

INSPECTION REPORT

LILLESHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lilleshall

LEA area: Telford and Wrekin

Unique reference number: 123378

Acting headteacher: Mrs Gillian Hosken

Lead inspector: Mrs Chris Field

Dates of inspection: 21st to 23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 256734

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	202
School address:	Limekiln Lane Lilleshall Newport Shropshire
Postcode:	TF10 9EY
Telephone number:	01952 604660
Fax number:	01952 678178
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Tony Cox
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school, which is of average size, is located in Lilleshall, a small rural village north of Telford. Currently there are 202 pupils on roll, all of whom choose to attend the school and some of whom travel some distance to do so. The profile of children's attainment when they start school is currently above average but varies year-on-year. School data shows that the current Year 2 started school with average levels of skill and knowledge but the current Year 6 began with an above average profile. Pupils' eligibility for free school meals is well below the level typically found in primary schools. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds but there are also a very few pupils from Indian and Chinese heritage plus a small number from mixed heritage. A very small number of pupils are from Travelling family backgrounds. All pupils speak and work confidently in English. A below average proportion of pupils have special educational needs that cover a range of learning difficulties; one pupil has a statement. The school was accredited with the Investors in People Award in 2003.

During the week of inspection the substantive headteacher was completing the last few weeks of a seven-month secondment. The deputy headteacher was acting headteacher and a temporary acting deputy headteacher was in post and teaching Year 6. The substantive headteacher returns to Lilleshall in September 2004 and the acting deputy headteacher moves to another school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
9479	C Field	Lead inspector	Personal and social education and citizenship.
10965	P Edwards	Lay inspector	
1189	S Brown	Team inspector	English, humanities, music, religious education, special educational needs, areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage.
15414	D Carrington	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, information and communication technology, creative and physical aspects.

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PART A SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Lilleshall Primary is a **very effective** school that enables boys and girls to achieve well in a caring and highly stimulating environment. Teaching is very good overall and pupils learn very successfully. They experience a rich and rewarding curriculum that assists their personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, growth very well. Leadership and governance are very good and the school runs very efficiently. The school has well-conceived strategies for continuing to drive forward improvement at a good pace and gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, and art and design and better than they were at the time of the previous inspection.
- Teaching is very good overall and results in a very good ethos for learning, though more pace and challenge are required to enhance some of the otherwise effective lessons in the infants, especially for higher attainers, and marking in all years needs to be more developmental.
- The acting headteacher has guided the school forward through a period of significant changes in staffing with quiet confidence, high aspirations, clarity of vision and a strong sense of purpose that other staff share.
- The children in the Foundation Stage receive a very good start to the education.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support and achieve well.
- Excellent relationships and a very strong team ethos are central to the very good quality of education provided equally successfully for boys and girls from different backgrounds.
- Assessment and target-setting systems are highly effective in the Foundation Stage and developed well in English but are less effective in supporting improvement in other subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good; they get on very well together and show outstanding social responsibility within the family of the school.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to review their own progress.
- The links with other schools and community are very beneficial to pupils' experiences.

There has been very good improvement overall since the previous inspection in 1998. Subject leader roles are developing well, curriculum planning is well focused on promoting both skills and knowledge, and provision in design and technology is very good. Information and communication technology (ICT) has been improved from an unsatisfactory to a good level. Extensive grounds and buildings improvement has eradicated all of the weaknesses identified six years ago.

Pupils' achievement is **good overall**. The table that follows shows that Year 6 pupils reached well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science in the 2003 National Curriculum tests. In comparison with similar school the results were well above average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. The school met its target in English but not in mathematics. Trends over time show that the school's rate of improvement is keeping pace with that seen nationally at the end of Year 6. In the light of the Year 6 results in mathematics, the school has been implementing an action plan with support from numeracy consultants. The number one priority for improvement has been to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the average level 4. The strategies are proving effective and standards are on the rise. Indications are that the 2004 National Curriculum test results for Year 6 will be well above average in all tested subjects.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6.:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	B	A	A
Mathematics	B	A	B	D
Science	A	A	B	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

The children in the Foundation Stage have received a flying start to their education and have made very good achievement. Most will exceed the goals set for them with many working within National Curriculum level 1. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and ICT. Standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. Standards are well above average in art and design and average in all the other subjects reported. At the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science and art and design and above average in all the other subjects reported. Records show that standards in swimming are above average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **very good**. Pupils enjoy school, they try really hard with their work and behave very well. Relationships are excellent and the school is a happy and purposeful learning community. Attendance levels are above those found in other primary schools and punctuality is generally good. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is **very good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **very good** overall. Classrooms are lively places to be in which pupils of all ages achieve well because of interesting activities that enable most to be challenged at the right level across the subjects they study, though in some lessons in the infants more could be expected of high attaining pupils. The curriculum offers exciting learning experiences for the pupils, with very good enrichment. The school's mission of *Working together for excellence and enjoyment* is well promoted. The positive care and support that pupils receive helps them to learn confidently and with success. Pupils are very well supported, especially those with special educational needs. The provision for pupils' personal and social development ensures that they move with good confidence to the next stage of their education. The school has a good partnership with parents and has forged very strong links with other schools and its community to the benefit of pupils. A networked learning community, that comprises a number of local small schools, works together in support of staff development and shared curricular experiences to the significant benefit of all.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The acting headteacher, formerly the deputy, is doing a highly effective job of maintaining the very clear vision set by the substantive headteacher, who is currently on secondment to the local education authority but returns to school in September. The partnership between these two key staff is very successful in motivating others to give of their best in leading the school forward on a number of fronts. The school is justifiably proud of its Investors in People Award accredited in 2003. The governing body is very committed to the school, gives very good support and challenge in equal measure and applies the principles of best value very securely to all decisions.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are happy with the school and most would not change a thing. A few parents would like school to home communication improved and the governing body are looking at ways to enhance this. Inspectors judge that parents are well served but that a web page would be a good advancement to make.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that assessment and target-setting systems are developed in all subjects and used consistently to plan pupils' next steps in learning, to track their achievement, to sharpen marking and to involve pupils more regularly in reviewing their own progress.

- Set higher expectations for learning and a brisker pace in teaching at the end of the infant years so that both are raised to the level of the very best quality found in school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is **good** overall with some very good achievement in the Foundation Stage and the upper juniors. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds who are represented in different ability groups share the trend of good achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, and art and design and better than they were at the time of the previous inspection.
- The children in the Foundation Stage exceed the goals set for them.
- Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well against their personal targets.
- Higher attainers are not always challenged to the full and some could achieve even more, particularly in the infants.
- Target-setting systems work effectively to support pupils' achievement in English but are less well developed in other subjects and this is a missed opportunity to help build for improvement.

