

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT BEDWYN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Marlborough

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126391

Headteacher: Mrs A Davidson

Lead inspector: Janet Sinclair

Dates of inspection: 23 – 25 March 2004

Inspection number 256253

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	193
School address:	Farm Lane Great Bedwyn Marlborough Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN8 3TR
Telephone number:	01672 870482
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gordon Stone
Date of previous inspection:	2 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Great Bedwyn is a small Church of England voluntary controlled primary school, located in a village near Marlborough. Pupils come from a predominantly white background, mostly of UK heritage. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language and only a few are of mixed background. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average, and the number of pupils with a statement of educational need is also average. Their needs include dyslexia, visual impairment, severe learning difficulties and autism. Pupils' attainment on entry varies over time, but is mainly average. The economic circumstance of pupils and pupil movement is average. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills quality mark, Healthy Schools and Investors in People.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19824	Mrs Janet Sinclair	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Foundation Stage, special educational needs, science, design and technology and music.
1311	Mr B Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
8056	Mrs G Battarbee	<i>Team inspector</i>	English, geography, history and physical education.
20063	Mr G Slamon	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design and religious education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness and value for money are good. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and an interesting and relevant curriculum. Leadership and management are effective and ensure that the school's positive ethos and very supportive working environment encourage good attitudes to work and high levels of maturity in its pupils.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors, is good and provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching in mathematics is a particular strength of the school.
- Pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 6 and achieve well.
- In a few lessons teaching is unsatisfactory.
- Very good relationships and good provision for spiritual, moral and social development, promote good attitudes and behaviour in pupils.
- Pupils' understanding of what it takes to live in a culturally diverse society needs further development.
- There are plenty of opportunities for curricular enrichment.

The school was very successful at the time of the last inspection. The few key issues that required attention have been tackled well. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now used well across the curriculum, and the library has been greatly improved. However, the library is still not used sufficiently as a resource for independent research. Standards have risen well in mathematics and ICT, whilst teaching and learning are broadly similar. There has been satisfactory improvement overall.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	B	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	B	C	B	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Overall, pupils are achieving well. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in English, science and ICT and well above average in mathematics. Standards in Year 2 are average in English, science and ICT and pupil achievement is satisfactory. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are above average and pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well against the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs). Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Children in Reception are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In personal, social and emotional development, they are likely to exceed them. **Their achievement is satisfactory overall in all areas except personal, social and emotional development, where it is good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education, including the quality of teaching, is good throughout the school. In Years 1 and 6, it is often very good. The part-time teacher of mathematics teaches small groups of pupils very well. The particular strengths of the teaching are the result of good questioning, interesting and innovative methods, high levels of challenge and very good relationships. Teaching is less successful when teachers do not question pupils well, when activities lack challenge or, as sometimes happens in the Reception classes, there are too many activities for each to be monitored well. There is a good curriculum in place; it is broad, balanced and relevant, with a very good range of curricular enrichment activities. Opportunities for pupils with special educational needs are good and their IEPs are clear and specific. Procedures for child protection, health and safety are good. The school has a good partnership with parents, who are supportive of its work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the governance, leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, governors and staff share a clear vision for the future development of the school. It is based on a caring ethos that includes all pupils, whatever their ability or gender. The governors and staff provide very good role models and they have a clear view of the school's strengths and the areas for development, derived from their analysis of performance data. The school complies fully with statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have confidence in many aspects of the school. They particularly like the fact that the school works closely with parents, that their children enjoy coming to school and that the teaching is good. Most feel comfortable about approaching the school and think that it is well led and managed. However, a good number do not feel they are well enough informed about their children's progress. Children are also positive about the school. They like being at the school and find other children friendly. They think that they are expected to work hard, but lessons are interesting. They get help when they are stuck and teachers are fair and listen to their ideas. Most feel that there is an adult they can go to if they are worried.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve teaching where it is unsatisfactory and ensure consistently good teaching in English.
- Improve pupils' understanding of what is required or expected in order to live in a culturally diverse society.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in mathematics at the end of Year 2, above average in English, science and ICT at the end of Year 6 and pupil achievement is good.
- Standards are well above average in mathematics in Year 6 and pupil achievement is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Children in Reception achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, and in the writing aspect of communication, language and literacy.
- The school has worked hard to improve standards in writing.

Commentary

1. Children mainly start school with levels of attainment that are average, although their mathematical skills are generally slightly better than average. By the time they leave the Reception classes and enter Year 1, they attain the Early Learning Goals expected for their age in all areas of learning. In personal, social and emotional development and in the writing aspects of communication, language and literacy, they exceed them. Children achieve well in writing and personal, social and emotional development because there are good systems in place to support these areas. They are inducted well when they first start school. A good start to the day ensures they feel safe and secure, with opportunities for them to work independently on a variety of tasks. They are given plenty of opportunities to develop their writing, both through directed and self-chosen activities.

2. In the National Curriculum tests taken by pupils in Year 2 in 2003, results were average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards were below average in reading, well below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. The results of teacher assessment for science were in the top five per cent nationally at the expected Level 2 and well below average at Level 3.

3. On the evidence of the current level of work seen, pupils are likely to attain average standards in reading, writing and science, and above average standards in mathematics. They are achieving satisfactorily in reading, writing and science. Their achievement in mathematics is good, the result of good teaching and a well-structured curriculum. Overall, standards are similar to that of the previous inspection, except in mathematics, where there has been an improvement.

4. In the National Curriculum tests taken by pupils in Year 6 in 2003, standards were above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. Standards are well above average in mathematics because the teaching of the subject is a strength of the school. Excellent teaching was seen in Year 6 and very good teaching in Years 3, 5 and 6 by the part-time teacher, who takes small groups of pupils for extension work. The school's standards are above the national trend. These pupils are achieving well and sometimes very well, given their attainment at the end of Year 2. Girls achieve better than boys; the school's analysis shows this is mainly because there are more boys with special educational needs than girls, and small cohorts of pupils can disproportionately affect the overall grading.

5. Standards in ICT are above average by the end of Year 6. Information and communication technology is used well across the curriculum and pupils are achieving well. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils have regular access to the computers in the computer suite, and this has led to improvements in pupils' skills and competencies. Standards in

religious education meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There was not enough evidence to judge standards in other subjects.

