

INSPECTION REPORT

HAREWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115492

Headteacher: Mr Richard Martin

Lead inspector: Mrs Deborah Zachary

Dates of inspection: 28th – 30th June 2004

Inspection number: 256337

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	330
School address:	Harewood Close Tuffley Gloucester
Postcode:	GL4 0SS
Telephone number:	01452 525364
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mark Lockett

Date of previous inspection: April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a suburban area within the city of Gloucester. Overall, the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are average, as is the number of pupils claiming free school meals. The large majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds, with small minorities from other ethnic groups; two pupils speak English as an additional language. Very few pupils join the school or leave it between Year 3 and Year 6. The majority of pupils join the school from the Harewood Infants School, but a significant minority, including a number of lower attaining pupils, join from a variety of other Gloucester schools. The standards of pupils who enter the school are below average overall, but getting higher. The standards of the current Year 6 pupils were well below average overall on entry, and those of the current Year 3 were close to average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average and nine pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is also more than usual. The majority of pupils with special needs have mild to moderate learning difficulties.

The school is a part of the Gloucester Education Achievement Zone (EAZ) and has been in the forefront of the introduction of the *city curriculum*, an initiative associated with the Government's drive to ensure excellence and enjoyment in primary schools. It is also part of the local Leadership Development Strategy.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2940	Deborah Zachary	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology
9756	Ken Parsons	Lay inspector	
28014	Peter Buckley	Team inspector	Mathematics
14997	Val Emery	Team inspector	English, special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good and improving school. It has a number of really outstanding features. It is a school that has taken the step of making radical and innovative changes to its curriculum, and these are paying great dividends for pupils. These time-consuming innovations have meant that the school has had to prioritise some developments before others, leaving some identified weaknesses still to be improved. These decisions have been absolutely right and reflect very good leadership. However, some lower level things have been unnecessarily ignored and there is some catching up to do on these. Management is not as good as leadership, but the pupils are achieving well and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The *city curriculum* is having a huge and positive impact on the ethos of the school – especially on teaching and learning and the attitudes of pupils, all of which are now very good.
- Provision is very good for art and design, and for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Spelling and handwriting, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and some aspects of religious education are not well planned; standards in these areas are lower.
- Aspects of leadership are inspirational and the direction of the school is identified very clearly, with strategies for development implemented very well.
- Though teachers know very well what their pupils can do, formal assessment records that allow such information to be passed on are not fully established.
- Whilst some other things in the school work well in practice, there are not the formal structures to ensure that they will continue to run smoothly.

The school has improved well overall since the last inspection. Changes have been exceptional in some areas; in others, though issues were tackled, improvement has not been sustained. On the one hand teaching and learning have dramatically improved. Standards, which dipped with a change in intake, are now rising. The curriculum and school development plan have greatly improved. Other issues have been dealt with satisfactorily but improvements in spelling and handwriting and written reports to parents have not been maintained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

These results show that there was some underachievement for pupils in Year 6 last year. This year there has been an improvement in both standards and achievement in all three subjects,

with a huge improvement in mathematics. **Achievement is good overall**, and it is very good for pupils with special educational needs. Achievement is better in Years 3-5 than it is for pupils in Year 6, where curriculum changes have as yet had less impact. However, the current Year 6 pupils are still achieving well. Their standards are below average overall, but they entered the school with well below average skills in key areas.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but moral and social development is very good. Attendance is well above average, but the registers are not completed in the way the law demands.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good, as are teaching and learning. The use of resources is excellent. The materials staff use – often sought out and brought in specially – really stimulate and enthuse pupils, and make their learning practical and real to them. Planning is also excellent with lots of work and tasks at different levels ensuring that pupils of all abilities are fully involved. The teachers know what their pupils are capable of and usually get the challenge exactly right. As yet, however, whole-school assessment records only exist in English and mathematics. This makes it hard for co-ordinators to be sure that pupils have learnt what they should as they move through the school. Marking can also be too generous, so pupils think they are doing better than they are. For these reasons, assessment is only satisfactory.

The *city curriculum* and the wholeness it gives to learning is a huge strength. The only reason for judging the curriculum to be very good rather than excellent is that it is still being developed. The school is aware that it does not yet cover all that it should in a balanced way. The developments have, however, led to excellent links with other schools and very good links with the surrounding community. Pupils are well cared for and supported – there is a great concern for the welfare of the individual and their happiness and joy in learning – hence the school's view of itself as 'the school that smiles'. However, the required formal health and safety policy is barely adequate.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher's leadership is inspirational and visionary, steering staff and pupils through the huge curriculum change of the last three years. He and the deputy head, in particular, have been very effective in implementing the changes, but their leadership has not been completely effective in keeping an eye on minor details. Much of their management has been good, but management is more variable at subject level even though, again, the inspiration and vision are there. The governance of the school is satisfactory even though some minor statutory requirements are not met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Both parents and pupils are highly satisfied. Parents especially like the *city curriculum* and the enthusiasm their children show for their learning. Despite a feeling that written information to them, including reports, could be better, they are very comfortable about approaching the school or individual teachers. The pupils really like the school. Very few want to change

anything about it. They feel that their views matter even though there is no formal way in which their views are sought.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in spelling and handwriting, in the use of ICT, and in the parts of religious education that concern learning from religion and relating that to pupils' experience.
- Improve formal assessment records so that subject co-ordinators can more easily monitor what pupils have learnt.
- Ensure that responsibility for basic things such as statutory requirements, written communication to parents and formal health and safety matters is clear, and improve these areas.

Also, to meet statutory requirements:

- Monitor the race equality policy, complete registers in accordance with requirements and ensure that the annual report to parents fully covers the things it should.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The standards judgement compares the school to standards nationally. The achievement judgement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.

Achievement is good overall. It is particularly good in Years 3-5 though still good in Year 6, where standards have improved this year - particularly in mathematics - but are below average overall. Achievement is very good for pupils with special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in art and good throughout the school in mathematics.
- Standards in spelling and handwriting are not as high as in other aspects of English.
- Pupils with special educational needs do very well because of the support they get.
- The current Year 6 pupils have had a more fragmented experience than those in the other year groups, and so still have some weaknesses in their standards.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT and religious education lessons, but over time their achievement in both subjects, though satisfactory overall, is too patchy.

Commentary

The table shown below gives average points scores for pupils. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term, so if a school's scores are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.6 (26.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.7 (25.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.9 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were [number] pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Results in the 2003 national curriculum tests were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. These pupils entered the school with below average standards and had some significant disruptions to their learning in Year 2, but their English and mathematics results nevertheless represent underachievement. The school took this very seriously and took major steps to improve mathematics and some aspects of English (the main developments in English are planned for next year). As a result standards in mathematics have improved from well below average to average, a jump of around 2.7 points, and are now close to the boundary at which they would be judged above average. Achievement in mathematics is good throughout the school, with some examples of very good achievement. Standards in English have improved by about 1.1 points and in science by 0.4 points.

