

INSPECTION REPORT

LYDBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lydbrook

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115531

Headteacher: Mr S Lusted

Lead inspector: Mr C D Taylor

Dates of inspection: 16 – 18 September 2003

Inspection number: 256802

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	141
School address:	School Road Upper Lydbrook Lydbrook Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL17 9PX
Telephone number:	01594 860344
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Walker
Date of previous inspection:	14 September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lydbrook Primary School is a rural community primary school with an annual entry of about 20 pupils. A privately run nursery operates on the school site. Most pupils attend the nursery, join the reception class at the age of four, and remain at the school until they are eleven. Relatively few pupils join or leave the school at other times. Numbers have increased since 1998. The school serves the village of Lydbrook and surrounding communities in the Forest of Dean. The local area is composed of a mix of privately owned and rented housing. Approximately ten per cent of pupils - broadly in line with the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. This year, most pupils joined the school with levels of attainment that are average for their age, but attainment was below average in most previous years. Twenty one per cent of pupils - close to the national average - are identified as having special educational needs. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs. Pupils with special needs include those with moderate learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties (dyslexia), autism and behavioural problems. Only one pupil is from an ethnic minority. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has received the Investors in People award for staff training and development.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23004	Christopher Taylor	Lead inspector	English as an additional language The foundation stage Science Music Religious education
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
13307	Ian Hancock	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Lydbrook Primary is an effective school. Standards of attainment fluctuate from year to year because of the small year groups, but are generally in line with, or above, the national average. Teaching and learning are good, so pupils achieve well. The school benefits from satisfactory leadership and management and a commitment by all staff to improve the school further. Expenditure per pupil is close to the national average and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Consistently good teaching in the reception year means that young children get a good start.
- Good teaching in Years 1 to 6, especially in English, mathematics and science, ensures that all pupils learn effectively.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, while relationships are very good. This helps pupils to make good progress.
- Provision for pupils' welfare and partnerships with other schools are very good, and the partnership with parents is good.
- Standards are below national expectations in information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 3 to 6, and ICT is not used enough to assist teaching and learning in other subjects.
- Procedures for marking work and target setting do not help pupils sufficiently to know how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.
- Assessment of pupils' standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not rigorous enough to enable teachers to set work appropriate to the needs of individual pupils.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes across the curriculum.
- The role of co-ordinators in subjects other than English, mathematics, science, ICT and design and technology has not been developed enough to enable them to raise standards further.

Since the previous inspection in 1998, the school has made satisfactory progress, overall, in improving the areas identified in the last inspection report. The curriculum is now more balanced and an appropriate scheme of work and improved teaching have raised standards in design and technology. While there have been improvements in computer resources and teacher expertise, standards in ICT are currently below national expectations in Years 3 to 6 where pupils are not being taught some elements of the ICT curriculum adequately, including remote sensing and control technology. The role of subject co-ordinators has improved in English, mathematics, science, ICT and design and technology, but in other subjects it has not been developed sufficiently for them to improve standards further. In addition, since 1998 there have been significant improvements in the school's accommodation, outdoor facilities and resources.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	C	B	B
mathematics	C	C	B	B
science	B	C	C	D

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

Achievement is **good**, overall. It is good in reception and in Years 1 and 2, and good, overall, in Years 3 to 6.

While many pupils enter the school with levels of attainment below average for their age, standards in most subjects are usually in line with the national average, or above, by the time they leave Year 6. In the current reception year, most children are achieving the goals they are expected to reach. Their personal and social development is above average for their age. In Year 2, standards of attainment are currently close to the national average in English, mathematics and science. In Year 6, standards are usually in line with, or above, the national average, but in the current year group, standards are below average because over half the pupils have learning difficulties. Attainment in ICT is below national expectations in Years 3 to 6; pupils underachieve as they are not taught the full range of skills required.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**, overall. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**, punctuality is **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching for children of reception age is consistently good across all six areas of learning. Consequently children learn quickly and achieve well. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good in English and mathematics. It is satisfactory in all the other subjects observed. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in all other subjects observed. Good teaching ensures that pupils learn effectively and achieve well in English, mathematics and science. Learning and achievement are satisfactory in all other subjects. Teachers use assessment well in English, mathematics and science to plan work that is appropriate for pupils of different abilities and ages. Assessment in other subjects is not as good as it should be.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met except in Years 3 to 6 in ICT. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors, and there is a good variety of extra-curricular activities for the size of the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive plenty of assistance and make good progress. Procedures for the personal support and guidance of pupils are good and pupils' welfare is very good. The school benefits from good parental links and receives the valuable support of an active parents' association. Very good links with other local schools enrich the curriculum and provide valuable opportunities for staff development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and other key staff are **satisfactory**. The work of the governing body is also satisfactory.