6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. There are clear specific targets for them to achieve, which are regularly reviewed and effective support from classroom assistants to ensure they are fully included in all aspects of learning. The school takes good care of, and seeks specific help for, children with a statement of special educational need, some of which is unusual in nature and requires a high level of specialist knowledge.

7. The school has worked hard to improve standards in sustained personal writing through a variety of initiatives, such as a boys' writing project and regular detailed analysis of performance in national tests. Work has been done by the whole school to improve handwriting and spelling. This is beginning to show results, but is still at an early stage.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.7 (14.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1 (18.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (27.55)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	29.3 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.8 (28.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their personal development is also good and is supported by strong spiritual, moral and social education. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' attendance is good and their punctuality at school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in the Reception class learn appropriate attitudes and behaviour and adapt well to the school.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour in the classroom and around the school support their enjoyment and motivation for learning.
- Some pupils in Years 2 and 3 have not yet learned consistently good attitudes and behaviour, whereas pupils in Years 5 and 6 have, which gives them a strong sense of purpose.
- Pupils build very good relationships with adults and each other, and they work and play together with confidence.
- The school's strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is effective in developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils have an insufficient understanding of the cultural diversity of life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average, but a minority of pupils has poor attendance.

Commentary

8. Children in the Reception class quickly adapt to the school's routines. They listen well to their teachers and are keen to 'have a go' at the many activities that are available. They enjoy learning, work well together and want to include other children in their play. Children develop good attitudes and behaviour; their progress in achieving the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development is good.

9. Pupils are happy to come to school and proudly wear the uniform. Most pupils quickly gain a thorough understanding of the headteacher's and staff's very high expectations for their behaviour, and they respond well. Overall, pupils show good attitudes and behaviour, and classes are calm and orderly. They are motivated to do their best and enjoy their lessons. However, some pupils in Year 2 are difficult to stimulate, whilst some boys in Year 3 are attention seeking and occasionally spoil the concentration of other pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show very good attitudes and behaviour and respond well to good teaching. They are self-disciplined and mature beyond their years. They realise that hard work will bring them success, and they look forward to the challenge of their new secondary school. Pupils with special educational needs, including some with challenging behaviour disorders, have little effect on the orderly learning in classrooms and, in older classes, are indistinguishable in attitudes and behaviour from other pupils. Around the school, pupils behave well. They relax and play safely together without fear of bullying or harassment. The school has not needed to exclude any pupils during the last three years.

10. Very good relationships exist throughout the school. Pupils trust their teachers and other adults and want to confide their anxieties and problems if they arise. Pupils enjoy each other's company, and work productively together in groups in classroom activities. They value each other's ideas and contributions in classroom discussions, and appreciate the efforts of others in the many clubs and activities. Most pupils know and appreciate that there is an adult they can go to if they are worried.

11. The good provision for spiritual, moral and social education is supported in the classroom by effective personal, social and health education (PSHE). However, teachers' planning does not indicate that opportunities are planned into their teaching of subjects of the National Curriculum. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and pupils learn about, and have respect for, the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths. Older pupils are given opportunities to express their own feelings, to be creative and curious and to question accepted ideas. Unfortunately, they are not given enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and to research their own ideas and topics in class or at home. All pupils know the difference between right and wrong and are taught to share and be fair with each other, and to learn about winning and losing. They are challenged by their teachers on moral issues such as bullying and friendship. They are proud of their school environment and many pupils willingly clear litter in the school playground. The school's ethos is strong in valuing the individual and increasing pupils' confidence and self-esteem through very supportive relationships. Older pupils look after younger pupils and take responsibility for a number of functions around the school. The school's sharing assemblies reflect pupils' very good relationships and enthusiasms when showing their personal work or engaging together in lively dance routines and plays. The school makes use of the local community and pupils take pride in their own cultural roots and traditions, as well as appreciating art, sport, music and theatre. School displays are colourful and support pupils' learning through a wide range of themes. However, multicultural displays are few. The school represents a mono-cultural society, and has not created enough opportunities for pupils to fully appreciate the wide cultural diversity of modern Britain.

12. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained attendance levels above the national average. Pupils' attendance in most classes is good, with only occasional lapses. Unauthorised absence is minimal, as parents try to respond positively to the school's requests for their children's regular attendance. However, holidays taken during term time are a significant reason for authorised absence. Many pupils arrive early at school and lessons start on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3 (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.0
National data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.2

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
188	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched through visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs. Teaching is effective and pupils achieve well. Pupils are well cared for, and good links have been created with the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Assessment of pupils' work is good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in all other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in English is mostly good and particularly strong in mathematics.
- Teaching in Year 6 is very good and occasionally excellent.
- There is good teaching of ICT.
- Good relationships exist throughout the school, and they promote pupils' self-esteem.
- Some teaching is unsatisfactory, and there are also some weaknesses in satisfactory lessons, which limits the progress that pupils make.
- There is good use of assessment in English and mathematics.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

13. The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. Lessons are organised and structured well. Planning is detailed, and teachers ensure that work is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs. Lessons are interesting, and pupils are challenged well, which motivates and interests them to give of their best. Some very good, and sometimes excellent, mathematics teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6, and also by the part-time teacher, who takes groups of more able pupils from Years 3, 5 and 6. In these lessons pupils were challenged very well and the teachers' very good subject knowledge ensured a high level of challenge for pupils. The strong emphasis in these lessons on developing mental computation and problem-solving skills ensured that pupils made very good progress.

14. There is good teaching of ICT. The computer suite is used well by staff and support staff to ensure that pupils make the best use of their time on the computers. Teachers plan lessons well, tasks are quickly explained so that pupils are clear about what they are expected to do. As a result, pupils stay on task very well and make substantial gains in their learning. They are very well supported in lessons so that new skills are quickly learnt and used.

15. Relationships are very good in all classes, and this motivates and encourages pupils in all aspects of their learning. They settle quickly to their tasks, sustain good levels of interest and are very willing to help and support each other. They have good opportunities to discuss their work with each other and the teacher, and this helps to develop their speaking and listening skills, but also their ability to think things through. Most pupils think that teachers are fair and will listen to what they have to say.