2. The majority of last year's Year 6 had significant disruption to their learning in Year 2, and so did the current Year 6 in Year 1, and to a lesser extent in Year 2. This was because the infant school that they attended was failing to provide an adequate standard of education. It was placed in special measures in Autumn 1998, when the inspection team found no teaching in Years 1 or 2 to be better than satisfactory, and 40 per cent to be unsatisfactory or poor. This must have affected last year's Year 6 and the current Year 6 in terms of their readiness to learn when they entered Harewood Junior. Inspectors took account of this in judging the achievement of the current Year 6 through the school. The similar schools grades printed in the summary for the previous Year 6 take account of it too.
3. The current Year 6 pupils are reaching standards that are below average overall, and below average in English, ICT and religious education. Achievement in these subjects is satisfactory, taking into account where pupils started. Nevertheless, pupils do better in some aspects of these subjects than in others throughout the school, and these are areas that the school needs to work on. In English, achievement is not as good in spelling and handwriting as in reading, and not nearly as good as in creative writing, where some high standards were seen. In ICT pupils are achieving well in some specific skills such as the construction of multimedia presentations. However, they do not have a good understanding of how computers are used in the world beyond school and they do not use computers as a matter of course to support their learning. Those in Year 6 do not yet have sufficient knowledge of the use of spreadsheets, but this is not the case in the other year groups. In religious education pupils know the necessary facts about the major faiths, but tend not to relate these to their own experiences or use them to explore what influences their own lives.
4. Standards in science are lower in Year 6 than in the other year groups; they are average in most aspects of science but below average in some investigation skills. This is because Year 6 pupils have been focussing on preparing for national tests. Standards are above average in other years and high standards of investigation skills were seen in Year 5. For this reason achievement in science is judged good even though Year 6 pupils have only achieved satisfactorily.
5. Standards in art and design are above average in Year 6 and pupils are achieving very well throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate precise draughtsmanship and art enhances almost every subject of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving very well across their subjects. They are very well supported, both in lessons and when they are withdrawn for special help. Teachers routinely plan adapted work for them to ensure they take a full part in lessons. The pupils who speak English as an additional language are achieving well. Pupils who have particular gifts and talents achieve well and are stimulated by the curriculum. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaires before the inspection felt their child was making good progress, and inspectors agree.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their moral and social development is also very good and their spiritual and cultural development is good, making these aspects of their personal development good overall. Attendance is well above the national average for a school of this type and punctuality is also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In most lessons pupils' very positive attitudes contribute very well to their learning.
- The very good relationships between staff and pupils help to maintain high standards of behaviour.
- The school has a clear set of values and this makes a strong contribution to pupils' moral and social development.
- The vast majority of pupils have a very positive approach to their education and participate well in what the school has to offer, including extracurricular activities.
- Very good attendance maximises the opportunities for pupils to learn, but attendance recording is not carried out in line with legal requirements.
- Whilst satisfactory, pupils' appreciation of a wide range of cultures is not as well developed as other aspects of their personal qualities.

Commentary

6. The majority of parents are very satisfied with the standards of behaviour in the school and believe that their children are encouraged to develop well as individuals. The school has a clear set of expectations that pupils understand and with which they usually comply. There is a range of rewards and sanctions in place, but the very good behaviour results more from the strong relationships between adults and pupils and the pupils' interest in their work. Pupils like and trust their teachers and want to please them. In turn, teachers treat them as individuals and usually pupils respond well to this. For example, when a class went to the edge of the site to carry out a traffic survey, nobody took advantage of the unstructured situation to misbehave; they were also quiet coming back into the building so as not to disturb others. Very positive attitudes to school are evident, for example, in the large numbers of pupils participating in school clubs and in the volunteers to do jobs for teachers and the school administrator.
7. Pupils get on very well with each other. Break times are pleasant occasions, with pupils organising their own games and including all those wanting to play. In a physical education lesson, for example, the pupils were happy to partner whoever happened to be near them at that time, without fuss. Pupils behave sensibly and with due regard for others. There is virtually no bullying; pupils are confident that any such incidents will be dealt with speedily by staff. Only one pupil has been excluded from the school, an unusual and individual case.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	279	3	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0

Black or Black British – Caribbean	5	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	27	0	0

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

8. The school has a very clear vision to help pupils see that all things are possible, to raise their aspirations and develop their determination to achieve them, using the *city curriculum* as a basis. Through the school's efforts, many pupils have developed into confident speakers and listeners, who can work together well in groups and are able to adapt to others' views. Pupils are trusted to come into the school building well before the official start of the day and they do not abuse this privilege. The school takes every opportunity to foster pupils' confidence and ambitions, often involving first-hand experiences and trips out into the wider community, and helping them to succeed, either academically or in fields such as sport or art. A pre-school gymnastics club, for example, saw pupils displaying considerable verve in vaulting, unfazed that some of their peers were watching.
9. The school's clear concept of what it is trying to achieve, emanating from the headteacher but shared by all the staff, helps to define the nature of relationships in the school and creates its very strong ethos. This can be seen in the way that staff from the headteacher downwards set an example for the pupils, with many prepared to "go the extra mile" and spend their own time to support them. Pupils themselves understand and appreciate this, as do their parents. The school helps its young people to develop a set of values and standards on which to base their own social and moral judgements. Assemblies sometimes provide moments of calm or reflection, although few pupils join in the prayers. Though not overt, the integration of learning that the curriculum provides strongly supports a sense of the spiritual – a wholeness – in the curriculum subjects. The strengths in art and in creative writing provide very good opportunities for pupils to appreciate some aspects of cultural traditions, as does the *city curriculum* in general, rooted as it is in local experience. In geography pupils are able to study the cultures of areas such as the rain forests, whilst the food topic saw pupils studying food from the Caribbean, France and Italy. However, the opportunities in religious education to reflect on a range of cultures are restricted compared with many schools and the school does not make full use of the multicultural nature of Gloucester to provide first-hand experience of other cultures. The school provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills, including residential trips and a peer mediation scheme under which older pupils are trained to help others with their problems. Pupils also run the school tuck shop, including buying the stock.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.1	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

10. Attendance is well above the national average for a school of this type. Pupils enjoy school and their positive attitudes means they want to attend. Parents are very supportive, with fewer holidays taken by pupils in term time than many schools. Pupils come to school punctually and as a result there is an efficient start to the school day. However, the

school's attendance procedures are unsatisfactory. The registers fail to comply with legal requirements, with some records marked only in pencil rather than permanently, missing sub-totalling and with numerous absences with no reason code. Without these codes it is impossible to say what the level of unauthorised absences is and hence the full accuracy of the school's legally-required attendance returns cannot be guaranteed. Monitoring of the registers by the headteacher, carried out on behalf of the governors, is ineffective in this respect and needs to be improved.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The *city curriculum* is having a huge and positive impact on teaching and learning, and has also had a big impact on the links with the community and other schools. These are now particular strengths. Some formal systems need improvement, such as whole-school recording of assessment and reports to parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons contain the right learning tasks for pupils of different levels of ability, and as a result pupils with special educational needs learn particularly well.
- Teachers know very well what their pupils can do, but formal assessment records that allow such information to be passed on are only established in English and mathematics.
- The use of most resources is excellent – which makes lessons practical and relevant – but computers are under-used.
- Planning for lessons is excellent.
- Marking is sometimes too generous.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	14 (28%)	25 (50%)	9 (18%)	0	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.

