

INSPECTION REPORT

ASHCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tewkesbury

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115500

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Price

Reporting inspector: Vreta Bagilhole
17517

Dates of inspection: 24 -26 June 2002

Inspection number: 249934

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ashchurch
Tewkesbury
Gloucestershire

Postcode: GL20 8LA

Telephone number: 01684 292376

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Len Fletcher

Date of previous inspection: 22 June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17517	V Bagilhole	Registered inspector	English mathematics information & communication technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results & achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9039	B Eyre	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15011	M Wallace	Team inspector	science music physical education religious education special educational needs foundation stage equal opportunities	
21992	J Newing	Team inspector	art and design design and technology geography history	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ashchurch Primary School near Tewkesbury has 121 pupils who are taught in one reception class, one infant class and three junior classes. It is smaller than other primary schools nationally. Approximately half of the pupils live in the large army base nearby or housing association properties adjacent to the school and converted army flats, which are now low cost private properties. The rest of the pupils are transported in from surrounding areas. Approximately 15 per cent of pupils come from army families and this causes an average total mobility rate of 12 per cent in the school. The school admits pupils who have been taught abroad for up to 3 years and who have often attended a number of different schools before they arrive at Ashchurch. All of the pupils come from a white UK heritage. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (46 per cent) is well above the national average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need. Children enter the reception class in the year in which they are five. Most children have attended local playgroups before starting school. The attainment of children on entry to the reception class is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school. The teaching is good and the children are enthusiastic learners. Pupils achieve well especially in mathematics and science. Leadership and management are very good. The school has a very clear sense of purpose and knows what it has to do to ensure that pupils of all ages, groups and abilities achieve their potential. The school works very well to include everyone and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average and those in science are well above average.
- Good, very good and excellent teaching helps pupils to achieve well, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The partnership with the secondary school is excellent.
- There is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- Imaginative and extended writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Opportunities for children in the reception class to develop their physical skills.

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 June 1998 and it has made very good improvement since then. Standards in mathematics and science have risen significantly and standards in literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) have improved as well. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is much better. The quantity and quality of learning resources available to pupils is now good. The teaching time has been increased with an appropriate balance for the time allocated to all subjects. The school has been successful in obtaining a good improvement in the accommodation and two new classrooms are being built. The school is in a good position to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	D	C	C
mathematics	C	C	B	B
science	B	B	A	A

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

The school's performance in national tests is improving from year to year. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, the pupils' attainment in English was close to the national average and to the standards in schools with a similar intake of pupils. Standards in mathematics were above those of schools nationally and of those with a similar intake. Standards in science were well above the national average and those of similar schools and the pupils are doing very well. In the tests for seven-year-olds, the pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was above the national average and their attainment in writing was average. However, standards in writing at the higher levels were below the national average for seven-year-olds. In comparison to similar schools, standards for seven-year-olds are average in writing, above average in reading and well above average in mathematics. Inspection evidence finds that standards in English are still improving at a good rate and pupils are doing better this year. Pupils are doing well in all aspects of literacy and numeracy. A setting arrangement in mathematics for all year groups has also made a good contribution to the standards the pupils are achieving. All groups of pupils make good progress and those who have special educational needs make very good progress in their learning. The school sets itself very challenging targets and is on course to achieving them.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are typical for those expected nationally and are improving at a good rate. However, the school is not making sufficient use of computers in the classroom to apply skills gained in the suite. Standards in physical education, geography and history are above average by the time the pupils leave the school. Standards in art and design, design and technology, religious education and music meet those expected for their age. By the end of the reception year the children achieve the expected standards in all of the areas of learning. However, the children need a wider range of movement experiences to develop their physical skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils settle to work quickly and focus well on their learning. They conduct themselves well both in class and around the school and are very polite.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils throughout the school are developing a good set of values, moral principles and beliefs. They enjoy taking on responsibilities. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good. The attendance rate is slightly above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. All groups of pupils learn well, are able to sustain concentration and show an interest in all the school's activities. Teaching in mathematics and English is good with some very good or excellent teaching in Years 3-6. Improvement is needed in the teaching of extended and imaginative writing in Years 1 and 2. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Most other subjects are also taught well as the teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum. Teaching in physical education, religious education and history is consistently good. There is some very good or excellent teaching in science, art and geography in Years 3-6. In information and communication technology (ICT) the teachers and pupils have adapted well to the new computer suite but the use of the classroom computers is inconsistent and some classes do not use these enough to apply skills during lessons in other subjects. In music, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall because staff competence in teaching music is still developing. No lessons were observed in design and technology. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and the highest attaining pupils are also very well challenged. All teachers and members of support staff provide a very good level of support that effectively contributes to the pupils' achievement. In the reception class, teaching and learning are good in all areas of learning except for physical development where they are satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection when there was insufficient time allocated to many foundation subjects. The curriculum for physical development in the reception class could be improved.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The high quality care and support ensures that pupils develop confidence in their learning and achieve very well for their ability.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and also for their personal, social and health education. Pupils are well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The provision made for the health, safety and welfare of the pupils is good. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents appreciate the caring environment and the efforts by all staff to make sure that their child receives the best education possible. The partnership with the secondary school is excellent and there is a very good range of activities outside of lessons.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher, all staff and the governing body share a very clear vision for the future of the school, and a vigorous determination to ensure that improvement in all aspects of the school continues to take place.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors show much commitment to supporting the work of the school. They monitor the school's performance very effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school's performance management scheme is fully in place and being effectively implemented. The professional development of staff is very good.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes the best strategic use of its resources and links decisions on spending to educational priorities such as sustaining five classes with the existing staff. It ensures best value in its purchases of supplies and services. The school is well staffed with teachers and teaching assistants. Taking into account the new classrooms soon to be built, the accommodation is good. The school is well supplied with resources to support learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very positive on almost all aspects of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework. Information about how their child is getting on.

Parents express high levels of satisfaction with many aspects of the school and inspection evidence supports their views. Inspection evidence finds that the school gives good information to parents about how their child is getting on. Homework set by the school is good and many pupils keep very good homework books but consistency across the classes needs to be checked.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, the pupils' attainment in English was close to the national average and to the standards in schools with a similar intake of pupils. Standards in mathematics were above those of schools nationally and of those with a similar intake. Standards in science were well above the national average and those of similar schools and the pupils are doing very well. In the tests for seven-year-olds, the pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was above the national average and their attainment in writing was average. Teachers' assessments in science were well above the national average. In comparison to similar schools, standards for seven-year-olds are average in writing, above average in reading and well above average in mathematics.
2. When looking at the test results for eleven-year-olds more closely and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level, the school's performance in English was above the national average. However, standards in writing at the higher levels were below the national average for seven-year-olds. Teachers have adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully and basic skills are taught well. Inspection evidence finds that standards in imaginative and extended writing in Years 1 and 2 are still not high enough, but pupils are making good progress in punctuation, handwriting, spelling and grammar. Standards in English by the end of Year 6 are better this year than the data from the tests in 2001 suggests and are above average. Pupils are doing well in all aspects of literacy and numeracy. This is because of the good teaching and because pupils with special educational needs and those who are more able are making such good progress. Pupils in all year groups make good progress in their speaking and listening skills and by the end of Year 6, standards are above average.
3. The school's performance in national tests is improving from year to year. The school has been officially commended as one of the country's top one hundred improved schools between 1997 and 2000 and has received two achievement awards. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection where weaknesses were identified in literacy and numeracy. Standards in science have been rising significantly. The school has tackled the issues from the last inspection very well, setting targets for improvement, making sure that all groups of pupils receive the best possible provision and monitoring their progress carefully. The school has identified that boys are not doing as well as girls. To improve this situation it has purchased more resources to motivate the boys. A setting arrangement in mathematics for all year groups has also made a good contribution to the standards the pupils are achieving. The school sets itself very challenging targets and is on course to achieving them.
4. Attainment on admission to the reception class is average. The children make good progress and, by the end of the reception year, they achieve the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning. Most children listen well and speak confidently and there is good focused teaching which extends children's skills through the activities provided. They work with a range of materials and experience different methods, observing the world around them. However, progress is not as good in physical development and the children need more regular opportunities to develop their physical skills.
5. In English, the structure of the literacy hour is well focused. Pupils show a great interest in a variety of books, both fiction and non-fiction, and read well and with expression. Pupils listen closely to staff and other pupils and express ideas confidently because teachers challenge the pupils well to

vary and extend their vocabulary. By the age of eleven, pupils read a range of texts well, show understanding and can select essential points. They make good progress in all aspects of writing and use a growing vocabulary across a range of writing styles. Pupils use their literacy skills well in all other subjects of the curriculum such as science, mathematics, history and religious education and there is some good use of ICT. However, in Years 1 and 2, pupils do not write in a broad enough range of styles or in an imaginative way, although they make good progress in all other aspects of writing.

6. In mathematics by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average. Teachers apply the National Numeracy Strategy very well in all classrooms and the pupils are confident and well motivated. Pupils have a good range of calculation strategies and make good use of these to solve problems. Data handling is well developed. The higher attaining pupils make very good progress in solving algebra problems. Pupils use their mathematics skills well in other subjects.

7. Pupils achieve very well in science throughout the school. Scientific procedures are clearly evident and build progressively through the school. Standards have improved as a result of improved subject management, improved teaching throughout the school and improved curriculum planning. The pupils make very good progress in applying their scientific knowledge and understanding.