16. There are weaknesses in teaching in some lessons which affect the progress that pupils make. For example, in the Reception class, tasks are not always matched to children's learning needs. Learning intentions are not always clear and sometimes there are too many activities to be effectively monitored. In other lessons, particularly those that are unsatisfactory, tasks have limited challenge; the teacher does not question the pupils effectively to further develop their knowledge and skills. Work is not well planned to meet pupils' differing learning needs.

17. There are good procedures in place for assessing pupils' work in English and mathematics. These procedures are used well to track progress so that teachers know how well pupils are learning and build upon what they know and can do. Work is regularly analysed, and this information is used to target pupils who have not made enough progress; they are given extra support. Teachers mark work well in English and mathematics, giving praise for good work, but also suggesting areas for improvement. All pupils have individual targets. They are monitored consistently and well in mathematics, but somewhat less consistently in English.

18. All of the teaching seen in Year 6 was very good and occasionally excellent. The teacher makes very good use of drama. For example, in a history lesson pupils were organised into characters with specific roles. Good use was made of equipment in the hall to represent ships, sails and tiller so that pupils could participate in a Tudor sea battle. The teacher uses very good teaching methods. In a music lesson he had pre-recorded individual musical sounds made by groups of pupils. He showed how these could be layered in order to create a harmonious sound. He regularly provides very high quality, well organised, teaching that is based on very good sound subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the ability of the pupils in his class. Pupils are all highly motivated to learn. The very good relationships promote pupils' self-esteem and encourage a high level of maturity.

19. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are well supported in small groups by the learning support assistants. Proper attention is paid to ensuring that work is well matched to their needs, and close attention is given to meeting the targets in their IEPs. As a result, pupils are keen and well motivated to learn. Teachers ensure that pupils with a statement of special educational need are well supported in lessons and are included in all activities.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	9 (21%)	19 (44%)	12 (28%)	2 (5%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

The curriculum

The planned curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is good in breadth and balance and provides pupils with a wide and interesting range of learning opportunities. The school gives pupils very good experiences to widen their horizons through extra-curricular activities. The school's accommodation and resources are sufficient to support pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development by senior managers is good.
- Increasing emphasis is given to developing pupils' writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Pupils are capable of taking on greater responsibility to research topics of their own choosing at school and at home.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport and the arts, strongly enhances the curriculum and pupils' social development.
- The whole curriculum, including extra-curricular activities, is available to pupils of all ages and abilities.
- Resources are sufficient to support learning.

Commentary

20. The school is innovative in the way the whole curriculum is planned and taught, and senior managers are constantly monitoring and improving its effectiveness. As part of its drive to push up standards, the school has strengthened curriculum planning in English and mathematics. There is a proper focus on English and mathematics, and good use is made of the national literacy and numeracy strategies for these subjects. Mathematics skills are well developed and used in other subjects, including ICT. Some good writing was seen in a range of subjects, and the school is seeking ways to extend this provision. Information and communication technology resources have significantly improved since the last inspection. Skills are progressively developed and teachers plan for pupils to use these skills across a range of subjects. The daily acts of collective worship are thoughtfully planned and there is effective guidance to ensure that these meet statutory requirements. Teachers are encouraged to use a range of methods such as drama in history and 'forensic investigations' in science.

21. Library provision has been improved, but the school needs to examine its use when considering how to give pupils greater responsibility for their own learning. Pupils spend very little time in researching projects, either of their own choosing or at the teacher's direction. Project work is rarely undertaken as a joint school/homework activity

22. The school ensures that boys and girls of different abilities and backgrounds are fully included in all curricular opportunities. For example, the very good provision made for higher attaining pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6, allows class teachers to focus effectively on other pupils so that all achieve as well as they can in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to the curriculum through the school's admirable efforts to provide activities at an appropriate level that will interest them.

23. The school provides pupils with a very good range of interesting and relevant extra-curricular activities that contribute well to their overall achievements and enjoyment of school life. Pupils' participation in the arts is very strong. Outside visitors contribute to organising the music provision for many pupils, whilst the choir competes in area competitions. The school's drama days improve pupils' talents, which come to the fore in sharing assemblies. There is a good range of sporting clubs and activities and, not only are teams competitive in outside competitions against other schools and clubs, but also are recognised for their standards of fair play. Pupils have their sense of adventure challenged on residential visits. The school council is a developing aspect of school life which is encouraging pupils to take decisions that affect them, and helping them to understand the concept of citizenship. Parents strongly agree that their children are offered a very good range of interesting and enjoyable activities.

24. The school has been innovative in overcoming the high turnover of teachers experienced in the last two years, even though the locality is difficult for teacher recruitment. Teachers are well supported in the classroom by a generous number of well qualified teaching assistants, who have enabled new teachers to integrate quickly into their designated classes. The accommodation is attractive and well maintained, even though the school does not have a caretaker. Resources are

good in mathematics, art and music and the ICT suite is small but well equipped. However, the provision of computers in classrooms is inadequate both in quality and quantity. The library is sufficiently stocked with books, but there are insufficient books reflecting our multicultural society.

Care, guidance and support

The school's care, welfare and health and safety procedures are effective. The school provides pupils with good support and advice. The involvement of pupils in its work and development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection and health and safety procedures are effective in keeping pupils safe.
- The school has good attendance and behaviour procedures.
- The headteacher and staff give a high priority to the care of all their pupils and all are included in the full range of classroom and extra-curricular activities.
- The headteacher and staff have a thorough knowledge of their pupils, which allows them to track all aspects of pupils' personal development.
- Pupils are quickly made to feel welcome as part of the school family.

Commentary

25. The school has strengthened many aspects of its support, guidance and welfare agenda since the last inspection. Policies and procedures are wide-ranging, adequately defined and thoroughly implemented by diligent and caring staff. The headteacher has a strong commitment to caring for pupils in order that they benefit from the full range of the school's activities. The school is welcoming to external professional agencies and receives mostly good and well-focused support, particularly where children have specific difficulties.

26. Child protection procedures are good. Staff training is reviewed annually, and the school is vigilant in guarding against risks to children. Health and safety procedures are good and produce a safe working environment for staff and pupils, as evidenced by the low minor accident rate. The school undertakes regular audits of the school premises and risk assessments are in place.