11. Teaching has improved enormously since the last inspection, when ten per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and only nine per cent were very good or excellent, and pupils' short concentration spans limited learning and presented problems of class management for teachers. Rapt interest is now almost the norm for pupils, and no discipline problems were observed. Almost all pupils say they learn new things in lessons and all who responded agree they usually have to work hard; nineteen out of twenty find at least some lessons interesting and fun, with two thirds agreeing this is true of most or all lessons. The table above shows teaching that was actually seen. The judgement of very good teaching and learning is also supported by examination of pupils' work and discussions with them. Teaching is helped to be of this high quality because teachers find the *city curriculum*, though demanding, stimulating and enjoyable. The reason that teaching is as yet better than achievement is that there is a time lag. The current pupils,

particularly those in Year 6, have had a more fragmented experience in the past in the school, so they have some catching up to do.

12. There are several reasons why pupils are so interested and learning is so good. Lessons are exceptionally well planned, through the links that teachers make in the *city curriculum*. The teachers make sure that what the pupils are studying is linked to everything else they are doing so learning becomes a coherent whole. In a very good Year 5 science lesson an investigation, on the length a levered catapult could fire an object, was introduced by a suitably aged and battered letter from a Roman General under attack from local tribes. This provision of exemplary resources is tremendously demanding on teachers, but pays great dividends. The catapults themselves, for example, had been painstakingly constructed. In a study of fish (used again in a range of subjects), each group of pupils in Year 4 had both a bowl of goldfish and a fresh (dead) trout to use as a stimulus. All these resources are linked as much as possible to the local area and the pupils' own experience, which again ensures interest and concentration.
13. The excellent planning includes clear learning outcomes that teachers ensure pupils are aware of and often revisit at the end of lessons. It also includes support materials for less able pupils and usually work to extend the most able. For example, in a geography lesson, pupils were asked to record their work in different ways, so that the less able had less demand for independent writing yet the same geographical context. Teachers challenge pupils very well, making sure they use technical language which is often prepared as key words for the lesson. The most able are also stretched by extension work that goes beyond the standards expected for this age.
14. Where lessons were satisfactory rather than better, this challenge was occasionally misjudged and the work was beyond the group. In some lessons opportunities were missed for work to reinforce or correct basics – such as spelling and punctuation, or to stretch able pupils in a less planned way – with an extra question in a mental arithmetic session, for example. Occasionally the use of resources fell below the very high standards seen elsewhere. However, these weaker areas were individual occasions, not typical of teaching. Another minor weakness is that though teaching is very good, the use of ICT is not routine. Good examples were seen where pupils were preparing multimedia presentations, but in general pupils do not as a matter of course move to computers to word-process a piece of writing or research a point. Use of computers tends to be on a strictly planned rotation at the start of a morning or afternoon.
15. Overall, the assessment procedures in the school are satisfactory, primarily because they are in place in the key subjects of English and mathematics and under development in other subjects. Important work has been done on this with other schools in the EAZ; an assessment system for all national curriculum subjects that involves pupils in identifying what they can and cannot do is due to start in September. There is already good practice in assessment in mathematics, and the outcomes are used effectively to help monitor pupils' progress. In English pupils' progress is monitored in writing, but insufficient attention is paid to assessing and improving pupils' reading, spelling and handwriting. Nevertheless, analysis of test results is appropriately carried out and this did help the school identify weaknesses. Assessment in science is currently linked to termly themes of learning, which helps teachers to identify how well pupils have done but does not identify gaps in terms of areas that have not been covered by the theme. At the moment, though individual class teachers know what pupils can do and tailor lessons accordingly, records cannot easily be monitored by co-ordinators. This means it is harder to spot when whole

classes are weaker at aspects of a subject, and problems of balance within subjects, a key area to be addressed, cannot easily be identified.

16. Written work is largely corrected, but there is inconsistency in the quality of the marking and insufficient focus on how well pupils have achieved, and how they can further improve. For example, too many over-generous comments of praise devalue the effectiveness of marking and give pupils, in some cases, a false impression of how well they are doing.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good with some outstanding features. Enrichment activities are very good. Resources and accommodation are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is designed very well to meet the particular needs of its pupils.
- The curriculum stimulates creativity, and really arouses pupils' curiosity, being based on direct experience and the city and local area.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils achieve very well.
- A number of subjects, although covering the national curriculum, do not yet get the balance right.

Commentary

17. The exciting and innovative curriculum is a key factor in the pupils' very good attitudes to their learning and prepares them very well for their secondary school education. They see the curriculum as a whole and enjoy a sense of purpose about all that they do. Given that many pupils entered Year 3 with a disrupted learning experience and without many of the necessary learning skills, the success of the approach is unquestionable. The changes have created opportunities, released pupils' and teachers' potential and already achieved excellence in some of the themes studied. The challenge to the school now is to ensure that the curriculum embraces a proper balance as well as depth and enjoyment. At the moment so much of it is outstanding yet, in the lack of balance in some subjects, the curriculum is also a key area that the school needs to work on.
18. Units of work are carefully planned to use the city and local environment to full advantage so that pupils have first-hand experience, which is used well and cleverly linked across the curriculum – though not in a forced way. This impacts very well on the teaching and learning in the school, because teachers revel in the freedom they have to explore themes and pupils learn subjects as a coherent whole. Despite the considerable time planning exciting activities to cover specific objectives, the teachers really enjoy their teaching and are very well prepared to motivate and excite pupils in their learning. Frequent visits to the local area, such as one seen to a local brook, give pupils an exciting starting point and real experiences for their work.

Example of outstanding practice

The curriculum is thematic and very carefully planned to raise standards and make learning fun.

Exciting themes, one or two a term, have been identified for every year group, often drawing on historical, scientific or geographical start points. Co-ordinators have divided national programmes of study in the individual

subjects between the year groups, taking account of the themes but also progression. Teachers then work together in year teams to plan how these individual subjects become an intrinsic part of the theme, not just loosely linked. They look in great detail at how local features, visitors and visits can be used to make learning relevant and they ensure a wide range of resources bring learning to life. The locality and things pupils can directly experience are at the heart of the curriculum, but the same unifying principles can be applied even to a theme about a more distant place, such as *the rainforest*, studied by Year 6. Here a video rather than a trip started the day. Pupils made notes, leading into an analysis and lively discussion about the reasons people were destroying the rainforest. Local examples and practical measurements helped estimates of the width a road must be to allow for lorries as opposed to cars and carts. Later that morning the focus moved smoothly into pupils writing persuasive arguments about stopping that destruction. After lunch a series of tropical plants and plants for other climates were placed on tables and some pupils analysed their characteristics – how fragile they were and how they were adapted for the climate. Others used the plants as a stimulus for close observational drawing at the same time. The day was seamless, learning vivid and real, and pupils responded with rapt concentration and rapid achievement.

