, letters are correctly formed. By Year 6, children write for a wide variety of purposes in a legible, joined up script mainly using correct punctuation and accurate spellings. Some very good writing of newspaper reports in a sensational style and a letter requesting permission to hold a fund raising event in aid of the Blue Peter Appeal are excellent examples of the clarity of thought prior to writing that results in very good achievement. Children are competent at carrying out research on a range of topics from books and the Internet. They make notes and organise writing in different forms for different purposes, such as lists, recipes, poetry and story plans.
87. There is good use of writing in other subjects. By Year 2, they label key landmarks and write about reasons for living on a particular island in geography and record investigations, label body parts and use scientific vocabulary when recording information in science. In Year 4 they write their major points of view and arguments for building a new supermarket in local geography studies and at Year 5 write factual accounts of how mountains are formed. In Year 6 they make good use of letter writing skills to write to their mother as an evacuee and record interviews with a member of the family.
88. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented as shown by the school's very good results in the 2001 and 2002 National Curriculum tests at the age of eleven. Literacy

skills are very well developed and help to raise standards in other subjects as children use them to find out about other lifestyles, times and cultures.

89. Children use information and communication technology effectively for the presentation of their work and research. For example, Year 1 children have learned that information exists in different forms and use such words as *print* and *delete* with understanding as they select from a word bank to make simple sentences. In Year 2 they created greeting cards at Christmas and showed some skill at changing font and style in messages.
90. Provision for those with learning difficulties is very good. The high quality of support for children is used particularly effectively for the older children in their writing. For example, one group of Year 6 children's writing about being evacuees was far from the good work that the teacher expected and the headteacher, who was supporting this group, decided to give them a near real experience to improve their work. They were taken to the woods to have a practical experience of what it was like to be an evacuee. This resulted in some lively, thoughtful writing. The feelings expressed show they used their imagination well. Ideas were developed and sustained in interesting ways and organised appropriately to make the writing more interesting to the reader. Good use of vocabulary led to such interesting phrases as, '*My hands were trembling*' and '*I was trying to breathe but my heart was thumping*'. This is a very good example of how teaching methods were used to accelerate children's learning.
91. Although there are no children who speak English as an additional language in the school at present the school does make provision for such children. Due status is given to their linguistic flexibility because the school is very aware that they may write in more than one script and specific support may be required.
92. Children achieve well because of the high quality of teaching. The teaching in English was very good overall and occasionally excellent. Particular strengths include very good planning and preparation for lessons where work was provided for the full range of ages and abilities and resources were carefully chosen to maintain interest. The excellent relationships between teachers and children resulted in the very good efforts made by children because they wanted to please their teachers and produce their best work. Another strength was the links made across subjects where children are encouraged to practise the skills learned in literacy lessons. Teachers are very knowledgeable about the subject and their enthusiasm maintained children's interest. A notable feature was the high expectations of teachers and the brisk pace of lessons, which meant children worked productively to deadlines. Those staff assisting teachers were carefully briefed before lessons and used their experience and expertise very effectively, making a significant contribution to the good progress made by children, particularly those with learning difficulties. Higher demands were made of the faster learners and their tasks were extended if they finished early. All children were included in all aspects of English. Teacher's marking of work helped children to improve as they responded to written comments. Homework helped to enrich the work in class as it focused on reading and spelling. Classrooms were orderly, discipline was very good and this helped to maintain a positive climate for learning.
93. The leadership of the subject is very good. The highly motivated co-ordinator keeps track of standards and is well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result of evaluations, targets are set and action taken. She has a clear vision of what the school does well and where improvements are needed.

MATHEMATICS

94. By the end of Year 2 standards are average for children at this age. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection and an improvement on the on the 2002 National Curriculum test results. Children make good progress as they move towards the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 children reach standards typical for their age. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection but below the results of the 2002 National Curriculum test results. However, these children have made very good progress from a low base in Year 2. It is not unusual to find some variation in standards in schools with small year groups as was the case here but in addition there is a high proportion of children with learning difficulties. Overall, the overall trend in attainment is an improving one.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the very good quality of teaching and learning;
 - the very thorough and regular checks on children's progress;
 - the marking of work so that children know what they need to do in order to improve;
 - the good progress children make in their mathematics targets;
 - the effective use made of the National Numeracy Strategy;
 - the very good matching of tasks to children's ability so that all achieve success;
 - the use of mathematics skills in other subjects;
 - the use of language in developing mathematical ideas;
 - the high quality presentation of work;
95. A significant factor in the good progress made by most children and their improving achievement is the overall very good and sometimes excellent quality of teaching and the correspondingly very good and excellent learning. Another important factor is the very good use the school makes of its very thorough and regular checks on children's progress in order to set targets for improvement, for groups, individuals or the whole school. Each child has specific targets for improvement in mathematics. This helps them to make good progress because it enables them to have a clear understanding of their own learning. Following an analysis of its assessments the school recognised the need to focus further on children's understanding and use of the measurement of time and on problem solving. This helped teachers to work on areas of identified general need.
96. The school makes good use of the numeracy strategy in order to raise standards and to help children to build on previous work. For example, children skilfully devise and explain their own approaches to mental calculations because teachers ensure that this aspect of their work is well taught. Teachers share lesson objectives with children so that they know what is expected and at the end of lessons they return to the objectives and discuss with children how far they have come in reaching them. In Year 2, for example, this helped to reinforce children's knowledge and skills in the calculation and measurement of time and gave them an understanding of their own learning.
97. The school has established good links between mathematics and other subjects of the curriculum. This helps to reinforce children's skills in mathematics and to extend their understanding of other subjects. For example, in geography children use their knowledge of co-ordinates in mapping skills and calculate the passage of time when they use historical time lines. In science they record the results of their investigations in charts and graphs. Children use computer programmes to reinforce their basic number skills and knowledge, for example, younger children group shapes according to their size and most older children are familiar with spreadsheets and use them well in this subject.