27. Pupils experience the school's culture of high expectations through the good behaviour procedures. These are positive and use praise well, and self-discipline is an expectation, particularly for older pupils. Staff act as very good role models and their positive impact on all pupils is evident and progressive during a pupil's stay in the school. The school successfully deals with any threatening behaviour and pupils feel safe. Pupils with behavioural problems are well managed, and have only a minor impact on the smooth running of most classes. Most pupils want to come to school and good attendance procedures work well with parents and have sustained attendance above the national average. The combination of ensuring that pupils come to school regularly, and work in a motivating and calm classroom, ensures that pupils achieve increasingly well as they progress through the school.

28. The headteacher and staff give a high priority to the pastoral care of all pupils. Pupils feel totally secure and that they can trust their teachers and other adults to listen with a sympathetic ear to their problems and anxieties. Many pupils talk easily about their enjoyment and happiness in coming to the school, and the fun of being involved in interesting activities with their friends.

29. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Pupils are well aware of their individual targets and older pupils in particular feel that they can influence their performance both in their academic and personal development. Teachers identify pupils with special educational needs, and they develop good IEPs with pupils and parents. The tracking of pupil's personal development is mostly informal, but the headteacher and staff, including teaching

assistants, have a very good knowledge of their pupils, so that pupils with problems are soon identified. There is good feedback and discussion of issues between the teachers and the headteacher at staff meetings, where teachers discuss how to deal with individual pupils.

30. The induction of pupils new to the school is good. Children and parents in the Reception class are quickly integrated into the school from the nearby playschool, and children make an enthusiastic start to their school lives. Parents are welcomed into classrooms at either end of the school day and are able to talk to the teacher freely. The quality of information for parents on how to help their children is insufficient for some parents.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents are extremely happy with the school and the kind of education that it offers. The partnership between the school and home is close. The school's links with the community are satisfactory. The school's links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have respect and trust in the headteacher and staff and their vision for the children's education.
- A few parents are unhappy with the school and the school does its best to meet their concerns.
- The good partnership with parents makes an effective contribution to children's learning and happiness at school.
- The headteacher and staff work hard to listen to parents and take their views into account in the school's development.
- The school has valuable links with other primary and secondary schools.

Commentary

31. The headteacher gives a high priority to the school's relationships with parents. In line with the previous inspection, the school continues to be very welcoming to parents and encourages them to be involved. Presently, there is a significant increase in parents' overall satisfaction with the school. They are pleased with many aspects of the school, especially the standards of work, the school's relationship with parents, the fact that their children like school, and the amount of homework they are given. The inspection team agrees that the partnership with parents is good. Parents feel that the school respects and values their role and some parents at the school gate expressed the opinion that the school is either 'wonderful' or 'brilliant'.

32. The dissatisfaction levels of parents remain at the same low levels as the last inspection. There is one area of significant dissatisfaction: the amount of information that they receive relating to their children's progress. After reviewing this concern, it is confirmed that the information given to parents about the progress of their children is satisfactory. There are two areas of increased concern for a minority of parents: homework and working cooperatively with parents. The inspection team considers that the policy on homework is satisfactory, whilst the partnership with parents is good. Other areas of dissatisfaction are specific to particular parents and the school is trying hard to meet their concerns.

33. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement and fulfil their pledge by ensuring their children's good attendance and assisting them with homework. Parents give strong support to their young children at the start of the school day when settling them into classes. Many parents help the school informally in classes or on visits and all parents attend school functions. The Great Bedwyn School Association is energetic in involving parents in fund raising. The school has been proactive with parents, through questionnaires and in evaluating the value of spelling and mathematics tables as part of homework.

34. The school has good links to other schools. The relationship with the local playgroup is close, and greatly assists the transfer of children, and their parents, into the school's Reception class. The school is involved with other primary schools in the cluster of schools, and together they hold joint training days for staff, and organise a wide variety of sports events and drama days. The good relationship with two local secondary schools assists the development of the curriculum, and with assistance for gifted and talented pupils. Parents receive knowledgeable and informative advice as the time for transfer to secondary school approaches. The school's positive efforts, and the pupils' natural confidence, enable them to feel positively challenged by the transition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance, leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, governors and staff share a clear vision for the future of the school based on a caring ethos that includes all pupils whatever their ability or gender. They provide very good role models and have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development; the latter derived from their analysis of performance data. The school complies fully with statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership.
- All staff with management responsibilities have worked hard on a strategic plan which gives a clear vision for the school's development.
- The head and governors have worked very effectively to manage the recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of the staff in order to maintain the best possible support for the pupils.
- Governance is good.
- There is a very clear view of how well the school is doing in English and mathematics, based on a detailed analysis of performance data.
- There are weaknesses in strategic planning and monitoring of teaching that adversely affect outcomes.
- Financial management is good.

Commentary

35. The headteacher gives good leadership and direction to the whole school through her clear ideas for the future, and by promoting a sense of purpose throughout the school. She uses her knowledge of every child and family to create a sense of community as well as to support her high aspirations for each child.

36. The able deputy head supports the headteacher very well and, along with subject leaders, they have developed a vision for the future of the school, and have involved all governors and staff in formulating a strategic plan. This ensures that the school is clear about its priorities and has clear procedures in place to achieve them. This involvement and teamwork has resulted in a very positive and caring ethos, and a happy and harmonious school where everyone works hard and tries their best. The strategic plan, however, does not indicate by how much pupil achievement should improve as a result of the school's initiatives, and this limits the ability to track and measure its success. For example, there is no target for improvement in pupils' achievement in ICT that would be expected as a result of the improved resources.

37. Through rigorous analysis of assessment information, the school has a clear knowledge of how well pupils are achieving in English and mathematics, and where it needs to focus on improvements. This helped the staff to identify the underachievement of more able pupils, particularly in writing in Year 2 and Year 6. A clear commitment has been made to improve the quality of writing. This is demonstrated by the well-focused range of initiatives designed to address the issues and their effectiveness, which will result in the good achievement of pupils by the end of

Year 6. The school caters well for pupils with special educational need through IEPs that set clear and specific targets, and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) manages provision well. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and ICT are making a significant contribution to pupils' overall achievement in their subjects.

