

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLY ROOD CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL**

Swindon, Wiltshire

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126426

Headteacher: Mrs D Slaght

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Sinclair  
19824

Dates of inspection: 24 - 26 March 2003

Inspection number: 254322

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Groundwell Road Swindon Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN1 2LU
Telephone number:	01793 523802
Fax number:	01793 523802
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr P Gilvin
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19824	Janet Sinclair	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage Art and design Science	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9388	Anthony Mundy	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	How well does the school care for its pupils?
9052	Helen Barter	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11901	Pat Lowe	Team inspector	Design and technology English Geography Music	How well is the school led and managed?
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Special educational needs History Information and communication technology Mathematics Physical education	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**

Holy Rood Catholic Infant School is a smaller than average infant school, situated in the central district of Swindon. The school serves four parishes and children travel from a wide area to attend it. There are 178 pupils on roll and they are taught in six single age classes. Attainment on entry is average over time with slight variations year to year. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds but their socio economic circumstances are average overall. There are 76 pupils from ethnic minority groups. Twenty-six pupils have English as an additional language, five of whom are at an early stage of English language acquisition. This is higher than in most schools. Their main languages are Polish, Italian, Portuguese and Konkani. Currently 13 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs which is a below average proportion. Their needs mainly include behavioural difficulties, speech and developmental delay. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need and this is below the national average. Around seven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average of 19 per cent. The school has undergone a major building works programme in the last few years with a new staff room, classroom and special educational needs room added to the main building. The school has recently been awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and a School Achievement award in 2002 and 2003.

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

This is a good school which is very well led by the headteacher, governors and key staff. They are committed to improving standards and providing a good quality of education for the pupils in their care. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and, as a result, pupils are achieving well. The school has average costs per pupil and provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve very well in reading and well in writing, mathematics and science because the teaching is very good in English, and good in mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, key staff and governors are very good and they are providing clear educational direction for the work of the school.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good and this is linked to the school's good provision for their spiritual, moral and social development, which helps to create a positive learning environment.
- There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress, which help to promote above average standards.
- The school has very good links with parents.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage so that it reaches the standard of the rest of the school.

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

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

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in April 1998. There is a new headteacher now in place who took on the role one year and a term after the last inspection. Standards in science have risen well, the school now caters well for its higher attaining pupils, staff with management responsibilities monitor their subjects well and the governing body has fully developed its role. In addition, standards have risen in English and mathematics and this is partly due to the very good assessment procedures that the school has and the effective use it makes of this information to target pupils who need additional support or extension activities. It is also due to the good teaching of these subjects in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching overall is similar to that of the last inspection, but it has improved in Year 2 whilst in the Reception classes it is not as good. The school is well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A	B	A	A
Writing	A	B	B	C
Mathematics	A*	B	A*	A

**Key**

very high A\*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

This information shows that the performance of pupils in 2002 was in the top five per cent nationally for mathematics, well above average in reading and above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, based on the number of pupils having a free school meal, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The results of teacher assessments in science showed standards to be above average. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in reading and above average in writing, mathematics and science. Pupils are achieving very well in reading, and well in writing, mathematics and science. Standards in geography and music are above average and pupils are achieving well. In all other subjects standards are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were average in all subjects except science where they were below average. This is due to the good teaching in these subjects, the very good teaching in English and the good use of assessment information to target pupils' learning needs accurately.

There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress against the specific targets set for their learning. In all other work they make progress in line with their peers. Due to good teaching and the good use of assessment, all pupils are learning well in English, mathematics and science.

Children currently in the Reception Year started with average levels of attainment and most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning except for the reading aspect of communication, language and literacy where they are likely to exceed them. They achieve satisfactorily except in their reading where they achieve well.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Relationships are very good and this creates a supportive learning environment.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school and arrive punctually.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although it varies between excellent and unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in the Reception classes. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection except that teaching is now better in Year 2 and not so good in the Reception classes. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is very good in English and good in mathematics, science, geography and music. The school uses the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies well to plan work for the differing learning needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy these lessons, particularly the literacy lessons where they are stimulated and motivated to learn. The main strengths in teaching overall are well planned and organised lessons, good working relationships and effective deployment of teaching assistants, who support pupils well. In these lessons pupils are keen and involved, sustain high levels of concentration and make good gains in their learning. The main weaknesses in the otherwise satisfactory lessons are a lack of emphasis on pupils' improving their work and limited demonstration and evaluation, particularly in physical education. This means that in these lessons pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen some children were unclear about what was expected of them and, for some, the work lacked challenge. As a result, the children quickly lost interest and were unsure about what they had to do. Teaching for higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good when it is directed at their specific learning needs; in all other work the teaching and their learning are similar to that of their peers.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum for children in the Reception classes is satisfactory and planned to cover the areas of learning. However, some of the group activities lack sufficient challenge to promote children's learning. The school enriches the curriculum well through its provision for visits and visitors and its small number of extra-curricular clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. Individual education plans have appropriate and manageable targets, which pupils are able to meet through the individual help they are given and well focused support in lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall. There is a weekly visit from a language support teacher who supports Year 2 pupils with their writing. Additionally, she assesses all pupils' stage of language acquisition and writes detailed action plans for their learning. The school provides additional support to target their learning needs within the classroom.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual and moral development is good. Provision for social development is very good and is well supported by the very good relationships throughout the school. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory and pupils are appropriately prepared for life in a multiculturally diverse society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a safe and supportive learning environment where pupils are cared for well. Procedures for child protection, health and safety are good. Assessment procedures are very good and used very

	well to monitor and improve standards.
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The school has an effective partnership with parents. They are fully involved in the work of the school and make a good contribution to their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future development of the school and has gained the support and commitment of staff and governors. All staff work harmoniously together to maintain and further develop an effective and improving school where pupils are motivated to learn.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. They clearly understand their role, are very supportive of the school and fully involved in shaping its direction. They were very active in ensuring that the building work on the school was completed to a high standard and cost-effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and securing effective action. The monitoring of teaching and learning and the very good use of assessment information have proved effective in raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources, including specific funds to support educational priorities such as special educational needs, are used very well. The governors allocate and agree funds to support the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The principles of best value are applied well, for example, in the extensive building work that has recently taken place.

The school is well staffed, learning resources are good overall and, as a result of the recent extensions to the building, the accommodation is now good. The outdoor area for the Reception age children is small but the school makes effective use of it.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The children like school, behave well and are making good progress.</li> <li>The school works closely with them and they would be comfortable about approaching the school with any issues.</li> <li>The school is well led and managed, the teaching is good and children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>The school is helping the children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> <li>The information about how their children are progressing.</li> </ul>

The response to the parents' questionnaire was very high; over two out of every three parents in the school responded. The inspection team supports the positive views held by parents. In terms of what parents would like to see improved, the inspection team found that the information provided to parents on their children's progress is good and the range of activities outside lessons, which include after school clubs and a good range of visits and visitors, is good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children's attainment on entry varies slightly year to year but is average overall. The attainment on entry of pupils currently in Year 2 was average in reading and slightly below average in mathematics.
2. Children in the Reception classes are achieving satisfactorily across the areas of learning. However, there is a need for greater challenge in group activities in order to promote consistently satisfactory learning. Additionally, children do not have enough opportunities to develop their own ideas in creative activities as too much of the work is directed by the teacher. Most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception year with a good number exceeding them in the reading aspect of communication, language and literacy. The school places a good emphasis on reading both within the class and through parental support at home and this has a positive impact on their achievement. This is a slight deterioration overall on the findings of the previous inspection when children were achieving well across the areas of learning.
3. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, results were well above average in reading, above average in writing and in the top five per cent nationally in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, based on the number of pupils having free school meals, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. When the three years 2000 to 2002 are taken together, standards have remained either above or well above average. The school's trend in standards is above the national trend in reading and mathematics and in line with it in writing. There is no significant difference in standards attained by boys and girls. The school has not been able to monitor standards of pupils for whom English is an additional language as they have not been in school long enough. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen well since the previous inspection. Pupils are achieving well and sometimes very well based on their attainment on entry. This is a good improvement.
4. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in reading and above average in writing, mathematics and science. Pupils are achieving well and sometimes very well, given their average attainment on entry. Pupils are achieving well because the school makes very good use of assessment information to target pupils' learning, lessons are well planned and good use is made of the literacy and numeracy strategies to provide a comprehensive framework for lessons. Standards in mathematics are not as high as in 2002 and this is because there are more pupils with special educational needs in this year group and their attainment in mathematics was slightly below average on entry. The school has supported them well.
5. Standards are average in all other subjects except geography and music, where they are above average. This is an improvement in geography and music since the previous inspection and a similar finding for other subjects. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory except in music and geography where achievement is good. Pupils achieve satisfactorily rather than well in these subjects because not enough attention is given to developing their skills progressively.
6. Pupils with English as an additional language currently make progress in line with their peers in class lessons and good progress when supported by the language support teacher.
7. The attainment of higher attaining pupils is above and often well above average. They make good progress, particularly in English and geography where they are encouraged to develop higher order skills, such as scanning for information and collating information from more than one source, including information and communication technology (ICT). In addition, they are mainly provided with appropriately stimulating and challenging work.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. Individual education plans have appropriate and manageable targets, which pupils are able to meet through individual help and well focused support in lessons.