98. As they move through Years 1 and 2 most children make good progress in their understanding of number relationships and place value. This is because teachers have a very good understanding of how to teach basic skills. For example, in Year 2 most children understood the value of digits in numbers. Higher achieving children worked accurately on problem solving and measured and calculated confidently in units of capacity. However, lower achieving children were less accurate in their calculations, although they measured length accurately and increased their skills in counting. This good progress in the use and understanding of number is further built upon in Years 3 to 6 because teachers have a very good understanding of mathematical processes. In Year 4, for example, children confidently converted equivalent metric weight measurements and accurately completed problems involving money. Higher achieving children in Year 5 accurately solved problems involving ratio and proportion and worked confidently in fractions and decimals. In Year 6 higher achieving children used accurate calculations involving negative numbers and worked confidently in decimals and percentages. Although they continue to make good progress the work of lower achieving children showed a less secure understanding of fractions and place value, although basic work on the four rules was usually accurate.
99. Good progress is further enhanced because teachers generally insist on high standards of presentation to support the accuracy of children's work. For example, children in Year 2 were helped to measure length and capacity with precision, tell the time accurately and know about two and three-dimensional shapes because their work was neatly set out. This was extended in Year 4 when children estimated and calculated weight and capacity precisely and recorded lines of symmetry. In Year 6 the careful presentation helped to clarify work on sides, angles, faces and vertices of two- and three-dimensional shapes.
100. Teachers generally mark children's work regularly and are careful to provide helpful and supportive comments so that they know clearly what they need to do in order to improve. For example, in Year 4 the teacher congratulated a child on improving the time and score of mental calculations and challenged another child to increase the number of shapes to be made. In Year 6 the teacher reminded a child to use the inverse method of calculation in order to check the accuracy of the calculations.
101. Teachers are very careful to plan work that is suited to children's abilities so that they are challenged to make progress at their own levels of understanding and skill. In the Year 4 class higher achieving children were challenged to interpret timetables and calculate the duration of television programmes. Children of average ability worked on digital and analogue clocks and with teacher support converted analogue time to digital time. Lower achieving children calculated the time to the half-hour using analogue clocks. The school also makes very good provision for children with exceptional talents in mathematics and for those with learning difficulties. In Year 2 a group of talented children were challenged to devise and record their own strategies for solving problems involving the four rules. They worked with large numbers and used the number line very confidently. Children with learning difficulties have individual educational programmes, which clearly identify manageable targets for improvement. During lessons teachers observe children continuously to support them and guide them to the next steps. In the Year 5 and 6 class the teachers and support assistants used clear explanations with individuals and groups so that their understanding of the measurement of the area of composite shapes was extended. In all classes, the support assistants who use their experience and expertise effectively to support children very well support teachers.
102. Teachers usually present work in lively and interesting ways. This helps children to work hard and sustain their interest. They manage children very well so that they behave well and

maintain their concentration. For example, in the excellent teaching in Years 1-2, the class teacher prepared a stimulating variety of practical activities, which helped to deepen children's understanding of the duration of time and extend their skills in its calculation. Some children estimated and timed their completion of physical exercises; others calculated the time intervals between events in stories. Other children determined the length of time needed to perform everyday activities and another group calculated the difference in time, using clock faces. Because the lesson was conducted at a brisk pace and an additional teacher and a classroom support assistant supported children they worked enthusiastically and rigorously. The school makes good use of homework to support the work in class. For example, children in Year 1 were asked to count to 20 and back and to practise writing numbers 1 to 20. This helped them to increase their knowledge and skills.

103. Because relationships are very good children are usually keen and confident to devise and explain their own calculations. In the Year 2 class children knew that their efforts would be valued and respected so they were confident to explain their estimations and calculations of time. Similarly, Year 5 children confidently described how they calculated the area of compound shapes. Teachers are very aware of the importance of language in developing mathematical ideas. They make good use of opportunities in lessons and in the use of language in rich displays to extend children's vocabularies and understanding. For example, displays in the Year 5 and 6 class outlined the properties of shapes. In a lesson on area the teacher insisted that the children used the correct name for the unit of measurement and she used language such as, inverse and operation, so that children's understanding was deepened and their vocabularies extended
104. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and experienced and provides very good support for staff. She checks teaching, learning and planning very thoroughly in order to help to make improvements. She also makes very good use of the analysis of assessments and children's work in order to raise standards.