38. In the recent limited employment market, the management of the school has been effective in its recruitment, retention and deployment of staff. The governors and headteacher have not avoided difficult decisions, and have worked very hard to maintain the best possible support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs who, as a result, achieve well in lessons. Through their good induction procedures they have also ensured that the areas of responsibility are well led by subject co-ordinators.

39. Performance management has been fully implemented and has clear links to the school's main priorities for improvement. Although the school has clear procedures and good records for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, it is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that staff are clear about what they need to do to improve.

40. The headteacher and governors check how well the school is doing financially compared with similar schools. They prepare careful strategic spending plans and use them to inform their decision-making. Governors monitor the short-term budget regularly, working closely with the head and deputy headteacher. All are well supported by the efficient school administrative officer. The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the principles of best value and apply them when setting the budget. They ensure that financial management systems are effective and that funds allocated for specific purposes, like special needs, are used appropriately. Given the average costs per pupil and the school's overall performance, it provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	422,088
Total expenditure	430,865
Expenditure per pupil	2,627

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	35,281
Balance carried forward to the next	26,504

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. There are two part-time teachers covering maternity leave in the Reception class, both of whom have only been in post for a very short time. They have made a good start to their work in this class and are providing a range of interesting activities for the children.

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Some good teaching was seen in these areas of learning. There was not enough teaching seen in other areas of learning to make a judgement on overall provision, although a good lesson was seen in the musical aspect of creative development. The strengths in the teaching are the good supportive environment that has been created; the quality of the relationships between staff and children; effective use of resources; reliable assessment procedures and good use of the teaching assistants. The weaknesses are in the planning, which does not cater well enough for the differing learning needs of children; too many different activities to be effectively monitored and supported by teaching staff, and a lack of clarity in the learning intentions.

44. Children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical and creative development. They are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, and in the writing aspect of literacy. There was not enough teaching seen to make overall judgements on the other areas of learning. This is a similar finding to that of the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Emphasis is given to promoting children's personal and social development.
- Warm and friendly relationships at all levels ensure that children are happy to come to school and effective teaching motivates them to learn.

Commentary

45. There are good relationships between staff and children so that all children are keen to come to school. They come in happily with their parents in the morning and get themselves organised for the day with minimal fuss. They conform well to school routines, know what is expected of them, and are already clear about the school's expectations of their behaviour. All adults are good role models and are sensitive to the differing needs of the children within the class. Children are mainly interested in what they are doing and co-operate well on tasks. They regularly choose their own activities, and sometimes remain involved for sustained periods of time. Occasionally, when activities do not engage them, they lose interest.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early speaking and listening, reading and writing skills are taught systematically.
- Children make good progress in developing their writing skills.

Commentary

46. Teachers ensure that recognition and letter sounds are taught regularly, and they reinforce this well by asking children to provide objects beginning with the letter that is the focus of the lesson. For example, during the inspection children brought in objects whose initial sound was 'h'. They use their knowledge of initial sounds when writing words. In one writing lesson some children were writing words such as 'hot' and 'she was kind'. They are developing their writing skills well as a result of being given good opportunities to write, and clear and specific teaching of letter sounds and three letter word building, which they are encouraged to use in their written work. Children are confident speakers, and are given appropriate opportunities within the class to answer questions and explain their ideas. However, sometimes when role playing, there are not enough adult interventions to develop their vocabulary or speaking and listening skills. Most children enjoy reading and read regularly in school and at home. Higher attaining children enjoy reading, recognise simple three and four letter words and are able to give their own version of stories they have read. Lower attaining children tell the story in their own words. They know some initial sounds but are not yet able to apply them to their reading. Children enjoy having stories read to them and become fully involved. In one story session a child shouted, 'shut the door,' to warn the pigs that the wolf was near.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good range of activities to promote mathematical development.
- Teachers sometimes plan too many activities for effective monitoring.

Commentary

47. Teachers provide a good range of activities related to mathematical development. For example, children learned to use a programmable toy and to count the number of movements. They counted easily to 10, and some higher attaining children used simple addition. Some were able to programme the toy as a two-step addition sum. In another lesson seen, children were learning to measure distance using body parts and other objects. Some children measured the distance to particular goals, and the classroom assistant helped them to count on as they moved from one goal to the next. Another group measured the distance from one point on a map to another using chocolate bars. They used vocabulary such as 'more' and 'less' and began to make estimations of the number of chocolate bars required to cover specific distances. In another group children measured the height of the animals in the vet's surgery. They found measuring the height of a giraffe was quite difficult using small cubes.

48. Sometimes the teachers plan too many activities, preventing all of them from being monitored effectively. While the children in the groups they are working with are fully engaged, other children are left unsupported. This happens when children are not clear about the activities they are supposed to do, or find them too difficult and lose interest. Sometimes the children find them too easy or boring and find other things to do.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

49. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or standards in this area of learning, but the work seen was satisfactory. Children have used the computer to draw pictures, and two children were seen using the computer during the inspection. However, they were unsure about the task and were not very productive. They take part in cooking activities, such as making cakes, and learn to measure using spoons. In one lesson seen, linked to their science work, children blew into a variety of musical instruments to see if they could make a sound, and also to get some idea of the effort involved. In the sample of work seen, children tested toy cars to see how far they would travel, and had looked at materials that would keep Bradbury Bear dry.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

50. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or standards in this area of learning, but the work seen was satisfactory. There are planned lessons to develop physical skills using the hall, but these did not take place during the inspection. Children have regular opportunities to use the outdoor play area, which enables them to ride wheeled vehicles. They are competent in their use, learn to use space effectively and improve their control. In the outdoor play seen, a parent helper was monitoring the children, but had not been given any guidance on how to extend the children's learning. A range of practical activities such as cutting, sticking and modelling help children to develop their small motor skills. The regular use of 'Brain Gym' helps to develop children's co-ordination, and they enjoy the activity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some good teaching was seen in the musical aspect of creative development.
- Teachers provide an interesting role play area.
- Sometimes teachers do not support activities well enough.