8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are typical for those expected nationally and are improving at a good rate. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. This year the school has opened a new suite that is having a good impact on standards. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils are confident users of ICT. They present information when using the word processor, database or spreadsheet to add, amend and improve that information. There are some good examples of ICT being used to support learning in mathematics, science, history and art and design but, overall, the school is not making sufficient use of computers in the classroom to apply skills gained in the suite.

9. There are strengths in physical education, geography and history and standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school. In physical education the pupils make good progress because of the challenging pace of lessons and high expectations of the teachers. All pupils know how to exercise safely and can talk about the effect of exercise on their bodies. Standards in geography are better than those found at the last inspection because lessons are now planned very well to teach knowledge and develop skills. In history, pupils show understanding that aspects of the past have been represented and interpreted in different ways. They select and organise information to produce structured work such as main events in history during the life of their school and make appropriate use of dates and terms. By the age of eleven, standards in art and design, design and technology, religious education and music meet those expected for their age. There are no major strengths or weaknesses in these subjects but all make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In music the quality of singing in the lunchtime club is above average and those pupils perform well for their age.

10. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress in their learning. All pupils achieve very well for their ability in national tests for English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. The school uses a range of school-based and national tests to determine pupils' needs. Individual education plans contain clear targets identifying areas for improvement. The school identifies need at an early stage and places pupils on the register of special educational needs. Targets are reviewed regularly and programmes of work are adjusted according to need. Pupils generally achieve the targets identified on their individual education plans. Early identification of difficulties and the provision of suitably challenging targets and very good support enable pupils to make very good progress in their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils' attitudes to the school, their behaviour, personal development and attendance are all good. This positive feature has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy their time at this school and talk about it with a level of pride. They express their feelings well and offer opinions sensibly. Shy pupils are encouraged to develop their confidence and teachers are careful to engage all pupils in class activities. Reception children enjoy coming to school and happily leave their parents and carers. They are pleased to see their teacher and share news with her.

12. Standards of behaviour are good. Pupils throughout the school are friendly and well mannered with adults and each other. They take care of equipment and resources. They move around the school in a calm orderly way and behave well at breaks and lunchtimes. There is very little bullying and parents and pupils are confident that any isolated incidents are dealt with very quickly and firmly. Parents approve of the standards of behaviour the school promotes. There have been no exclusions in the current academic year.

13. Pupils' personal development is good and relationships are very good. Pupils are very polite and respectful to each other and adults. Relationships between teachers and the children in lessons are very good throughout the school. Opportunities to experience what it is to undertake responsibilities are well developed; for example, in a physical education lesson, pupils devised their own rules to ensure that the evaluation of their progress could be recorded fairly. Pupils of all ages visibly 'swell with pride' when their teachers invite them to assist and they undertake the allotted task sensibly. Pupils with special educational needs are happy and secure within their class groups and the smaller support groups. They relate very well to their classmates and adults. This very good relationship gives pupils the confidence to join in with all school activities and explore new areas of their learning. They are encouraged to work independently and they respond to this very well.

14. Attendance is good and this position has been maintained since the last inspection. Lessons commence on time and there are few punctuality problems. The school records the reasons for absence accurately and an electronic recording system enables data to be analysed speedily. Teachers engage the pupils in informal discussion during registration periods and this creates a harmonious start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. There has been very good improvement in teaching since the previous inspection and it is now good. There is some very good or excellent teaching in English, mathematics, science, art and geography in Years 3-6. All pupils learn well and make good progress. The main strengths in learning are the way pupils take delight and interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills. They are able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves.

16. In the Foundation Stage teaching and learning are good in all areas of learning except for physical development where they are satisfactory. Consistent messages are given to the children and reinforced in a friendly but firm way. Learning is assessed well and consolidated and supported effectively. Questions are used well to extend awareness and to check the children's understanding. In physical development learning is not as strong as other areas. There are insufficient opportunities to explore and investigate a wide range of movement experiences.

17. There has been a good improvement in pupils' literacy skills since the last inspection because teachers are applying the literacy hour well. Teaching is consistently good and there is some very good and excellent teaching in Years 3 to 6. The basic skills of literacy are taught very well. The teachers plan and organise good activities for the pupils and there is good attention to ensuring that all ages and abilities have suitably challenging work. Lessons are managed very well and very good relationships are established so that pupils work purposefully. Classroom assistants provide very good support in lessons particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The very good and excellent lessons are characterised by clear and high expectations of pupils' work and high levels of challenge to all ability groups. Questioning is used very effectively. Improvement is needed in the teaching of extended and imaginative writing in Years 1 and 2. Teachers do plan targets with their pupils and pupils remember them, although they are not written down. Detailed analysis of pupils' responses in assessments enables teachers to identify areas where pupils can improve. However, there are some inconsistencies in marking. The best is very effective and pinpoints specific areas for improvement but in other classes it does not. The teachers set homework regularly.

18. Teaching and learning are good in mathematics, and there is some very good teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teachers apply the National Numeracy Strategy very well in all classrooms. As a result, the pupils are confident and well motivated. The basic skills of numeracy are taught very well. A setting arrangement for all year groups is having a good impact on the standards the pupils are achieving. Teachers have a very good knowledge of mathematics, the programmes of study and the National Numeracy Strategy, and these strengths have had a major impact on standards. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and standards. Pupils work willingly and productively. Lessons are very well planned, well paced and effective and introductions are clear.

19. The teaching of science is good throughout the school and some examples of very good teaching were seen in Years 4 and 5. Science lessons are well prepared and planned and include a variety of opportunities for the pupils to explore and investigate. Pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is good. Discussions and careful questioning by the teachers ensure that pupils fully grasp new ideas and scientific principles. Teachers use resources well to extend learning. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher showed the pupils a dead plant and challenged pupils to explain why the plant died. Where the teaching is most effective, for example in lessons in Years 4 and 5, the teachers made good links with prior learning and set very clear objectives.

20. Most other subjects are taught well as the teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum. In information and communication technology (ICT) the teachers have adapted well to the new suite and are teaching basic skills very well and making sure that the pupils know how to explore different software packages. The pupils are making fast progress in their learning. However, the use of the classroom computers is inconsistent and some classes do not use these enough to apply skills during lessons in other subjects. There is some excellent teaching in geography in Years 3 to 6, showing very high expectations and presenting challenging, interesting activities to the pupils. Teaching in history is good because an investigative approach is planned; as a result, the pupils are interested and participate fully. In a very good art lesson the teacher managed and organised the class very well showing high expectations and making sure that the pupils appraised each other's work at the end. In physical education, pupils enter a wide range of sporting events and competitions with local schools. They develop ideas and apply good amounts of physical effort in their work because of the good teaching. In music, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with instances of good teaching. There is currently no member of staff with specialist knowledge and confidence and competence in teaching music are still developing. Lessons in religious education are well organised and teachers plan interesting tasks and activities. In personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons a very good atmosphere is established to discuss a broad range of topics with the pupils. No lessons were observed in design and technology.

21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and the highest attaining pupils are also well challenged in English, mathematics and science. All teachers and members of support staff provide a very good level of support that effectively contributes to the pupils' achievement. The support is flexible and is adjusted depending on individual needs. This makes a positive contribution to the very good rate of progress which pupils make in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs work towards their targets within the classroom and in smaller withdrawal groups depending on the specific needs of individual pupils. Individual support outside the classroom has a specific focus and needs a one-to-one support. In a Year 4/5 withdrawal group for comprehension, rigorous questioning by the support teacher enables pupils to understand and explain the significance of the poem 'Our family comes from around the world'. Pupils are challenged to compare the different styles of two poems. Very good relationships and the pace of the sessions contribute to very good learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported for literacy, numeracy, ICT and any other curriculum area depending on their particular need. Class teachers have suitably high expectations of pupils. They plan work that closely matches pupils' needs.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good and there is an appropriate statutory curriculum in place. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection when there was insufficient time allocated to many foundation subjects which had an impact on attainment. Very good planning ensures that the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. There are recently revised policies and schemes of work for all subjects and a secure timetable for reviewing and developing them is in place. The curriculum in the foundation stage has a weakness in the provision for physical development.

23. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well and there has been a continuous rise in standards for the older pupils. Writing for pupils in Years 1 and 2 needs to remain a focus. Opportunities and strategies need to be developed to help pupils write imaginatively. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced as part of the school's strategy for numeracy and is having a good impact across the curriculum.

24. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school fully meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice for pupils identified with special educational needs. Pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and range of learning opportunities. The provision within and outside the classroom is very good. It ensures all pupils have full access to the National Curriculum. Pupils are given support in booster classes, additional literacy and springboard sessions for mathematics, comprehension, spelling and phonics. The intensive reading sessions are effective in raising standards in reading. Individual support for reading contributes to the very good provision.

25. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. There is a very good range of clubs for pupils of all ages. Sport has a high priority in this school; many teachers, pupils and their parents support those pupils who are representing the school in tournaments. Visits and visitors, as well as a residential trip, enhance the curriculum in alternate years. Many pupils take advantage of this provision. The curriculum provides good opportunities and equality of access for all pupils to learn and make progress. Policies identify inclusion and equal opportunities. Teachers' planning takes appropriate account of pupils' age, attainment and special educational needs through the provision of appropriate teaching methods and resources. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in the life of the school. Pupils new to the school are made to feel welcome and are included in all the

activities. The school works hard to ensure that pupils are challenged in their work. All pupils work in ability groups for mathematics and this has contributed to the rising standards. Children joining the school when they are four enjoy the Busy Bee activities that help make a smooth transition from home to school. A weakness in equal opportunities occurs when pupils not participating in a physical education lesson are given work to do that is not related to learning about physical education.

26. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. Pupils' work and effort are valued by good displays, achievement assemblies and verbal praise. Circle-time sessions help pupils to consider a variety of issues which are important to them and to manage their feelings, for example, anger, disappointment and frustration. The health education van visits for two days and provides guidance to pupils about drugs awareness and healthy eating. The school nurse provides high quality sex education.

27. The community makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning. The Before and After School Club which meets in the recently refurbished premises provides high quality child care and gives parents the opportunity to embark on training to develop their skills, as well as to take up employment opportunities. The school, in partnership with the community, is committed to providing good training opportunities. The school's computer suite is available for adult learning. The school trains teachers on the Graduate Teacher Programme. The police and fire service visit the school as part of the school's PSHE programme. There are close links with the local church who provide personnel to lead an assembly each week. The Easter Festival is a good example of the church and the school working closely together to have a significant impact on pupils' personal development. The church is used as a resource for learning as well as for special services.

28. The school has excellent relationships with its partner institutions. Effective links have been formed with local playgroups. Most pupils transfer to the local comprehensive school which is a Beacon School. It provides an extensive range of learning opportunities for its feeder primary schools. Year 6 pupils attend a mathematics session in the ICT suite each week for a term, a teacher from that school teaches science linked to ICT in this school, and homework clubs and summer schools are organised. During the week of inspection Year 6 pupils were looking forward to a design and technology challenge day at the comprehensive school. As well as this good provision for pupils' learning, a very professional relationship is developing between the teachers in both schools. The Year 7 curriculum has been adapted to take account of the achievement of pupils in Year 6. There is consultation between the schools about the setting arrangements for the pupils when they enter secondary schooling. Teachers from both schools have observed each other's teaching and given feedback and there is a very strong community spirit in the area with people working in both schools who were former pupils.

29. Provision for pupils' personal development is good and is part of the school's ethos and inclusiveness. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The provision for spiritual development is good. Religious education lessons provide good opportunities to explore values and beliefs of Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. Attractive displays in the hall promote this learning well. Assemblies and the school's structured PSHE programme enable pupils to consider people's values and how these affect the way people live. Excellent and very good teaching enables pupils to participate fully in lessons and to gain a sense of achievement. Opportunities for spirituality appear in all schemes of work and include teachers using a range of strategies to promote self-esteem and a quest and joy for learning.

30. Provision for the pupils' moral development is good. Rules are clearly and attractively displayed in all classrooms and pupils are fully aware of the school's consistent expectations for behaviour. Teachers use praise and rewards for positive behaviour well. There are a significant

number of pupils who display very challenging behaviour and teachers deal this with skilfully. Some of these pupils have behaviour charts which show how well they are managing their behaviour. Sanctions are used appropriately when necessary. Adults in the school act as good role models, treat pupils with respect and show a real interest in them, for example the child who came to school in the local radio car when it was her birthday. Pupils are expected to care for property and the environment, for example, an assembly had a focus on litter. The history curriculum provides good moral role models, for example Louis Braille, Victorian social reformers.

31. Provision for social development is good. The caring ethos of the school creates a well-ordered purposeful community in which everyone feels valued. A strong community spirit, as evidenced by the Before and After School Club and the excellent relationship with the secondary school, sets pupils good examples of social co-operation. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work collaboratively. The very good range of extra-curricular activities and visits, including a residential trip, provides opportunities for pupils to learn in a different setting. As part of the school's 160th anniversary celebration, Year 6 pupils interviewed past pupils who had attended the school since 1922. The 'house' system gives opportunities for pupils to relate to a wider group of pupils than their peers. Year 6 pupils have opportunities to exercise leadership, for example, they are making a video of playground games to be sent to schools in Romania and France. The pupils entertained Year 6 parents and foreign visitors and planned and organised a tea party, negotiating roles and allocating the numerous jobs that needed to be done.

32. Provision for cultural development is good in this mono-cultural white school. Pupils' Christian beliefs and those of other world faiths are considered in assemblies and religious education lessons. Stimulating displays make a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about the diversities and richness of other cultures in our world. Pupils' cultural awareness is enriched by links with schools in France and Romania with whom they correspond. The headteacher is visiting these schools later in the year and will take a video made by Year 6 pupils. The headteacher visited Australia earlier this term and the stimulating display resulting from this visit widens pupils' horizons. The school is planning a Jamaican Day which will draw on the experience of a newly qualified teacher and will include work across the curriculum. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture is developed well throughout the curriculum, especially history, geography and art. Visits and visitors make a significant contribution.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The provision made for the health, safety and welfare of the pupils is good. The school is fully aware of both its moral and legal duty to ensure that pupils are secure and it does this effectively. All adults in the school attach importance to the welfare interests of the pupils and they care for them very well. There are ample opportunities for pupils to explore relationships and feelings, including understanding that faiths and beliefs are important.

34. The school promotes high standards of behaviour well. The behaviour policy contains guidance to enable pupils' behaviour to be modified and it also provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on the effect that their behaviour has on others. It has the right balance of rules and strategies to guide them into an awareness of the acceptable standards. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are handled very skilfully.

35. The school is alert to its duty to protect children from harm and it does this well. It pays good attention to child protection procedures and it is aware that it has to keep up with current procedures. This includes collaboration with outside agencies including the educational support service. First aid arrangements are secure, but the space to treat bumps and bruises is severely limited. Staff are aware

that some pupils have specific medical conditions and they understand how these have to be supported. Health and safety arrangements are properly managed and a governor supervises them to ensure that risk assessments are conducted. The school is aware that these should be done at defined intervals.

36. Procedures for promoting and improving attendance are good and include analysis of data collated electronically. This means that trends and variations can be detected quickly and appropriate action can be taken; this includes support from the educational welfare officer. The school provides effective guidance to parents explaining that holidays taken during term-time tend to disrupt the continuity of learning of all pupils in the class.

37. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good. Each pupil's attainment and progress is well known by the headteacher and staff and thorough records are kept on their progress in English, mathematics and science. Teachers and support staff understand the strengths and learning abilities of individual pupils very well. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. They are most effective in the core subjects of mathematics, English and science and are a strong contributory factor to the standards achieved by the pupils. Teachers and support assistants keep notes to record individual pupils' progress and the teachers use this information to plan appropriate learning objectives for future lessons. Consequently good progress is made. In other subject areas there are fewer records but the school has identified the need to do this. A new system is presently being introduced for ICT. The records of pupils are comprehensive and this is a strong contributory factor leading to the improvements made. Discussions with the pupils who are shortly to leave the school upon their transfer to secondary education confirm that their teachers have discussed their expected attainment levels.

38. Arrangements to ensure that pupils settle into the school's routines are very good. Children joining the reception class attend Busy Bee taster sessions weekly throughout the year and this ensures that both parents and children become familiar with the daily routines. The nature of the area means that pupils join the school at odd times during the year and these pupils confirm that they are made to feel welcome. One pupil remarked that other pupils in the class went out of their way to offer friendship. This ensures that pupils settle quickly and happily, a matter that is greatly valued by parents.

39. The school keeps detailed records and documentation on all pupils with special educational needs. This ensures that teachers are knowledgeable about individual difficulties which pupils might encounter and that pupils receive the appropriate support and guidance. All members of staff are totally committed to pupils in their care. All pupils receive very good attention and this provides an important element in the provision. Both within the classroom and in the support groups, staff are effective in establishing a supportive environment where pupils feel secure and can develop their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils receive very good support in classes from learning support assistants. There are good opportunities in lessons for pupils to share their work, this contributes to their growing confidence. From an early stage assessments are used effectively to identify attainment, progress and targets for further development. These records enable teachers to identify any problems and plan future targets effectively. Parents believe that the school provides a good level of support for underachieving pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The parents' views of the school are very good and their involvement makes a good impact on the work of the school. They value the support the school provides to their children, they have trust in the integrity of the teachers and support staff and they identify fully with the standards the school strives to promote. They appreciate being consulted about the school development plan. The positive views are endorsed by the opinions expressed to the registered inspector before the inspection and in the comments made on questionnaires.

41. Some parents would like to have more precise information regarding the progress their children are achieving but inspection evidence finds that the school gives good information to parents about how their child is getting on. Reports give a clear understanding of what their child needs to do to improve and they set appropriate targets. Newsletters regarding topics to be studied are sent out by individual teachers and other information of a general nature is sent out at frequent intervals. Inspectors found that the provision of homework is good, although a significant number of parents expressed dissatisfaction.

42. The parents who help in the classrooms provide high level expertise to enhance the work of the teachers and support staff. An 'achievement tree' was produced by the joint efforts of a parent and pupils who now write messages on 'leaves' expressing appreciation for acts of kindness by their classmates. The parents association organises social and fund-raising events that enrich the educational experience of the pupils. A recent event called 'making music' has linked pupils and parents in a sponsorship initiative that will raise funds to enable the school to purchase musical instruments. Funds have also been provided to enable the school to purchase wet playtime games, picnic benches and computers. The parents of the younger pupils are diligent in hearing their children read at home and recording what they have done in their child's reading diary. There are two formal occasions per year for teachers and parent discussions and these are well attended.