Commentary

1. Most children currently in reception started with above average levels of skills and knowledge and have made very good progress so that virtually all have exceeded the goals set for them across the areas they experience. Children's achievement during the Foundation Stage of their education is very good; many are already working well within National Curriculum level 1 in English and mathematics. The work of the highest attaining children is well above the level expected for children of this age. For example, some of the writing is very clearly of the standard expected for pupils to reach by the end of Year 2.
2. Standards in Year 2 are currently above average in English, mathematics, science, ICT and design and technology. Standards are well above average in art and design and average in all other subjects. Pupils have made good progress during the infants overall and most have achieved well during their time in school. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties are very well responded to and the very good provision being made ensures that they achieve well against their personal targets. Those pupils at the other end of the ability spectrum are not as consistently well provided for. The work in their books and the findings from lessons shows that these pupils are not always challenged to the full in mathematics. In writing, however, they are provided with tasks that develop their skills progressively and facilitate independent and creative outcomes, though in some of their recorded work presentation could be neater.
3. The table that follows shows that Year 2 pupils reached well above average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics in the 2003 national tests. Pupils' performance was well above that found in similar schools in reading, above in writing and in line in mathematics. Target-setting systems work effectively to support pupils' achievement in English but are less well developed in other subjects and this is a missed opportunity to help build for improvement. The school's trend in improvement fell below that seen nationally. Indications are that pupils' performance in the 2004 national tests will be above average across the board.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.9 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.7 (16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.2 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards in Year 6 are currently well above average in English, mathematics, science and art and design and above average in all other subjects reported. Pupils have made good progress during the juniors overall with some accelerated progress in the last two years of school due to particularly effective teaching. Pupils of different abilities have achieved equally well during this stage of their education.
- The table that follows shows that Year 6 pupils reached well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science in the 2003 national tests. In comparison with similar schools the results were well above average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. The school met its target in English but not in mathematics. Trends over time show that the school's rate of improvement is keeping pace with that seen nationally at the end of Year 6. However, in the light of the Year 6 results in mathematics, the school has been implementing an action plan with support from numeracy consultants. The number one priority for improvement has been to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the average level 4. The strategies are proving effective and standards are on the rise. Indications are that the 2004 national test results for Year 6 will be well above average in all tested subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.5 (28.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.8 (28.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.9 (30.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards in English have been sustained at high levels for some years, whereas in mathematics and science, though positive, the picture is not as consistent. Target-setting systems work effectively to support pupils' achievement in English but are less well developed in these other subjects and this is a missed opportunity to help build for improvement and to ensure that trends in performance are at least as good as in similar schools at the end of both key stages of the pupils' education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities **are very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning, and their behaviour in lessons and at break time is very good.
- Relationships between pupils and with adults working in the school are excellent.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and show outstanding social responsibility.

- There have been no exclusions and this is testament to the school's very strong commitment to fully inclusive education.

Commentary

- As found at the time of the previous inspection, pupils enjoy coming to school. They told inspectors that school is good fun and even if they could be the headteacher for one day, there is very little they would change. They look forward to lessons and to the opportunities to play together during break times. They behave very well and have a very well developed understanding of school rules which staff ensure are consistently implemented. Pupils move around the building, and enter and leave classrooms, quietly. They are polite to visitors, holding open doors and giving directions to classrooms when asked. They listen to adults carefully and are very well behaved during assemblies and in the dining hall where they enjoy one another's company as they share a meal together.
- Relationships between everyone involved in the school are excellent. Pupils are respectful of different views and show interest in each other's ideas. Adults are quick to identify any signs of intolerance and to remind pupils of the standards expected of them. They are equally keen to praise pupils' efforts and this motivates and engenders a deep sense of social responsibility for pupils to do the right thing. Pupils play very well together and Year 6 pupils act as *playground friends* to the younger pupils. Pupils' sense of the school as a community is excellent and they take their responsibilities very seriously, always carrying them out to the best of their ability.
- Pupils have a very good knowledge of themselves and the world around them. They are encouraged to discuss their feelings and time is given for reflection. For example, when discussing friendship in Year 4, the pupils listened quietly to a song about what it means to be a friend. They each made a friendship bracelet out of paper and glued them together to make a *large circle of friendship* to go around their classroom walls. This willingness to express their deeper thoughts and emotions enhances their spiritual awareness. Pupils have discussed moral issues, such as world poverty and education for all. The school Eco council have implemented some very good ideas on how to improve their local environment and encourage a healthy diet. Pupils work collaboratively in lessons and support fund raising efforts, for example *Operation Christmas Child*, to help others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' cultural development is very good. The study of places such as St Lucia widens their experiences of lifestyles different from their own. In religious education studies the pupils have learned about a range of world faiths that share common themes that promote tolerance and understanding. Pupils' work on monastic life within the Buddhist and Christian faith reflects this well. Frequent visitors to the school from the local church and community, and visits to places of interest such as Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Swan Theatre, art galleries and Lichfield Cathedral have helped enhance pupils' knowledge of their own culture and the wider world. The local studies work, including an in depth project on Lilleshall Abbey, enables the pupils to develop a long-lasting pride for their local environment.
- Attendance is above average. Registers are marked promptly. Reasons for absence are always provided and parents are well aware of the school rules regarding absence. Pupils' good attendance makes a positive contribution to their achievement.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.7	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **very good**. Excellent relationships and a very strong team ethos are central to the very good quality of education provided equally successfully for boys and girls from different backgrounds. Teaching and learning are **very good** overall. The curriculum offers exciting learning experiences for the pupils with **very good** enrichment. Pupils are **very well** supported, especially those with special educational needs. The school has a **good** partnership with parents and has forged **very strong** links with other schools and its community to the benefit of pupils.

Teaching and learning are **very good** overall with excellent features in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage with excellent features that result in the youngest children in school receiving a flying start to their education.
- Teaching is good overall in the infants but more pace and challenge are required, especially in the work set for higher attainers.
- Teaching is very good overall in the juniors and results in pupils in Year 6 reaching well above average standards.
- Assessment, including marking and target-setting systems, are excellent in the Foundation Stage and developed well in English but whilst satisfactory are less effective in supporting pupils' achievement in other subjects.
- The school's use of teaching assistants is very effective and helps to ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity to succeed.
- The use of closing sessions in lessons does not involve pupils sufficiently well in reviewing their own progress or in identifying next steps in learning.

Commentary

11. Teaching is very good and pupils learn very successfully in a highly stimulating environment. The quality of teaching is better than at the time of the previous inspection. This reflects very well on the very good leadership, as since September, over half of all year groups have been taught by new staff who have clearly been very well inducted into their roles. Classrooms are lively and interesting places in which pupils of all ages mostly achieve well because of the exciting activities provided. Parents are happy with the quality of education provided for their children and identify the rounded education they receive as a real strength. The provision for homework is good and secures parents' positive support for their children's education. Pupils told inspectors that they learn a lot and have good fun.
12. The teaching team's exceptionally high expectations in the Foundation Stage together with their excellent system for assessing and recording individual progress result in all of the children building skills, knowledge and understanding at a very good rate. The very good focus on meeting individual needs, and personalising learning opportunities, enables children with learning difficulties to achieve really well, as well as those who are very high attaining. The Foundation Stage classroom is vibrant and exciting and the children are given plenty of opportunities to plan and manage appropriate aspects of their day of learning. They are encouraged to make personal choices and to justify them. This flexible approach is very successful in helping the children to show initiative and to take responsibility for their own actions. Fundamentally, the approach is highly effective in supporting the very good personal and academic development of the children
13. Teaching is good overall in the infants. Teaching in lessons and in nearly a year's worth of work sampled by inspectors shows that pupils learn successfully in this stage of their education. From a broadly average starting point in reception, the current Year 2 pupils have learned successfully over their three years in school. Pupils in the infants achieve very well in art and

design where personal creativity has been nurtured and developed successfully, for example in helping design a school environment that is attractive to birds and animals. They do well in building their basic skills, especially writing which is lively and interesting, though some work could be much better presented. Numeracy skills are well honed with most of the pupils reaching a better than average standard in their work. However, the potentially high-flying mathematicians are not always set a taxing enough level of challenge that could push them on to achieving more. In lessons, a sharper focus on promoting pupils' thinking skills through questioning, and their active involvement in managing appropriate aspects of their learning, could support better achievement.