Commentary

51. In the good music lesson seen, children listened very carefully to the music of 'Peter and the Wolf' and made comments about the music, such as 'Peter's music was fast' and 'we heard the guns'. The teacher then demonstrated the instruments which were used in the piece, and how they were played. When the music was played again, the children quickly identified the horn as representing the wolf 'because it was scary'.

52. The teachers have set up a 'Vets' surgery as a role play area. Children enjoy playing there. They like being vets and looking after the animals. They enjoy bandaging the sick animals, making appointments and writing out prescriptions. Good cross-curricular links are made through activities such as measuring the height of the sick animals. However, teachers did not give a great deal of input to their role play, and this limits the gains they make in terms of developing vocabulary or gaining a good understanding of the roles and functions of veterinary practice.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening are above average by Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good overall.
- The initiatives to improve writing are proving effective.
- The analysis of assessment data is used well to identify areas for improvement.
- The overall leadership and management of the subject are good.
- The teaching of handwriting is inconsistent throughout the school.
- The mechanistic use of the reading scheme, particularly in Years 1 and 2, limits the progress of some pupils.

Commentary

53. Standards in English in Year 6 are above average. Pupils achieve well because teaching is consistently good or better. Standards are average overall in Year 2 and pupil achievement is satisfactory. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. The school is focusing on specific initiatives to raise standards, particularly in writing, with an emphasis on raising expectations of the more able pupils and involving boys. The school has set itself challenging targets, and current predictions suggest that with continued good progress the targets will be achieved.

54. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are good, and in Years 5 and 6 they are very good. Pupils listen well, remember what has been said and are able to answer questions. In many lessons, pupils are encouraged to be active listeners and speakers by contributing new information, discussing opinions or questioning what has been said. Pupils across the school enjoy reading and develop their reading skills well during their time in school. However, all pupils work through a structured reading programme. For some pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2, this mechanistic approach limits their progress. The development of the library was a key issue at the last inspection, and this has been addressed. Most pupils know how to use the library as a tool for reading and research, but, partly because it is a thoroughfare, opportunities to use it are still too limited. Pupils are not able to develop independent learning and research skills in school, particularly in Year 6.

55. Improving the standard of writing, particularly for the more able pupils, has been a major focus. The school has used assessment data very well to focus on areas for improvement. During the inspection there was clear evidence in lesson observations, work scrutiny and discussion with pupils, that the school's strategies are beginning to raise standards through increased pupil motivation. The introduction of the new spelling system has improved the standard of spelling for some pupils, but the school has already recognised the need to review and refine the system. Although by Year 5 the standard of handwriting is satisfactory or better, it is inconsistently taught, and this does not help to ensure good practice across the school.

56. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, but ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. In Year 6 and Year 1, where the improvements in standards and achievement are consistently good, the quality of teaching is good or better. All teachers organise and structure their lessons effectively and work hard to motivate the pupils. Teaching is most effective when planning is detailed and matched well to pupils' differing learning needs, and provides challenge for all pupils, including the most able. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to motivate and interest their classes. The

pupils understand what they are learning about; questioning and conversation are encouraged, and the pupils are challenged well. In the great majority of lessons seen pupils behaved very well and had good relationships with the teachers. As a result, they concentrated well and worked hard.

57. Assessment in English is good overall. Individual records are used well to track pupils' progress, and data is regularly analysed. This data has been well used to provide support for groups and individuals. There is some good marking of work which gives pupils encouragement, praise and ideas for how they can improve. Pupils also have individual targets in their exercise books that they know and understand, but their use in lessons is not consistent.

58. The subject specialist provides good leadership, has created an effective team and gives good support to staff. She understands the subject well, and in her action plan has established a range of strategies to raise achievement. Unfortunately, these are not closely enough linked to measurable targets. The subject is managed well. Assessment data is regularly collected and analysed to ensure that pupils are progressing. The subject leader monitors planning and observes teaching regularly. She provides constructive feedback to colleagues which links closely with the areas for improvement.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

59. The school has implemented an effective strategy for teaching English across the curriculum. Pupils are given good imaginative opportunities to use and practise a wide range of language skills in different subjects, including ICT. For example, in history pupils in Year 5 took on World War 2 characters and wrote heartfelt letters home as evacuees. They hope to receive replies from their 'parents' (pupils at a local secondary school). In Year 2 pupils wrote poems about the Iron Man, made a large model of him and, through beautifully chosen music, developed their dance skills using their Iron Man poems. Teachers plan this work carefully and pupils achieve well because they are motivated and understand the purpose of the work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and sometimes very well as a result of the school's strong commitment to mathematics.
- There is strong support for pupils of all abilities.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Teaching is consistently good or better.
- There is a strong emphasis on pupils' ability to devise and explain strategies.
- Mathematics is used well across the curriculum.

Commentary

60. The standards identified at the time of the last inspection have been improved, and pupils now attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 2, and well above average at the end of Year 6. Standards attained by pupils in national tests have been consistently well above the national average over the past three years. They achieve well by the end of Year 2 and very well by the end of Year 6. Improvement is due to:

- very good leadership and management of the subject;
- rigorous monitoring of teaching to ensure consistency of practice;
- very good provision for higher attaining pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6 through small group support given by a very effective part-time teacher;
- a thorough analysis of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision, or groups of pupils who might be underachieving.

61. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards in mathematical development slightly above those expected for their age, and they achieve well as they move through the school. This is due to effective planning and good quality support for different groups of pupils, including those of higher attainment and those with special educational needs. Special educational needs support staff are effective in ensuring that the pupils they support are fully included in lessons. There is no evidence of any differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Most teachers challenge all pupils to answer questions and ensure that girls and boys work together.

62. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was good overall. Most teachers structure their lessons well so that a good pace is maintained. The National Numeracy Strategy supports teachers' planning and many features, such as the mental sessions and the discussions of strategies, are securely embedded. An analysis of pupils' books shows that the programme of work is covered systematically and thoroughly. At the same time, teachers are good at adapting the recommended structure to meet pupils' immediate needs and to suit their particular teaching styles. There is a strong emphasis on mental computation and developing pupils' thinking skills. Teachers expect pupils to learn their multiplication tables at home and most have a very good understanding of these, which allows them to think and to work quickly. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson where most pupils quickly identified which numbers within a range were not multiples of 8 or 9. They went on to apply their considerable skills to identify and carry on advanced number sequences made by counting on or back in regular steps from any integer, using the appropriate formula. Very good examples were seen in lessons and completed work of pupils applying their numeracy skills in problem solving situations. Pupils in Year 1, for example, determine how to collect information in order to group the class according to eye colouring. They present this information as block graphs which they use to answer challenging questions such as 'how many more children in the class have blue eyes than brown eyes?' This emphasis on solving problems allows pupils to use and apply their learning in meaningful ways. By the end of Year 6, most pupils develop their own strategies for problem solving, while higher attaining pupils are efficient in arriving at, and providing reasons for, their conclusions. Sessions at the end of lessons give pupils an understanding of what they have learnt. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work, and written comments indicate what pupils have learnt and how they might improve. The very good relationships that exist between all members of the school community give all pupils the confidence to offer answers without fear of getting them wrong.

Example of outstanding practice

A Year 6 lesson, in which pupils applied their knowledge of angles to understanding and using *bearing* as direction or position relative to a fixed point.

The excellent relationships established in this class, resulted in all pupils wanting to do their best to please their teacher and support assistant, for whom they have great affection and respect. The teacher's very imaginative teaching and very clear explanations generated a high level of excitement and motivation in the pupils. Through very effective and focused questioning, he and the very well prepared teaching assistant continued to teach and challenge as pupils worked on group tasks. This high amount of direct teaching was a special feature of the lesson, as a result of which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved very highly to acquire these difficult mapping skills.

63. The subject is very well led and managed by the well-informed co-ordinator who closely monitors provision and pupil performance. There are good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress and for setting realistic but challenging targets for individual pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects, and consequently develop an appreciation of the practical uses of the subject. For example, they use graphs and tables to record their work in geography and science, and use their measuring skills and knowledge of angles in design and technology lessons, as well as to develop accurate mapping skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good provision for science in Years 4, 5 and 6 enables pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not keep pupils work in an easily retrievable form, making it difficult to monitor how well pupils are doing, or to help them improve through constructive marking.
- Occasionally teaching is unsatisfactory.
- The subject coordinator does not manage or monitor the subject well.

Commentary

65. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. These are similar findings to the previous inspection.

66. From a scrutiny of work in Year 5, discussions with pupils in Year 6, and the good lesson seen in Year 4, pupils are achieving well in these classes. In the lesson seen in Year 4, pupils worked very well to complete a fair test involving solids that did or did not dissolve in water. The pupils were clear about what a fair test was and the measurements they would use. They knew that some elements would have to be constant whilst others were variable. The teacher made good use of demonstration, which helped the pupils to a greater understanding and, as a result, they achieved well in this lesson. The scrutiny of work in Year 5 shows that pupils have separated materials using magnets, filter paper and evaporation. The teachers were very innovative in their approach to this work as it was presented to the pupils as a forensic investigation. All pupils made a very detailed analysis of gravel with clearly labelled diagrams. In discussion with pupils in Year 6, their enthusiasm for their work was evident. They were very keen to discuss their most recent experiment on how to extract sugar from a mixture of debris, including sand, paper clips and other materials. Higher attaining pupils explained processes such as sieving, filtration, making a solute and finally evaporation. They discussed each problem they encountered in turn and how it was solved. Most have a clear understanding of air resistance, gravity and up-thrust. In discussion about changing materials, they were very clear about reversible and irreversible change, and the higher attaining pupils were grappling with the difference between chemical and physical reactions. These discussions support the evidence in their books, which clearly shows what they have covered and the good progress they have made.

67. Most of the work in Years 1 and 2 is practical, resulting in very little written evidence of what pupils can and cannot do. In Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils carry out most of their work on individual work sheets, which are kept in different places. This means that, as there is no clear ongoing evidence of progress, it is very difficult for teachers to use marking to help pupils improve. It is also difficult for teachers to monitor what individual pupils have covered or understood in order to provide an appropriate level of work for them in lessons.

68. The teaching seen in Years 2, 3 and 4 varied from good to unsatisfactory. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that teaching and learning is at least satisfactory or better across the school. In the good lesson, the teacher was clearly focused on developing scientific skills, and the lesson was well organised to secure this. However, in the other two lessons there were some weaknesses. The teachers' questioning was superficial and not used well enough to develop scientific knowledge and understanding. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the task lacked challenge. Pupils repeated simple activities without being given any clear extension to provide challenge or focus on new learning. The pace of the lesson was slow and there was limited teacher input. As a result, pupils did not make the gains in their learning of which they were capable.

69. Leadership and management of the subject are not rigorous enough in determining how well the subject is taught. More monitoring of the subject is necessary in order to have a clearer view of standards. Marking and assessment are not used well enough to help pupils improve. No rigorous analysis was undertaken by the co-ordinator to identify reasons for the low number of pupils attaining Level 3 in Year 2 in 2003.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is effective and good use is made of the computer suite.
- Skills are well taught and the curriculum is comprehensively covered.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Information and communication technology is used well across the curriculum.

Commentary

70. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 are above expectations. At the time of the last inspection, standards were reported to have been above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been a significant improvement in standards, especially when one considers how much expectations of what pupils can do have increased since the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 2 and achieve well by the end of Year 6.

71. Pupils' good response and behaviour, and their willingness to help each other, make a positive contribution to their learning. Teaching in the recently developed suite is good. On-going training for teachers results in their increased confidence to teach the required skills. They plan effectively, using a good scheme of work which ensures the curriculum meets statutory requirements. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of the projector to quickly and accurately explain the objectives of the lesson to pupils. As a result, pupils spend most of the lesson working on the computers while adults circulate and continue to guide and teach. Assessment tasks are carried out annually, and these are moderated and leveled to give teachers an idea of how well pupils are doing. Lesson plans now need to take greater account of pupils who are moving on at a faster rate and need to be challenged at all stages of the lesson.