SCIENCE

105. Standards in science are still good. Overall, the standards in science at both Year 2 and Year 6 are average with some children achieving higher standards. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, all the Year 6 children reached the expected level of attainment for their age for the first time, which is high in comparison with all schools. Of this small group, one third reached the higher level. The school is justifiably proud of the achievements of the children, and the very good progress they made during their time in the juniors. Each year group varies in size and range of ability but over time science continually improves. Inspection findings indicate that the current Year 6, who were underachieving a few years ago, are now achieving as well as can be expected. They are responding very well to the teacher's very suitable and appropriate challenge to their understanding and to the carefully planned support for their learning in lessons. In 2002 the children's understanding of their science work was evaluated at the end of Year 2, and all achieved the expected standard for their age, doing exceptionally well as many in the group (75 per cent) had learning difficulties. Few reached the higher level. The current Year 2 children are learning very well, particularly in their understanding of aspects of investigative work.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the thorough planning of lessons that builds on children's knowledge and understanding and

- matches tasks well to ability;
 - the teachers' use of very good and challenging questioning techniques;
 - the excellent relationships that make children try hard and do their best;
 - the effective use of resources to ensure lessons are practical and clearly focused;
 - the use of first hand experiences to develop investigative skills and learning about science that underpins the very good learning;
 - the pupils' use of literacy and numeracy skills to report on and to record their investigations;
 - the good use made of teachers' subject knowledge that provides clear explanations and gives emphasis to the use of correct scientific terminology;
 - the sustained progress from year to year that culminates in good achievement overall.
106. Overall, teaching is very good and its strength is reflected in the very good progress that all children, including those with learning difficulties, make in lessons. An important factor is the high quality of teachers' planning for each theme and for lessons, which not only builds very effectively on their knowledge and understanding but also ensures that tasks are extremely suitable for every child's needs. In the Year 1 and 2 class children began their new work by contributing what they already knew before finding out more about magnets. Teachers, and their knowledgeable support assistants, skilfully questioned and challenged children's understanding. When children noticed that the magnet pulled along only one of the two metal spoons it led to further discussions about the attraction of differing metals. Teachers are good at encouraging use of the correct scientific words in explanations for example, in Year 4 they include the words *enamel*, *acid*, *dissolve* and *decay* in their discussion about teeth.
107. The teacher's marking comments and children's individual targets provide pointers on ways to improve their learning. All contributions and answers are highly valued by children and adults alike and the very good relationships seen in all lessons have a huge impact on the quality of learning that takes place throughout the school.
108. Developing appropriate investigative skills and learning about science through first hand experiences underpins the very good learning that takes place. From the youngest age, children make decisions - to predict what might happen, how to record what they find out, to explain and compare, learning to reflect back to see if what they originally thought is correct. Questions are asked that are relevant to everyday situations. For example, inspired by the story of "Cinderella," children in Years 3 and 4 test the absorbency of different materials to help Cinderella in her work. They test liquids to see which drinks are not "tooth friendly." They discover that sometimes tests need to be repeated to make sure that the findings are reliable, for example, when investigating which foods rabbits prefer. At Years 5 and 6 they work out how best to muffle noises that disturb others. Consideration of what makes a "fair test" is an integral part of teachers' planning of all investigations and by Year 6 children have the skills to take account of the variables within their investigations.
109. Science is really enjoyed by children of all ages. Their instantaneous reactions to their learning produce many delightful moments during lessons - from the great excitement of younger children setting off on a "Magnetic Safari" following the trail of clues to test for materials with magnetic properties to the amazement of Years 3 and 4 on discovering the complete disappearance of the marble from some of their pots of vinegar. When testing the sound proofing qualities of some materials older children learn to accept that in science things do not always happen as planned, especially if the selected volume is too loud or the distance needed "to lose the sound" extends too far to be measured. Children's attitudes to science have a real impact on the progress they make - they co-operate very well, share ideas and decision making and take a full and active part in group or class tasks.

110. Children's skills in numeracy and literacy are successfully used in science. Recording how far a pot of weights travel out from a "catapult," children in Year 4 plot the distances on a simple line graph before concluding that the heavier the object the shorter the distance it travels. Finding the exact amount of marble that had dissolved in their liquids needs careful calculations to show the rate of decay. In Year 2, when learning about forces, children measure how many centimetres their cars roll and record the information in the form of a bar graph using a computer program. By widening older children's experiences of different ways to communicate data will strengthen opportunities to analyse and interpret information before arriving at a conclusion to their work. Independently recording the facts about their own investigations gives real meaning to this style of factual writing. Researching their own information helps children find out more about animal diets in Years 3 and 4.
111. Science is very well resourced enabling teachers to plan wide ranging first hand experiences to extend not only children's learning but their interest and involvement in science. Through the close supportive links with the local secondary school, the resources are further expanded. For example, when children in Years 3 and 4 have to accurately measure the mass of their marble chips, the loan of a specialist electronic balance ensures the smallest reduction in grams can be recorded. The contributions of the school nurse brings not only her expertise but extends the children's understanding as they begin to study teeth and link this to their knowledge of diet and healthy eating.
112. The science co-ordinator is most effective in her leadership of the subject. She works in close co-operation with other local primary schools, observes teaching, makes regular checks of children's work and analyses test results thus gaining a very comprehensive understanding of the needs of her subject. She has a very secure foundation upon which to build further improvements.