43. The school brochure and governor's annual report provide a full range of information about the school's routines. Admission arrangements work well because parents have opportunities to visit the school to discuss individual concerns and to seek reassurance. Discussions with the parents confirm that one of the major factors they have in mind when selecting Ashchurch school is the knowledge that their children will settle quickly in a caring environment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. Leadership and management of the school are very good and make a very positive contribution to the standards the pupils achieve. The school has a very clear sense of purpose and knows what it has to do to ensure that pupils of all ages, groups and abilities achieve their potential. The headteacher leads a united team of staff and governors and has the clear approval of parents. All systems in place are the result of a team effort where new initiatives are carefully planned and evaluated. There has been very good improvement in the issues identified at the previous inspection. The role of the curriculum co-ordinator has been developed and now all subject leaders are expected to drive the development of their subjects and contribute to how this will be done through the process of school development planning. The school's strategic priorities are now very clear and educational priorities are supported through careful financial management. Learning facilities were judged to be inadequate when the last inspection took place and the school has addressed this matter effectively. Resources for learning are now good in all areas. Standards have also improved significantly, particularly in mathematics, science and ICT. The school has explicit aims and values and works very well to achieve very good relationships and equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff.

45. The school identifies appropriate priorities and targets, takes the necessary action, and reviews its progress towards them. The school development plan is clear and comprehensive and is the result of an annual training day involving all staff. The school analyses data from national and published tests very effectively. It has identified that girls are doing better than boys and has purchased specific resources as a result but also found that the ability of the girls was higher. The school is well staffed and there is very effective appraisal and performance management for them. Training has been extensive. All staff have received training, which has resulted in the school being awarded the Investors in People standard. The school has expanded teachers' experience by encouraging staff to

change year groups and take on new responsibilities. There is very effective induction of staff new to the school and the school is also an effective provider of initial teacher training. Within the constraints of a small school the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is good. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators have monitored teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science and targets are rigorously set and evaluated. The school has clear plans to extend its monitoring over all subjects. There is good use of specific grants that are used effectively for their designated purpose. A small school grant provides provide non-contact time for the headteacher and staff to monitor and observe teaching and learning.

46. The governors effectively fulfil their statutory responsibilities and take an active part in supporting the school and monitoring its progress. They are open to new ideas and adapt quickly. The chair of governors is well informed and provides good leadership and firm direction. The governors have clear aims such as raising boys' attainment and to maintain the existing high level in the professional development of staff. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and takes immediate action to improve weaknesses that are identified.

47. The management of special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator is well supported by the headteacher and governing body and she in turn supports the staff very well. Funds for special educational needs are well used and pupils' interests are foremost when planning the budget and funding allocation. Resources for special educational needs are good.

48. The school is efficiently run. There has been a heavy investment in resources since the last inspection, the largest of which has been the new computer suite. Two new classrooms are shortly to be built. The large carry forward has been planned to make sure that the school retains five classes, and not four as before, by sustaining existing staffing levels. In order to achieve the highest possible standards for all pupils the school has put a large number of support systems into place. These involve support for special educational needs and extra classes for literacy and comprehension. Booster groups for mathematics are also available and additional classroom assistants have been provided in some classes. All staff have been involved in these decisions. Best value principles have been wellapplied.

49. Including the two new permanent classrooms due to be built, the accommodation is good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The computer suite, in refurbished upstairs accommodation, has adjacent facilities that are used by the community. The provision for pupils to be quiet and reflective at break-time are good and there is a large, well-fenced area of grass where pupils can both play and enjoy team games. The governors are aware that security matters have to be kept under review and a promised realignment of the main road immediately outside the school entrance will enable further improvements to be made.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. The staff and governors should improve:

- (1) the standards in imaginative writing across a range of styles in Years 1 and 2 by further training for staff, monitoring teaching in the classroom and evaluating the standards attained by the pupils against National Curriculum levels;
(paragraphs 5, 17, 68)
- (2) opportunities for physical development in the Foundation Stage by planning a broad range of movement experiences for the children.
(paragraphs 4, 22, 61)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- to monitor the use of classroom computers for applying skills learnt in the computer suite.
(paragraphs 8, 99, 102)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	17	3	0	0	0
Percentage	7	21	61	11	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	121
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	56

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	13	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	23	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 [100]	92 [100]	100 [100]
	National	84 [83]	86 [84]	91 [90]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 [100]	92 [100]	92 [100]
	National	85 [84]	89 [88]	89 [88]

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	8	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys*			
	Girls*			
	Total	15	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 [81]	80 [85]	95 [92]
	National	75 [75]	71 [72]	87 [85]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys*			
	Girls*			
	Total	13	16	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 [73]	80 [85]	75 [92]
	National	72 [70]	74 [72]	82 [79]

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

* Data for boys and girls has been excluded because the number of boys in the year group is less than ten.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	105
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	396,466
Total expenditure	418,494
Expenditure per pupil	3,577
Balance brought forward from previous year	53,994
Balance carried forward to next year	31,966

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	121
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	41	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	66	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	44	20	0	0
The teaching is good.	46	54	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	51	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	37	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	34	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	66	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	59	34	7	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	34	5	5	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	34	7	0	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

51. There is one reception class in the Foundation Stage. Children are admitted to school in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 16 children in the reception class. The class is supported by a learning support assistant. Most children have attended local playgroups before they come to school and the co-ordinator liaises with all the local playgroups prior to the children starting school. Children and parents are well prepared before they enter school; the progression enables children to make a smooth transition into full-time education. There is an induction meeting for new parents and children join the Busy Bee activity sessions weekly prior to commencing full-time school. The session provides a very good opportunity to bridge the gap between home and school and enables children to familiarise themselves with the school and get to know their teacher. Attainment on entry is average. Two children have currently been identified with special educational needs. Baseline assessment information is carefully collated and contributes to the ongoing assessment procedures carried out during the year. Assessment is well established and is used well to inform planning. The classroom provides an appropriate learning environment for younger children. The outdoor provision is still being developed. The tarmac and grass area is easily accessible but there is currently no climbing apparatus. The children have opportunities for climbing, swinging and balancing when they use the hall. Resources are good and easily accessible. By the end of the reception most children will achieve the expected goals of learning in all areas of learning and many will be working on National Curriculum levels. Children with special educational needs are making good progress. Planning is well linked to the national guidance for the Foundation Stage. The teacher has responded well to requests from parents to know what their children are learning. Busy Bee books record achievement and these are sent home to parents each week.

52. Since the last inspection standards and the quality of teaching have been maintained. There has been good progress developing the outdoor area and increasing the range of resources. The school has identified the need to develop the provision for outdoor play.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good and reflects the good teaching in this area of learning. By the end of the reception year all children will achieve the expected learning goals and high attaining and average children are already achieving them. Children settle into school routine well because the teacher is well organised. The teacher creates a secure environment, where expected behaviour is clearly identified. Children enjoy coming to school and happily leave their parents and carers. They are pleased to see their teacher and share news with her. They co-operate well with each other in the role-play home area, tidying up the house, hoovering and taking the dog for a walk. Children have the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning by selecting their own play activities. Effort and achievement are acknowledged in whole-school assembly when all children receive a certificate. Moral development is good, children have a clear understanding of right and wrong because the teacher identifies expectations clearly. Children's ability to work independently is sound.

54. Teaching is good and effectively contributes to standards achieved because consistent messages are clearly given and reinforced in a friendly but firm way. The teacher reminds the children of personal challenges and expectations of behaviour during the day. Children are reminded to be tidy, caring, obedient, hardworking and careful. They are rewarded with points for noticeable effort in any of these areas.

Communication, language and literacy

55. The majority of children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and some children are already exceeding them. This is because there is good focused teaching which extends children's language and literacy skills through the activities provided. Standards in speaking and listening are average. All children listen well, focus on their teacher and other adults and follow instructions. Most children speak confidently in front of others and visiting adults. Higher attaining children explain clearly the story of Cinderella. They talk about the events of the school Victorian Day and Jubilee celebrations. They communicate effectively giving reasons for their favourite activity, for example 'I liked the dancing best because we kept getting in a muddle and it was fun'. They enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and are encouraged to share conversations. The reading corner is well stocked with books and encourages children to sit down with a book. All children enjoy books and they know books communicate meaning and print goes from left to right. Children make good progress in reading. They identify the weekly word in the text and higher attaining children are beginning to notice punctuation such as exclamation marks. Children with special educational needs know and identify initial sounds. They are well supported by an alphabet chart, which gives them confidence in selecting initial sounds. Children make good progress in their writing skills. Higher attaining children write stories about Sleeping Beauty. They use capital letters and occasional full stops. Lower attaining children make good progress in their handwriting that is now beginning to resemble recognised letters. They can all write their own name.

56. The teaching and learning are good with an appropriate emphasis on phonics. Good use is made of incidents that arise within the lesson to develop speaking skills. The teacher makes rigorous assessment notes and identifies attainment. She encourages children to watch her lips as she sounds beginnings and endings of words very clearly. This is helping children to clarify their speaking. The teacher has a very good relationship with the children and they are eager to please her. She checks children's understanding of difficult words such as 'proposed'. Twinkle the puppet is used well to encourage children to check the way words are spoken. This strategy also encourages the children to develop a helping caring attitude towards others.

Mathematical development

57. Standards of work seen are average and the children make good progress. The majority of children are likely to attain the early learning goals and some are already exceeding them. There is an appropriate emphasis on counting and number recognition. Average and special needs children count in twos to ten and understand place value. Higher attaining children count in twos to twenty. They are able to work out the total cost of two sausages costing four pence each and they identify the coins needed to pay for the sausages. Scrutiny of work indicates that most children have a sound understanding of time and identify activities taking place at certain times of the day. Higher attaining children calculate simple addition and subtraction sums involving numbers under ten. Ability to recognise shape, space and measure is well developed. The average child recognises basic shapes and can identify heavier and lighter, taller and shorter measures.