72. By the end of Year 2, pupils have been taught to manipulate text by changing font size, style and colour to enhance the quality of their work. They are taught to create pictures, to produce graphs using the 'starting graph' program, and to find information using 'Children's Encyclopedia' CD-Rom. Planning and discussions with pupils revealed that they are expected to produce an accurate set of instructions to control a floor turtle and to predict outcomes. Year 1 pupils were observed using a computer microscope, with support, to examine a range of materials. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were being very effectively taught to apply their skills to create an 'interactive book' for pupils in Year 1 and 2. They achieved very highly in using information and communication technology to organise, improve and present information for specific purposes and audiences, including text, sound and pictures. Planning, completed work and lessons observed show that, by the time they transfer to secondary school, pupils have been taught the full range of skills required, including handling information, modelling, sensing and control. Extra-curricular clubs are well used to support pupils' learning and to develop further their interest in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. The use of ICT across the curriculum was a key issue for action in the last inspection report. Some good examples were seen during the current inspection, and in work on display, of pupils using computers to support their work in English, mathematics, art, geography and science. This is no longer a key issue for action. Lesson times are well used to teach pupils the full range of skills expected within the subject itself and with other subjects. The school has plans to provide pupils with good quality computers in the classrooms so that they can have more regular opportunities to apply taught skills during a range of lessons.

HUMANITIES

74. In history and religious education some teaching was seen and work scrutinised. In geography, no lessons were seen but work was scrutinised.

75. The scheme of work for **geography** is fully in place and is imaginatively linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 4, the work about Japan includes a range of writing skills and work in art. In Year 3, history and geography are well linked in a study of Egypt and, in Year 1, photographs show pupils trying out food from around the world, integrating elements of PSHE, mathematics and science. Good use is also made of the local area and the opportunities it offers for linking subjects together.

76. In **history**, work was sampled and two lessons were observed. From the lessons seen, it was clear that the pupils' learning is enhanced by imaginative, demanding, lessons in which resources are used well, and very good opportunities are created for discussion, the evaluation of historical fact and fiction, and the development of empathy. Pupils enjoyed these lessons and were able to speak knowledgeably about what they had learnt, such as the use of portraits as political and social propaganda. In these lessons standards were above average and pupils achieved well.

77. Standards of attainment in **religious education** on the basis of available evidence appear to be in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. As only one full lesson was seen, the main basis for judging attainment was centred round discussions with staff and pupils. Discussions with pupils show that they are given a good understanding of the nature of Christian belief. Visits to the local church and assemblies are well used in this respect. The organisation of the way in which the curriculum is delivered means that the range of faiths studied is not visited frequently enough to allow pupils to identify similarities and differences between the teachings of different religions. Teaching of religions alongside each other would further help teachers to teach *through* religion as well as *about* religion. In discussion with pupils, it was evident that they forget facts about the religions studied as they progress through the school. A thematic approach to the learning of religious education would help pupils to research, recognise and remember a wide range of features common to a number of religions: for example, festivals and other key events, as well as distinctive features of the religions studied, such as views on prayer and fasting. In the lesson seen in Year 1, the very good relationships established, and the teacher's very sensitive approach, resulted in open and frank discussion as pupils explored their feelings when learning about Christ's death and resurrection. The way they were encouraged to explore their feelings on how it would have felt to be present at these events, and when they talked about their experience of death in their own lifetimes, made a very strong contribution to their spiritual development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. Work was sampled in all of these subjects. Some lessons were seen and work was scrutinised.

79. One lesson in **art and design** was seen. Teachers' planning and work on display, as well as discussions with staff and pupils, show work in this subject to be varied and interesting. Emphasis is placed on developing skills and techniques, as was evident in the Year 5 lesson, where pupils were directly taught to use various drawing tools to create effect. This lesson was well planned to follow on from the highly imaginative work produced by pupils, guided by a local artist. They had drawn inspiration from the works of Charles Keeping and used his style to enhance their own work. A strength of the subject is the imaginative way in which skills are taught through evaluation of the style, techniques and methods of a variety of well-known artists. All evidence indicates that pupils are attaining standards above those expected, as at the time of the last inspection.

80. Only two lessons were seen in **design and technology**: one in Year 1 and one in Year 2. In the very good lesson seen in Year 1 pupils were using simple finishing techniques to improve the appearance of their castles. They were able to explain how they made them, describing books they had looked at, materials they had used and the tools and techniques required to put them all together. The class teacher very effectively motivated the pupils, who were totally involved in their task. In a good lesson seen in Year 2 pupils were making puppets. The teacher's good questioning helped pupils develop their ideas in order to produce work of good quality.

81. Only two lessons were seen in **music**. In the Year 5 lesson, good cross-curricular links were made with history work on World War 2. Pupils listened to Britten's 'War Requiem' and discussed its context, particularly with reference to the carnage caused by the blitz. Pupils found the different musical elements quite difficult, but tried to interpret how the music reflected the mood of war. In the Year 6 lesson seen, pupils were involved in the penultimate lesson to create a harmonious composition. They had gradually been building this up over several weeks. The teacher's very good methods and organisation engaged the pupils very well, and all pupils were keen to improve their individual contributions. They read musical notation, maintained their own parts and used a variety of percussion instruments, as well as the clarinet, violin and guitar.

82. Only a few lessons were seen in **physical education**, but it is clear that all strands of the subject are being taught, including dance and outdoor and adventurous activities that are organised on a two-year cycle for the upper part of the school. Swimming is given a high priority, due to the proximity of the canal, and has a high profile from Reception to Year 4, with the great majority of pupils being able to swim by this time.

83. A broad range of school clubs is offered by teachers, governors and outside agencies, and these make a positive contribution to the development of games skills. The pupils are also given a wide range of opportunities to take part in local activities and competitions. They put an emphasis on sportsmanship, and are justly proud of their Fair Play Award, won at the Newbury Tag Rugby competition.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

84. There is a good policy in place for PSHE, which is well understood by all staff. The school is committed to the well-being of its pupils through physical education, exercise and healthy living. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award for its work in this area of pupils' development and care. Pupils are strongly encouraged to care for school property and the environment. The whole ethos of the school helps pupils develop a sense of social justice and moral obligation. They are made aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs, alcohol and tobacco through the school's science programme. The well planned sex and relationships education programme helps pupils

face the changes of puberty as they begin to develop into young adults, and to transfer to secondary school with support and encouragement from their primary school. Effective use of outside agencies, such as the medical and safety services, ensures that pupils are given accurate information in preparation for adult life.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).