14. Teaching is very good overall in the juniors and results in pupils in Year 6 reaching well above average standards. A strong focus on enabling pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry is successful in assisting them to build on earlier achievements in finding things out for themselves. The work in pupils' books is of good quality and reflects well the very exciting curriculum on offer and the challenges provided for pupils to work independently and at a pace that means they accomplish much. Lessons were observed to be universally successful in enabling boys and girls to work to the full of their capabilities across the subjects they study. The job share arrangements in Year 5 works very well and the transition is seamless. The two teachers' skills and approaches are complementary; their shared methods ensure that pupils learn well.
15. Pupils with special educational needs receive some good one-to-one support from teaching assistants who are well deployed and effective in role. Teachers set suitable learning challenges in response to these pupils' diverse learning needs, as work provided is closely related to targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. Pupils are provided with the correct blend of help and challenge, so that they do not become over-reliant on the staff who work with them. The separate lesson plans written to help focus the work of teaching assistants are very positive features in assisting pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as their classmates.
16. Throughout the school, pupils are being given some helpful comments when their work is marked in English but marking is not as developmental in other subjects. Targets are used consistently and well to help pupils focus on the next steps for learning in English with shared reviews a positive feature. However, targets are not used as well in other subjects and this is a missed opportunity to support even better achievement, especially in mathematics and science across the school. Most teachers are assessing how well pupils are learning through a variety of methods, but now need to inject more rigour into how they record pupils' achievements and how they target improvement.
17. The very best teaching observed by inspectors that led to all pupils achieving very well was found in 14 lessons: six in the Foundation Stage, one in the infants and seven in the juniors. All of these lessons shared very good features that appealed to both boys and girls and enabled very good achievement. These were:
 - Very well matched tasks that enabled pupils of all capabilities to be challenged successfully and show high levels of self-motivation;
 - A strong focus on questioning that not only elicited what pupils' knew but also deepened their thinking skills and enabled personal views to be confidently shared with the class;
 - Very good use of time targets that were set to help the pace at which pupils worked;
 - Firm but fair class management that insisted on pupils taking responsibility for their own actions;
 - Highly effective use of the concluding session to check up on what had been learned and what should be learned next time;
 - A real sense of enjoyment in learning that was demanding but fun.

18. The school's learning and teaching policy is due for review and the features reported above could usefully be part of the update to enable the sharing of the very best practice and to support monitoring activities when assessing school effectiveness.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	13 (29%)	23 (52%)	7 (16%)	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.

The Curriculum

The school's vision statement of *Working together for excellence and enjoyment* is being very well promoted through the **very good** curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils experience a rich and rewarding curriculum that assists their personal and academic growth very successfully.
- Cross-curricular links are very well made and enable the pupils to study in depth and build very good knowledge and develop high-level skills in subjects such as art and design.
- Well-chosen topics are at the heart of work in geography and history but not enough focus has yet been given to setting sufficiently different work for pupils in different year groups.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular experiences that include a well-planned programme of visits and visitors, however some parents would like to see this enhanced to include more competitive sports.

Commentary

19. Since the previous inspection, very good improvement has been made to the curriculum, which now provides a range of very worthwhile experiences across subjects and fully meets statutory requirements. Boys and girls of all abilities and aptitudes experience a rich and rewarding curriculum that assists their personal and academic growth very successfully. The very good provision made for English is central to pupils very good achievement during their time at school and the school's strong performance in National Curriculum tests reflects this. The school has worked hard to raise the profile of mathematics in the school following disappointing test results last year and its strategies are proving successful with still more professional development work planned to continue this year.
20. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is extremely well planned and delivered. The cross-curricular links between the areas they experience are very well made and give a meaningful context that draws well on the children's own experiences, for example when playing in the garden centre which has been developed just like one down the road!
21. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils make good progress against their specific targets because of good assessment, timely review and effective leadership and management. Record keeping is in good order and pupils receive the right amount of nurturing and development to help them achieve well.
22. Pupils are provided with a range of very good quality experiences in the creative and aesthetic aspects of the curriculum that add considerable enrichment to their cultural development. For example, art and design work in every year group based on the painting *St Francis and the Birds* is of a very high standard. The school's contribution to the *Take One Picture* exhibition organised by the network of local schools shows clearly the immense value that pupils have

gained from developing their individual creative talents. All enjoyed a visit by Simeon Wood, a flautist. Pupils listen to his music as they enter assembly and give total concentration to appreciating original composition that inspires their own work. Pupils' physical development is soundly catered for by the curriculum through opportunities for games, athletics and dance. Records show that standards in swimming are above average. There is a range of extra-curricular experiences that include a well-planned programme of visits that add value to pupils' experience, for example, a residential visit to Arthog outdoor adventure centre that some governors go on too, is a positive feature. All pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to go swimming and last year 90 per cent met the required standard in swimming. However, some parents would like to see the physical education curriculum enhanced to include more competitive sport.

23. Well-chosen topics are at the heart of work in history but not enough focus has yet been given to setting sufficiently different work for pupils in different year groups. The recent move to blocking periods of time for specific subjects that enable pupils' sufficient opportunity to build knowledge is a useful approach as is the shared planning between teachers across two year-groups. This is working well on the whole and has led to some outstanding work in design and technology and art and design for example. However, not enough attention has yet been given to making sure that pupils in different age groups are set sufficiently different work in history and geography. To some extent this is true within year groups too. For example, some very detailed work on the Tudors in Year 5 has also been covered in Year 6 but not in the same depth or to the same high standard. The work set for the average and higher attaining pupils in Year 5 next year when they are in Year 6 will need careful planning to ensure that they are provided with opportunities to build on the very good knowledge and skills already built.
24. The accommodation is of very good quality; it is bright, stimulating and well maintained. Resources are well chosen and of high quality, though some enhancement is required in design and technology, music, physical education and history, which has been flagged by subject leaders in their action plans.

Care, guidance and support

The quality of care provided for pupils' is **good** and the support and guidance given to them is **very good** and contributes very well to their learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are supportive of the school induction arrangements.
- Pupils' corporate views are represented through the school council but more time is needed for personal self-evaluation.
- Pupils' personal development is very well monitored.
- Child protection procedures are working effectively in the school, but a training update is required for non-teaching staff.

Commentary

25. The school has maintained the very caring and supportive environment found at the previous inspection. Teachers know their pupils very well and value them highly as individuals. Pupils feel confident about approaching staff with any worries they may have. Year 6 pupils appreciate the opportunities provided to discuss any personal or academic concerns with their mentors. Pupils' views are represented through the school council which draws up its own agenda for discussion at the lively weekly meetings. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and secure in the family of the school and that their voice is heard in decisions about its daily life and development. The next step is for more regular opportunities to be provided for personal reflection and a review of individual achievement.

26. The school has an effective health and safety policy. Regular risk assessments are carried out and all necessary safety checks on equipment are up to date. First aid boxes are appropriately stocked and sited. Most support staff have undertaken emergency first aid training and there are three fully trained first aiders on the staff. The child protection policy follows local guidelines and is well understood by teachers. However there is a need to ensure all members of staff are aware of these procedures and that the most recent training undertaken by senior staff is disseminated to all.
27. The school has a strong commitment to meeting individual needs. This is apparent right through the school. Parents are very happy with the school's induction programme which is well planned and enables staff to get to know the children in their pre-school setting before they transfer into the reception class. Pupils' personal development, including those with special educational needs, is very well monitored. The school shows a strong commitment to seeking additional resources for the benefit of pupils. For example there are very good links with social and medical support services that ensure that pupils' particular needs are responded to quickly and effectively.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents and has forged **very strong** and effective links with other schools and its community to the significant benefit of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has excellent links within its small schools networked learning community.
- Very strong and effective links have been forged with the local community.
- Parents are provided with useful information in regular newsletters but some would like to see wider channels of communication.
- Parents are very supportive of their children's learning at home.