19. The *city curriculum* is relatively newly established and is being reviewed by the school to ensure coverage of the national curriculum. The broad curriculum meets statutory requirements, but a number of subjects do not yet get the balance right. There is no requirement to spend a specific amount of time on an aspect of a subject, and this is not the root of any criticism - inspectors made these judgements about balance in terms of outcomes for pupils. In science for example, Year 6 pupils do not demonstrate the capacity to plan investigations at a level commensurate with their understanding of some other aspects of the subject. In English, handwriting and spelling are weaknesses, because there is insufficient depth and regularity to the teaching of these skills and they are not closely enough pursued in everyday work. In religious education pupils cannot apply what they learn from religion to other experiences well enough. In ICT pupils' skills are there, but they are not well aware of how computers are used in the wider world. Solutions for this imbalance are not difficult, given the work that has already been done. The issues in ICT and religious education are about more practice in applying what pupils know, and the context of the *city curriculum* is ideally suited for this. The issue in science will largely disappear as the next year group comes through, because action is being taken. Handwriting and spelling will require a more sustained focus, but pupils do have a great enthusiasm for English that will support a drive on these basic skills.
20. The provision for curriculum enrichment is very good. Parents are, unusually, very positive about the activities the school offers. Pupils benefit greatly from the range of activities and the support it gives to their learning. Residential opportunities are offered to Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, making a valuable contribution to pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The school offers very good sporting opportunities, both in participation in clubs before and after school, and by offering involvement in a good number of local tournaments and competitions. The range of visits and visitors is also very good and is well linked to the curriculum. A recent visit to find the source of the River Severn is a good example. One area, though, which could be developed, is the use of visits and visitors to extend pupils' appreciation of multicultural Britain further.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they achieve very well. The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs and interest of all its pupils. Pupils are well supported in class, usually in small groups with a teaching assistant. Good use of pupils' individual education plans, help them to achieve very well and enables them to be fully included in class activities. There are good quality partnerships and dialogues between support staff and teachers, so that the curriculum is adapted where necessary to meet the specific needs of each of the pupils. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language, and these pupils are comparatively new to the school.

They are receiving good quality external support with the help of the local education authority, though at the moment the time for this is limited. Nevertheless they benefit greatly from the *city curriculum* because of its strong visual and resource-based learning. Provision for them is good overall.

22. The resources the school has accumulated for use in many lessons are exceptional. They are often gathered or borrowed for use for a specific theme, and they greatly enhance the learning of the pupils because of the interest they generate. In other ways resources are fairly typical, but in ICT some equipment for sensing and control has to be borrowed and thus is not permanently available. This affects both science and ICT standards in that science investigations cannot always involve very accurate measurement and ICT is not used naturally when the need arises. The school building provides a pleasant working environment, with good-sized classrooms enhanced by interesting displays of pupils' work. There is neither a proper school library nor a computer suite, and lack of both impacts on the development of pupils' research and ICT use. Lunchtime arrangements utilising a classroom as a serving and dining area are not ideal. To balance this, however, the school has very large grounds, providing facilities such as a couple of football pitches and a running track.

Care, guidance and support

There are good arrangements to ensure students' care, welfare, health and safety. The school provides students with good support, advice and guidance. There is satisfactory pupil involvement in the school's work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good and trusting relationships with their teachers.
- Pupils have access to well-informed advice and guidance when they need it.
- Child protection procedures are effective, but the health and safety policy could be improved.
- There is no school council to enable pupil involvement in school decisions.

Commentary

23. Parents believe that their children are happy and safe in the school. The school does provide a safe working environment, with satisfactory procedures in place and with the governing body involved appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to work safely, for example, in physical education lessons where good guidance is sometimes given to help them avoid injuries. First aid provision is in place. However, the school's health and safety policy is much shorter than many such documents and lacks a clear allocation of responsibilities within it; it is very general. Child protection procedures fulfil requirements and are effective in practice; staff are regularly briefed and appropriate records are kept. Although the coordinator is not a full-time member of staff, there is sufficient liaison with the headteacher to ensure that problems can be dealt with in her absence. The school works well with other relevant agencies, such as social services, to ensure that pupils get additional help when they need it.
24. The school is sensitive to the needs of individual pupils and most teachers and other staff know them well. The school's ethos emphasises the worth of each individual and staff are effective at putting this into practice. There is often a good rapport and mutual respect

between pupils and staff. In particular, pupils feel that their class teachers treat them well as individuals. They also feel that senior members of staff are accessible if they need them. Although assessment of pupils' personal development is largely informal, it is nevertheless effective. Parents believe that staff treat the pupils fairly, that they do encourage pupils to become mature and independent and that induction arrangements for Year 3 pupils are good. The staff do make considerable efforts to provide good induction for infant pupils starting at Harewood to help them settle well into life in the junior school phase.

25. Regular assessment of pupils' progress against national expectations takes place in most subjects and, based on this, pupils receive satisfactory guidance on how to improve. The school has procedures for testing pupils in English and mathematics at the end of Years 3 to 5, using national tests and setting targets for the next year. Pupils' progress against these targets is monitored each half term and support is given to pupils who are not achieving as well as expected. Staff are able to judge if a pupil is underperforming. Class teachers are able to relate various aspects of a pupil's behaviour, attendance and academic performance together to gain an overall picture of their progress. They respond appropriately if a pupil is having problems and they support the pupils in their class well. Pupils feel that there is a trusted adult that they can go to with a problem and that their teachers will willingly give extra time to ensure that they overcome problems with their work. The school makes appropriate use of external sources of support, such as counselling and the educational psychologist, to help pupils.
26. The school's formal personal, health and social education programme addresses a range of issues relevant to young people and *circle times* are used to support pupils and give them an opportunity to discuss issues as a class. Unusually, there is no school council, though it is identified for development on the school improvement plan; at the moment this is a missed opportunity to enlist the energies of these sensible young people to contribute to the running of their school. Nevertheless, almost all pupils feel that the school listens to their ideas. Pupils do on occasion aid their own learning through helping to set their own targets.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are satisfactory links with parents. The school has very good connections with the community. The headteacher's work within the EAZ means that partnerships with other local schools and colleges are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very active participant in the wider Gloucester EAZ and contributes considerably to it.
- The school makes very good use of community resources to provide a rich range of experiences for pupils.
- Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate what it is achieving for their young people.
- Information to parents is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