58. Teaching is good over time and scrutiny of work indicates good coverage of all areas of mathematical development. A weakness occurs in some lessons however, when the activities for average children are insufficiently challenging and do not involve the children in inter-active learning. The pace of learning slows down during the individual work when some children become involved in their own agenda. A strength in teaching is the reinforcement of learning and the recap on the main content of the lesson.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. Standards of work seen are average and most children will achieve the expected levels of learning by the end of the reception year. All children achieve well in this area of learning. They are encouraged to develop a good awareness of their local environment. Children use a simple map of their route to school to identify features in the local area such as shops, traffic lights and the church. There are good opportunities for children to develop their computer skills during the weekly lesson in the computer suite. Children make good progress using control technology. They create a route for Princess Lovepenny to help Prince Cinders find his way around the town. Children count the distance accurately on the grid to work out the distance. All children are able to move the arrows to the corners counting the squares. The computer is used to paint their own pictures such as the Nutcracker Suite and Queen Victoria. Children are developing an awareness of living things. They all plant their own pumpkin seeds and they observe the tomato plant growing rapidly in the classroom. Non-fiction books are used well to locate information. Children have a sound knowledge the wider world and draw a range of different types of transport such as vans and buses. There are good opportunities to use construction kits, for example to make a model of Prince Cinder's visit to the disco and Sleeping Beauty.

60. Teaching is good and children are challenged in their learning. Interesting activities help children develop curiosity about their world and develop their observation skills. Questions are used well to extend awareness and to check children's understanding. The work is challenging for all children and activities are well considered and organised.

Physical development

61. Standards of work seen are average and most children will achieve the expected levels of learning by the end of the reception year. Children achieve well in fine motor skills because they are encouraged to improve their manipulative and fine motor skills with a range of appropriate activities. They use pencils, crayons, scissors and paint brushes effectively and with confidence. They know what they want to do and how to achieve it. Hand-eye co-ordination is well developed through matching and positioning shapes, decorating and sticking. The range of activities provided outdoors is limited and does not give children regular opportunities to develop their physical skills. There is one structured physical education lesson each week to promote their physical development and a daily outdoor activity session. Opportunities to develop gross motor skills could be better. The current method of combining Foundation Stage children with pupils in Year 1 and 2 in a formal physical education lesson is inappropriate for younger children. During this lesson they are told specific skills to practise and there is no opportunity to explore and investigate a wide range of movement experiences. They have opportunities to run, throw and jump but it is the formal way they are taught with older children that deprives them of the opportunity to repeat and develop a wide movement vocabulary. The school has already identified this area of learning for development. There are no regular opportunities for children to climb and develop their balancing skills.

62. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning and it is not as strong as other areas. The methods used are inappropriate for younger children especially children with special educational needs who need more time to practise and repeat their skills.

Creative development

63. Children achieve average standards. They are all well on course to achieve the expected level of attainment by the time they enter Year 1. Scrutiny of work reveals that children have opportunities over the year to work with a range of materials and experience different methods. Children make good progress using paint imaginatively. They paint their own sea creatures and features for the route to school such as the church and traffic lights. Printing skills are well developed; children print with string and use wax resist to create pictures. They use pencils and crayons and complete simple collages. Children create a slipper for Cinderella using different materials and skills as they cut, stick and position colours and silver paper. They use clay to make a castle for Prince Cinders. The computer is used well to create pictures using the paintbrush tool. They use a range of colours and higher attaining children fill in their pictures of teddies and people with colour. The role-play areas provide children with opportunities to use their imagination playing out the Prince Cinders story. Singing is well developed and children sing a range of songs from memory confidently. The role-play home area is used effectively and children are encouraged to think of the needs of others preparing the house and acting out the story of Prince Cinders.

64. Teaching is good. A strength of teaching is the good organisation and planning for the children to experience activities they enjoy. The teacher uses questions well to check children's understanding and knowledge. Children's work is appreciated and shared with others.

ENGLISH

65. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, the pupils' attainment in English was close to the national average and to the standards in schools with a similar intake of pupils. In the tests for seven-year-olds and in comparison to similar schools, the pupils' attainment in reading was above average and writing was average. Teachers have adopted the National Literacy Strategy successfully and basic skills are taught well. Inspection evidence finds that standards in imaginative and extended writing in Years 1 and 2 are still not high enough, but pupils are making good progress in punctuation, handwriting, spelling and grammar. Standards by the end of Year 6 are better this year than the data from the tests suggests and that the pupils are doing well in all aspects of literacy. This is because of the very good teaching and because pupils with special educational needs are making such good progress. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection where weaknesses were identified across all aspects of literacy. The school has tackled most of the issues very well, setting targets for improvement, making sure that all groups of pupils receive the best possible provision and monitoring their progress carefully. The school has identified that boys are not doing as well as girls. To improve this situation it has purchased more resources to motivate the boys and is monitoring their progress well.

66. By the end of Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average and pupils in all classes make good progress. Pupils are attentive listeners and interact well with their teacher and other pupils in the class. They enjoy answering questions and are keen to give a contribution. They respond appropriately to others, thinking about what has been said and the language used. Teachers challenge the pupils well to vary and extend their vocabulary. When discussing two different versions of the story of Cinderella, Year 6 pupils are quick to notice that they are different to the conventional fairy story and that Cinderella is 'moody' and 'grumbly' and that the fairy godmother is 'disorganised'. The pupils are good at conveying story, themes, emotions and ideas but drama is insufficiently used to express these ideas within lessons.

67. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average in reading and pupils are making good progress. The pupils show a love of books and respond enthusiastically to what they read. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read sentences accurately and are becoming fluent and expressive readers. They know to emphasise words in large text such as 'DRAT' when reading a big book. They read a good

range of books, including stories from other cultures. All pupils make good progress in their understanding of sounds and names of the letters of the alphabet and they are becoming good at building words using those sounds. In Years 3 to 6, pupils read fiction and poems well, think carefully about the content and show understanding of a range of texts, selecting essential points. Many can identify key features, themes and characters and select relevant information to support their views. Pupils research information well using non-fiction books, make appropriate use of the Internet and use dictionaries, index and content pages effectively. They have a good selection of books to choose from in the classroom and the library and they read regularly at school and at home.

68. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able, make good progress in grammar, punctuation, spelling, handwriting and presentation. Most know and use speech marks and the more able are beginning to use adventurous words in their writing such as 'Tom cooked a fantastic meal'. Year 2 write about how they celebrated the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Pupils apply their literacy skills in other subjects such as science, when they write about living things such as butterflies, and in writing tables and lists in mathematics. However, in English, pupils do not communicate through writing in a wide enough range of forms and there is little evidence that they use their imaginations well. Too much time is spent on writing a weekly diary or recounting holidays and there is insufficient attention to writing across a broader range of skills such as poems, notes, captions and instructions. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in all aspects of writing and standards are continuing to improve at a good rate. This year standards are above average. Pupils use a growing vocabulary across a range of writing styles. In Year 3 the pupils write playscripts and poems and become news reporters. In Year 4 and 5 pupils write good book reviews and show understanding of characters in books such as John in *Black Beauty*. Work on the poem 'Reynard the Fox' enables pupils to think of different points of view on foxhunting and to empathise with the fox. They write letters to a Member of Parliament about the dangers of smoking and find information about whales from magazines and write why they are endangered. This and writing in Year 6 on bullying, birth and death make a very good contribution to the pupils' personal development. Pupils are good at organising, drafting and presenting their work. An example of the good use of literacy in history was seen in Year 6 when pupils write about the history of the school. In religious education, the pupils write a diary about the events of the Passover. There is some good use of ICT. Pupils in Year 2 highlight and delete words on screen from the book 'Elmer' and replace them with a new one they have thought of. They highlight and delete them and then write a new word in capitals. Year 6 pupils make good progress using PowerPoint to make a presentation about the school's 160th anniversary, which they will show to the rest of the school.

69. Teaching and learning are good. There is some very good and excellent teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teachers prepare for lessons well and work is very carefully planned for all ability and age groups. There are very good relationships which enable lessons to start in a very positive and friendly way. Class displays give the pupils good reminders on aspects of the subject such as 'reviewing your writing'. There are plenty of good quality reading and library books available which is a very good improvement from the last inspection. A strength in the pupils' learning is that they settle to work quickly and work well independently and in small groups. Teachers manage the classrooms very well and this enables the pupils to concentrate quickly and work purposefully. Teachers and pupils enjoy discussing what is to be learnt during the lesson and pupils are interested and well motivated. The teachers plan and organise good activities for the pupils and there is good attention to ensuring that all ages and abilities have suitably challenging work. Classroom assistants provide very good support in lessons particularly for pupils with special educational needs. They know the pupils' needs very well. Small groups of pupils are also withdrawn for extra support in reading and writing. The very good and excellent lessons are characterised by clear and high expectations of pupils' work and high levels of challenge to all ability groups. The teaching is very lively and engages the pupils' interest so that they behave and concentrate very well. Questioning is used very effectively. In a Year 4/5 lesson the

teacher asks the pupils to describe what the poet is trying to do and asks what is he trying to tell us about the fox. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher challenges the pupils through probing questions to think about vocabulary such as 'contamination' and 'inadequate' and sayings such as 'his bark is worse than his bite'. Evidence of monitoring the progress of boys' writing in Year 6 has been kept and there is a good collection of their independent writing which has been evaluated by the teacher. Handwriting and spelling are well taught throughout the school. Teachers do plan targets with their pupils and pupils remember them, although they are not written down. There are some inconsistencies in marking. The best is very effective and pinpoints specific areas for improvement. Homework is given regularly and the pupils are justifiably proud of their homework books.