Commentary

28. As found at the previous inspection most parents are supportive of the school and feel comfortable about approaching the staff with any questions or concerns. The information provided for parents in monthly newsletters and termly class letters is helpful and written in a friendly and upbeat style. The governing body is keen to respond to parents' requests for improvement. They are currently setting up a school web site with the support of external expertise and inspectors agree that this will be a useful addition. Pupils' annual progress reports are clear regarding what pupils' can do and also detail the work that has been covered. There is some useful guidance about how pupils can improve. The setting of targets that can be shared with parents at more regular intervals is the next step for improvement.
29. Parents are very supportive of pupils' learning at home with helpful comments in reading record books, completion and return of the home school agreement and support for their children's independent learning projects. Parents told inspectors how much value they felt had been gained by Year 5 pupils in researching information at home to support the topic on the Tudors. The school has good links with outside specialists and uses their advice and guidance to provide informed support for pupils. Parents assist in school and on visits. This help is much valued by staff. The Friends of Lilleshall School are very supportive and raise considerable funds to provide additional resources for the enhancement of pupils' learning.
30. The school has very good links with the community. The parish church is visited for an annual carol service and the local vicar leads collective worship in the school each term. The school is working with the local community on a project to provide additional play equipment for the neighbourhood playing field. A successful *Community Day* was organised with Church Aston Infant School and a questionnaire was held to collate people's views and expectations of this event. The school has excellent links within the local small schools network which enhance

pupils' learning and provide good opportunities for staff professional development. Good transition links have been developed with the many secondary schools to which pupils transfer. Students on initial teacher training from Wolverhampton University are made welcome in the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and governance are very good and the school runs very efficiently.
- The acting headteacher has guided the school with quiet confidence, high aspirations, clarity of vision and a strong sense of purpose.
- A very strong team ethos is central to the very good quality of education.
- The governing body is very committed to the school, and gives very good support and challenge in equal measure.
- The school has well-conceived strategies for continuing well paced improvement.
- The principles of best value are promoted very effectively in all decision making.
- Target-setting systems are highly effective in the Foundation Stage and are developed well in English but less so in other subjects.

Commentary

31. Lilleshall Primary School gives very good value for money. The reason for this can be tracked back to the overall very good quality of leadership and management, which, in turn, ensures that the quality of education is very good and pupils' achievement is effective in producing results that are well above average at the end of Year 6.
32. The acting headteacher has built very effectively on the very secure procedures in place in school during her seven-month leadership. She is a very good leader who motivates and enthuses staff and governors because of her quiet confidence, high aspirations, clarity of vision, very effective management of people and strong sense of purpose. The acting headteacher has personal energy and enthusiasm to follow things through and has worked in very effective partnership with the substantive headteacher who returns to school next term.
33. The acting headteacher has very successfully fostered a very strong team ethos in school. The staff of teachers, teaching assistants, administrators and other people work together very well in the interests of the pupils. Governors are also part of this equation. They are very committed to the school, understand its performance very well, and are playing a much increased and very good role in the way that they challenge and question senior managers about the successes and areas for improvement in school. They measure the work of the school carefully and set the outcomes of their decisions against the cost in terms of finance, staffing and other resources. They can point to the value returned for their investment in terms of pupils' achievement and the quality of education. In this way they ensure that the principles of best value are applied very effectively to all of their decisions.
34. Finances are very well managed and controlled. The budget has very little slack; most money is committed to staffing, but governors have been able to finance projects that are a desirable addition to provision for the pupils because of their prudent and careful management of finance. The school administrator plays a central role in ensuring that finance is spent wisely and tracked efficiently. For many years she has given loyal and highly efficient service to the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	456 861
Total expenditure	451 845
Expenditure per pupil	2 162

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-2 268
Balance carried forward to the next	2 747

35. Tracking procedures, as in the case of finance, generally work successfully. However, the tracking of academic targets set for pupils is not yet as effective. This is because of inconsistencies in the system of target setting, sharing and tracking between different subjects. Currently, target tracking is working well in English but is less well developed in other subjects, especially mathematics and science. Elements of assessment, such as marking and pupil self-evaluation, also require strengthening in order to lead to a system of target setting and tracking that is focused on how well pupils are achieving *now*. Realisation of a rigorous target tracking process will go a long way to lift the overall quality of management to a very effective level. There is room in the school improvement plan for more specific success criteria that could usefully include explicit pupil progress targets to support this work.
36. Subject leaders are committed to the necessary improvement to assessment and target tracking as part of their role of ensuring the quality of provision is good or better. They understand the demands that subject leadership places upon them in terms of responsibility for standards and achievement across the whole school, though historically their role has been narrower than this and focused on resourcing and the curriculum. Current job descriptions are up-to-date and very detailed but they do not make explicit the leadership and management expectations as well as they articulate the coordination role. Some subject leaders, such as for English, have already taken the necessary steps forward to exercise their leadership role to the full. Others, such as those for music and physical education, have still to do this, though they are ready for the transition. More focused job descriptions could help with this. The process of performance management in school is effectively supporting the promotion of good subject leadership. The school is justifiably proud of the Investors in People Award accredited in 2003.
37. The school has made very good improvement to the quality of provision and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection in 1998. It is now a very effective school giving very good value to parents, who hold positive views of its successes. There is every reason to judge that the school has a bright future.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and is a strength of the school.

Children receive a very good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is consistently very good and at times excellent, inspiring children to learn very successfully. The very good curriculum is exciting and challenging, providing a very good balance between child-initiated and adult-directed activities. Children are very well involved in planning and reviewing their work. There is a strong emphasis on the development of literacy skills with excellent links made to other areas of learning. The use of the interactive whiteboard contributes very effectively to children's learning. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good and results in very effective team work. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment outcomes are excellent, informing planning for the next stages of learning for each child most effectively. The recording of children's progress in each area of learning is very informative and used successfully to help each achieve very well.

Children enter the reception class either in September or January depending on their birth date. At the time of the inspection there were 27 reception children including a very low proportion statemented child. There are very good induction procedures enabling children to settle quickly and happily into school. Good links with the privately run on-site pre-school group, which most children attend before they start school, ease the transition. Most children at Lilleshall will have spent two years in this stage of education before starting statutory education. Parents are very positive about the start children receive to their education. Attainment on entry to school is above average for the current year group, which includes both very high attaining children as well as children with specific learning difficulties. All children are very well provided for and their needs are met very well because of the team approach to personalising learning to meet individual needs. This is a strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage where there is excellent attention to inclusion.