ART AND DESIGN

113. Although few lessons were seen there is sufficient evidence to show that children of all abilities achieve well and standards are typical for age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. It was possible to see only one lesson but evidence from discussions with teachers and children, teachers planning, photographic records and displays of art throughout the school indicates that all children make at least sound progress in their learning. Standards in art and design were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the attractive display of pupils' work around school;
- the good opportunities for children to work with visiting craftspeople;
- extending awareness of art, craft and design in different times and cultures;
- the wide range of experiences to extend their skills in art techniques;
- the use of art and design in other subjects of the curriculum.

Areas for development:

- regular use of sketch books to support work;
- a system of tracking progress in art techniques and skills.

114. Too few lessons were seen for a judgement to be made as to the quality of teaching. However teaching was good in the single lesson seen enabling all children, including those with learning difficulties, to progress well in developing the use of texture in their work. In Years 1 and 2 well-planned tasks provided varied experiences for children to use and join different materials and successfully produce their own 'seascapes'. Whether to sew a fabric wall hanging, weave pictures, build a collage using paper and fabric or create a seaside picture using the computer program - the children are eager to begin and concentrate hard on mastering the skills, particularly working with great patience at their sewing. Their creative efforts are well rewarded.
115. Based on the national guidance, but which is adapted to meet the school's requirements for the children, the planned experiences in art and design are wide ranging. Recalling their study of the work of Claude Monet Year 6 children talked about how they explored his use of brushstrokes and experimented with colour mixing to find the exact shades they needed for their own painting. Working in three-dimension older children designed and made a clay tile with a relief pattern and recalled their use of papier-mâché when making Aztec masks. Although teachers check children's progress in their learning within lessons, a system is not yet in place to track this progress as they develop art techniques. Sketchbooks are used but not regularly to support art.
116. Good opportunities are arranged for children to work with visiting craftspeople. Inspired by working with a potter on the Creative Arts Open Day, all ages made various clay pots - experiences remembered with enthusiasm by older children. Children in Years 3 and 4 worked with the "Sea Legs Puppet Group" to make their own animal puppets using a range of materials.
117. Teachers plan effectively for children to develop an awareness of art, craft and design in different times and cultures. A theme for Years 3 and 4, "Taking a seat", encourages children to consider an interesting character or special occasion as they design a chair, taking into account the user when deciding on decorations that are both pleasing to the eye and to touch. When designing prayer mats as part of studying the Islamic faith children extend their understanding of using geometric patterns.
118. Art skills are well used to support children's learning in other subjects such as literacy and history. Imagining the character of Mr Tumnus in the book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* younger children illustrate their work carefully as part of their literacy display. A collage based on the mythical ancient Greek story of *Theseus and the Minotaur* resulted in older children considering the effects they can create from the materials they select.
119. The co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for art and design, but is keenly looking forward to fully reviewing the subject with her colleagues when it becomes the focus of the school's planned improvement programme in the near future. Identifying aspects for development, such as the compilation of a portfolio of a full range of examples of children's work, she is already very aware of the needs of her subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. By the end of Years 2 and 6 children achieve standards in design and technology that are typical of those found in other schools. All children achieve well and make at least satisfactory and often good progress in their learning. Evidence is based on discussions with teachers and children in both age groups, a review of teachers' planning and from displays and photographic records. Children are very enthusiastic about their work and recognise the need to share ideas

and work closely in partnership with one another on designs. Standards in design and technology were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the teachers' planning;
- children develop a thorough understanding of the designing and making process;
- children produce carefully finished models and artefacts;
- children co-operate well together when designing and making;
- effective use is made of the school's good resources.

Areas for development in the subject are:

- the use of information and communication technology to extend learning.

121. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning, as it was possible to observe only one lesson. Here the very good teaching encouraged the children in Years 3 and 4 to build on their evaluation skills very successfully as they put the finishing touches to their work. They responded very well to the teacher's high expectations when they discussed the success of their photograph frame designs and the improvements they had made, before offering commendable and positive comments on the work of their others. As they reflected back to the original design brief, they acknowledged the hardest problem was in making the frame stand firmly on a wide base. Many persevered to overcome this. Children with learning difficulties achieved equally well in this task because of the encouragement they received not only through the teacher's thoughtful support, but also that of their partners as they talked sensibly together about their work.
122. Discussions with children illustrated so well that teachers' planning is a strength of the subject. As they recalled their most recent work, the older children included the full process they followed to meet the challenge "to design and make a bridge to span a given distance and bear the weight of three toy cars." They discussed all the essential steps - from investigating different structures, the initial labelled designs, identifying the skills and materials used to construct and strengthen their bridges through to the final evaluation - "*its essential to know how well it has worked!*" Improving skills to cut and join materials safely and in different ways is an integral part of the development of each theme. For example as Year 2 children practise attaching wheels to an axle they decide that cotton reels are preferred to the cardboard ones because their vehicle must travel down a ramp with wheels turning. Improving their sewing skills, before carefully stitching and decorating their purses, helps children in Years 3 and 4 to proudly produce good quality gifts for their families.
123. Very good links are developed with other subjects. In year 1, jam sandwiches are made following a sequencing activity in a literacy lesson. Working carefully under the watchful eye of a very competent teaching assistant, they improve their spreading skills with no opportunity missed to use their numeracy skills of counting in twos and recognising quarters. After relishing the opportunity to eat their work, they think about the design of a sandwich for a hungry giant.
124. The co-ordinator is developing her role very effectively. Planning is strong and procedures to check children's progress are now in place. The close relationship with the partner secondary schools provides valuable support for both resources and subject expertise. Resources are good

but the use of information and communication technology to extend learning has yet to be fully explored.