The headteacher ensures that the school is moving forward steadily. Subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work, but do not have sufficient opportunity to help their colleagues to raise standards in subjects other than English, mathematics, science, ICT and design and technology. The headteacher monitors and evaluates the school's performance well. Teachers and governors both have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. They play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school. The school supports educational priorities well through good financial planning. Specific grants are used appropriately and the school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

There is strong parental support for the school. Parents are particularly pleased that children behave well and enjoy school, teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard. Pupils think highly of their school because teachers help them effectively and other pupils are friendly.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in ICT in Years 3 to 6 by developing teachers' competence and expertise, improving resources further and by providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their skills.
- Make more use of ICT to assist teaching and learning across the curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Improve marking and share targets with pupils in English and mathematics so they know how to raise their standards.
- Improve assessment of pupils' standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science; use this information to set work that meets the needs of individual pupils and challenges higher-attaining ones.
- Create more opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes across the curriculum.
- Improve the effectiveness of co-ordinators in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT by giving them sufficient opportunity to work alongside their colleagues to raise standards.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in ICT in Years 3 to 6.

These issues have already been identified as areas for development in the school improvement plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

In reception, most children usually achieve the goals they are expected to reach. At the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are usually **in line with the national average or above** in English, mathematics and science. Achievement is **good** in reception and in Years 1 to 6. Boys and girls generally reach similar standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in reception and make good progress towards the early learning goals for young children.
- They achieve well in Years 1 and 2 where standards are usually in line with the national average in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6, and standards are usually in line with, or above, the national average.
- They underachieve in ICT where standards are below expectations in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

1. Standards fluctuate from year to year because numbers are small and profiles of ability vary considerably from one year group to the next. Consequently, great care must be taken when comparing the attainment of pupils of different ages.
2. Standards on entry have generally gone down over the past few years and were below expectations in most year groups when they joined the school. Children's attainment on entry was better this year, however, and broadly in line with expectations for their age. All children, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress towards the early learning goals for young children. By the end of the reception year, most children usually reach the levels expected for their age in communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Their personal and social development is above average for their age. This is similar to standards at the time of the previous inspection.
3. In Year 2, pupils' attainment in the current year group is average in reading and writing, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment in ICT is in line with standards expected nationally. This represents good achievement for these pupils, many of whom entered school with below average skills. Attainment was found to be close to the standards expected nationally in all other subjects. This is an improvement on the previous inspection in design and technology, where standards were below expectations and have improved because of better teaching. Standards are better than those in the national tests in 2002 when attainment was well below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. This is because there were more pupils with learning difficulties in Year 2 in 2002. There are no significant variations in standards between girls and boys.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.7 (15.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.8 (14.8)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.8 (17.2)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. In Year 6, standards are usually in line with, or above, the national average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well in these subjects and exceed the challenging targets set. This year, standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science because over half the year group has learning difficulties. Pupils, nevertheless, achieve well in these subjects. Attainment in ICT is below national expectations. Pupils underachieve as they do not have the full range of skills required. Standards are not as good as in the national tests in 2002 when attainment was above average in reading and writing and average in science. This is because far more pupils in the current Year 6 have learning difficulties, and some of these have joined the school only recently. Attainment is usually close to the standards expected nationally in all other subjects. Attainment has improved since the previous inspection in design and technology, where teaching has improved. Most pupils achieve well, while those with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because of good teaching. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (27.3)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.2 (26.5)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	28.2 (28.5)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic and work hard.
- Pupils behave well; very little bullying occurs.
- Relationships between pupils are very good.

Commentary

5. Pupils usually concentrate well during lessons and display good attitudes to their work. They particularly enjoy visitors to the school. During the inspection, they listened very attentively to a police officer, for example, and were keen to ask her many questions. Pupils respect others, allowing them to express their views and opinions. They respect the attractive school environment because they have been consulted about their views. Consequently, they have a good sense of ownership, and there are no signs of litter, graffiti or deliberate damage. Pupils are taught to be good citizens. Elderly residents, for example, appreciate the gifts given by the children at harvest time.
6. Behaviour is good both inside and outside the classrooms, as it was at the last inspection. Pupils of all ages work and play together well, and this leads to very good relationships. Because nursery children share a playground with the younger pupils, this allows them to be very confident when starting school life. Pupils are very involved in all that the school offers. They are keen to carry out a wide variety of useful tasks such as photocopying, library work and answering the telephone at lunch times. Members of the School Council make a very positive contribution to school life by discussing possible improvements to facilities such as the school playgrounds. Because of the good relationships, there are very few incidents of

bullying. When any concerns are reported to teachers, these are dealt with promptly and effectively.