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

9. Since the last inspection pupils have maintained their good attitudes to school, their good behaviour and the very good relationships that they have with one another and with adults. These have a good impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the positive atmosphere in the school. Parents say that the school promotes good attitudes and values and that this is evident in the behaviour of their children. They say that their children are keen to attend school and nearly all feel that the school helps their children to grow and mature well.
10. Pupils' and parents' positive attitudes towards the school are reflected in the good levels of attendance. This has been maintained since the last inspection. There are no unauthorised absences and most parents avoid taking their children on holiday in term-time. Although a few pupils arrive during the registration period, punctuality is good overall.
11. When provided with interesting work and activities in lessons and around the school, pupils are well motivated to learn, keen to participate and enthusiastic about what they are doing. This has a good impact on their learning and personal development. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to their teachers, are keen to answer and respond to questions, and sustain concentration when working. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and this helps them to feel confident to discuss and share ideas in the classroom. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and speak positively about their learning and activities, such as visits to a local museum.
12. Behaviour around the school is good. Pupils say that it is a happy school and, apart from some 'falling out', they get on well with each other and that there is no bullying. They are clear that if they did feel unhappy an adult would help them to sort out their problems. Pupils get on well with their teachers and respond well to their expectations for work and behaviour. They understand the school and class rules and behave well in assemblies, at lunchtimes and in the playground. Although pupils behave well nearly all of the time in lessons, behaviour in physical education lessons is less positive because it is less well controlled. Pupils are noisy and excitable and do not always give their full attention to the teacher or follow instructions when asked. Pupils who have specific behaviour problems are well managed and supported through the provision for special educational needs. There have been no exclusions from the school.
13. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Relationships in the school are very good and help all pupils to enjoy their learning and to feel fully included in the school community. There is no evidence of anti-social behaviour and pupils of all abilities and backgrounds get on well together. They are able to co-operate and work well together in the classroom and often help each other by checking and discussing each other's work. Through the provision for their personal development, pupils learn to understand relationships and how their actions affect others. For example, pupils in Year 2 consider what makes them a good friend and some are able to be self-critical when they say 'I make friends unhappy if I'm bossy when I'm playing'. Pupils respond well to opportunities to develop their responsibility. They undertake small jobs in the classroom and around the school willingly and respond well to adults' requests, such as to hold the door open for others.

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

14. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although it varies between excellent and unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good; it is satisfactory in the Reception classes. Teaching was good in almost half of the lessons seen and in a small proportion it was very good. There was one unsatisfactory lesson. This is a similar

finding to that of the previous inspection except that there were fewer unsatisfactory lessons observed during the current inspection.

15. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage, but varies between good and unsatisfactory. This is not as good as the previous inspection when teaching in the Foundation Stage was found to be very good. The main strengths in the teaching are good questioning to encourage speaking and listening, good teaching of reading, good relationships, good management of children and well established classroom routines. However, in group activities there is often a lack of challenge and this is caused by a lack of clear learning objectives. In creative activities there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their own ideas.
16. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is very good in English and literacy and good in mathematics, science, geography and music. It is satisfactory overall in physical education. No judgements were made in the teaching of art and design, design and technology, ICT or history as not enough lessons were observed and there was not enough evidence of work over time to make secure judgements. Teaching in English is very good because lessons are thoroughly planned and the needs of pupils with differing abilities are fully catered for. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make very good assessments through questioning and observation. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and assessment information from tests is used well to ensure that pupils' needs are accurately targeted. In mathematics, numeracy and science, lessons are well planned, good use is made of assessment information and basic skills are thoroughly taught. In science pupils have good opportunities to investigate and experiment and this is helping to develop their observational skills.
17. There are some aspects of teaching which distinguish very good or good from satisfactory lessons. In the good and very good lessons teachers have good subject knowledge, planning for lessons is detailed and class organisation is effective; consequently pupils know what is expected of them and settle to their tasks confidently and with enthusiasm. Work is well matched to pupils' different learning needs and teachers explain tasks very well. This helps to consolidate learning. Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to think more carefully and work out solutions. Additionally, good use is made of humour and the element of surprise which ensure pupils' attention. In all these lessons there are good relationships, which enables pupils to express their ideas and move forward confidently in their learning. In the satisfactory lessons teachers allow a higher level of noise and there are limited opportunities for evaluation or demonstration. As a result, the pupils do not make the gains in their learning of which they are capable.
18. Day-to-day assessment is mainly good as all teachers are required to carry out a summative evaluation of pupils' progress in lessons and this ensures their individual needs are considered. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly through praising comments or ticks. However, there is limited emphasis on suggesting ways that pupils can improve their work or in considering the support or extension needed. Teachers are using ICT satisfactorily across the curriculum and pupils' skills are developing well as a result.
19. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good when they are supported by the local education authority's advisory teacher. She assesses all pupils in terms of their language acquisition and provides clear action plans to help teachers and support staff work effectively with them within the classroom. In most lessons, their needs are well catered for, ensuring that they can be fully involved in lessons. The support teacher mainly works with pupils in Year 2 in order to improve their writing skills, but also additionally monitors the work of all other pupils with English as an additional language. She is due to provide staff training next term in order to help teachers improve their teaching strategies. Most teachers and support staff consider the needs of pupils well within the class, but occasionally support staff are not well enough briefed and pupil support is less effective.
20. The quality of teaching and learning for more able pupils is very good in English and good in science, mathematics, geography and music. The analysis and use of data are particularly effective in English in providing them with challenging tasks and extension activities. More advanced spellings and other homework are set for more able pupils.

21. Good, well focused learning opportunities are provided for pupils with special educational needs, allowing them to meet their targets, particularly those related to literacy and numeracy. Within the class lessons, planned activities are generally appropriate for pupils with special educational needs and teaching assistants mostly carry out their support role effectively. However, in some lessons their role is not sufficiently defined in planning and preparation, and is therefore less effective.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage.
23. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is based appropriately on the specified areas of learning for children of this age. It is planned to ensure that the youngest children in school have full access to a wide range of suitable experiences but does not always ensure children are sufficiently challenged by them.
24. The school provides a good curriculum for Years 1 and 2 that promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. It prepares them well for the next stage of education and meets statutory requirements for the National Curriculum. The minor weaknesses in balance, reported at the last inspection, have been addressed. Provision for higher attaining pupils is now built into planning.
25. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully. They have been effective in raising standards and enabling good achievement. Good use is made of literacy skills in subjects such as geography, science and design and technology. The schemes of work for other subjects take account of national and local authority guidelines, but are nevertheless adapted to the particular needs of the school. They help to ensure continuity and progression in learning.
26. Good provision is made for personal, social and health education. Lessons are timetabled, and a scheme of work, 'Time to Talk', is followed. Circle time, religious education lessons and assemblies also provide further opportunities to develop this area. The school has agreed not to provide sex education, although any questions from pupils are answered sensitively. Drugs' awareness is covered appropriately, for example, when discussing the safe use of medicines. Pupils have regular homework sheets, which encourage parents to talk to their children about issues such as 'stealing' and 'telling lies'.
27. All pupils are fully included in lessons and other learning opportunities, regardless of background, gender or ability. The school now has a policy with agreed criteria for identifying more able pupils, and schemes of work have been revised to include provision for them. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual education plans relate closely to their particular needs, and are reviewed regularly. Teachers provide appropriate learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs, and generally work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum. There is good provision for pupils with English as an additional language. They are given additional support in lessons and teachers have clear action plans specific to their needs to guide their work.
28. The curriculum is enriched well by visits and visitors. All pupils go on three visits each year, linked to their studies. For example, visits are made to the Cotswold Wildlife Park and Westonbirt Arboretum as part of the science curriculum. Parents and grandparents visit the school to talk about their past experiences to help develop pupils' understanding of chronology in history. Different groups, such as a science theatre group, also visit the school. Due to the

school's wide catchment area and transport arrangements, it is difficult arranging extra-curricular activities after school. Good provision is however made - for example, the tuition of Brazilian soccer skills. Year 2 pupils also have singing activities and football at lunchtime.

29. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is good. Effective use is made of the local environment; for example, through the use of the local park and visits to the local cenotaph. A police officer visits every class on a regular basis to talk about personal and road safety issues. There are strong links with the church. Pupils have visited the civic centre to debate school uniform, and have also sung at a local festival. Local poets and authors are invited to the school during an annual book week.
30. There are very good links with partner schools, which help significantly when pupils transfer from one stage of education to another. Visits made by Reception class teachers to the local playgroups help them to know the pupils who will be joining the school. Particular concerns, such as special educational needs, are discussed. Strong curricular links have been made with the Catholic junior school; there are joint training days and co-ordinators discuss how schemes of work can be followed through. Students on diploma courses are placed at the school, and older pupils visit on work experience.
31. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, and has improved since the previous inspection.
32. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Whole-school assemblies help pupils to gain personal insights, and to understand the importance of caring for others. Although not seen during the inspection, pupils have opportunities to participate individually in assemblies and contribute their own ideas. Enthusiastic singing is encouraged, and, during the inspection, children in a Reception class sang spontaneously during their afternoon activity session. A very good relationship is established with the adjacent church, and the priest is a frequent and welcome visitor. In lessons, teachers often lead pupils in prayer, and in reflection upon the natural world. Geography lessons stimulate pupils' interest in the wider world, environmental issues and global citizenship. Pupils frequently visit many local places of interest, including the Fire Station, Queen's Park, the library and college theatre.
33. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. The development of self-discipline is guided by teachers' expectations, and their reminders of specific rules agreed in classrooms. Teachers are skilled in explaining to pupils why some actions by individuals have wider effects in the community, for example, 'We all look different, but we all have the same feelings'. Pupils show respect and affection for teachers and the other adults who help them every day. Staff are very good role models, and the consistently good relationships between staff and pupils promote strong moral values in all year groups.
34. Provision for social development is very good. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are very good. Older pupils are aware of the needs of newcomers to the school, and enjoy accepting responsibilities as 'buddies' for individuals. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to work together, exchanging ideas and sharing equipment. During the inspection, in a very good music lesson in Year 1, pupils' very good relationships contributed to their very good learning. Pupils in Year 2 participated in a lively discussion about the use or disposal of unwanted gifts. Although circle time sessions are not regularly timetabled, pupils' comments are valued in lessons, and teachers often respond by inviting further discussion of issues, and clarification of individual viewpoints. A wide range of visitors extends pupils' knowledge of lifestyles and living conditions at home and abroad. They are very interested in hearing news from a partner school in Zambia, and they enthusiastically raise money for local, national and international charities. In all classes, pupils have responsibilities for tidiness and taking care of resources.
35. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school participates in some public events, including the choir's participation in the annual Swindon Festival. Pupils study local and regional culture, and they know how their town has developed over the years. Western culture is fully explored through Book Weeks and visits from theatre and music groups. Pupils have some

awareness of the diversity of British society, and they are learning something of the values and beliefs of a variety of faiths and cultures. They celebrate the diversity of the cultures represented within the school through having, for example, Polish, Irish or Italian days. However, the school has few books in pupils' home languages, and very few multicultural artefacts and this limits the opportunities to explore cultural diversity through these media.



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

36. The safe and caring environment maintained since the previous inspection has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. Good procedures are established for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. The headteacher is the responsible officer, and has received recent training. At regular meetings, she verifies that class teachers and other adults fully understand and implement the school's procedures.
37. The school's detailed policy for health and safety includes procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during off-site visits. Good health and safety practice is supplemented by regular risk assessments of the site, and specific assessments for activities. Frequent fire alarm practices ensure that the building can quickly be evacuated. The school site and buildings present no apparent risks to health and safety.
38. Two members of staff are qualified in aspects of first aid, and all staff are sensitive to the welfare needs of pupils. Good supervision ensures pupils' safety in the playgrounds at break times and lunchtimes. Midday assistants are conscientious and attentive, and are interested in pupils' welfare and safety. Procedures are very good for safely welcoming into school the significant number of pupils arriving each day by scheduled bus and escorting them to the bus at the close of the day.
39. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good, and have improved since the previous inspection. The school retains copies of all certificates awarded for good work, effort and behaviour. Teachers and other adults know the pupils very well, and are skilled in assessing their needs. Pupils of all ethnic groups and of all attainments are included fully in all activities. Pupils receive very good individual care and support from class teachers, teaching assistants and the headteacher, who is accessible, caring and reassuring.
40. There are very good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Baseline assessments for pupils starting school are analysed carefully, along with records from pre-school providers. From this analysis and careful observation of pupils in class, special educational needs are identified and individual education plans drawn up by class teachers, with any necessary help or advice being given by the co-ordinator. Realistic and manageable targets are set that are reviewed at least termly, and are discussed and shared with pupils. Careful records are kept of pupils' progress. The help and support of outside agencies is sought as required - for example, from the educational psychologist. Provision, particularly for behavioural needs, draws effectively on this support.
41. A very good induction system settles pupils quickly into the Reception classes. They are gradually and sensitively introduced routines and consequently settle well. Pupils joining other year groups adapt easily to the school's routines. Good procedures in Year 2 prepare pupils for transfer to the junior school. Pupils in all year groups are relaxed and happy in the school community.
42. Procedures are good for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Most pupils conform to the agreed rules displayed in classrooms. Teachers' behaviour management techniques are mainly good although, in physical education lessons, expectations of behaviour are unclear to pupils and they do not always behave well, as a result. A simple, effective system of merit awards acknowledges pupils' good behaviour, good work and effort. Outstanding achievement is acknowledged at weekly celebration assemblies.
43. A good anti-bullying policy provides pupils, parents and staff with clear definitions of bullying, and detailed procedures for action. Parents and pupils have no concerns about bullying: they know that reported incidents are promptly addressed by discussion and reconciliation. Staff and governors have not yet agreed a policy on the use of restraint by staff, or on procedures for noting incidents of restraint.

44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good, and contribute to good levels of attendance in each year group. The school meticulously contacts families over unexplained absence, and rigorously records the few incidents of unauthorised absence.
45. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. They are clearly defined in all policy documents. Assessment is integral to the planning, recording and reporting cycle and is based on national guidance. It identifies each child's strengths, weaknesses and needs and enables the school to plan for continual progress. As pupils progress through the school, the results of national tests and formal school tests are collated, and an academic profile, which commences with the national baseline profile in the Reception class, is built up for each child. Attainment is recorded in terms of the Early Learning Goals in the Reception class and National Curriculum levels in Years 1 and 2. This forms the basis for reporting pupils' strengths and weaknesses to parents, the governing body and the child's next teacher. Evidence of pupils' work is provided in their achievement books, which contain a termly annotated sample of work in English, mathematics and science. This leads to target setting for individual pupils and groups of pupils, and constitutes a focus of meaningful dialogue between parents and teachers during the final consultation each year. In other subject areas, the assessment of pupils' achievement is planned for at the end of each unit of work, in accordance with national guidance. Assessment and recording are viewed as a means of improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards of attainment.
46. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is very good. The school analyses children's baseline scores in the Reception class and national test scores in English, mathematics and science in Year 2. It also analyses pupils' reading and spelling scores in Years 1 and 2 and termly writing assessments, in order to highlight strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment, predict future performance and take effective action. This includes setting suitably challenging work for groups of pupils of different ability in each class in English, mathematics and science and the provision of extra literacy support for small groups of pupils in Year 1 who need to improve their skills and raise their attainment to a higher level. As a result of verbal feedback, most pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a sound knowledge of their own learning. The marking policy is generally supportive, and sometimes analytical, but it does not always identify ways in which pupils can improve their performance. Teachers, aided by teaching assistants, evaluate pupils' work each week and use the outcomes to adjust future planning.
47. The school uses its records and assessment procedures to identify more able pupils, track their progress and budget for resources, such as chess sets, website links and the 'Thinking Skills' programme. The co-ordinator works closely with the co-ordinator at the junior school to which pupils progress. The school contributes to, and gains from, the local authority's 'More Able' newsletter and its booklet, 'Ideas for Challenging Pupils'. More able pupils, during instructional writing in English, were asked to evaluate a challenging fractions game. There are opportunities for them to attend classes and workshops within the community. The school uses all available data, together with individual target setting, to set appropriately challenging targets and tasks for more able pupils.
48. The school has good procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs and providing them with specific support. It recognises the need to identify difficulties as early as possible. The assessment of children on entry to the reception class effectively highlights specific needs. All available information is used in setting and reviewing appropriate targets for each pupil, tracking their progress and providing support to those who need it. Individual action plans are in place and are used to guide teaching, and monitor progress. Key staff are aware of the contents of pupils' statements of special educational needs and are able to contribute to the reviews that take place. All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with specific needs, ensure that they take an active part in lessons and assist teachers in monitoring pupils' progress. The results are used to plan for individual pupils' learning.
49. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is very good. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. It highlights the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils and groups of pupils, and informs future planning. The progress of

selected pupils of differing abilities is monitored throughout their school career and combined into a school portfolio. The aim is to illustrate all aspects of English, mathematics and science and the range of levels attained by pupils throughout the school. There is an extensive monitoring programme in English and mathematics and, to a lesser extent, in other subjects. For example, the subject leader for English carries out a rolling programme of monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom, teachers' medium- and short-term plans and pupils' writing, spelling and reading results. Through value-added analysis of formal tests, the school monitors the extent to which pupils are making expected progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The progress of different groups is monitored, such as boys and girls, parallel classes, more able pupils, pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. The results are analysed, in order for the school to take effective action and improve achievement. The school acknowledges pupils' achievements through rewards and praise in class and at weekly achievement assemblies. This improves pupils' self-esteem and encourages them to achieve success.