GEOGRAPHY

125. During the inspection it was possible to see only one lesson in Years 1 and 2 and one lesson in Years 3 to 6. However, evidence from discussions with children and teachers, a scrutiny of children's work and from the lessons seen, the evidence is that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 most children achieve standards that are typical for their ages. Standards in geography were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection. The effective use of topics from the National Curriculum guidance ensures that children cover all the work they should and build carefully on previous work. This, combined with the very good quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen, helps most children, including those with learning difficulties, to make good progress.

Strengths in the subjects are:

- children's well developed mapping skills;
- the children's good knowledge of the features of their local area;
- the interest and research into the care of the environment and their zest for dealing with real issues;
- the very good presentation of work;
- the way they use literacy skills to express their knowledge and understanding;
- well-organised and well-informed teaching.

Areas for development are:

- the extension and use of the skills of geographical enquiry;
- the use of geographical vocabulary.

126. By the end of Year 2 most children have the mapping skills expected for their age. For example, they use names, symbols and simple keys in real and imaginary maps to show human and natural features. They are good at recognising the differences between island, mainland, seaside, countryside and town and village. By Year 6 teachers ensure that children build on previous map work so that they know about a range of maps and atlases and use grid references to find locations.
127. In the two lessons seen the teaching was very good. Teachers use a range of methods to make the subject interesting. Children extend their view of the places, weather and change because teachers provide them with opportunities to think about their holiday experiences and use role-play to stimulate interest. Higher achieving children make thoughtful and well-presented comparisons between life in Mordiford and that in the Scottish islands and in the seaside resort of Blackpool.
128. Teachers very good knowledge of the subject helps them plan interesting work to extend geographical skills. For example, in Year 2 children designed post cards from Mordiford and Blackpool and in so doing increased their understanding of how some buildings in each place are different. Year 2 children confidently used the Internet to research information about Blackpool and higher achieving children, with support from the teacher, considered how the resort had changed over time. Most children produce detailed sketch maps although the work of lower

achieving children is less detailed and less clearly presented. In Year 4, the children conducted a traffic survey in the village. They produced maps of the local area and knew about landscape, land use and how to use a checklist to identify changes in the environment. Children also understand the importance of caring for the environment because teachers deal with real issues. In Year 3 children were asked to consider how they might improve a local area and had to consider the sustainability of any suggested improvements. This gave them a real insight into planning issues.

129. Teachers have high expectations of presentation and accuracy and written work was neat and easily readable. Some particularly good examples were produced by Year 6 children in sketches and diagrams about the formation of mountains.
130. The subject is very well managed. As part of its curriculum development the school has identified a need to focus on extending geographical skills and the use of appropriate vocabulary in order to raise standards. The very experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator has been instrumental in initiating the appropriate development. However, it is too soon to see a significant impact on standards yet. The co-ordinator checks children's work and teachers' planning in order to make improvements and has correctly assessed the development needed to raise standards.

HISTORY

131. Although only one lesson was seen there was sufficient evidence to show that standards in history, by Year 2 and Year 6 are typical for the children's age. However discussions with children and teachers, a scrutiny of children's work, and review of teacher's planning indicate that throughout the school all children, including those with learning difficulties make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. Standards in history were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- effective use of discussion to understand historical terminology;
 - children's understanding and use of the skills of historical enquiry;
 - the ways that teachers inspire and challenge children to use their imagination effectively to make history of the past come alive;
 - children's understanding of how different accounts influence what they know and feel about characters from history;
 - effective use of artefacts;
 - the use of literacy skills in history.
132. By using photographs of Blackpool past and present, children in Year 2 found many changes and discussed them enthusiastically recognising the differences in beach clothes and the leisure park, whilst emphasising that some things are the same such as going to the seaside for enjoyment and holidays. As they recalled facts about the lives of Grace Darling and Guy Fawkes and explained the events of the Great Fire of London they showed a good understanding of the different ways we find out about what happened in the past.
133. In the one lesson seen at Years 5 and 6 the teaching was very good and children achieved very well. . They accepted the teacher's challenge to act as investigators putting together "*pieces of the puzzle about the past,*" as expressed by one member of the class. They thoroughly enjoyed finding the answers to their own questions. Researching many aspects of this ancient time from the lives of women in Athens and Sparta or of warriors in the Greek army to the wonder of the Acropolis, they successfully selected relevant information from a wide range of books, drawings, photographs and the Internet. Sharing their findings at the end of the lesson, they were encouraged to consider the differing points of view historical sources can give. This builds very effectively on the work in Year 4 when children learnt how different accounts of the character of Boadicea influence what they know and feel about her.
134. Learning in history is very well enhanced by the imaginative use of new and different situations to engage the children's interest and involvement in their learning. When studying Roman Britain the children in Years 3 and 4 became archaeologists for a day, experiencing the delight of handling and investigating pottery remains under the expert guidance of the Heritage Service. When identifying containers, such as an amphora used for transporting wine or olive oil, from the fragments in the collection they began to understand the detailed work of historians. Handling toys from the past and comparing them with their own favourites helped younger children develop their understanding of the differences between old and new playthings.
135. Teachers make good links between history and other subjects such as literacy. For example, a teacher had inspired children by arranging a journey into the local woods to find out what it may have been like to be an evacuee leaving a familiar place to be sent to a strange home. It really fired their imaginations and their writing improved. Teachers make effective use of sources