70. Subject co-ordination is good. The school analyses data from tests and areas of improvement have been identified, such as writing, comprehension and further developing literacy through the use of ICT. There is good identification of the most able pupils and those who need extra support and these pupils are often put into other year groups so that they can make the maximum progress. There is a good programme for monitoring teaching and learning in all classes and targets for development have been agreed. There is a separate library that contains a good selection of books and there is a very good range of reading books, including group-reading books to be used with the lesson. Parents make a good contribution to their child's learning and help during the literacy sessions.

MATHEMATICS

71. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, the pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 attained standards that were above the national average. Standards were well above those of schools with a similar intake in Year 2 and above those of similar schools in Year 6. Inspection evidence and early indications from tests in 2002 agree with this picture. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection. The school acted effectively after the last inspection to raise standards and the trend for the last three years is of improving standards. Rates of progress are good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able pupils, although girls are doing better than boys. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has helped pupils gain confidence and appreciation of numbers and to use them in everyday situations. The school has effectively identified the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and used these to set targets for improvement. A setting arrangement for all year groups is having a good impact on the standards the pupils are achieving.

72. By the end of Year 2, pupils are good at using mental calculation to add, subtract, divide and multiply simple number problems. They have a good grasp of mathematical language and can discuss what they have done and explain their results. The highest attaining pupils work in a Year 3 set. They use their knowledge of multiplying by four to work out problems involving multiplication and division. Other more able pupils in Year 2 count confidently in fives and tens and can do calculation involving three-digit numbers. The lower-attaining pupils use two-digit numbers. They make good progress in changing analogue to digital time and solving simple problems with money. They know what a right angle is.

73. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in all aspects of mathematics and this is largely due to challenging teaching. Pupils use the number system confidently and work well in the four number operations. By Year 4, many pupils can multiply decimals and understand ratio. They measure accurately using kilometres, grams and millilitres. The more able can work out the area of a given surface and the lower attaining pupils can mentally work out calculations such as 6×30 . Pupils in Year 5 work out problems involving the months, days and years. Pupils in Year 6 can calculate volume, perimeters, diameter and radius of given two and three-dimensional shapes. They use negative numbers by exploring temperatures on a

thermometer and recording them. The most able show understanding of rotational symmetry. Pupils make good progress in data handling. They collect and record information on cycling habits in the class and draw a chart showing how many cycle to school. The higher attainers do a probability scale on whether it could snow on Christmas Day or not. They make very good progress writing algebra problems when working with a secondary teacher and understand the importance of brackets. There is some good use of ICT. Pupils interpret tables, lists and charts used in everyday life. Pupils in Year 3 produce a pie chart on their favourite food and Years 4 and 5 produce a graph to show the population changes in their village. Year 6 use a spreadsheet to find the best value when buying new readers for the class. Pupils' work is neatly presented and well written. The attention to mathematical vocabulary throughout the school makes a good contribution to pupils' speaking skills.

74. Teaching and learning are good. There is some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Lessons are planned carefully and this leads to brisk and well paced lessons. Initial sessions challenge the pupils well and make sure that they stay well motivated. Lesson objectives are clearly explained to the pupils. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. There is a careful match of work to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils. As a result, pupils remain on task and work hard. A good feature of some lessons is the 'phone a friend' where pupils can ask for help. Sessions at the end of lessons contain extra challenge for the pupils and give opportunities to share their work with the rest of the class. In the very good lessons, the teachers lead the pupils through a very clear framework to help them solve problems and levels of challenge are very good. The pupils respond by eagerly getting on with their work and show a confidence and enjoyment in mathematics. Learning support assistants provide good support in lessons and contribute well to the progress the pupils make. Teachers use their knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy well in all classes to teach the pupils to communicate mathematically, including the use of precise mathematical language.

75. The co-ordination of mathematics is very good. The school was chosen as an evaluation school for the numeracy training and tests for all classes have been evaluated by the testing body. This and analysis of national tests has given the school a thorough evaluation and identified strengths and weaknesses. A very comprehensive and thorough action plan has been produced and subtraction has been a priority for the school this year. There is a regular programme of lesson observations and targets are set with the teachers afterwards. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and these are being well used to guide curriculum planning. The school is well resourced for mathematics and there is a good range of books to support the teaching.

SCIENCE

76. Standards in the teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2001 were well above the national average at both the expected level 4 and at the higher level 3. In the same year, the proportion attaining the expected levels in the national tests in Year 6 was well above the national average. The number of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was also well above the national average and above for similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms the high standards throughout the school. By the age of seven and eleven standards in science are well above average and pupils make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of science. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs achieve well in comparison with their prior attainment. Since the previous inspection, standards in science have been rising significantly. Standards have improved as a result of improved subject management, improved teaching in science throughout the school and improved curriculum planning. The school has analysed and identified areas of weakness and has worked hard to improve.

77. By the age of seven pupils have very good knowledge of living things. They can identify parts of a plant and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils in Year 1, know and

can explain what plants need to grow and flourish. Higher and average attaining pupils in Year 2 know the function of the parts such as that the roots supply the plant with food and water. They are encouraged by good teaching to suggest their own ideas to find solutions. They explain ways to investigate and identify what a plant needs to live. Average pupils suggest putting one tomato plant into the cupboard so that it does not get any light. Lower attaining pupils suggest depriving the plant of water to test whether a plant can grow without water. Pupils investigate plants growing around the school. High attaining pupils are able to articulate the difference between a living and a dead plant. By the age of seven pupils record and investigate the properties of different materials. Higher attaining pupils know things move by gravity and they can explain the difference between pushing and pulling actions.

78. Pupils make consistently very good progress throughout the school. A strength in the teaching and learning of science is the challenging investigation and high expectations. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 investigate and record the different temperature of porridge for daddy, mummy and baby bear. They observe and record the different rates the porridge cools. Pupils have a very good understanding that different amounts of porridge cool at different rates. They use thermometers well to determine and record the different temperatures. All pupils can explain and have a very good understanding of a fair test. Pupils observe and comment that an investigation to determine heat loss from substances is unfair because the teacher gives out the small amount of porridge for testing first before the medium and large portion. Scientific enquiry is very well developed. Pupils investigate what happens to eggs when they are boiled for one, two, three and four minutes. Higher attaining pupils explain that the yolk was the last part of the egg to solidify because it is further away from the shell and the heat. Literacy and numeracy are very well used to enhance learning in science. Pupils independently write up their own investigations and record their own results, independently deciding whether to show the results with a bar or line graph.

79. By the age of eleven pupils systematically record observations and measurements and draw line and bar graphs to show their results. They investigate the changing pulse rate during different activities and they make sensible practical suggestions to improve their methods of investigation. They independently write their methods and record the pulse rates when playing football at 126 beats, walking activities at 108 beats, sleeping at 79 beats and sitting at 69 beats. Pupils explain and record their own investigations and all pupils have a very good understanding of a fair test. A higher attaining pupil writes that it is unfair if pupils are tested running at different times of the day, for example after lunch, also pupils are running at different speeds. Pupils show very good knowledge on the function of teeth, skin and the skeleton. They write about different types of teeth and their function. ICT is well used, for example lower attaining pupils use the computer to record information about the layers of the skin. They write, 'The epidermis is the part of the skin that you can see'. They import pictures of a section through the skin and label parts of the skin such as subcutaneous layer, hair follicle, sebaceous gland and sweat gland. Pupils in Year 6 have a very good understanding of gravity and explain a balanced force. Detailed drawings and descriptions of the function of plant parts show very good progression from the younger classes. Pupils know and explain that the anther holds down the pollen and the sepal protects the flower.

80. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, with some very good teaching in Years 4 and 5. Teachers plan their work carefully. They set appropriate objectives and provide an interesting range of activities including practical experimental work. Pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is good. They respond well to the challenging activities set and work productively. Teachers make good use of their own secure subject knowledge and adopt a range of challenging questions to focus pupils' attention and extend their thinking and understanding. Overall, the management of pupils is good. Teachers are competent in ensuring a smooth transfer from discussions into practical work. Where the teaching is most effective, for example in lessons in Years

4 and 5, the teachers make good links with prior learning and set very clear objectives. Very good use of scientific vocabulary is made and pupils are encouraged to make comments and predictions. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers invariably give good support, particularly to those pupils with special educational needs. Assessment for science is good and teachers use the results of the assessment when planning the content of lessons. Teachers use resources well to extend learning for example the teacher shows pupils in Years 1 and 2 a dead plant and challenges them to explain why the plant died. The teacher challenges pupils to think for themselves and explain how we can investigate what plants need to grow. Attractive science displays around the school reinforce learning and help science maintain a high profile.

81. The co-ordinator makes a very good contribution to the development of science and the improved results. All staff have benefited from professional development in science. Test results have been analysed carefully and areas of weakness identified. The subject has a high focus within the school. There are regular visitors and visits such as to Technoquest which provides pupils with opportunities for lots of inter-active science experiences. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator that has good subject knowledge and is very keen to improve the overall provision and standards.

ART AND DESIGN

82. Standards in art and design are average for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Achievement in art is satisfactory for the younger pupils and good for the older ones. They are developing their knowledge and skills systematically as they move through the school.

83. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have frequent opportunities to draw, paint, print, model and use textiles to make collages. They look at the work of famous artists, for example Rousseau, and notice how he uses pattern in nature. Pupils in Year 3 do good work in the style of Kadinsky using concentric circles. Pupils have experienced tie dying using the wax resist technique. Years 4 and 5 have worked on press printing using two colours. Year 6 displays show good skills are being developed in Batik work, still life drawing and drawing and painting in the style of Archimboldo. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. They study art from different cultures, have frequent opportunities to work collaboratively and evaluate their own work and that of others. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all lessons. Pupils throughout the school are good at using drawing and painting software and older pupils can import pictures and word art into text, considering the layout and design. Good links have been made with history, science and geography.

84. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection in Year 3 and this was very good. The teacher demonstrated good knowledge and understanding and had high expectations of behaviour. She supported and challenged all pupils well. As a result, pupils worked with enjoyment and concentration. Teachers' planning and displays indicate that teaching is good overall, especially for the older pupils.

85. There is satisfactory co-ordination of art. The policy has been reviewed and the scheme of work adapted to include national guidance. There are adequate resources to teach the units in the scheme of work and to develop pupils' skills. The co-ordinator has a clear development plan to improve attainment which includes arranging training to increase teachers' knowledge and understanding. An Art Week is planned for next term when the pupils will have the opportunity to work with an artist in residence and create something lasting for the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. No lessons in design and technology were taught during the inspection. The judgement on standards is made from looking at teachers' planning, pupils' work and talking with Year 6 pupils. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain average standards. There has been an improvement in standards since the last inspection and the link between design and making is now successfully made.

87. Pupils achieve well as they move throughout the school. They have a sound idea of the design and making process and evaluate their work. Pupils in Year 2 produce clearly labelled drawings and use a variety of tools safely to create a wind-up toy. All classes this term have designed and made musical instruments, which were then used in a fund-raising event. All pupils investigated a range of instruments, including those from other cultures, considered carefully how sounds were made and were presented with a wide range of materials to create different sounds. The youngest pupils made simple shakers using plastic cartons and put rice, dried peas etc. inside. Older pupils designed more complex instruments involving careful measuring and joining techniques, while Year 6 pupils produced some quite sophisticated instruments including two wooden guitars. Year 6 pupils have also designed and made slippers for a Roman soldier. Their brief was that they had to fit the designer. This was a good cross-curricular link with history. Literacy is used effectively in this subject when pupils produce clearly labelled drawings and write their evaluations. The subject makes a good contribution to personal development. Pupils have experience of working independently and as part of a team. Pupils with special educational needs are supported, as necessary, so that they are successful learners.

88. From the standard of work on display, looking at teachers' planning and talking to Year 6 pupils, there is clear evidence that teaching is good throughout the school. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their projects. Teachers are beginning to assess pupils' achievement at the end of each unit. ICT is being used as the digital camera is used to record pupils' work.

89. The deputy head, who is also responsible for ICT, co-ordinates design and technology satisfactorily. There are sufficient resources available for teachers to teach effectively.

GEOGRAPHY

90. Standards in geography are average for pupils at the end of Year 2 and they are above average for pupils in Year 6. This is very good improvement since the last inspection when standards for the oldest pupils were judged to be below average. Pupils achieve well in geography throughout the school. This is because lessons are planned very well to teach knowledge and develop skills. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported while the more able are challenged.

91. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 study the local area. They go on a walk from the school across some fields to a densely populated housing estate. They identify the features of the different areas and describe the areas using appropriate geographical vocabulary. On their return to school they create a large map and make models of shops, station, school, etc. to put on the map. Literacy was used well in this topic when pupils wrote about their journey. Pupils in Year 3 use and make maps. They use atlases competently to identify countries and continents and can mark important towns in the United Kingdom on a map. They study a local map of Tewkesbury and discuss how the local area has changed over the years. They are beginning to use grid references of Ordnance Survey maps. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have a good idea of settlements and of the amenities that are found in a village and a town. They discuss in groups the advantages and disadvantages of living in each locality and record their ideas. Literacy and ICT are being used well in this unit of work.

92. Teaching and learning in the one lesson seen in Years 4 and 5 was excellent. Planning was very detailed, a variety of teaching styles were used and challenging, interesting activities were presented to the pupils. The teacher had high expectations of behaviour and pupils responded

appropriately. As a result of this excellent teaching pupils enjoyed the lesson, worked well collaboratively and independently. Talking to Year 6 pupils reveals that they enjoy geography – in their words ‘You study different sorts of maps, find out information from atlases as well as learning from the teacher’. Geography makes a significant contribution to pupils’ personal development.

93. Geography is managed very effectively. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is very enthusiastic. The policy has been reviewed and the scheme of work has been modified to include national guidance. Resources have been purchased to teach the chosen units and to develop key skills. Visits enhance the learning in geography, for example, pupils in Year 2 visited Cheltenham by train, and Year 5 pupils went to the local river when they studied rivers.

HISTORY

94. Standards in history are average for pupils at the end of Year 2 and above average for pupils at Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection when too little time was allocated to history which had an impact on attainment.

95. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the lives of some famous people in history such as Louis Braille. They know Elizabeth I was imprisoned in the Tower of London when she was a princess. Pupils use common words and phrases relating to the passing of time such as ‘yesterday’ and ‘last month’. They search for evidence of old and new objects in the school and describe that a jigsaw is old because the wooden pieces are faded. High quality planning indicates that the older pupils, those between seven and eleven, study the same topic, but each year group has a particular focus with clear and appropriate learning objectives. This term ‘Romans’ has been the focus. Year 3 find out about the way Romans lived in hamlets, towns and cities and know about the difference in the lives of rich and poor Romans. Years 4 and 5 make good progress in understanding the Roman invasion and how Hadrian’s wall was built. They know that people, such as Boudicca, resisted the invasion. Years 5 and 6 have a good knowledge of the role of the legionary, army and politicians. The visit to the Roman villa at Chedworth enhanced the learning of this topic. History has had a special focus this term as the school celebrates its 160th anniversary. Years 5 and 6, especially, have studied each period of ten years since the school opened in 1842, highlighting significant world facts, for example, the Crimean war and the work of Florence Nightingale, alongside facts about the school. This work gives the pupils a good understanding of chronology and was attractively displayed in the hall so that the whole school shared the learning. Year 6 pupils interviewed those who were in the school before the Second World War, at the beginning and after the war. At the Victorian Day all staff and pupils dressed in period costume and pupils experienced a Victorian school day.

96. As a result of the very practical way in which history is taught pupils are well motivated and enjoy history and achieve well. Good opportunities are provided for pupils’ social, moral and cultural development. Literacy is used effectively, for example when pupils prepare questions to ask visitors about their schooldays and then record their answers. ICT is used well. Years 5 and 6 pupils are to use the display to create a PowerPoint presentation and Year 2 pupils find information about Louis Braille on the Internet.

97. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The lesson observed lacked challenge for pupils in Year 2 but it was interesting to the pupils and they all participated fully. The teacher was well prepared for the lesson and had good control when the pupils went outside to discover signs of their school building being old, such as broken bricks, rusty pipes and the school badge giving the opening date of the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are proud to tell visiting adults about the research

they have completed for the school's anniversary. Lesson plans show that teachers know their pupils well and that the needs of all pupils are met, including those with special educational needs.

98. History is co-ordinated effectively. The policy and the scheme of work have been revised in the light of national guidance. Monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and pupils' work ensures that an investigative approach is used to teach history. The digital camera is beginning to be used to record pupils' work. There are adequate resources to teach the chosen units of work and develop pupils' enquiry skills. Assessment takes place at the end of each unit and consideration is being given to improving assessment procedures as a result of the headteacher's visit to Australia where she has found a new software package to trial at the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards are typical for those expected at the age of seven and eleven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able, are progressing well. This represents a good improvement from the last inspection when standards were not good enough in Years 3 to 6. There is a new computer suite in the school, which is having a good impact on the standards the pupils are attaining. However, classroom computers are not used consistently to apply skills that have been gained and used in work across all subject areas. The subject is a priority for the school and identified well on the school development plan.

100. Pupils throughout the school explore ICT and learn to use it confidently. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 control everyday devices such as a tape recorder and listen to stories from their reading scheme. They are good at using painting software. Pupils choose and change a colour, use the brush, spray and fill tools and edit and print their work. They do pictures about the 'Teddy Bears' Picnic'. They add colour to show the symmetry of a butterfly's wings. They are good at logging on to their computer and finding past work. They can browse through directories and open the file they need. They use the word processor to record some of their writing and do exercises in English, which involve knowledge of highlighting, editing and changing font size and type. The pupils have used a programmable toy and made some use of the Internet for research in mathematics and history.

101. By the end of Year 6, pupils can prepare information for development using ICT and think about the needs of the audience. They understand the need for care in framing questions when collecting, finding and interrogating information. All pupils make good progress when using the computer suite. Pupils in Year 3 do good work on databases and gather and record the information. In Years 4 and 5 the pupils design covers for their topic books in history and do posters using imported pictures saying 'Welcome to our class'. They are good at designing pictures using painting software and have composed pictures in the style of Matisse. They have used a control program to give directions. Year 6 pupils make good progress in designing a PowerPoint presentation and in using a spreadsheet in mathematics. They have used a control box to turn traffic lights on and off. However, more could be done in the classroom to ensure that pupils use computers to apply their skill in other subjects. At present there is some good evidence of work in literacy, mathematics, science, history and art and design, but work in other subjects is very limited and more regular opportunities need to be given in all areas during classroom lessons. There was no evidence that ICT is used to support learning in music, although one teacher did bring her own keyboard in to use during a lesson. Pupils do use the digital camera well to record work in other subjects such as design and technology. During the inspection Year 6 pupils made very good use of the video camera to record playground games. This will be shown to pupils in Rumania. The Internet is used for research but again this is not used sufficiently and pupils have not used email for communicating.