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

50. Since the last inspection, the school has further strengthened its partnership with parents and there are now very effective links that have a very good impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the life of the school.
51. Parents have very good views of the school. At the meeting before the inspection, parents commented on how the school has become increasingly open and relaxed and that there is a much friendlier atmosphere. Parents are very pleased with the progress that their children are making in both their academic work and in their personal development. They say that there is a very good Catholic ethos which supports their children's personal development well. Parents are clear that they can speak to teachers at any time about their children's progress and any difficulties that they may be having. They are pleased with the way in which the school encourages them to be involved in school life, through volunteering with activities, helping in the classroom or attending social and fundraising activities organised by the Parents' and Friends' Association.
52. Those parents who completed the questionnaire also demonstrated their high level of support for the school. They agree that their children make good progress and behave well as a result of high quality teaching, leadership and the expectations that their children will achieve their best. A small group of parents criticised the amount of information that they receive about their child's progress. The inspection team judges that the quality of information received by parents is good and this was confirmed by parents at the meeting who said that the 'open door' policy of the school means that parents can easily find out about their children's progress if they have concerns. A few criticisms of the school's provision for homework were proved unfounded by the inspection team. Homework is set regularly and supports pupils' learning well. Parents are kept well informed about homework and how they can help their children through termly curricular newsletters.
53. The school provides parents with good quality information. School documentation is well presented and encourages parents to be involved in school life. Pupils' end of year reports record their progress well in all subjects of the curriculum and in their personal development. Targets, mostly in literacy and numeracy, are clear and are helpful to parents who wish to help their children at home. Parents are able to discuss their children's work and their targets at regular consultation meetings and there are many opportunities for informal discussion with teachers at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents say that newsletters, including termly curricular information, are friendly and very informative. The school has developed a website so that parents have access to up-to-date information. [www.holyroodinfantschool.org](http://www.holyroodinfantschool.org)
54. There are very good links with parents. The home-school agreement demonstrates a strong commitment to working together to achieve a positive partnership. Parents, carers and other adults are positively welcomed into school and a large number help in classrooms, with activities

and visits outside school. This contributes to the sense of 'community' promoted by the school and gives good encouragement to pupils' personal development and learning. Most parents support their children's learning well. They regularly hear them read at home, share library books with them and help with homework activities. Teachers are easily accessible to parents and parents make good use of these positive, informal relationships to keep in touch with their children's progress and welfare.

- 55. The school keeps parents of more able pupils well informed. They are aware of their child's particular strengths and the provision available, both in school and in the community. Parents provide good support at home and contribute effectively to the progress made.
- 56. Parents of children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are kept well informed. They are involved in reviews, and discuss the help that they as parents can provide.

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

- 57. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when leadership was good. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. They work harmoniously together to maintain and further develop an effective and improving school where pupils are motivated to learn. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future development of the school and has gained the support and commitment of the teaching and non-teaching staff. She has fully addressed a key issue of the last report, which was to develop opportunities for the headteacher, deputy headteacher and co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching and standards. The delegation to staff with management responsibilities is very good and they contribute effectively to school improvement.
- 58. The school's aims and values are fully reflected in the work of the staff and the positive climate for learning within which both pupils and staff achieve success. The mission statement is firmly rooted in the Catholic ethos. The school's priorities for development are appropriate and the action taken to meet the school's targets is very good.
- 59. Improvements in monitoring and assessment procedures, and their use, have been instrumental in raising standards. The two-year school improvement plan identifies areas for development and includes time scales and cost implications. The strategic aims are identified through three priorities – safety, success and security. There is a shared commitment to further improvement and the capacity to succeed is good.
- 60. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. It has addressed the main area for improvement of the last inspection report, which was to develop a system by which the governing body could monitor and evaluate the impact to their decisions and the quality of education provided. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the areas for development. They have developed their role in strategic planning and the monitoring of the school's performance. Their role in shaping the direction of the school is now very good. They take an active role in the formulation of the school improvement plan. The headteacher works closely with the governing body and provides regular detailed reports on standards, curriculum development, monitoring of pupils' performance, trends over time and financial matters. Governors have individual responsibility for liaising with the school regarding a National Curriculum subject or an aspect of teaching. They have established the necessary committees to assist them in their work and each committee keeps the full governing body informed through written reports. There is a race equality policy and the governors are in the process of producing an accessibility plan to ensure that the buildings and grounds are as accessible as possible to adults and pupils with physical disabilities.
- 61. The management of the headteacher and key staff is very good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the governing body are fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and the taking of effective action. Subject leaders monitor and review their

own subject areas. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom by the headteacher, the senior management team and local authority personnel has proved effective in raising standards in Years 1 and 2. They are aware of the inconsistencies in teaching between Years 1 and 2 and the Foundation Stage and have already begun to address these. Monitoring has now been largely devolved to subject leaders and they are beginning to take an increasingly active role in monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom. Improved planning ensures that pupils' learning builds on what they already know, understand and can do. This has led to good improvement in teaching in Year 2 since the last inspection.

62. There are very good procedures for reviewing the performance of the headteacher and other staff. The governing body, with the support of an external advisor, appraises the work of the headteacher and sets performance targets for her. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher appraise the work of teachers. There are plans for teaching assistants and all staff on the payroll to participate in performance management. Teaching assistants have many opportunities for further training. They have developed their expertise in managing initiatives in literacy and numeracy and generally provide good support to pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. There is a programme of induction for teachers and teaching assistants who are new to the school. The school is not involved in the training of student teachers, but it welcomes secondary school pupils on work experience and students from Swindon College, an arrangement which is mutually beneficial to the trainees and the school.
63. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well led and managed. The current special educational needs co-ordinator is a recent appointment, and is well supported by the previous co-ordinator. They both have a clear picture of the special educational needs within the school, and how they are being met. Individual education plans are carefully monitored to ensure that targets are manageable and clearly focused. Special educational needs' folders have been provided for all classes with relevant records and information. Teaching assistants meet regularly with the headteacher, who was the previous co-ordinator; to discuss issues concerning special educational needs support. A room is currently being set up to provide a base for special educational needs provision and support. Funding for special educational needs is used fully and appropriately. The governor with oversight for special educational needs is well informed and liaises with the co-ordinator on a regular basis. The school works closely with the junior school to which pupils transfer, in order to ensure the smooth transition of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
64. The school is equally successful in addressing the needs of average and more able pupils and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Teachers are developing expertise in extending pupils' thinking skills. Through weekly sessions for all classes, pupils are developing library and research skills, which are particularly evident in English and geography, where pupils are encouraged to scan for information and to collate information from more than one source, including the use of the Internet.
65. The deputy headteacher provides very good leadership in his role as co-ordinator for more able pupils. He continues to build effectively on the foundations laid in recent years. More able pupils are identified in each class and are placed on a register, which is reviewed termly. Lesson observations are carried out with a focus on more able pupils. All staff are aware of their needs and have had specific training on teaching literacy and numeracy to them. Provision for more able pupils is a focus of the school development plan.
66. The school is committed to educational inclusion and equality of opportunity. Pupils who have special educational needs receive good support in all areas of their work and play. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are fully integrated in all activities, but few books are available in their home languages. Consequently, teachers rarely have opportunities to endorse the value of home languages to EAL pupils, and to those whose first language is English.
67. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The school makes effective use of new technology in managing the budget and keeping track of pupils' data and progress. All expenditure is budgeted for systematically. The administrative officer, ably

supported by the clerical assistant, manages the school office very efficiently and extends a warm welcome to visitors to the school. Finances are managed very effectively. Issues highlighted in the recent audit report have been addressed, or are in the process of being addressed. There is close liaison with the governing body and the school has ready access to outside expertise in managing its finances. The budget process is managed efficiently and the headteacher keeps the governors fully informed regarding spending levels. The strategic use of resources, including specific funds to support educational priorities such as special educational needs, is very good. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value well to ensure that the school makes efficient use of all its resources; for example, in the extensive building work that has recently taken place. The governors allocate and agree funds to support the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Financial reports show careful analysis of spending against aims. The significant carry forward is to be used for resurfacing the playground, the provision of ICT equipment and disabled toilets.

68. The number of teachers matches the demands of the curriculum well. The school employs a very large number of teaching assistants, most of whom provide good support for individuals and small groups of pupils, but others require training to fulfil their roles effectively. The school does not currently offer a training programme for teaching assistants, and does not monitor how class teachers deploy assistants during lessons. Newly qualified and newly appointed teachers receive satisfactory mentoring through the school's induction programme. The administrative and cleaning staff and lunchtime assistants all contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.
69. Accommodation is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has carried out a programme of extension which has enhanced the accommodation. Classrooms are of a good size, and the school building provides a pleasant environment for pupils and staff. Some small rooms are available for specialist activities. Displays of pupils' work in classrooms and open areas are satisfactory. Classroom furniture is in good condition and is suitable for all pupils in the infant age range. The library is a pleasant room, well stocked with fiction and reference books. Externally, the playgrounds are of satisfactory size, and have some useful markings to stimulate pupils' games. The external area available to the Reception classes is small but used well by the school. The school site and building are free of vandalism, graffiti and litter, and are clean and well maintained.
70. Learning resources are good overall, and this is a similar finding to the previous inspection. The number of computers available to pupils is close to the national average and all computer hardware is of good quality. Resources for geography, science and the Foundation Stage are good. The school has a generous number of books in the English language, but has few books for pupils whose home language is not English.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

71. In order to raise standards further and enable children to achieve more the governing body, headteacher and staff need to:-
  - (1) Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage so that it reaches the standard of the rest of the school by:-
    - ensuring that there are clear learning intentions for all activities which provide an appropriate level of challenge and that teachers intervene appropriately in children's learning in order to extend their knowledge and understanding;
    - providing more opportunities for children to use their own ideas and imagination in their creative activities.