encouraging children to interview local people about their wartime memories and give great insight into life at the time. They use family experiences too as one boy asked his grandmother “*What was the hardest time in the war for you?*” Teachers make good use of information and communication technology, particularly in helping children get the best from their research and use of different sources of information. Teachers plan many opportunities for drama, role-play, and discussion, such as when putting forward the argument to the Celts for building a Roman road, which used and developed their English skills successfully.

136. The co-ordinator is developing her responsibilities very well. An action plan to develop the subject further during the current year has highlighted the need to review the history policy, audit resources and provide opportunities for more observation of teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. During the inspection it was not possible to see any lessons in information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2. However, from discussions with teachers and children, and from scrutiny of teachers’ planning and children’s work the evidence is that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are typical of those expected for children of this age. However, the school has worked hard to increase staff knowledge and confidence and to improve its resources so that standards are improving. As they move through the school most children, whatever their stage of learning, make good progress and achieve well. The high quality of support for children with learning difficulties and the ways that teachers plan for this has had a positive effect on their progress and enabled them to achieve success.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the ways that teachers use their very good knowledge of teaching basic skills to extend children’s learning in this subject;
- the improved use of technical vocabulary;
- the great awareness that children have of how their knowledge and skills make some everyday tasks easier;
- the very good use made of information and communication technology in other subjects of the curriculum;
- the improvement in resource provision in the last two years.

Areas for development are:

- provision of an ICT suite when the building programme begins.
138. Teachers have a clear understanding of how to teach skills and most children have a sound understanding how to use the keyboard and mouse. For example, in Year 2, children combined text with graphics. They produced block graphs to record the results of scientific experiments and created pictures and patterns. By the end of Year 2 most children are familiar with the use of computers in every day life. They understand a range of technical vocabulary, such as *download*, provide instructions for a floor-based robot and save and print their work.
 139. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is good and effective use is made of subject knowledge to extend children’s learning. By Year 4 children are confident at explaining how to do such tasks as *drag*, *copy*, *paste* and *highlight*. They change font size, shape and definition. By Year 6 children readily make changes to saved information. They search data for answers to questions

and produce branching database. They use information and communication technology for everyday tasks such as letters to parents, answer slips about school events and graphs that compare prices between shops.

140. A significant aspect of the work is the use teachers make of information and communication technology in other subjects. This increases children's skills and gives a purpose and relevance to their work. For example, in mathematics, children in Year 2 used computer programs to group shapes according to size and created pictograms from information fed into the computer. In science they used CD ROMS to research mini beats and their habitats and similarly researched homes in the past in their work in history. They used tape recorders effectively to record work in music. In their literacy work children in Years 3 and 4 adjusted the size and style of labels for displays and designed textile patterns in art. In science they entered data about the properties of materials and produced accurate block graphs on scientific investigations into the cooling rates of water. Higher achieving children in Year 6 researched the ancient Greeks via the Internet. Most children used spreadsheets well in mathematics but lower achievers were less confident and accurate in dealing with the spreadsheet formulae. They produced graphs to record scientific work on insulation and produced a sound range of letters, reports and journalistic writing in literacy. In a design and technology project with the local secondary school they learned to control moving vehicles.
141. Teachers also make good personal use of technology to support their own work in the curriculum. For example, by using video cameras to assess work in physical education using cameras to take photographs in geographic work on improving the environment and using computer programs to assess and analyse children's work in mathematics.
142. Relationships are very good and children are confident to discuss their work with teachers and one another. Skills in speaking and listening, collaboration and technology are increased. This was evident in Year 4 when children compared and contrasted each other's newspaper articles and considered how effective and appropriate their use of the computer had been. Challenging questions prompted children to extend their understanding. Most children made good progress because the teacher carefully planned work, which was well suited to their stage of learning. Very good use of the sessions at the end of lessons challenged children to consider how they would approach the task of producing a word processed newspaper article differently if they were to do the same again. Teachers inspire children to extend their skills and do their best. For example, Year 6 were asked, according to their abilities, to follow instructions and produce spread sheets to complement their work about area. Because the teacher engaged in ongoing discussions with children they were not afraid to make and learn from mistakes because she clearly valued their efforts. This helped them feed in data accurately and understand how the computer assisted their calculations. However, because there was only one computer available, the teacher needed to deal with occasional questions from other children engaged in another task, and to repeat the spreadsheet work as each small group had time on the computer. The school intends to resolve such issues by its planned provision of a computer suite.
143. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic and works very hard to support colleagues. She checks teaching, learning, children's work and teachers' planning in order to make improvements. She has a clear understanding of how the subject is to develop in order to raise standards.