102. Teaching and learning in the lessons observed were good. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and are keen to talk about what they have done. There has been great excitement in the school about the opportunities given by the new suite and the pupils are very keen to use it and enjoy their time spent in it. All the teachers have received training and now have a good knowledge of the subject. The teachers are planning their time in the suite very carefully and ensuring that the pupils are receiving very good instruction in all the software available. The school also has six laptops, which are sometimes used in lessons. However, the use of the classroom computers is inconsistent and some classes do not use these enough to apply skills during lessons in other subjects. The resources in the suite are very good and include a smartboard, although the chairs cause the younger pupils to fiddle and swing round, which lessens their attention.

103. The subject leader has clear plans for future development, which include identifying ICT in all subject areas. The school receives very good technical support which it shares with other local schools. A good new assessment package is being trialled at present which will give instant feedback to pupils on whether the skills have been understood. The computer suite also makes a very good contribution to the school's links with the community and it is available to the public for accredited training.

MUSIC

104. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are typical for pupils of this age. All pupils achieve well and make satisfactory progress in their learning. Provision for music is not as strong as other subjects. Since the last inspection standards in music have been maintained but there has been no significant improvement in the provision for music. The school has identified the need to develop and enrich the music curriculum

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve average standards in performance, listening and appreciation of music. The quality of singing in the lunchtime club is above average. Pupils learn and sing a range of songs from memory. They are confident in singing and the tempo, rhythm and pitch are impressive. All pupils in the singing club perform well for their age opening their mouths well and singing all the words clearly. They accompany their singing with simple appropriate movement gestures. Pupils sing songs such as 'Hello, hello, whose your lady friend?', 'I'll be your sweetheart,' and 'It's a long way to Tipperary'. Pupils in Year 2 can identify changing tempo in music and they know tempo means speed. They listen to 'Flight of the Bumblebee' and a lullaby. All pupils can identify the fast and slow tempo of the music. A few higher attaining pupils can identify when the tempo of the music changes from slow to faster. Pupils play a range of percussion instruments. All pupils can accompany the slow beat in the music but many find it difficult to maintain a faster beat accurately in time with the taped music and the gradual change of tempo in 'Zorba the Greek'. The music is too challenging for most pupils who find it difficult to accompany the music when the tempo changes. A few higher attaining pupils manage to accompany the taped music playing their tambour in time with the music. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to listen to and comment on the style of the music.

106. Due to timetabling no teaching was observed in Year 6. Pupils make steady progress in music but progress is not as good as in other subject areas. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 show a good understanding of dynamics and identify the difference between high and low sounds. Progress in composition work is satisfactory. Pupils work in groups of four to produce a composition using trains as the stimulus. All groups compose and perform their music showing good use of body sounds, vocal accompaniment and use of percussion to communicate the changing tempo and dynamics of their chosen train. They use their own simple notation to record their compositions. In small groups pupils collaborate and co-operate well with each other deciding the type of train, how the sounds will be

presented and the individual contribution of group members. Attitudes are good and pupils become absorbed in the composition work.

107. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to perform in assembly, for example the younger pupils sing the songs they had practised in the lunchtime club. There are two singing clubs held during the lunchtime. These are well organised and pupils have the opportunity to extend their competence in singing. Clear teaching points to improve the quality of the singing are given such as attention to body posture. Performers such as local musicians and Jamaican drummers visit the school and enrich pupils' experience of music.

108. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with instances of good teaching in Years 1 and 2. Teachers are following a published scheme of work and lessons are planned appropriately. There is currently no member of staff with specialist knowledge, and confidence and competence in teaching music are still developing. Teachers give appropriate attention to all aspects of learning in music. The pupils' response to lessons tends to reflect the quality of the teaching. Pupils respond well when given freedom within a framework structure to create their own musical compositions. Expectations for attainment especially for higher attaining pupils could be higher. Teachers are aware of this and are working hard to develop their own confidence and expertise. They are well prepared and follow planning carefully. All teachers maintain a good pace in learning. Assessment in music has not yet been developed.

109. The co-ordinator has recently taken over responsibility for music and has not yet had time to make an impact on the development of the subject. There has been no monitoring of teaching and learning in music. The school is aware of the need for professional development for all staff. Resources are satisfactory; they are easily accessible and currently sufficient for all pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. Standards of attainment by the end of Years 2 and Year 6 are above what you would expect for pupils of this age. All pupils including those with special educational needs achieve very well and make good progress in their learning. Since the last inspection the good standards have been maintained and the school has made good progress developing extra-curricular activities. During the inspection lessons were observed in athletic activities. No lessons were observed in dance, gymnastic activities, games or swimming. A discussion with staff, pupils and a scrutiny of planning indicate an appropriate curriculum for physical education and enabled judgements to be made.

111. By the age of seven all pupils can remember and reproduce a simple sequence of actions. They combine the actions of running, skipping and hopping showing good control and well-developed co-ordination. The athletic activity session is well organised and ensures all pupils experience running, jumping and throwing activities. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the activities and they all work hard to improve. The challenging pace and high expectations contribute to the above average standards achieved. All pupils know how to exercise safely and can talk about the effect on their bodies. Pupils are developing awareness and knowledge about how to perform a long jump. They know that they must push from their legs and use their arm to get them into the air. Opportunities to evaluate their performance and suggest ways to improve could be better. Pupils demonstrate a mature running style and experience running for speed and distance. Higher attaining and average pupils have developed a good throwing action, throwing for distance and at a specific target. Aiming skills are well developed, but more challenging opportunities for higher attaining pupils would raise standards further.

112. By the age of eleven all pupils understand and can explain simple attack and defence strategies for invasion games. Average pupils explain how to gain and maintain possession of a ball in

an invasion game. Pupils have a good understanding of the effect of exercise on the body and the importance of exercise to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of technique in their throwing, running and jumping skills and are developing confidence in hurdling skills. Higher attaining pupils throw the tennis ball transferring their body weight appropriately using an over-arm throwing technique. Teaching points are reinforced by teachers and classroom helpers. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speed and stamina in running events. Pupils are keen to improve their speed in the 50 metre and 75 metre distances. They show responsibility timing each other and recording their own times and distances. Athletics is well organised. Teams are responsible for deciding their own rules and identifying good sporting behaviour. Discussion with pupils indicates that they have a good knowledge of movement vocabulary for gymnastics. They describe the contents of movement sequences, talking about different jumps, rolls and balances. Pupils talk about and explain different dances including line dances and maypole dances. Pupils swim from Year 2 and they all achieve and go beyond the expected level.

113. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Lessons are well organised and contain an appropriate level of challenge for most pupils. Pupils develop ideas and apply good amounts of physical effort in their work. They show interest and understand what they are doing. Teaching points are given clearly and teachers have good subject knowledge. All the junior and infant age groups take part in the lesson together. This works very well for the older pupils for athletic activities but it is inappropriate for the younger Foundation Stage children to be included in the formal organisation. Support from the learning support assistant is very good. The curriculum is enriched by visits from professional cricket and football coaches. The use of literacy to enrich learning is less well developed. Mathematics and ICT are well used as pupils design and make their own recording sheets for the athletics lesson.

114. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop extra-curricular activities and these are well attended and enrich the curriculum provision. He is enthusiastic about sporting activities and this enthusiasm is reflected in the pupils' positive response. There is currently no monitoring or assessment in physical education. The school enters a wide range of sporting events and competitions with local schools. Considering the size of the school pupils achieve well against other larger schools. They are well supported by teachers and the headteacher in these events. The co-ordinator is a good role model.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. By the age of seven and eleven standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve well. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory progress in teaching and learning and in the standards pupils achieve.

116. By the age of seven pupils' learning about and through religious education is developing well. Pupils learn about the significance of customs in other religions. Scrutiny of work indicates sound coverage of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2 have a growing understanding of the Hindu religion. They can explain some of the basic beliefs that guide people following the Hindu religion. Pupils list qualities such as do not steal, always tell the truth, do not have too much money, share your wealth and respect your grandparents. They talk about the beliefs and write about them giving examples that can be applied to life today. They can explain about traditional daily duties of a Hindu family.

117. By the age of eleven, pupils develop their knowledge about religion and their ability to apply it to everyday life. Pupils have a sound knowledge of events in the bible and their knowledge and understanding of major faiths is satisfactory. Pupils can explain the differences between the Christian

and Muslim religions. They understand the key features of a mosque and talk about the significance of features such as the minaret. Pupils write about customs and festivals in the Jewish religion and the difference between Christianity and Judaism. Progress through the school is consistent. Pupils in Year 3 write about the main features of Islam. They know that Muslims pray five times a day facing Mecca. Pupils write about and understand how the five pillars are used by Muslims to guide their lives. Their knowledge of religion is applied well to everyday life. Pupils reflect and write about how they should live their own lives. In Year 4 pupils write about Judaism and Jewish customs, for example they describe the contents of the Seder table. There are attractive and informative displays in all classrooms that reinforce learning and awareness of other religions. A display in the hall reinforces learning about Hinduism and artefacts are attractively displayed. Pupils are invited to investigate the resources and artefacts.

118. Teaching is good overall. Learning is good because the teacher is well organised and plans interesting tasks and activities. Pupils are given clear instructions and questions are used well to check pupils' understanding and knowledge. There are good links with the biblical text and pupils are encouraged to apply the simple messages to everyday situations. Literacy and ICT are used well to enhance learning. Pupils are encouraged to write about the events of a biblical story and the Internet is well used to research information about other religions.

119. The co-ordinator makes a good contribution to supporting teaching and learning in religious education. Resources are adequate and the school is developing a good range of artefacts to enrich learning. The school makes regular visits to the local church. There have been no visits to other religious centres but Hindu, Muslim and Christian visitors come into school.