*(Paragraphs: 2, 15, 72)*

In addition, the governing body may wish to consider the following for possible inclusion in its action plan: -

- ensure teaching assistants provide effective support in all lessons;  
(*Paragraphs: 21, 68,92*)
- improve the quality of marking so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work;  
(*Paragraphs: 46, 88, 93, 99*)
- improve the level of multicultural artefacts and the provision of books in pupils' home languages.  
(*Paragraphs: 35, 70*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	35
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	1	3	13	17	1	0	0
Percentage	3	9	37	48	3	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	178
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	26

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.7	School data	0.0



National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year		2002	35	25	60

  

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	31	34
	Girls	25	24	25
	Total	58	55	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (95)	92 (95)	98 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

  

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	32	34
	Girls	25	23	25
	Total	58	55	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	92 (93)	98 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
90	0	0
3	0	0
13	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
3	0	0
7	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

No ethnic group recorded
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1
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0
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0
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*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	194

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-02
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	£
Total income	369,621
Total expenditure	382,415
Expenditure per pupil	2,136
Balance brought forward from previous year	102,154
Balance carried forward to next year	89,360

### **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)	
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	180
Number of questionnaires returned	132

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	23	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	31	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	42	8	2	1
The teaching is good.	67	30	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	42	14	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	45	44	8	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	71	25	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	37	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	38	14	8	12

## **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**

72. Children enter the two Reception classes in the September prior to their fifth birthday. Those children who have birthdays before the first of April attend full time from the outset, whilst all others attend part time until January, when they attend full time. Attainment on entry varies slightly year to year but is mainly average.
73. The teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although teaching varies between good and unsatisfactory. This is not as good as at the time of the last inspection when teaching was found to be very good. Teaching is good in the reading aspect of communication, language and literacy and satisfactory overall in all other aspects of early years' learning. The main strengths of the teaching are good questioning, correct use of vocabulary and lessons that are well organised and managed. Teachers have good relationships with the children and this encourages their confidence in tackling activities; occasionally it leads to their starting to sing in the middle of lessons, which enhances their learning. Where teaching is less effective, group activities lack challenge, for example, when there are no clear learning objectives and no intervention by the teacher to extend children's knowledge and understanding. Sometimes, when work is not explained clearly enough, or children are unsure of what to do, they lose interest and make up their own games. In creative activities there is too much teacher directed work with too little opportunity for children to develop their own ideas or imagination. Additionally, there is too much use of worksheets which does not allow children to learn through practical activity. In the unsatisfactory lesson, children were unclear about what they had to do and quickly lost interest. The teacher herself was not clear enough about her expectations for the children and the lesson became confused and jumbled. Good use is made of the small outdoor area to provide role play and opportunities for physical development.
74. Most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning, with a good number exceeding them in the reading aspect of communication, language and literacy. Children with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are mainly supported well with a good focus on their needs but occasionally there is not enough focus on what needs to be done in specific activities in order to improve their learning. Higher attaining children are mainly well catered for in their reading, writing and mathematics.

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

75. Children enter the Reception classes with average personal and social skills. They enjoy class activities when they are clear about what is expected of them and maintain good attention and concentration. They do not show any concerns about being away from their parents or carers during the day and this includes children who are at an early stage of learning English. Most children know where resources are kept and tidy up well at the end of lessons. They happily share resources such as crayons, paints and malleable materials and mainly play well together. Most successfully undress for physical education and need only minimal help. When tasks engage them they can sustain concentration for extended periods of time; for example, when painting, one small group worked quietly and with total concentration to complete their work. They are given some opportunities to develop their independence through choosing their own activities, but sometimes these have limited challenge and children lose interest.

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

76. Children are developing their speaking and listening skills at least satisfactorily and sometimes well. In one class the teacher's good questioning and effective use of vocabulary helps children to develop these skills well; for example, 'Why do you think the shark sank and the duck floated?' and, again, 'You told me the duck was bigger but it still floated'. Most listen carefully during teacher led discussions and respond appropriately with clear diction and in sentences. There are

however some children who have to be helped to contribute as their speaking skills are poorly developed. These children tend to be given help in small groups. Children are developing their reading skills well. Higher attaining children read confidently and make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds to build words. They make simple predictions of what might happen next in the story. Lower attaining children recognise a few words and use these when reading. They know how to turn the pages and read books appropriately. Children have regular opportunities to write but mainly in a highly structured form, either through copying under the teacher's writing or writing with support using their knowledge of sounds. There are few opportunities for children to develop their writing independently through their play. A few higher attaining children are writing a few sentences by themselves with a good knowledge of the conventions of writing, but many are still writing under the teacher's writing. All children are able to write their own first name with a good level of consistency in the formation of letters.

### **Mathematical development**

77. Most children recognise numerals to ten and count to ten accurately with some higher attaining children counting to 20 and beyond. Most children have some idea of 'more' or 'less' when dealing with small numbers. They know which number comes between given numbers, for example, they know that eight comes between seven and nine. A few higher attaining pupils can add and subtract numbers within ten and have some idea of the range of numbers which added together make ten. Children have a good knowledge of shapes such as squares, triangles and circles and name them appropriately. They know how to order size using terms such as 'biggest' and 'smallest' through their work on the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Most know how to continue and complete simple repeated patterns. However, they have limited opportunities to use sand and water play to explore the shape of different containers. They sort objects by colour and shape and are clear about the criteria they have used. They enjoy singing number songs such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs' and carefully carry out the subtraction involved.

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

78. Most children have good opportunities to develop their ICT skills and are skilled in using the mouse. When using a graphics programme they use the Icon carefully to screen a variety of shapes. They use a programmable toy well to help them develop their ideas of movement and direction. In the lesson seen, this was developed further in the playground by a teaching assistant who set out cones into a right angled track. One child had to act as a robot and the other as a teller. With good support from the teaching assistant the teller managed to control the robot on the track. In their work on floating and sinking they learn that words such as 'predict' means 'to guess' and most make good guesses as to which objects will float or sink. Children are developing their ideas of which materials are good for joining objects together. For example, they learn that glue, sellotape and stitching are effective means of joining some materials together. However, they find the task of making a bridge outline for the Three Billy Goats Gruff difficult and they need a great deal of help. Children learn about their own religion through celebrations such as Harvest festival and regular assemblies. They have good opportunities to investigate the world around them through activities such as a winter walk in Queen's Park, a visit to Roves farm and regular opportunities to observe the changing seasons in the priest's garden. During the inspection, they noticed that there were buds on the trees and lots of spring flowers in bloom.

### **Physical development**

79. Children manage their own clothing before and after physical activity and are very quick to get undressed and put their clothes away properly. In the physical education lesson seen, all clearly knew how to get into a space and were quiet and attentive. This obviously relates to the clear rules and high expectations set by the class teacher. They knew how to skip, jump, and stretch on tip-toe and maintained their level of physical activity well, moving with obvious enjoyment. They used their imagination well when trying to make fierce, ugly Troll faces. Children were confident to choose different positions but did not have enough opportunities to improve their skills through intervention by the teacher. When playing outdoors they ride their tricycles and other

wheeled vehicles competently. In the classroom most have good pencil control, manipulate plasticine and clay to make objects and cut and glue with an appropriate level of

skills and co-ordination. Through 'brain gym', which is related to developmental movement, children learn to move with increasing confidence and control, for example, by keeping a bean bag on their head, for up to 15 seconds.

### **Creative development**

80. There are some opportunities for children to paint using their own ideas, mix colours in order to create new colours and use collage materials to explore texture. However, there is an over emphasis on using templates, which tends to inhibit creative development. For example, all the three-dimensional spiders and the collage snowmen were identical. Sound use is made of role play and small world environments to develop children's imaginative and co-operative skills. Children enjoy playing in the supermarket and know that they need money for their transactions. They enjoy singing songs such as 'Humpty Dumpty' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle Chocolate Bar'.

### **ENGLISH**

81. Standards in English at the end of Year 2 are above the national average, overall. They are well above national expectations in reading, and well above expectations for their age in speaking and listening. Standards in writing are above the national average. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was satisfactory overall. It was good in speaking and listening and satisfactory in reading and writing. The improvement in pupils' achievement has also been very good. Although it was satisfactory in English, overall, at the time of the last inspection, it was unsatisfactory in writing.
82. Pupils listen carefully to each other and to adults, and respond well to questions and discussions. This was evident in a lesson in Year 2 when pupils listened very well to the teacher and each other as they discussed the features of instructional text and assessed how well they and others had succeeded in composing and evaluating instructions. The good use of focused questioning by most teachers and the expectation that all pupils will make an active contribution to discussion encourages most pupils to participate fully. During group reading sessions, pupils experience a wide variety of carefully selected material, which provides a range of contexts for formal and informal speech. There are planned opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills during class discussions and paired and grouped activities, and the use of subject specific vocabulary in most subjects.
83. Ongoing records are kept of pupils' attainment in reading and are analysed regularly. The monitoring of pupils' reading and the use of the results to inform planning have a positive effect on standards. Regular focused reading sessions and the use of a structured reading scheme, in the early stages of reading, contribute to the high standards achieved. A consistent approach to the teaching of phonics is an important factor in pupils' progress and their growing ability to use phonics to read unfamiliar words. The high standards achieved by pupils in reading owe much to the practice of hearing pupils read individually on a regular basis. The weekly session that all classes have in the school library successfully develops pupils' library and research skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning to scan for information and collate information obtained from more than one source, including the Internet. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are beginning to appraise simple texts quickly and effectively and to predict what will happen next by using inference and deduction. Many pupils have favourite authors or books. For example one pupil's favourite author is Bel Mooney and her favourite book by this author is 'Who did that?'. Most pupils read regularly at home and parents are very supportive in hearing them read. In addition,

several parents provide very valuable help by coming into school on a regular basis to hear pupils read.