27. There are very good links with the local community. Three local churches contribute regularly to school assemblies, and there is a range of other visitors from the police through to the rat lady, who spoke to pupils about the Black Death. The school makes very good use of visits out into the community to support learning in topics. Studying the Tudors, for example, involved a visit to the local St Margaret's church and its graveyard; a transport project used the local canal museum; whilst study of the Victorians involved the museum at Cheltenham. Using local resources this way is central to the *city curriculum* and motivates staff and pupils alike. This project is also the focus for the excellent links with other local schools in the EAZ, with the headteacher spending a great deal of time working with other schools on its implementation, both locally and nationally. There are also strong links with the adjacent infant school and very good links with the secondary school, ensuring that pupils have a stress-free progression through the stages of their education.
28. The school has succeeded in gaining the trust and confidence of parents, and the parents' meeting before the inspection demonstrated the almost universal support it receives from them. The school does not have a parents and teachers association at the moment, but there is still strong parental involvement in raising funds, often through sales linked to special occasions such as *mother's day*. These funds often provide help with the resources the *city curriculum* needs to flourish. A significant number of individual parents also help with school trips. For example, parents acted as group leaders on a recent trip to a roman villa site, a couple of them coming into class the next week to help the pupils with their follow-up work. Almost all parents feel comfortable approaching the school with a question or complaint – they find the staff very accessible. An impressive percentage believe that the school seeks their views and takes them into account, though there is no regular method of doing this. Most think they are kept well informed about how their child is getting on, but fifteen percent of those responding to the questionnaire had some reservations on this. Inspectors also had reservations about this aspect.
29. Teachers have an *open door* policy and parents appreciate their availability on an informal basis before and after school. The school also holds three meetings a year, which parents can attend to see their child's work or discuss their progress. Both these aspects are very effective ways of ensuring parents are fully informed. The problem lies with the annual written reports. A number of parents dislike the lack of consistency and detail, and the somewhat impersonal style in some of them, such as their child being referred to as "they". From the reports, it is difficult to easily distinguish a high attainer in the class from a low attainer. Some reports have targets, some do not. The reports need far greater consistency and detail to be useful documents to parents. More generally, the newsletters for parents that were published up to 2002 have lapsed. Some parents would like more notice of events such as school trips; this may be harder to resolve as some short notice is understandable, given the way the curriculum responds to pupils' needs. The prospectus is attractive and covers the necessary things, but the governors' annual report to parents is missing numerous mandatory sections, so does not give parents the information to which they are entitled. The November 2003 version had key data from 2001-2 rather than 2003. There is no school web site – unusual these days – and details provided to parents on the topics that will be covered in class are very brief. Information to parents was a key issue identified in the last inspection report and though improvements have been made to face-to face access and to the prospectus, improvements made to written reports have not been sustained.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. Leadership, including that of the headteacher, is very good, and management is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

The following statutory requirements are not met:

- the race equality policy has not been formally monitored and the result reported to governors;
- registers are not completed in full accordance with requirements; and
- the annual report to parents does not cover all the things it should.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides inspirational and charismatic leadership, motivating both staff and pupils.
- The visionary decision to implement the *city curriculum* was absolutely right even though it meant that not all subjects could be included as well as required at once.
- Changes have been planned and implemented very well, with the right rolling programme for review.
- The lack of a whole-school system for assessment has meant that subject co-ordinators whose subject was not in focus have not been able to monitor pupils' learning, and gaps in RE and ICT have been left unfilled unnecessarily.
- Some minor things, which could have been quickly put right, have been left to drift, including statutory requirements.

Commentary

30. The headteacher and the deputy head form the key leadership team in the school. The headteacher is seconded to work associated with the EAZ for 1.5 days a week and the deputy head therefore takes more responsibility than is usual. They have an excellent working partnership, with different skills but with a shared vision for the development of the school. Three years ago they identified growing problems with pupils' learning in the school, and a lack of ability to concentrate. With the full support of staff, they took the visionary step of rewriting the curriculum in a highly innovative way to make learning a stimulating and coherent whole – both for adults and pupils. In so doing they anticipated many of the strategies identified for primary schools in the Government's 2003 document *Excellence and Enjoyment*. The impact of this is clearest on pupils in Years 4 and 5, who have had the benefits for two years. The curriculum for Year 6 was implemented in September 2003. Though there are aspects of the curriculum that are not yet tight enough, for example spelling and handwriting, the major things to do have been identified and are shown in the school improvement plan with a schedule for development. The inspection team recognises that the huge and time-consuming task of reorganising the curriculum meant that standards in all subjects could not be improved at once. It fully endorses the decision that the school made for a rolling programme.
31. The very positive impact of the decision to implement the *city curriculum* can now be seen in the attitudes of the pupils and in the greatly improved teaching and learning. Improvements to achievement take longer, but even so achievement is rising. The school entertains visitors from other schools and national bodies who come to see the innovations that have taken place, and other staff as well as the headteacher are

influential as leaders beyond the school. Even though the leadership can be criticised for not keeping quite enough attention on aspects of religious education and formal procedural matters, the far more important thing for the pupils has been the changes that have taken place. The school is inclusive and a wonderful place to visit. For this reason, both leadership and leadership and management overall are judged to be very good.

32. The members of the wider senior management team support the head and deputy head well. They have been closely involved in planning the *city curriculum* and its implementation, making a very valuable contribution. Subject leadership reflects the pattern of leadership at the top of the school. Many of the subject leaders interviewed showed very good leadership, with vision and drive to raise standards. They are knowledgeable and committed to the school's innovations. There are effective year teams and the leadership of the special needs co-ordinator is very good. The leadership skills and experience of teachers without qualified teacher status are well identified and used.
33. Management, like much else in the school, shows particular strengths but some weaknesses. Great strengths lie in the way school decisions are implemented – the strategic planning is supported by an extremely effective programme for development. The decision to focus on mathematics was the result of analysis of performance data. The focus for two terms has been very well turned to action, including innovative use of support staff to release the mathematics co-ordinator. The result has been mathematics results that have jumped from well below average to the top end of average in a year. The school improvement plan has been well supported by performance management, and there is a rigorous programme for monitoring and improving teaching. All of these things are primarily due to the organisational strengths of the deputy head. The management of the special needs co-ordinator, however, is also very good. It is seen, for example, in the thorough organisation of support staff and in the well thought out balance between withdrawal and in-class support.
34. The weaknesses in management are to do with a lack of some formal whole-school systems. Gaps in provision in ICT and religious education had not been fully identified by co-ordinators, because they have limited means of tracking what pupils have learnt. Subjects are planned to come into focus in turn, and this is appropriate, but the rotation is new and until every subject has been a focus some co-ordinators' management will be satisfactory at best, simply because they have not had time to properly evaluate and organise their subject. A further problem in management concerns the continual evaluation of school systems. There have not been enough checks on minor organisational matters such as the fulfilment of less wide-reaching statutory requirements, the formal recording of some health and safety responsibilities or a review of how information is sent to parents. These are not matters that need to be done by members of the senior management team, nor necessarily by teachers.
35. The governance of the school is judged satisfactory despite the breaches of statutory requirements. This is because the breaches are not affecting outcomes for pupils. For example, there is a race equality policy and a great commitment to inclusion of the individual in practice, but the policy has not been formally evaluated and results reported to the governing body. The governing body has been through a period of change and only now has a stable membership. Nevertheless it benefits from good leadership in the chair and vice chair, and individuals offer a challenge to the senior managers of the school and a clear view of where the school should be going. The governing body as a whole offers support and full agreement with the direction the school is going, but governors do not yet

have a rigorous corporate culture of review and challenge. However, they do review finance effectively. The larger than usual amounts carried forward below were the result of money identified for capital expenditure that could not be completed within the financial year. They are therefore no cause for concern. The school's finances are effectively managed.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	819,286
Total expenditure	827,129
Expenditure per pupil	2,522

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	94,411
Balance carried forward to the next	86,568

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recent focus on raising standards in writing has been successful in terms of some high quality composition and use of language, but spelling and handwriting need further development.
- The teaching of English is often good or better and inspires and interests pupils.
- Literacy is used very well in other subjects.
- Marking is sometimes too generous and does not help pupils to improve.