MUSIC

144. It was not possible to see any music lessons in Years 1 and 2 but the limited evidence available indicates that by Year 2, standards in music are typical of children of this age. By Year 6 standards are higher than usually expected for age. Standards in music were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection. A trained musician now provides specialist teaching for this subject. She has made a very positive impact on the subject both in children's learning and the standards they attain. The specialist teacher has been concentrating particularly on improving singing by developing techniques, improving listening skills, aural memory and use of rhythmic and melodic patterns.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the use of specialist teaching to improve standards and extend teachers' confidence in supporting learning;
- the improvements in children's singing and their confidence to perform;
- children's enthusiasm for the subject;
- improved knowledge and use of musical terminology;
- the ways that instrumental tuition extends children's skills in learning to read music and use notation.

Areas for development are:

- updating and extending the range of resources.
145. By Year 2, children sing with confidence and are beginning to understand how the way that they use their mouths affects the sounds they make. They show an awareness of pitch, duration, dynamics and tempo, for example, in assemblies. They listen and respond to music well and talk about music enthusiastically, naming and describing some types of music and giving personal likes and dislikes. They use simple percussion instruments to accompany songs and create short compositions.
146. By Year 6, there is greater emphasis on breathing, dynamics and accuracy of pitch. Although there are many children developing a strong sense of pitch and rhythm, there are others still working towards these goals. There has been a marked increase in the number of children, particularly at Years 5 and 6, who are now able to sing in tune. Their knowledge of musical terms and general vocabulary has developed well. Children are now much more willing to participate and even attempt a solo role. Staff are encouraged by the rapid development of rhythmic and interpretive skills among children. The good standards attained, particularly by older pupils are well supported by instrumental tuition and lessons in guitar, flute and violin extend their ability and maintain interest. They learn to read music and reach a good level of competence.
147. Overall, children make good progress and achieve well whatever their ability. Those who need support receive it but in the lessons observed those with learning difficulties coped well in this subject and interest was maintained. Standards in music were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection.
148. The teaching of the specialist is very good. Although other teachers do teach this subject it was not seen during the inspection so no overall judgement is made. In the lessons seen, the very good relationships between the teacher and the children motivated them to make very good efforts and do their best. In some classes there are many boys and the teacher was particularly skilled with them, inspiring them to attempt difficult tasks by making sure they sang at a level

suited to their voices. The pace of these lessons was very quick and children needed to stay alert to meet the challenges of swiftly moving activities from vocal warm ups to rhythmic dictation, work on tonic sol-fa and writing notation. The children's verdict was that music was fun.

149. The co-ordinator was the only musician in the school until recently and provides good advice and support to other colleagues. Through observing others she realised a need for more confidence and skills and the initiative to bring in some additional expertise has been beneficial to teachers and children alike. Good support for the subject comes from the range of instrumental tuition but the resources though adequate need updating and extending.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. In the gymnastics and games lessons seen standards are higher than those that would be typically expected by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 children reach high standards in gymnastics. All children receive swimming lessons and many achieve high standards. A significant factor in the high achievement is the overall very good quality of teaching and learning. Standards in physical education were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection. Although children achieve high standards, this is in a limited range of activities. The size of the hall limits the scope of movements that a class can safely experience. For example, children are inhibited from taking part in sequences of movements involving the use of large spaces or vigorous running, or the experience of working at a range of heights, because the hall cannot safely accommodate such activities. Despite the lack of hall space, teachers provide a wide range of physical activities, especially in the aspects of games, swimming and extra-curricular activities.

Strengths in the subject are:

- teachers' very good subject knowledge;
- the ways lessons are planned and organised;
- the effective ways that teachers gather information about children's performance to help them improve;
- the very good support for children with learning difficulties;
- the effective use of demonstration to improve performance;
- the school's provision for swimming;
- the way sequences of lessons are planned.

Areas for development are:

- better accommodation for gymnastics.

156. In the three lessons seen, one was excellent, one was very good and one was good. Teachers ensure that children warm up and down thoroughly at the beginning and end of lessons and that they understand the reasons for this. Children in Years 1 and 2 learn basic skills such as throwing and catching and as their accuracy increases they make good progress in using beanbags and balls. The work of children with learning difficulties is well supported by classroom assistants so that children achieve success and make good progress.
157. Teachers observe performance very carefully and ensure that lessons build on work that has gone before. A very good example of this was seen in a gymnastics lesson with Years 1 and 2 when the teacher used the video camera to record children's performance to help them to

evaluate and refine their movements later. Teachers' organise lessons very well. They run smoothly and children make good use of time. For example, teachers make very sure that classroom support assistants are very clear about children's tasks. Any changes in the location and use of equipment were made efficiently enabling children to transfer their skills confidently. They adapted a well-controlled sequence of body shapes and balances to larger apparatus and began to develop and rehearse pathways. The teacher made very good use of children's demonstrations to give them time to reflect on their own and others' performance in order to improve. They were invited to comment on areas for improvement.