Progress in all areas of learning is good and all children achieve very well. Virtually all children are already achieving the early learning goals in the areas of learning and most are exceeding these and working well within level 1 of the National Curriculum. Standards are well above average by the end of the Reception year, maintaining the very high standards found at the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of the Reception year and achievement is very good.
 - Teaching is consistently very good and therefore children achieve well.
 - Classroom routines are very well established and there is a high level of independence.
 - Personal, social and emotional development is integral to all class activities.
38. Children enter school with a good range of skills in personal and social development as a result of their pre-school experiences. These skills develop very well within the class and progress is rapid as a result of very well planned activities, very good teaching, excellent relationships and very high expectations of behaviour. Children quickly learn classroom routines. They listen carefully to instructions and participate with great enthusiasm in all class activities. They share well and take turns, for example, when using the interactive whiteboard or computers. They listen well to each other, showing respect for others views. They work well cooperatively, with a mature attitude and response to learning. The majority are confident with very good

independence and positive self-esteem. They are likely to exceed the early learning goals in this area of their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of the Reception year and achievement is good.
 - Teaching and learning are consistently very good.
 - Children achieve well in all aspects of this area of learning.
 - Assessment of the progress of individual children is excellent.
39. Attainment is above average when children start in the Reception class. Children achieve well because the very well planned activities challenge children of all abilities and enable them to make good progress. The excellent relationships with the adults promote confidence, independence and self-esteem. Children listen carefully, follow instructions well and engage readily and confidently in conversation with the adults and other children. The many opportunities for speaking aloud, questioning, discussion and role-play ensure that speaking and listening skills are very well developed. Children have a good appreciation of books, which they take home daily. The majority are writing independently with many able to write at length. They know the letters and sounds of the alphabet and many build words accurately with plausible attempts at more complex spellings. Many children understand alphabetical order and the majority understand how to write instructions, for example, to inform pre-school children how to use the equipment in the park safely. Well-focused questions challenge children to use their language and extend their skills in a variety of classroom situations. They write for a wide range of purposes with a good focus on non-fiction writing, such as the minibeast research and recording of information. Very good use of assessment information moves the learning on very well. Excellent links are made to other areas of learning as children retell stories, make lists, label diagrams and record information such as that about old toys. The majority are working within level 1 of the National Curriculum, having exceeded the early learning goals. In some of the very best work, the standard is at the level expected for pupils when they are 7.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of the Reception year and achievement is good
 - Teaching is very good and pupils achieve well.
 - Basic number skills are reinforced well.
 - A very good variety of practical activities are provided to help children learn.
40. Children enter the Reception class with above average mathematical skills. They achieve well as a result of very good teaching with very well planned activities, clearly matched to their stage of development. Number rhymes and songs support children's learning and reinforce basic number skills very well. They count accurately with higher attainers counting to 30 and beyond. The majority count forwards and backwards and recognise numbers to 20. Many children complete addition and subtraction sentences and higher attainers make 2 digit numbers with good understanding. They understand *one more than/less than*. Children develop a good awareness of the concept and language of length, time, money and capacity. They recognise two-dimensional shapes and higher attainers can describe two and three-dimensional shapes using mathematical language. They solve practical problems such as finding all the totals of individual dominoes by putting them into sets and labelling them.

41. Higher attainers describe what they have done. Rigorous assessment ensures children understand and move forward very well in their learning. Mathematics is made exciting for children through a very good range of practical activities and role-play situations, for example, using money in the 'Garden Centre' and weighing and measuring in cooking activities.
42. Children are likely to achieve the early learning goals and the majority will exceed these. Many are already working well within level 1 of the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of the Reception year and achievement is good.
 - Children achieve well because teaching is consistently very good and, at times, excellent.
 - Excellent links are made to other areas of learning.
 - ICT is a strength.
 - Visits and visitors support the curriculum very well.
43. Children enter the reception class with above average attainment in this area of learning. The very good teaching provides an exciting and stimulating range of experiences that enable children to make good gains in their knowledge about the world. Lessons are very well planned and linked very well to the language and mathematical areas of learning, for example, when mapping their route to school children make lists of the features on their route and in design and technology, they evaluate the success of the wind chimes and finger puppets that they have made. They develop an awareness of the passage of time, making simple time lines of their own lives, ordering toys according to their age and experiencing washing in cold water using a jug and bowl. They carry out scientific investigations about absorbency of different materials, floating and sinking and transparency of different materials, recording their findings. Visits and visitors support children's learning very well. Children know many stories from the Bible and know about the main festivals and celebrations in the Christian faith such as Easter and Christmas. They visit the church and role-play a baptism. When learning about the Hindu festival of Holi, children recall the name Krishna and know there are thirteen gods in the Hindu faith. Children dress in saris, make coconut barfi and enjoy henna painting and Hindu dancing. Such rich experiences make for exciting learning. In an excellent lesson the children discussed God in a very mature way. They reflected quietly on what He might look like, where He lives, what He does and what God is like, deep in thought as they listened to music. This was a deeply spiritual experience and children expressed their thoughts and communicated their ideas very well. The teacher followed this with an expressive reading of The Creation Story. The use of ICT is a strength, with children using computers, the interactive white board and programming robotic toys with confidence and skill.
 44. Knowledge is extended well with a succession of well-directed and encouraging questions which challenge children's thinking very well. Most children have achieved the early learning goals for this area of learning with the majority exceeding these and working well within the National Curriculum.

Physical development

45. No lessons were observed where physical development was the focus. Children have very good access to a range of outdoor equipment enabling them to use wheeled toys which they pedal and steer with confidence. They have regular access to the hall where they use a range of climbing equipment to extend their gross motor skills and develop their hand-eye coordination through a range of small apparatus such as bats and balls.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of the Reception year and the children achieve very well.
 - Very good teaching enables children to achieve well.
 - Children are given a very good range of experiences.
 - Good opportunities are provided for role-play.
46. Children have above average creative skills when they start in the Reception class. The teacher has a very good understanding of how children learn. She provides an exciting range of media and experiences, enabling children to explore and experiment.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Excellent links are made to other areas of learning. The teacher and support staff help children to develop their control of small manipulative skills very well. They control a pencil and paintbrush, stick and paste very effectively. All adults in the Reception class have high expectations of children's independence as they explore colour, texture and shape through a variety of media, producing work of a very high standard. For example, detailed clay masks, colourful wind chimes and three-dimensional models of minibeasts provide colourful displays. Using the painting of St Francis and the birds as a whole school stimulus, children in the Reception class produce observational drawing, press prints of flowers and create tissue flower sculptures on wire. They use ICT very well to create pictures and patterns. Very good use is made of music to support learning. Children sing number rhymes and songs confidently; they listen to music such as *Carnival of the Animals* and have access to a good range of untuned instruments. They match instruments to their minibeast poems and create simple compositions for the instruments which they record using symbols. Role-play areas provide good opportunities for imaginative play and contribute very effectively to literacy and mathematical skills. Nearly all children are achieving the early learning goals in this area of learning with the majority exceeding these.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils of different abilities achieve very well as a result of high quality teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and higher attainers are well challenged.
- ICT is used effectively to support learning.
- Very good use is made of target setting and pupils' self-assessment.
- Excellent relationships and very good attitudes to learning enable pupils to learn successfully.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

48. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6. They are above average at the end of Year 2. In years 1 and 2 standards have improved markedly since the previous inspection, although the trend in raising standards has been below that found nationally. National Curriculum tests results for Year 6 pupils are significantly better than at the last inspection. These pupils have made very good progress in English. The school's tracking of individual performance over time confirms that pupils of different abilities achieve well, and very well in the junior phase.
49. In years 1 and 2 there are good opportunities provided for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills across all subjects, with role-play, hot-seating and discussions being a regular feature. By the end of Year 2 pupils of all abilities speak and listen confidently in different contexts. These skills are built upon very effectively in Years 3 to 6 so that by the end of Year 6 pupils in discussion pay good attention to the contribution of others, ask questions to develop ideas and make contributions that take account of other's views. They have a very good command of English, using a wide range of more complex vocabulary with good understanding.
50. By the end of Year 6 average and higher attaining pupils read with good levels of fluency and expression. Reading is accurate with pupils equally interested in fiction and non-fiction texts in most cases. They show understanding of a wide range of texts and express preferences for authors and styles. By contrast, standards in reading in Year 2 are average. Some average and below average readers are hesitant when building unknown words, and rely on adult help. Higher attainers read with fluency and good expression and are able to name their favourite authors.
51. The school's continued focus on the development of writing has proved very worthwhile. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 the writing of higher attaining pupils is organised, imaginative and clear, with good use of punctuation to mark sentences. They show an increasing use of descriptive language and write for a good range of purposes. The writing of all pupils communicates meaning in both narrative and non-narrative forms and letters are accurately formed with higher attainers writing in a neat cursive style. Ideas in stories are well sustained for higher attainers, for example *'In a dark, spooky forest there were creeping animals – Jaguars prowling silently through prickly branches...'* Average writers in the junior years develop ideas logically and make plausible attempts at spelling. They use words like *'flourishing'* and *'entanglements'* with confidence. Pupils' writing covers a wide range of styles, with good examples of stories, play scripts, diary extract, instructional writing and poetry. One pupil, for example, wrote *'The chameleon leaves dance and flip in the morning light; others are stronger and hold the fortress. The villainous wind strikes, and again! The conquered trees bow down to their master.'* Pupils have a good understanding of personification and use similes and metaphors with confidence.
52. Teaching is consistently good and in the junior classes often very good. Teachers provide good role models for pupils and value the contributions made by pupils in lessons. They have good subject knowledge and in the junior phase expectations are high and pupils well challenged. Expectations and challenge for Year 2 pupils are not as high as they could be and this is a relative weakness in the infants that needs to be addressed if the school is to improve further. Behaviour management is very good throughout the school. Support assistants are very effective in their role and contribute very well to children's learning. Assessment of individual progress and attainment is very good in English with very effective target setting. Pupils are well involved in self-assessment in the junior classes and as a result have a good understanding of how they can improve. In the best practice, marking is purposeful but this is not consistent in all year groups. Excellent relationships contribute very well to pupils' desire to learn and succeed. The subject is very well led and managed and this has led to continuing developments and improving standards. Good use is made of computers to support learning. Teachers and pupils

make very good use of the interactive white boards and these are proving very beneficial in developing pupils' learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Overall, pupils use their literacy skills very well to support work in other subjects. Their skills in speaking and listening are used extensively across the curriculum in support of discussions, questioning and group work. Pupils' competence in reading and their ability to research, retrieve and collate information from a range of sources is used well in science, history and geography topics. The very good writing skills are put to good effect in most subjects, with many examples of extended writing in subjects such as religious education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strategies to improve provision in mathematics, following some disappointing National Curriculum test results in the past, are proving effective.
- Standards are now well above average at the end of Year 6. They are above average at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs.
- Teaching is good overall and results in good learning.
- Mathematics is well led and managed.
- Assessment and target-setting systems are not effective enough in mathematics.

Commentary

54. In 2003, Year 6 pupils reached above average standards in mathematics in their National Curriculum tests. In comparison with similar school the results were below average in mathematics and the school did not meet its targets. The school identified a number of aspects of mathematics for improvement following these test results with an increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the average level 4 as the number one priority. Numeracy consultants from the local education authority were involved in this work and it is evident that the adopted strategies are proving effective and standards are rising.
55. For the current Year 6, standards are well above average and in Year 2 they are above average. They are now above those reported at the time of the previous inspection. The work has a strong bias towards basic numeracy, as is entirely appropriate, and there is also good focus on the problem solving and investigation aspect of mathematics. This ensures that pupils achieve well in all strands of the subject. It is also evident that pupils of all backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, the higher and middle attaining pupils and boys and girls achieve equally well. The very few pupils from different ethnic backgrounds share this trend of good achievement. There is, however, some evidence that the very top attainers could be set work that is more focused on their specific strengths, particularly in the infants.
56. Teaching of mathematics is good overall and results in good learning. Indeed, very good teaching and learning was observed in Years 5 and 6. For example, Year 6 pupils were very well motivated by the teacher's approach to the subject of pie charts and were constructing and interpreting these with very good skills and understanding. They were very productive in their work and managed the intricacies of the associated percentages, fractions and angle measurement with confidence. The marking of pupils' work could be more informative about ways to improve and pupils given more frequent opportunities to self-assess their learning. In other respects, teaching and learning have many strengths, including very good insistence on good behaviour.

57. Excellent relationships, very good behaviour and attitudes and a very strong work ethos are at the heart of the good provision in mathematics. All staff are well signed-up to the process of improvement in mathematics and are committed to making the necessary improvements to the assessment and target-setting systems, which are currently not effective enough. From the scrutiny of pupils' past work it is evident that target-setting systems are inconsistently applied. There is some good practice in school but strengthening this part of the otherwise good self-evaluation systems is of prime importance for the future success of the subject.
58. The leadership and management of mathematics are good and the subject leader is influential in bringing about improvement. There is a very good team spirit amongst the staff and this is a strong base from which the school can move forward with confidence in its work to make further advances in mathematics provision.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Pupils have good skills of arithmetic, problem solving, data handling and measurement. Much of the development of these skills is clearly due to the effective cross-curricular use of mathematics. Inspectors traced some good development of mathematics skills and knowledge, especially basic numeracy and data handling, in other subjects when they looked at pupils' past work. Such good quality links were evident in science, ICT, art and design, design and technology, history and geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and the curriculum is well rooted in practical investigations.
- Science is well led and managed and this ensures that subject improvement is good.
- Aspects of assessment, marking and target setting and tracking are inconsistent.

Commentary

60. Last year, Year 6 pupils reached above average standards in science in their National Curriculum tests. The results were average in comparison with those in similar schools. Current standards in Year 2 are above average and they are well above average at the end of Year 6. The achievement of all pupils is good in science.
61. The curriculum for science is very firmly based on practical problem solving and investigation work, even for the youngest pupils. In a very good quality Year 1 lesson on seeds and their characteristics, the pupils were enthusiastically studying different seeds at close quarter. They were very proud to be the first pupils in school to use the electronic microscope. They likened the dandelion seed, projected large-scale on the whiteboard, to a star, and one top attaining girl explained how seeds were blown along in the wind and that some had similar flying mechanisms to helicopters. In general, teaching and learning are good in science and pupils accomplish a lot in lessons. The marking of work to show how to improve, and pupils' assessment of their own work are the two aspects for improvement.
62. Assessment and target-setting systems are not as highly developed as in English. The procedures for assessment in science are good but there are few targets set for individual

pupils or groups and the measuring of achievement is, therefore, less effective than it is in English.

63. Science is a well led and managed subject. The subject leader is well organised, knowledgeable about subject performance and undertakes some effective monitoring of provision. The monitoring, review and evaluation of strengths and weaknesses is good. There has been good improvement to the subject since the 1998 inspection and there are very positive prospects for maintained improvement in the future because of the very strong team approach to provision and the effective sharing of responsibility for standards and achievement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT has been improved very well during the last six years.
- Standards are above average at the end of Years 1 and 2 and the achievement of all pupils is good.
- Teaching and learning are of good quality.
- ICT is well led and managed.
- The subject is well resourced and the accommodation is good.
- There are some good cross-curricular links, though such provision could be further improved.