Commentary.

36. The school has recognised that standards are not high enough in English and has very successfully focussed on developing pupils' writing this year. The co-ordinator has provided training for staff and there are very good links with the *city curriculum*. Pupils are now confident in their writing and have a new-found enthusiasm in responding to the many and various tasks they are set to write in all areas of the *city curriculum*. Although standards in English remain below average at the end of Year 6, the improvement in writing means that standards have risen since the last year's national tests, when they were well below average and there was some underachievement. Overall, achievement is now satisfactory and the quality of provision in English is also satisfactory because of a balance of strengths and weaknesses within the subject. The present Year 6 has an above average number of pupils with special educational needs many pupils who did not have good attitudes to their learning when they entered the school. The standards in English are now rising on entry to school and standards lower down the school reflect this improvement and the pupils' response to the good teaching.
37. In lessons seen, the teaching and learning were predominately good or better and writing was almost always a key feature of the lesson. Writing poems about a fish, a persuasive argument linked to deforestation, which had been studied in a previous geography lesson, or writing in the traditional style of a myth were all examples of good lessons seen. An excellent lesson where Year 6 pupils wrote in the style of Tolkein was very successful because pupils had studied the mood and atmosphere created by the author. They had been asked to link this to their rainforest work and discussed key questions about how Tolkein's work came alive. Personification, similes, metaphors, action and vocabulary were all subjects for discussion. Music was used very effectively to create atmosphere and pupils thought deeply about what their own responses might be, using all their senses. Responses were very good and because of the very good, careful preparation and planning, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved very well. These pupils were carefully included in the reading of their writing at the end of the lesson, because of their very good achievement.

38. Pupils compose their work well, planning and choosing words carefully, and sometimes exceptionally well. They do this largely because of the stimulation of the way the curriculum is constructed – because it makes links between their learning and develops their imagination. However, spelling and handwriting are weaknesses throughout the school. They are better in some classes: in Year 4 for example, where there is regular practice and teaching and this is carefully linked to everyday writing. Nevertheless, many pupils, even in Year 5 and Year 6, do not regularly use joined script and pupils continually misspell common words. These errors are not always corrected by teachers and some are evident in displayed work. Not all teachers present their own writing in a neat joined script and praise is given too easily for work that is untidy and has many spelling mistakes, indicating a lack of value given to these elements.
39. Lower down the school, pupils read regularly to adults, both at home and school, and good records are kept. As pupils become older and independent readers, there is a lack of focus on recording pupils' reading progress through the national curriculum. For some older and higher attaining pupils, regular opportunities to share and discuss their reading with adults are not evident.
40. Drama is used well across all areas of the curriculum to promote pupils' speaking skills. Good use of discussion partners, questioning and reporting back work are other key elements of the speaking and listening provision. Good use is made of teacher modelling of writing and oral contributions by pupils to edit and refine this work are regular.
41. Assessment is satisfactory because there is a newly established system, but this is not yet fully operational and therefore has not yet fully impacted on standards. Information from the computerised system is not yet used fully to track pupils' progress through the national curriculum in all elements of English and to check whether pupils are on line to meet their targets. The co-ordination of the subject is also satisfactory. Many aspects of writing have been successfully addressed, but the school is aware of the need to continue to focus on handwriting and spelling. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. Writing has been well developed through pupils using their skills to support work in all other subjects. Displays of work indicate good examples of writing in many different styles. In geography, a day in the life of a rainforest child, an animal profile and a description of the living forest are good examples. In history, an historical account of Gloucester, a step back in time and a study of artefacts are other examples. The school has been very successful in using pupils' improving writing abilities across all areas of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and the use of specialist teachers have contributed to pupils' good achievement.

- Very good leadership and good management of mathematics have provided a clear focus on raising standards and contributed to very good improvement since the last inspection.
- The school's development of the *city curriculum* has enriched pupils' mathematical experiences and contributed to their very good behaviour and interest in learning.
- Pupils' use of ICT in mathematical work is limited.

Commentary

43. National tests results in Year 6 have been well below average in recent years, but, through very good teaching, standards are now average. Setting arrangements and the effective use of the maths coordinator have contributed to pupils' good achievement. Achievement is only good rather than very good because there was ground to make up.
44. Teaching throughout the school is having a strong positive impact on pupils' achievement. Lessons are very well planned with clear learning objectives, against which progress is evaluated at the end of the lesson. This was seen in a higher ability Year 6 set when many pupils had problems in interpreting data on two pie charts and planning was adjusted for the following lesson. The mental/oral starter to each lesson is very effective because teachers have worked hard, with good support from the coordinator, to develop imaginative resources that maintain pupils' interest and develop their ability to recall number facts quickly. This had been identified as a weakness from analysis of test results. While good progress has been made, and mental strategies are very well taught, there is no clear expectation of how rapidly pupils should be able to recall multiplication facts by the end of each year. In an average Year 5 set, for example, there was a wide range of ability in the speed with which pupils could recall multiplication facts. This also affected their pace of work in an imaginative activity linked to the year group topic on the Roman period, in which the slave Antonio, using silver coins, had to make his purchasing calculations. Teachers' planning includes detail of well-matched work for different ability groups within the set and this helps pupils to achieve well. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs, who achieve very well.
45. Those teachers who have interactive whiteboards in the classroom use them effectively. In a lower ability Year 4 set, pupils' learning was improved by the visual display of adding different combinations of fractions to make 1. Another good use of ICT was seen in one class that is trialing the use of 'digimice', small individual key pads for use in mental mathematics sessions that display class results onto a screen, so that the teacher and pupils can assess quickly the number of correct answers. However, pupils' use of ICT is not embedded in the maths curriculum and while the *city curriculum* enriches and broadens pupils' learning, the relatively rare use of ICT constrains the breadth.
46. The coordinator has made effective use of a numeracy consultant through the school's involvement in the primary leadership programme. Test data has been analysed, three areas of whole-school weakness in mathematics identified and well-targeted support provided. The coordinator has led by example by modelling lessons throughout the school, although the monitoring of others' teaching has not been the main focus this year. She has ensured that assessment procedures are now good and that teachers have more confidence in levelling pupils' work against national curriculum criteria. Pupil targets for the year are set and monitored each half term, and support is planned for those pupils who are making insufficient progress. Work is marked, but there is a lack of consistency

in the quality of comments on how well pupils have achieved and how they can further improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

47. The *city curriculum* is very successful in enriching pupils' mathematical experiences and relating them to everyday life. The coordinator has produced a wealth of ideas to support each topic, with an emphasis on using the locality or making relevant connection. In a Year 3 lesson pupils looked at plans for new houses in terms of shapes, angles and perimeter size. In another lesson pupils studied local maps to create a pictogram. Year 4 pupils using the Severn Bore timetable showed well above average skills in using and applying their knowledge of numbers. Year 5 pupils have studied tessellations in Roman mosaics and Year 6 pupils have plotted the different time zones in which the world's rainforests are located. In all lessons pupils are attentive, interested and behave very sensibly. They work hard, show sustained concentration and work very well collaboratively. This reflects very positively on the interesting curriculum the school provides.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and sometimes excellent, with first-rate lesson planning and use of resources.
- The subject leaders show great vision and very good leadership; they know exactly what needs to be done.
- The curriculum is not yet properly balanced because assessment is not fully established, and marking can be over-generous.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 5 are achieving very well, but the achievement of pupils in Year 6 is not as good.