84. The school's focus on writing and the termly assessment of writing are having a positive effect on raising achievement. Planned opportunities for writing in some other subjects, such as geography and science, are proving particularly beneficial, but opportunities for formal or imaginative writing in some other subjects - history, for example - are often missed. During the inspection week, progression in pupils' learning from one year group to the next was very evident. Pupils in Year 1 identified the features of non-fiction books and developed their research skills. Year 2 pupils developed their understanding of the analysis and writing of instructional texts and their ability to compose and analyse instructions. The visible progression of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, both during the inspection and over time, is evidence that the National Literacy Strategy is having a very positive influence on standards.
85. The school places strong emphasis on spelling. Phonics is taught systematically from the Reception Classes. The learning of weekly spellings and the ongoing assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress in spelling have a positive effect on standards. By the end of Year 2, there is clear evidence of the accurate use of a range of spelling patterns, on the part of most pupils, and many of their vocabulary choices are becoming more adventurous. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 learnt to discriminate between, read and spell words ending in 'nd' and 'nk'. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated their ability to spell correctly words containing 'er', 'ir' and 'ur'. Good use is made of classroom computers to reinforce spelling through the 'Starspell' program.
86. The National Literacy Strategy provides the structure for the progressive development of pupils' reading, writing and spelling skills. The school has invested in a range of good quality resources for the literacy hour, which have helped teachers to deliver the elements of the strategy very effectively. Early literacy support is provided in Year 1 for pupils who need additional support to develop their skills and raise their attainment. Pupils are encouraged to transfer their reading, writing and spelling skills to other areas of the curriculum. Marking is supportive, but does not always identify the next steps that pupils should take in order to improve further. Literacy is developed in a wider sense when pupils take part in school productions and watch plays by 'The Sixth Sense Theatre Company', based at New College. Opportunities were taken to enhance pupils' moral development at the annual Book Week, when a visiting story-teller worked with pupils on Aesop's Fables. Literacy contributes to pupils' spiritual development through their appreciation of the writings of others and the expression of their own feelings and thoughts, in speech and writing. Some links are made with mathematics, for example, when higher attaining pupils in Year 2 evaluated a challenging fractions game during literacy. Class discussions and group and paired work aid pupils' social development. Moral issues are considered as they arise and the study of texts from a range of countries and cultures enhances cultural development.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The strengths of teaching are teachers' very good subject knowledge and planning, and the strong emphasis on the teaching of phonics, reading, spelling, writing and handwriting. Teachers have very high expectations and manage pupils very well. Teaching methods are very effective and time, support staff and resources are used very well. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is good and homework is used well to support and extend learning. These strengths inspire pupils to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. They are highly motivated, interested and enthusiastic and concentrate fully. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and achieve well. Their acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills is very good and they have a good knowledge of their own learning.
88. The curriculum is enriched by book weeks, visits to theatres, and visiting authors, poets, storytellers and theatre companies. Procedures for the formal and informal assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are very good and assessment information is used very well to guide curriculum planning. There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' subject performance. The subject leader monitors teaching and learning in the classroom, teachers' planning and all aspects of pupils' work.



89. Leadership and management of English are very good. The subject leader is experienced, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She gives very clear educational direction and a strong commitment to raising standards. She provides good support for colleagues and has produced a clear and helpful policy. She encourages the application of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects. Very effective whole school systems reflect the school's aims and values and ensure that there is a strong emphasis on basic skills, and equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. An area for future development is the more consistent use of marking to help pupils to know how to improve their attainment.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are above average. Above average standards have consistently been maintained since the last inspection, when they were average, therefore, good improvement has been made. This has been due to good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Also, very good assessment procedures now carefully track individual progress. As a result, work is carefully planned to take account of the full range of ability within classes, enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to achieve well.
91. In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of number and place value, working with numbers up to 100 and beyond. Higher attaining pupils have an appropriate knowledge of times tables and the associated division facts. Pupils understand simple fractions of shape, and start to calculate fractions of numbers. They start to use metric measures and calculate lengths of time. Higher attaining pupils know the appropriate measures to be used, for example, when measuring the length of a room or the size and thickness of an exercise book. Pupils know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes, and identify them by their basic properties; they recognise right angles. They collect simple data and record them on bar charts, which most are able to interpret, using terms such as 'more' or 'less than' or 'most' and 'least popular'. Pupils use strategies, such as partitioning, counting on and back and rounding numbers to the nearest ten, when working out answers to sums. There are, however, few opportunities for pupils to apply these to real life problems; the school recognises that this is an area needing further development. Where opportunities are provided, higher attaining pupils, especially, are becoming confident in discussing their work and explaining their reasoning.
92. From an analysis of pupils' past work and the lessons seen, it is clear that the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and the tasks set are appropriate and provide a good challenge to pupils of all abilities, helping to ensure good progress in learning. However, teachers do not always make clear their expectations of how much work is to be completed, to further encourage this progress and maintain a good pace to lessons.
93. In better lessons good use is made of teaching assistants and other adult support. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, teaching assistants and parents were given notes on what was expected of them in the lesson. This ensured their role was well focused on pupils' learning, and promoted good support for the groups they were working with. In other lessons this support was not used as effectively, due in part to teachers' not planning sufficiently for it and making their expectations known. For example, in one lesson a teaching assistant sat through the introduction, reading up the planning for the lesson and not offering any support. In group work teaching assistants talk over tasks with individual pupils, but often miss opportunities to work with groups as a whole, for example, by providing opportunities for questioning and discussion to further pupils' understanding.
94. Teachers also do not always provide sufficient opportunities, through whole class questioning and discussion, for pupils to articulate their thinking and develop greater understanding. Ongoing assessment opportunities are therefore missed. This was apparent not only from lesson introductions, but also from their conclusions, where teachers tended to tell pupils how well they had done rather than encourage them to evaluate their own learning, for example, by saying what was easy or difficult. Teachers do spend time in lessons, however, marking work and talking to pupils about it, actively carrying out ongoing assessment. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson,

where the teacher identified the difficulties some higher attaining pupils were having with fraction work related to number. Such assessments are used well to help set individual targets for pupils. Pupils are mostly aware of these and are keen to reach them. Although work is marked consistently, there are few recorded comments that refer to learning objectives, and inform pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

95. Classes are well managed, and, as a result, pupils generally behave well in lessons and display positive attitudes to learning. Their work is well presented. They work well together in groups, often helping each other spontaneously when they are not sure what to do. Homework is set regularly, which supports pupils' learning in school.
96. Satisfactory use is made of numeracy in other subjects. For example, careful measurements are made in design and technology, and science investigations are planned where results are measured, recorded and compared. The use made of ICT is satisfactory. Programs are used in classes that relate to and support current learning. For example, Year 1 pupils were using a program to build up a block graph of their favourite colours.
97. Mathematics is well led. Lessons have been observed and pupils' work sampled, with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards. Aspects such as time and money were identified as requiring some attention and lesson conclusions were found to be in need of further development. The results of national tests are carefully analysed to monitor the progress made by different groups of pupils. Very good assessment procedures, against key learning objectives, enable pupils' progress to be carefully tracked, and additional support provided where required. For example, the school recognised the need to develop further the support for lower attaining pupils, and allocated teaching assistants accordingly. Individual records of achievement show termly assessments, future targets and comments from teachers that are shared with pupils and their parents. This helps to establish the school's very good links with parents, and encourages them to support children in their learning.

## **SCIENCE**

98. Standards at the last inspection were below average and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory, particularly in the lack of investigations and experiments. Since that time a new scheme of work has been introduced followed by whole staff training. There is a much greater emphasis on investigation now and pupils' achievement in this is recorded regularly through 'stamp charts'. Standards are now above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are achieving well. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection.
99. Higher and average attaining pupils in Year 1 are able to distinguish between living and non-living things. They use statements such as 'My brother is alive because he can move and talk'. They make good use of illustrations to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of living or non-living things. They have a basic knowledge of how to keep healthy. Most can use a variety of processes to change materials, for example, by stretching, squeezing or folding. They notice that after most of these processes materials go back to their original shape. They write up the results of their investigations in simple terms, for example, 'I rolled the material' with an accompanying diagram. By the time they are in Year 2 pupils distinguish between alive, not alive and no longer alive and are able to give examples. They know what animals do, for example, eat, grow, use their senses and reproduce. Most are able to name a good number of the parts of the body and have a good idea of what constitutes a healthy life style, such as keeping their body clean and eating the right kind of food. They are able to name a wide variety of materials and set them out in a table describing some of the properties of them, such as hard, or breakable. They are beginning to use scientific vocabulary, such as liquid and solid and, through their experimentation on changing a variety of objects from liquid to solid or vice versa, they are developing a clear understanding of reversible and irreversible change. Higher attaining pupils clearly know how to write up their experiments. They make good observations and clearly explain them. They write out the equipment required and the method used in order to carry out their experiments.

Diagrams are clearly labelled. Lower attaining pupils complete simple graphs, know some of the bones of the body and have a sound understanding of healthy living. They recognise that a healthy meal might include carrots and yoghurt. Although not all aspects of science have been covered in this academic year so far, teachers' planning shows that all areas are appropriately covered.