Commentary

64. The school has improved its provision in ICT very effectively since the 1998 inspection and it has successfully kept up with the fast-moving developments in technology, curriculum and teaching methods that are ongoing. It has been able to finance the provision of a well equipped computer suite for the focused learning of skills and knowledge in the subject and has further enhanced provision by the employment of a specialist teaching assistant to work with groups of pupils in the suite and in their classrooms. The recent introduction of interactive whiteboard technology has been effective and has led to a further step being taken in the school's pursuit of high quality provision.
65. Today, standards are above average through the school and pupils achieve well. Pupils show great confidence, enjoyment and successful collaboration as they work with computers and other technology. Year 1 pupils usually set up their work on the computer unaided and by Year 5 and 6 pupils handle professional software, such as presentation, spreadsheet and word processing packages, with secure skill and knowledge. The effective use made of computers in other subjects does much to consolidate and extend skills and knowledge.
66. The staff have improved their expertise well. Teaching and learning are of good quality. Planning is firmly focused on skills and knowledge and teaching methods give prominence to the pupils' successful use of an ever-widening range of features of different types of software. The management of pupils in ICT sessions is very good, as is the insistence on high standards of behaviour. There are, however, not yet enough opportunities for pupils to self-assess their work in lessons. Teaching assistants undertake good quality work to support their pupils' learning and the specialist support is very successful in raising standards.
67. Leadership and management of ICT is good. The subject leader has managed the improvement of provision and resourcing well. Monitoring, review and evaluation are all good. Assessment systems are satisfactory. The target setting process is in its infancy and is clearly in need of improvement in order to ensure every pupil is achieving as well as is expected.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. The school has made the fostering of ICT skills in other subjects a priority in recent years and has been successful in this work. There are good links to other subjects and occasional very good practice, as in the case of some work in art and design and music. For example, in a lesson observed a group of Year 3 pupils were working effectively to develop simple music compositions on the computer screen and to play them back through headphones. Once the basic tune had been composed, the pupils investigated how the pitch and duration of notes could be changed and how the tune would sound when played by different instruments of the orchestra. This work enhanced their music and ICT achievement in equal measure.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is closely linked to the locally agreed syllabus and pupils achieve well.
- The subject is well supported through the general ethos of the school.
- Religious education contributes very well to pupils' cultural development.
- The subject leader provides good leadership and management.
- Spiritual development is a strength.
- Assessment and marking are areas for further development.

Commentary

69. Standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2. They are above average by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6. Four lessons were observed; in three, teaching and learning were good and in one lesson they were satisfactory. Planning in all lessons is closely linked to the locally agreed syllabus, recently implemented. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good, enabling pupils to achieve well. Standards have been maintained well since the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore religious themes and ideas. Year 1 pupils engage in discussions about God and share their thoughts with each other, considering what God means to a Hindu and Buddhist as well as to a Christian. Ideas are imaginative and thought provoking. For example, one pupil says *'I think He holds out his hand, and the whole world is there – the whole universe.'* Year 2 pupils use role-play to express feelings and thoughts when considering the impact of thoughts and feelings on the choices they make. During their time in school, pupils build effectively on their knowledge and understanding of Christianity as well as learning about other world faiths such as Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. They know about major festivals and celebrations. They are encouraged to recognise similarities and differences between religions. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils explored the Chinese version of The Creation Story and compared this with other versions, identifying ways in which they could improve the world. Year 4 pupils expand their ideas on the meaning of *'love your neighbour'* in the Christian faith through stories such as The Good Samaritan and Zaccheus. When considering friendship they discuss rakhis given by Hindus to their friends. They make a bracelet for a friend with symbols of friendship. Very good speaking and listening skills enable good debate and discussion to take place from the youngest pupils and throughout the school. Coverage of themes such as caring for others, signs and symbols and the natural world give pupils a growing awareness of themselves as developing individuals. Religious education links closely with personal, social, health and citizenship education when pupils examine issues such as bullying and managing conflict. They relate what they have learnt to their own lives, for example, identifying their personal strengths and how they may help with changes and challenges, developing a strong sense of citizenship.

70. Religious education is well supported through the ethos of the school, the sense of caring and community and the strong spiritual dimension, which permeates much of the learning. An example of this is the whole school response to the painting of St Francis and the Birds, which has culminated in a wide range of art, music, poetry and prayers of a very high standard. The subject contributes very well to pupils' cultural development and links very well to other areas of the curriculum.
71. Teaching and learning are good overall, with satisfactory teaching seen in Year 2. Strengths of the good teaching include effective questioning promoting good discussions and inspiring pupils to voice their own opinions. Good use of visits, for example to Granville County Park, provides very good enrichment as does the use of the local environment. Pupils show respect and consideration for the rich diversity of culture and religion. Work in religious education underpins much of the learning in school.
72. The subject leader provides good leadership and management, supporting colleagues well. She undertakes monitoring, including work in books and on display. Assessment procedures are not fully developed. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not help pupils to know how to improve.

Geography and History

73. These subjects were sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. No lessons were observed in history and only one lesson was seen in geography. From the evidence seen standards are above average in history and geography in Year 2 and Year 6.
74. Good use is made of resources to help pupils observe and record information and to enable them to respond to their own questions about St Lucia. Pupils make good use of the Internet to gain further information and use the interactive white board to good effect. Good questioning by the class teacher in a Year 5 lesson consolidated earlier learning and deepened pupils' understanding about St Lucia. Pupils have a good knowledge of a range of maps and locate St Lucia confidently. Analysis of work shows Year 2 pupils involved in a comparison of life in Jodhpur, in India, with life in Lilleshall. A time line of Ghandi's life is a very positive feature of this work. Work shows good organisation and demonstrates good knowledge. Pupils in Year 3 to 6 show that they have a good knowledge of their own locality. Mapping skills are well developed in Years 5 and 6 and pupils make good use of a range of sources to gather information, including maps, plans, text pictures and photographs as well as using ICT well. They explore a range of environmental issues making good cross-curricular links with literacy for interviews and letter writing and with mathematics as they conduct a traffic survey. Visits into the locality and further afield have added interest and improved geographical knowledge.
75. In history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have developed a good knowledge and understanding of events leading up to the Great Fire of London making good cross-curricular links with design technology in Year 2 as pupils designed and made waistcoats to commemorate the fire and recorded their own compositions in music. Pupils developed ideas based around '*how people send messages*', exploring the Romans' influence in Lilleshall and visiting Lilleshall hill, Telford town park and Ironbridge. Personal diaries were written in the style of Samuel Pepys. Pupils made good use of the digital camera on their local visits.
76. In Years 3 and 4 pupils explore Ancient Egypt, creating an Egyptian time line, conducting their own research. They also learn about Greek gods, the Trojan War and the Olympic games with journalistic writing in the Daily Greek News. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have good knowledge of historical periods such as the Tudors, focusing on Tudor homes and costumes, famous people such as Sir Francis Drake and voyages of discovery. Good links are made to art and design and design technology, for example, in the construction of models of Tudor houses. Pupils have a good understanding of the Tudor time line. Work on these topics contains good factual accounts and empathic writing.

77. Well-chosen topics are at the heart of work in history but not enough focus has yet been given to setting sufficiently different work for pupils in different year groups. The recent move to blocking periods of time in these subjects to give pupils time to build knowledge is a useful approach as is the shared planning between teachers across two year-groups. However, not enough attention has yet been given to making sure that pupils in different age groups are set sufficiently different work. To some extent this is true within year groups too. For example, some very detailed work on the Tudors in Year 5 has also been covered in Year 6 but not in the same depth or to the same high standard. The work set for the average and higher attaining pupils in Year 5 next year when they are in Year 6 will need careful planning to ensure that they are provided with opportunities to build on the very good knowledge and skills already built. Neither subject has any systematic method to record pupils' progress in the development of key geographical and historical skills and this is a missed opportunity.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weakness

- Provision in art and design is a particular strength of the school.
- Standards are well above average in Years 2 and 6 and achievement is very good.
- Teaching is very good and results in very effective learning.
- The curriculum is very good and the quality of enrichment activities is excellent.
- Leadership and management of art and design are very effective.
- Art and design makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and also to their personal development.
- Assessment systems are not consistent.
- The links with other schools and the community are very beneficial for the development of a rich and varied creative curriculum.