Commentary

48. Science has been a staple part of the development of the *city curriculum*, and this development is paying great dividends in the standards of pupils in Years 3 to 5. However, Year 6 pupils have not had a properly progressive and comprehensive curriculum and this means that over their time in the school their achievement has been satisfactory rather than better, despite the very good teaching they are now getting. Because the school has been concentrating on mathematics, science has not been a focus for development. Nevertheless, the co-ordinators have been doing what they can to prepare for development time to come. Concerned to improve standards, they reviewed the whole science curriculum using teachers' planning, and identified some areas of the national curriculum that were not covered in sufficient depth. They have plugged these gaps for pupils in Years 3 to 5, and they implemented a revision programme for the current Year 6 to ensure that they had covered all of the programme of study before their national tests in May. Whilst this ensured the coverage, it resulted in a curriculum that was not balanced through the year. The current pupils have a good understanding of many factual elements of science, but their ability now to carry out investigations is limited. Their standards are below average overall and their achievement is satisfactory.
49. In contrast, Year 5 pupils, who have had the stimulus of the *city curriculum* longer than Year 6, are reaching standards that are above average and showing very good achievement, as are Year 4. Achievement in Year 3 is good, and good is the judgement inspectors reached for science achievement overall. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. The only reason that achievement is not yet very good is that the balance of the curriculum, whilst it was under development in past years and in Year 6, has held back progress. The lack of formal assessment systems, due to be put into place in September 2004, limited the subject co-ordinator's chances of tracking how well pupils are doing. They got round this by examining all the planning, but management as a result is satisfactory – not as strong as leadership.
50. Although the implementation of the *city curriculum* did cause some temporary gaps in what was taught to pupils, and still needs reviewing and revising to ensure what pupils are learning is appropriate, it has nevertheless been the driving force in the improvements to the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, and the subject is still improving. The reason that teaching and learning are very good is that teachers and pupils alike are inspired by the topics they cover. The teachers plan down to the smallest detail, providing special ways of recording work to ensure that even less able pupils have a record of what they have done. They prepare and present elaborate resources that make science real and relevant. Occasionally pupils are so interested that they do try to go into greater depth than they are capable of, and some misunderstanding results, but

this is an acceptable by product of the high achievement such interest and enthusiasm engenders. Occasionally too, teachers give too much praise for science work that shows great enthusiasm but is not of a standard that pupils should be reaching. Some examples of investigation work from Year 6, for example, though praised in the teacher's comments, were comprehensive but lacked depth of scientific analysis. However, the investigation work seen in Year 5 lessons was of a high standard and some showed excellent achievement because teachers concentrated on really challenging pupils.

Example of outstanding practice

Year 5 pupils helped a Roman General to subdue local tribes (with the help of a bit of science).

The lessons, the same across the 3 classes, started with the teacher gently throwing a ball so it moved across in front of the pupils in an arc. They drew the path of the ball on the whiteboard and with questions the teacher helped them to draw arrows for the forces acting on it at various points in its journey. Then suddenly a 'letter' arrived. The scroll was torn and stained (burnt or was it bloodstained?). The teacher undid it and read it out to rapt attention. A Roman general was trapped by local tribes and could not reach them because his catapults would not fire far enough. The pupils' help was needed – how could he make them fire further? There was a warning that they only had sixty minutes or else they would be thrown to the lions. The teacher produced a see-saw-style catapult made of construction-toy components, and after a brief discussion of forces together they predicted what might extend the range. There were three places at different distances from the pivot to put the missile, and a rubber band that was stretched the same amount to provide the (same) firing force. The teacher used a few of the sixty minutes to structure the working groups. Pupils had roles in the group according to what their skills to be developed were. For example, the most able were instructed to focus on accuracy of measurement. The teacher continued to question prompt and probe throughout the investigation. The result was that all made exceptional progress – and incidentally, we are told the General escaped with his men.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- When a skill is being taught directly, teaching and learning are good.
- Less attention is given to how computers are used than to the actual skills pupils are learning.

Commentary

51. At the time of the last inspection there was no evidence of direct teaching of computer skills. Resources were very limited and national curriculum requirements were not met. Some pupils even struggled to understand what the cursor was. Improvement has been satisfactory. Although there is no suite, there is an interactive whiteboard in each year group; the system whereby the pupils are taught a skill together which they then use through the week, in rotation at the machines, is working. The skills that pupils need to know are planned into an appropriate rotation of topics, and the context in which the skills are applied is that of the *city curriculum*.
52. Standards are below average in Year 6, but achievement is satisfactory. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 were using their skills in the preparation of multimedia presentations. The actual skills were age appropriate. However, few pupils could explain how the things they were putting into their presentations were chosen to take account of the audience for the presentation. There is no assessment of what pupils can do or what they understand that is passed on from year to year, so teachers cannot be sure how well

pupils have covered the range of things they should. Another weak area in Year 6 is the use of spreadsheets, but Year 5 are covering these at the moment.

53. Teaching and learning are good. The interactive whiteboard is used effectively. Pupils of different abilities are sometimes given different tasks; for example, in a lesson about control, higher attainers worked on screen to try to program the cursor draw shapes, while lower attainers used the floor turtles – actual programmable machines that are simpler to use. In other lessons challenge and support were provided by questioning and discussion with the teacher or support staff. The reason why this good teaching and learning are not yet leading to better achievement is to do with the balance of the curriculum - there is not enough attention given to the way computers are used in the world outside school, and opportunities are missed to use computers in lessons.
54. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There have been changes in co-ordinator over the period between the inspections, and ICT is not at the moment a focus for development. Nevertheless the co-ordinator is able to outline appropriate plans for development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. There are some examples of ICT used across a range of subjects. In Year 6, multimedia presentations are being completed on facts about rainforests. In Year 5, digimice were used in a mathematics starter activity for lower ability pupils to track how many in the class could do simple mental calculations. This year group also prepared multimedia presentations on different aspects of Roman life. In Year 4, pupils have used ICT to produce a newspaper and Year 3 pupils have processed data to make bar charts. In art, ICT is used very well. However, datalogging is only used at a comparatively low level - using ICT to make accurate measurements in science would be one way to raise Year 6 attainment in science investigations. The main area for development, though, is that in many classrooms computers tend to be only used for work that is planned to link with the topic, rather than in a natural way whenever they are needed. For much of the inspection, computers were left unused in classrooms. This does not give the pupils a good sense of computers as a natural part of learning. In addition, there was little evidence of pupils being taught about the way computers are used beyond school. This is a missed opportunity in a curriculum that has so much relevant and practical work linked to visits in the world outside.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. History and geography were sampled.