100. The quality of teaching and learning is good because lessons are well planned, pupils are given good opportunities to observe and carry out experiments and good use is made of scientific vocabulary to encourage pupils to think scientifically. Teachers question pupils well, for example, 'Why did it change? Why did it go solid?' and this encourages pupils to explain further and develop their knowledge and understanding. Lessons are well organised and, where appropriate, contain a good emphasis on activities for different groups of pupils. All teachers make good use of resources to give pupils good opportunities to experiment with a variety of objects or to consolidate their learning through a variety of experiments based on the same concepts, for example, 'change'. Teachers make good use of discussions to ensure pupils clearly understand the main objectives of the lessons. Occasionally teachers do not explain tasks clearly enough or give the pupils too much information so they do not have a clear knowledge of pupils' understanding of the task. Although teachers mark pupils' work, they rarely suggest areas for improvement in the scientific content of the work and this adversely affects pupils' knowledge of their own learning. There is limited use of ICT to support science except for a general program and a micro-scope that links to the computer.
101. Pupils have good attitudes to science and particularly enjoy the opportunities for experimentation. This occasionally leads to some excitement, for example, when observing pop corn change as it was heated.
102. The leadership and management of science are good and the subject leader has worked very hard to improve the provision and standards in the subject. Additionally, she has ensured that through the scheme of work there is provision for pupils to work at the higher Level 3. Pupils' work is regularly assessed and levelled at the end of each topic. This ensures that the school has a clear idea of pupils' standards and what they need to do in order to improve. There is a good level of resources and these have been very well organised in order to ensure easy access by all staff. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance science, such as the Quantum Theatre visits, presenting plays such as 'Captain Cholesterol', which is all about food or 'Missing Link' which is about living things. Year 1 pupils visit Westonbirt as part of their work on plants and living things and Year 2 pupils visit the Cotswold Wild Life Park as part of their work on animals. Each summer there is a science enrichment week when all classes are involved in scientific investigations and this enhances the provision.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. Standards meet expectations and pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator, work on display and in sketchbooks and teachers' planning.
104. In Year 1 pupils have worked on self-portraits and many of those show a good sense of proportion. Still life drawings of fruit sometimes show good perspective and occasionally there are good drawings of movement. In their sketchbooks there are some useful drawings by higher attaining pupils but there is less work in the books of lower and average attaining pupils. All pupils have painted pictures of their resurrection walk linked to new life and beginnings. They have made natural sculptures and collage pictures. Pupils in Year 2 have carried out observational drawings which are mainly appropriate for their age, such as the drawings of 'Mr and Mrs Twit'. They have learned some techniques for sketching, such as using the edge of the pencil and the extension of a pattern through cutting. In their work on display in the classroom there are observational drawings of shells and fruit and use of collage materials to create a warm coloured background for the desert. Most of the work is of an average standard although occasionally there are some

examples of good work. For example, a fir cone, drawn by one pupil shows good attention to detail. The pupils spoken to during the inspection were not aware of studying any famous artists and could not name any. There were no examples of the work of famous artists displayed in classes in Years 1 and 2.

105. No overall judgement can be made on teaching as only one lesson was seen. In the lesson seen in Year 1, pupils attained satisfactory standards in weaving using various materials. The teacher clearly explained the technique of under and over and gave them a good variety of examples on which to base their own weaving. Good use was made of vocabulary such as 'loom', 'warp' and 'weft' and the technique was reinforced by the use of flat card and ribbons. Some use is made of ICT graphics programs to support work in art, for example, to make Christmas cards.

106. There is a temporary appointment for the subject leadership until September, when a new co-ordinator will be appointed. The current subject leader has ensured that a policy and a scheme of work are in place to ensure continuity and progression and a portfolio of work is kept showing coverage of the subject. Several talented pupils have been identified by the school and their work is being monitored. Currently no use is made of visits or visitors to enhance the work in art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

107. There were no design and technology lessons timetabled during the inspection. Evidence from teachers' planning, photographic evidence, pupils' design sheets, models on display, a discussion with the subject leader and a discussion with six pupils in Year 2 confirm that standards in design and technology are in line with expectations, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and sometimes well.
108. There is a strong emphasis on skills and techniques. The consistent approach to planning, designing, making and evaluating products results in finished products that are of a satisfactory standard and sometimes better. Pupils in Year 2 spoke with enthusiasm about how they have made puppets and movable vehicles this year. They explained how, when making puppets, they drew a design, labelled it, listed what materials they would need and how they would make the puppet, made a template, and cut, sewed and glued the puppet as required. Afterwards, they evaluated the finished product, deciding in what ways it was good and how it could be made even better. Their enthusiasm further increased as they described how they used reclaimable materials to make a moving vehicle, with cotton reels to act as wheels on the end of wooden axles, and explained how axles help wheels to move. They spoke about how they were allowed to add windows, doors, pedals, seats, a steering wheel, and anything else, if they wished. All pupils were very articulate and all clearly enjoyed being able to express their own ideas.
109. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well as they talk about their products and complete their design sheets and written evaluations of their products. They develop their numeracy and mathematical skills as they count, measure and make templates. Their social development is enhanced as they work in pairs or groups and assess their own work and the work of others. Spiritual development takes place, as they reflect on their designs as they develop, and identify what works well and what could be improved. No evidence of the use of ICT was seen.
110. It is not possible to comment on teaching and learning, as no lessons were observed, but the quality of pupils' design sheets and their finished models suggest that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. Pupils are trained to evaluate their products and identify and carry out improvements. As a result, they have a sound knowledge of their own learning.
111. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum is enriched through links with other areas of the curriculum. Models on display, supported by photographic evidence, include different types of house, linked with history and geography in Year 1, calendars, party hats, puppets, and collages to illustrate traditional stories. Year 2 pupils have made masks, puppets and models with construction kits, a three-dimensional model of the Isle of Struay, clay pots and wheeled vehicles. They have developed the skills of making hinges and joints. Food technology includes making Christmas biscuits in Year 1 and bread and fruit salad in Year 2.
112. Leadership and management are sound. The subject leader demonstrates a clear sense of educational direction, which reflects the school's aims and values. She has produced a comprehensive policy and scheme of work that provide good support for colleagues. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the use of assessment information to inform curriculum planning follow national guidance. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work and will soon have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. Learning resources are adequate and are used well. The action taken to meet the school's targets and the priorities for development are appropriate.

## GEOGRAPHY

113. Standards in Year 2 exceed expectations. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well.
114. There is a strong emphasis on mapping skills and geographical enquiry skills. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 developed their knowledge of Zambia, with which the school has strong links. It is one of the countries that the school focused on during the recent CAFOD week. Pupils send and receive letters and photographs to and from pupils at a school in Chingola and send money to support it. They used maps, globes, books and the Internet to find out what they could about Zambia and the similarities and differences between Zambia and England. Pupils in Year 2 acted as geographical detectives as they used books, maps, photographs and the Internet to find out more about St. Lucia, having recently watched a video about the island. During the year, they develop their awareness of places beyond their immediate locality in the United Kingdom, as they compare and contrast life on the imaginary Isle of Struay in Scotland with life in Swindon and as they compare holidays in the seaside resorts of Tenby and Saundersfoot in Wales, today, with seaside holidays in the past, making links with their work in history.
115. The local area is used well. Pupils in Year 1 make many visits to the local park and the area surrounding the school. They draw plans, map routes and follow directions. They study photographs and maps and produce plans and maps of the local area and discuss what they like or dislike about the physical and human features. Their understanding of places beyond their own locality and their knowledge of other cultures develops, as they follow their 'passport to the world' theme, and study one country from each continent, linked where possible to where pupils come from, for example, Poland and research the location, physical features, climate and way of life, comparing it with life in Swindon.
116. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge and place strong emphasis on geographical enquiry skills and first-hand observation where possible. Mapping skills are taught well. Teachers have high expectations and plan effectively for pupils of all abilities. They set challenging tasks for groups of pupils of differing abilities and expect high standards of effort and presentation. Pupils throughout the school are interested, enthusiastic and motivated, as a result. Learning objectives are made clear to pupils and opportunities are provided for them to assess what they have learned, with the result that they have a sound knowledge of their own learning. The management of pupils is good and pupils' good attitudes and relationships contribute to their good learning. Time and resources are used well and teaching assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Opportunities are provided for them to discuss moral issues in relation to environmental factors, such as pollution, sustainability of the environment and global citizenship. Pupils in Year 2 consider the morality of destroying the rainforests of St. Lucia, in order to support tourism by building houses and other amenities. Their social development is enhanced as they work together in groups when exploring the local area. They develop their literacy skills well, through discussion, writing and research. Numeracy skills are developed as they consider the distance between England and Zambia, for example.
117. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum is enriched through fieldwork in the local area. Cross-curricular environmental links are made, through the annual visit of Year 1 pupils to Westonbirt Arboretum. ICT is used satisfactorily, as a means of research.
118. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress at the end of each unit of work, and the assessment of pupils' development of skills, are good and the information obtained is used well to inform future planning. The monitoring of pupils' subject performance is good. The subject leader monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work and her role has been extended to include the monitoring of teaching and learning.

119. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic leader. She has a very clear sense of educational direction. Standards have improved, through the broadening of the curriculum, the increased emphasis on geographical enquiry skills and fieldwork, and the greater emphasis on meeting the needs of pupils of all abilities, including higher attaining pupils. Resources are good and are used well to promote learning. The school's priorities for development, with the emphasis on independent learning, are good and reflect the school's aims and values.

## **HISTORY**

120. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection, but a review of pupils' work, interviews with pupils and discussions with the subject leader enabled judgements to be made on standards. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, attain standards in line with expectations and achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar finding to the last inspection.
121. In Year 1, pupils have started to understand how, over the course of time, aspects of life develop and change, such as children's toys, bathrooms and kitchens. By Year 2, pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of some historical events and characters from the past. They learn about the Great Fire of London, and famous people such as Florence Nightingale, sequencing the events of her life. Higher attaining pupils use the Internet to find further information. Pupils begin to understand how the events of history can bring about changes, for example, in hospitals and health care.
122. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning as no lessons were seen. From a review of past work, apart from higher attaining pupils using the Internet for research, there is little evidence that work is sufficiently planned for the full range of abilities within classes. For example, in Year 2 all pupils copy down sentences when sequencing the events in the life of Florence Nightingale. When considering her journey to the Crimea, all pupils match given text to pictures. Sometimes lower attaining pupils do not complete activities or just record less, for example, when writing about hospitals today in comparison with the past. Photographic evidence shows that some teachers have been more creative in their approach to history, as in Year 1 where the home corner was turned into a Victorian kitchen and good use was made of a visitor who brought in different artefacts. When comparing a steam iron with a flat iron, a pupil wrote, 'The old iron is heavy and bumpy. It smells rusty'. Visiting parents and grandparents are used well, for example when showing pupils toys from their own childhood. In Year 2, displays are informative, but do not celebrate pupils' achievements or sufficiently help to raise interest in the subject.
123. Satisfactory use is made of literacy skills, but there is further scope for pupils to make fuller use of these skills at levels more appropriate to their particular abilities. The use of ICT is being developed, for example, to find information about the life of Florence Nightingale. However, not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to use and develop their ICT skills through history.
124. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator, who is keen to move the subject forward. A scheme of work, based on national guidelines, has been adapted to the needs of the school and this is helping to ensure the development of skills throughout the school. Some lessons have been observed, showing that questioning is used well and that books are used for research. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and record how well pupils have achieved the learning objectives in specific units of work. Resources for the subject are good, although the subject development plan recognises the need for more artefacts to help with historical investigation.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Evidence for standards in ICT is taken from teachers' planning, record keeping and discussions with pupils in Year 2. Standards are in line with what is expected by the end of Year 2 and have been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well. There are now three up-to-date computers in each classroom, and the use of ICT in some other subject areas has been developed; for example, the use of ICT in literacy and numeracy is identified on weekly planning sheets. Assessment procedures have improved, although they are yet to be used more fully to inform future planning, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Overall there has been good improvement since the last inspection.
126. By Year 2, most pupils use the mouse with reasonable confidence and control, though some of them are yet to develop their keyboard skills fully. They enter text and edit their work, putting in spaces and capital letters and correcting spelling and punctuation errors. Most use paint programs effectively, making choices from the toolbar to create different effects. They begin to understand how to control equipment, such as a floor robot, recognising the link between the instructions given and what happens. In mathematics, information based on the throw of a die, is entered, displayed as a bar chart, and compared. Pupils use the Internet to find out information about the Island of St Lucia and Florence Nightingale. Most log on to different programs, and store and retrieve their work.
127. Rather than having a weekly timetabled session to teach specific ICT skills, teachers incorporate this learning into different subject areas. For example, in literacy pupils develop word processing skills when writing poems or ordering sets of instructions; in art and design pupils are shown how to use a paint program to create a winter scene; in numeracy pupils are taught to record and compare data. Although ICT was being used during the inspection, no direct teaching of skills was observed, and therefore no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning.
128. The use of ICT to support learning in other subject areas is being developed satisfactorily, although in some subjects, such as science, it requires further development.
129. The subject is well led and managed. A scheme of work clearly shows how skills are to be taught and developed and the subject areas where this can appropriately take place. There are appropriate assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress. A media policy contains a statement on the safe use of e-mail and the Internet. A primary adviser has monitored the use of ICT in classrooms and found it to be satisfactory. The subject development plan shows that new software is being introduced and evaluated, and that teachers and teaching assistants are being trained in its use. It also shows further plans for improvement with the introduction of interactive white boards. A well-planned evening for parents was very informative, and helped to raise further interest in the subject.

## **MUSIC**

130. Standards in music are above expectations by the end of Year 2. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were average. Since the last inspection, the school has benefited from the employment of an enthusiastic subject leader, who has addressed the issues of the last report. All pupils now have appropriate opportunities to compose and perform music. Progress, also, has risen from satisfactory to good for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. All pupils achieve well. The active participation of pupils is encouraged, as in a lesson in Year 1 when pupils developed their ability to pitch their voices accurately and match pitch movement to actions and notation. In mixed ability groups, they successfully composed music and sound effects to the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Year 2 pupils demonstrated increased pitch discrimination and vocal ability, as they used actions, vocal sounds and body percussion to illustrate a song about a ghostly presence, creaking stairs, scary rooms, door movements, the howling of the wind, skeleton sounds, ghostly noises and the scrabbling of rats. Higher attaining pupils recognised and explored ways that sounds can be combined to create a desired effect. Average attaining pupils represented sounds with actions, vocal sounds and body percussion and



recognised how musical elements can be used to create different moods and effects. Lower attaining pupils responded to the sounds and moods in the music and

recognised well-defined changes in sound. Many of the difficulties of expressing themselves verbally, which are sometimes associated with pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are overcome through music.

131. Teaching in music is good, overall. It was good in one lesson observed and very good in the other lesson. The strengths of teaching are the teachers' good subject knowledge and effective planning, and a strong emphasis on basic skills and high expectations. This leads to good learning by all pupils and the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Class routines are well established and most pupils apply a good level of creative effort to their work. They show interest, concentrate well and work at a good pace. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own work and the work of others and have a sound knowledge of their own learning. Time and resources are used well to maximise learning.
132. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. An enrichment week is held in the summer term and each class spends a morning or an afternoon working with the subject leader for music. Pupils' singing is of a high standard. It contributes to their spiritual development as they listen to music such as 'Gather', in assemblies and sing hymns in hymn practices and the weekly mass. All pupils are involved in the music associated with the celebration of Christmas. The Year 2 choir sings at the Swindon Music Festival. The school organises visitors such as a woodwind group.
133. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is good. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning and listens to taped music from lessons in order to monitor standards and provision. Music actively promotes pupils' communication skills as they participate in discussions in order to compose and perform in small groups. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed through the rhythm and structure of music. Their social development is encouraged well through paired and group work. Cultural understanding is enhanced through the singing of songs from around the world. Pupils sing with reverence and enjoyment. They are encouraged to reflect on music and its effect on people's senses.
134. Leadership and management are good. They ensure clear educational direction and reflect the school's aims and values well. There is a comprehensive policy and the subject leader has introduced a new scheme of work, which challenges and inspires staff and pupils alike. Her appointment as subject leader is having a positive influence in improving standards and ensuring the progression in pupils' learning. Resources are good in quantity and quality, and are used well to support learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. Only games and gymnastics lessons were seen during the inspection. By Year 2, standards in these aspects are in line with expectations, and have been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.
136. In games, Year 1 pupils show sufficient control, for example, when using bats and balls. In gymnastics, Year 2 pupils mostly show satisfactory control and co-ordination, for example, when exploring spinning and turning movements. More able pupils combine movements to develop a simple sequence ending with a composed balance. Pupils are not sufficiently aware of the effects of exercise on the body, and have insufficient opportunities to view and evaluate each other's performances in order to improve their own. At times, the behaviour and lack of concentration of some pupils spoils what they should be doing. This was apparent in all lessons seen.

137. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and prepared to help ensure sufficient progress in learning. Although they start with a warm up session and end with a cooling down period, little mention is made of the effects of these on health. Lessons are satisfactorily managed. Pupils listen to instructions quite carefully, and sensibly get equipment and apparatus ready. However, teachers do not exercise sufficient vigilance when activities are taking place, resulting in some pupils not fully controlling what they have been asked to do. In a Year 1 games' lesson, some pupils, when asked to aim the ball carefully between two beanbags, continued to hit it wildly. In part, this is due to a lack of initial demonstration by either teacher or pupils, so that activities are not fully understood. For example, in Year 2 pupils were unsure how to develop spinning and turning movements from floor to apparatus. Where, in the course of a lesson, pupils are asked to demonstrate good practice, this is not very effective. Either some pupils are not watching, or there are few opportunities for pupils, rather than teachers, to say why they think it is good and so improve their own performance. Where pupils with special educational needs are supported, for example for behaviour or physical needs, teaching assistants help to ensure that they are fully included in lessons. There is no evidence of ICT being used to support learning.
138. The subject is led satisfactorily. The policy has recently been reviewed and schemes of work are in place for games and gymnastics, which help to ensure the ongoing development of skills. A scheme of work for dance is currently being developed. There has been no monitoring of lessons with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards. Acquired skills are ticked off on individual assessment sheets, but this does not yet sufficiently inform future planning. Extra-curricular tuition in Brazilian soccer skills enhances the provision.