Commentary

78. The school has a deserved reputation for its work in art and design. Much of the very good quality work on display around the school is the result of imaginative and innovative approaches and many examples stand favourable comparison with professional designs and images. The exhibition of pupils' artwork at University College, Edgmond, which was based on the theme of St Francis of Assisi showed the very careful development of skills and painstaking technique that resulted in very high standards of art and design.
79. It is very evident that standards are well above average in art and design and that achievement is very good. The work of Year 1 pupils, for example, is remarkably advanced for their age and on first sight looks to be the product of pupils two or three years older. This is the result of very effective provision and a consistently very good quality of teaching and learning. Art and design is a subject much enjoyed by pupils and staff alike, and the effort, motivation and interest in lessons is very high. The results are much enhanced by the high quality of resources and the very professional way in which artwork is displayed about the school. The school itself is an inviting art gallery that celebrates pupils' successes and promotes art and design as an essential subject within the overall curriculum.
80. The art and design curriculum is rich and rewarding and the quality of enrichment activities is excellent. Art is celebrated in school and pupils' achievements are the root of much pleasure, enthusiasm and enjoyment. The work makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and, especially, their cultural development. Through their art and design work, pupils gain

very good insights into the attributes and values of other cultures. Art and design is also at the heart of pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

81. Provision is considerably enhanced by the school's partnership with a networked learning community that comprises a number of local small schools. The above-mentioned exhibition at Edgmond is a prime example of the outcome of these excellent links.
82. Art and design is a very well led and effectively managed subject. For the future, the subject leader realises that assessment is in need of more consistency and there needs to be a greater focus on the development of skills and knowledge. However, she is very well informed of the strengths and areas for development and is very influential in ensuring that standards and achievement in art and design are amongst the best in school. There is every prospect that the very many strengths of provision in this subject will be maintained and consolidated.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and achievement is very good.
- The work focuses as much on planning and evaluation as it does on designing and making products.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall.
- Design and technology is a well-led and managed subject.
- Assessment systems are inconsistent.
- There are some shortages of resources.

Commentary

83. Provision in design and technology, which is effective in bringing above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 and good achievement through the school, is influenced positively by the very good provision in art and design. It is also of good quality because of the determination of the subject leader to ensure every pupil has access to a very good curriculum and high quality teaching.
84. The very well balanced, broad and rich curriculum is firmly focused on the consolidation and extension of skills and knowledge. The emphasis is as much on planning and the later evaluation of outcomes as it is on the design and making of a wide range of products. Links with other schools, particularly the local City Technology College, are very effective in providing access to expertise, resources and materials that are of very good quality. This ensures pupils build knowledge and skills very well, as seen in the very good display of Year 6's articulated bird mobiles made of medium density fibreboard. The quality of these mobiles is high and their overall kinetic effect added much to the exhibition of work on St Francis of Assisi at the nearby University College.
85. Design and technology is a very well taught subject. It is also very well led and managed. The subject leader has ensured that all staff are part of a very committed team who work very effectively for improvement. Thus, work to improve the inconsistent assessment procedures has every chance of success. Staff show considerable ingenuity in circumventing the shortages of some resources for design and technology. The links with other schools are successful in this respect. There is also a good programme of visits to enhance the quality of provision, as in the visit to the *Ingenuity* exhibition at Ironbridge.

Music

86. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. Standards are broadly average in singing. A very good lesson in Year 5 enabled the pupils to develop their creative musical talents very successfully as they used Calypso music as a stimulus for their own compositions and performance using tuned and untuned instruments and following a graphic score. Good self-evaluation enabled the pupils to refine and polish their performance. Pupils enjoyed singing a two-part round as part of the cool down at the end. In Year 2 pupils enjoyed a satisfactory lesson that enabled them to think about pitch and dynamics and identify different sounds in the music they listened to and then sang. There was no warm up before the pupils sang and for most of the lesson they were seated on the hall floor. Pupils tend to remain seated when singing in assemblies and this restricts the opportunities for the teaching of breathing and voice projection. It also limits the opportunities for the most talented musicians to take a lead when appropriate. The use of music from around the world contributes effectively to pupils' cultural development. The use of an outside music specialist for instrumental tuition has a positive effect on the achievement of a small number of higher attaining musicians. Pupils have good opportunities to perform in concerts and musical productions which enhances both learning and their personal development.

Physical education

87. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. No lessons were observed in physical education. However, it is evident from planning, the subject leader's evaluation of provision, a portfolio of photographs and school records that the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils talk enthusiastically of their work in the subject, though they say there is not enough gymnastics and athletics. The vast majority of pupils achieve at least the desirable 25-metre length in swimming before the end of Year 6. In this aspect, standards are above average. There is an effective residential visit to North Wales each year that is used successfully to develop pupils' skills in outdoor and adventurous activities. Whilst tuition is given, both in lessons and outside school hours, in a range of games, there are few sports events held in conjunction with other schools. Some parents told inspectors they would appreciate more competitive sport and more use of the adjacent cricket field and tennis courts by the pupils.
88. The leadership and management of physical education are satisfactory, with sound evaluation of the strengths and areas for improvement. For the future, the main priority is to introduce effective target setting and tracking procedures and to use them consistently to plan pupils' next steps in learning and to ensure that achievement is good. This is well understood in school as the logical next step for the improvement of provision in physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a happy and very caring community in which all pupils are given equal status and show consideration and respect for one another.
- Pupils are making gains in their knowledge about how to keep safe and healthy because of the school's good approaches and they grow as responsible future citizens.
- The accreditation of the Bronze Eco award is testament to the good quality environment that pupils work actively towards developing for the benefit of the people who use it, for birds and for wildlife.

Commentary

89. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is very well provided for. The excellent role models provided by staff and governors support positively the very well-bonded relationships so evident in school. Opportunities to become a member of the School Council, Eco Committee, to lead on charitable endeavours, or to act as a buddy to younger children, assist the pupils in developing very good social and leadership skills and support the very positive learning culture so evident in the school's daily life. These positive experiences help pupils to achieve confidently and with success.
90. Specific PSCH lessons often focus upon a theme that supports pupils' personal, including moral and social development, for example, challenging stereotypes, dealing with bullying, avoiding risks and coping with unfair situations. PSCH times were observed to be used soundly for Year 3 children to consider how to deal with an unfair situation they may encounter and for Year 6 pupils to consider the power of advertising to persuade us to buy things. The *STAR* (Stop Think, Act, Reflect) programme is used effectively to help pupils prepare for citizenship and draws on a wide range of experts in the community to share their experiences. The nurse makes a beneficial input to sex education and the community police officer, likewise, to the drugs education strands of the programme. In a PSCH lesson, pupils wrote down their Hopes for Arthog, before embarking on the planned residential experience. Inspectors found it was good to talk with pupils and to find out that their hopes had materialised to the full and that the experience had been brilliant!
91. The school pays good attention to health and environmental awareness aspects. Younger pupils benefit from fruit provided daily and are learning about the need for a good diet to keep them healthy and mentally alert. They learn about keeping safe in the playground and when out in the community, for example the need for road safety. Members of the Eco Committee are a very well organised group and besides pupils involves a cross section of other stakeholders including the office manager, caretaker and bus escort. The visitor is immediately struck by the high quality of the outdoor spaces on arrival at the school with well tended gardens, hanging baskets, picnic tables, bird feeders and exciting play areas available with a sense of tender loving care so apparent. Pupils are very tuned into the need to sustain resources and conserve energy and have good recycling initiatives up and running. The Eco Committee's work has recently been recognised with a bronze award.

PART D SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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). When judging standards- 1 is very high, 2 - well above average; 3 – above average; 4 – average; 5 – below average; 6 – well below average; 7-very low