56. In a good **history** lesson, Year 5 pupils were following up a recent visit to Chedworth Roman Villa. The lesson was well prepared with effective resources. In a very good Year 6 **geography** lesson, teaching was challenging and pupils learnt at a high pace as they came up with ideas on why people clear trees (linked to rainforest deforestation). Pupils of different abilities recorded their ideas in different and carefully thought out ways, ensuring that none were held up by their speed of writing.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good within lessons but result in satisfactory achievement over the longer term because the curriculum lacks balance.
- Pupils learn about aspects of three major faiths but tend not to relate these to their own experiences or use them to explore what influences their own lives.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory because it does not give teachers a sufficiently clear idea of how well pupils are doing to help them achieve better.

Commentary

57. Pupils enter the school below average standards. This means that despite leaving at the end of Year 6 with standards that are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, their achievement is still satisfactory. Pupils' achievement was satisfactory at the last inspection so provision is broadly unchanged. This is satisfactory improvement because there were more pressing priorities for the school to address.
58. The good quality of teaching and learning means that in lessons themselves achievement is good. This is because information is conveyed in an interesting way and made relevant to much of the rest of the curriculum, and lessons make good use of the contributions of visitors. In a good lesson in Year 6, for example, pupils learned a great deal about the animist beliefs of people living in the Amazon basin thanks to the knowledgeable contributions of a teaching assistant. This added an innovative dimension to their geography studies, especially in looking at the reasons for conservation. The good structure of the lesson used the key words "dependence", "belief" and "respect" to show clearly how faith may originate, take a form of worship, and influence lives. Pupils could appreciate these elements as they applied to the Amazonians. Conversations showed, however, that they were largely unable to relate their studies to earlier work on the Biblical account of the Creation and had only a confused recall of aspects of Islam. They did not relate their studies to themselves.
59. Pupils' folders show that only a limited proportion of their work is recorded. This is largely factual information related to Christianity and to a lesser extent Judaism, and there is relatively little to show that Islam has been studied at all. This in itself points to a lack of balance in the curriculum, but more importantly there is little to show that pupils are encouraged to learn from as well as about religion. In consequence they do not make links between values and commitments and their own attitudes or behaviour; much less do they ask questions or suggest answers from their own or others' experiences about the puzzling aspects of life.
60. Broad statements of outcome do not identify clearly how well pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding in the different strands of the subject. The agreed syllabus has an optional system of levels, much like those for the subjects of the national curriculum, which would help teachers and pupils chart the progression in their learning. These levels are not used, so it is very difficult to identify patches of underachievement and then take steps to address them.
61. The school has done much in other areas so the subject has had to wait its turn for priority. Subject management is satisfactory because the curriculum and assessment are

scheduled for review next term and the school has enlisted the aid of its partners in the EAZ to benefit from the work it has already done.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art was inspected in full and is reported below. Design and technology and physical education were sampled. Music was not inspected.

62. The **design and technology** lessons seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. In the satisfactory lesson a few of the things pupils were asked to do were too hard, but in the very good lesson the challenge was very well judged. Here, in a lesson that also contained elements of art, pupils were studying how Roman mosaics were constructed and transferring these ideas into print making.
63. There is a wide range of provision in **physical education**. Opportunities for swimming are very good as all pupils swim regularly at the local secondary school. Standards seen in dance were above average. A well-qualified and highly enthusiastic dance specialist leads the area of dance and in the lesson seen, pupils were motivated to achieve well and reach above average standards due to the good teaching. 'Tuffley Past and Present' was the theme of the dance being created. Because of the pupils' wide experience of visits to the local area, they were able to work from first-hand experience in creating a movement to represent the local brook and Robinswood Hill. Good use was made of their knowledge of speeds, levels and directions to help create an interesting whole-class performance.
64. There is a very good range of sporting extra-curricular opportunities, which make a big contribution to the strength of the school's provision. Dance, athletics, football, hockey, rugby, cricket and cross-country are all well represented. Both extra-curricular clubs observed were early in the morning before school and good numbers of pupils, both boys and girls, were present. Other pupils also arrived to observe the enjoyment of the pupils taking part. The tap dancing activity was uplifting and joyous, providing a wonderful start to the school day. The pupils worked to perfect their dance routine and were very well supported by the expertise of their teacher. The gymnastics club provided further opportunities to extend knowledge and skills for enthusiastic pupils. Pupils worked hard to develop their sequences with partners, using various levels, speeds and stillness to add interest.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent leadership underpins very good improvement since the last inspection.
- Teaching, learning and achievement are very good so standards are rising throughout the school.
- The wide-ranging curriculum encourages pupils' creativity very well.

Commentary

65. At the time of the last inspection pupils were making satisfactory gains in their skills, knowledge, and understanding over their time in school. There has been very good improvement - pupils in the current Year 6, who entered the school below average standards, now produce work of a quality above national expectations and all groups achieve very well.
66. To a great extent this is thanks to the particular talents of an accomplished artist who is a teaching assistant at the school and has been willing to take on the role of art co-ordinator. Planning is now very well structured. The standardised assessment process is good. It is improving as a new system comes into use to enable teachers and pupils to see how well they are doing in every strand of the subject. The co-ordinator's example and enthusiastic sharing of her expertise have inspired pupils and colleagues alike, so that art pervades the school and its walls form a gallery to celebrate pupils' achievements.
67. The co-ordinator leads much of the classroom activity, frequently working alongside the regular class teacher. This allows staff members to improve their own subject skills so that they become better able to share with pupils what is being done well and what could be made better. Some teachers are also competent artists in their own right. The key strengths of teaching are the encouragement of pupils' close observational skills and the sharply focused feedback that is regularly and constructively given. This was exemplified in a very good lesson for Year 3 where pupils used oil pastels to create a still life drawing of the leaves and twigs of various different plants. The precise draughtsmanship demonstrated by the vast majority resulted in a number of sketches looking good enough to be finished products even before colour was added. Three or four of the highest attainers achieved an almost photographic accuracy when they blended colours. Both the co-ordinator and class teacher used probing questions to make pupils think hard: "can you really see all of every leaf?" so that even the very few whose control was less precise started to represent the twists, curves and overlaps of the foliage in front of them.
68. Pupils use a good range of media for both two and three-dimensional work. The school has its own kiln so pupils are not restricted to cold-setting materials. ICT is used very well, high quality images being created, for example, by Year 4 thanks to very good links with the neighbouring secondary school and use of its resources. Cross-curricular links are very good so that art enhances almost every subject and many subjects provide inspiration for art. Although artistic traditions from other cultures remain to be discovered, the range of artists studied, from Leonardo to Roy Lichtenstein, gives pupils plenty to emulate, appreciate and enjoy.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

69. Planning for **personal, social and health education and citizenship** is satisfactory. The caring ethos of the school supports pupils' personal development and the teachers use *circle time* to share feelings and discuss certain topics. Specialist input provided by the school nurse supports the school's work on drug and sex education.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	4

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