158. Very good use is made of specialist teaching to improve children's performance. Teachers from the school have achieved extra qualifications in gymnastics and specialist coaches help with such sports as hockey, tennis and cricket and. For example, this helped Years 5 and 6 to create sequences with symmetrical and asymmetrical body shapes and to record their paths around the apparatus on plans provided by the teacher. The teacher was skilled in close observation and analysis of children's performance and used this to encourage children of all abilities to improve their response, balance and poise. Teachers have high expectations. They dress appropriately for lessons and insist that children do too and use appropriate vocabulary. This sets the tone for lessons and children use words such as *straddle*, *flexibility* and *body tension*, with understanding. The very good relationships instil confidence to demonstrate aspects of their work and they respond positively to suggestions from others about how they might improve.
159. A very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities enhances the subject. These include tag rugby, football, netball, rounders, cricket, athletics, skipping and gymnastics. Children have opportunities to play competitive sport against other schools and during their residential visits they participate in outdoor activities. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and experienced. She works hard to organise the subject and support colleagues. She has a clear understanding of how the subject needs to develop in order to raise standards further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

160. By Year 2, standards are typical of that expected for the children's age and by Year 6 standards are higher than usually expected for age. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. All groups of children achieve success and make good progress. Those children with learning difficulties are supported in lessons and faster learners have tasks extended so their interest is maintained. Standards are in line with the expectations of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus. Standards in religious education were not inspected at the last inspection so no comparison can be made between that and this inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the very good relationships which encourage openness during discussions;
- the ways that teachers challenge and inspire children resulting in very good efforts and work of a high standard;
- the very good contributions to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- the good knowledge children have of world faiths and their understanding of how the beliefs and practices of a religious group influence the way that people live;
- the very good presentation of written work;
- children's reflective and personal response as they listen to and understand the views of

others.

Areas for development are:

- extending resources so the school has artefacts of their own to support the teaching of each religion.
156. In lessons the same topics were taught at Year 1 as those at Year 2. At this stage children concentrate on learning about two religions – Christianity and Judaism. Most recently, children had discussed what it means to belong to a religious group and talked about the signs in their own lives that show a person belongs, such as wearing a school badge or being part of the Brownies group. They have a satisfactory knowledge that symbols show belonging. When thinking about gifts that Christians today might give to the baby Jesus they had discussed love and the teacher had used the story of the Prodigal Son to explain the importance of love. Children had a good memory of the story but more importantly were beginning to understand why one brother was jealous and that forgiveness occurred because the father said, “I love you both equally”.
157. At Years 3 to 6, children are extending their understanding of the impact of faith on others and learning that people have different ideas about the truth of the Bible. In Years 3 and 4 they used the story of Abraham from the Old Testament and had researched the lives of a few people who professed great faith. There were key questions applied to St Benedict, Anne Frank, Florence Nightingale, Mother Theresa, William Booth and Joan of Arc. Each group had shared their research while others took notes to ask questions and some difficult moments occurred, for example, when having to explain what they meant by such phrases as *‘not be bad’* and *‘people behaved that way because they believed it was what God wanted’*. This was a great challenge and children handled it well. By Year 5 and 6, children are coming to terms with what is meant by literal and symbolic truth. A brain showering session helped them to get at the meaning of ‘truth’ and the teacher used the creation story from Genesis to help them understand the difference between literal and symbolic truth. Every child followed the story from the Bible and their responses showed they had read or listened carefully and had a good understanding of the text. Children showed a mature understanding of temptation and the feelings that both Adam and Eve experienced in eating the forbidden fruit. A few children gave very clear examples of temptation from their own lives and gained a tremendous insight into whether this story was literal truth or a symbolic story.
158. Children have a balance between Christianity and other faiths. They are learning to respond thoughtfully to what they learn about religions against a background of their experiences and values. Their learning from religion is giving children an informed, reflective and personal response as they listen to and understand the views of others. They can then evaluate what this means and draw conclusions from what they have learnt.
159. Since no lessons were seen at Years 1 and 2 no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching but in the two lessons seen one was good and the other was very good. In both lessons the planning was very good with clear objectives shared with the children who understood what the teacher was trying to achieve by the end of the lesson. Teachers had high expectations and challenged and inspired children resulting in very good efforts and work of a high standard. The older children used a greater variety of methods, particularly when moving to the hall to use drama which was used effectively to explore emotions. Teachers make good efforts to link their religious education work to other subjects, for example, when designing prayer mats, the older children had a better understanding of how Muslims use geometric patterns and Islamic writing called calligraphy to decorate them because they do not use animals

or human shapes in the art and design work. Children presented their written work neatly because teachers encouraged them to take pride in their efforts. The class of older children had the support of an assistant who was effectively deployed to keep slower learners busy and help them understand some of the views expressed in the lesson. This worked well enabling all children to make good progress.

160. The subject has good leadership and teachers are more confident at teaching it but there is a lack of some resources, particularly artefacts that teachers need when dealing with several world faiths. Staff make good use of the wealth of resources available on loan.