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good moral understanding and can clearly distinguish right from wrong.
- Pupils work well together and fulfil the responsibilities of living in the school community.
- Multicultural awareness has improved but is not well developed.
- Pupils' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness are underdeveloped.

Commentary

7. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall, and has been maintained since the last inspection. However, spiritual and cultural development are weak compared with the very good provision for moral and social development.
8. Collective worship meets requirements in assemblies. However, there is little or no time for reflection and themes are not explored sufficiently to ensure pupils develop self-knowledge and grow in spiritual awareness. There is limited planning to promote spiritual awareness across the curriculum and opportunities are often missed to give pupils a sense of awe and wonder.
9. High priority is given to equipping pupils with a clear set of moral values. This high expectation is effectively reinforced by routine classroom practices, the consistent application of the behaviour policy and explicit moral teaching in lessons, including those time-tabled for personal, social and health education. As a result pupils have a clear understanding that helps them distinguish right from wrong.
10. All pupils understand and fulfil very well the responsibilities of living in the school community. The promotion of values such as friendship and caring for others forms an important aspect of school life and as a result pupils interact well with each other. Pupils are encouraged to take a full and active part in all aspects of school life and contribute their ideas for improvements through the School Council. Pupils are encouraged to work together in small groups whenever possible and play amicably in the playground.
11. Pupils learn of their own culture through a variety of local trips in the Forest to support learning in geography and history. Since the last inspection, some efforts have been made to help pupils gain a fuller understanding of multicultural traditions. These include visitors demonstrating African drums and Indian dance. However, pupils' multicultural awareness is often restricted to comparative geographical studies of different countries in the world.

Attendance

Attendance is **satisfactory**, punctuality is **good**.

Attendance levels at the school are currently close to the national average. Attendance has improved recently because the school has taken firmer action and has had improved contact with the home on the first day of a pupil's absence. Most pupils arrive at school on time, but teachers do not always start lessons, or finish, at the correct time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

There have been **no** exclusions in the last school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning, and links with parents and the community, are good, while the school makes very good provision for the welfare of its pupils. Assessment of pupils' standards is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science, but is unsatisfactory in other subjects.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** in reception, in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are consistently good in reception.
- Teacher's expertise is good in most subjects.
- Teaching of ICT is satisfactory, overall, but is hampered by inadequate resources and the limited expertise of teachers.
- In English, mathematics and science, tasks closely match pupils' individual needs.
- In other subjects, work is not always challenging enough for older or higher-attaining pupils.
- Effective class management encourages good behaviour and positive attitudes to work.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work effectively together.
- Teachers use a wide range of resources to make lessons interesting.
- Teachers do not use ICT resources enough to assist teaching and learning in other subjects.

Commentary

12. During the inspection, teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good or better in sixty per cent of lessons. This is a similar situation to that at the previous inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	1 (3%)	17 (57%)	12 (40%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

13. Teaching for children of reception age is consistently good across all six areas of learning. Children are taught in a mixed-age reception / Year 1 class, though pupils are often taught in two or more separate groups by the class teacher and the learning support assistant. This arrangement works well for both age groups and children achieve well and make good progress. The teacher and learning support assistant have a good understanding of how young

children learn, and make learning fun. They have high expectations of all the children and constantly encourage them to build their confidence. The curriculum is well planned and lessons have clear learning objectives leading towards the early learning goals for young children. The teacher frequently checks children's knowledge and understanding, and provides tasks that are well matched to children's individual needs. Both adults give good support and guidance to children who are less confident and they make good progress as a result.

14. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good in English and mathematics. It is satisfactory in all the other subjects observed. No teaching was seen in science, music or religious education. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in all other subjects observed. No teaching was seen in religious education. Satisfactory teaching is the key to the improvement in standards in design and technology since the previous inspection.
15. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, and is sometimes very good. This ensures that pupils learn sound techniques and acquire accurate information. In a Year 4 and 5 science lesson, for example, the teacher had a very good understanding of investigative procedures. She ensured that the pupils discussed how they were to carry out their investigations and wrote down predictions that could be tested later. In contrast, most teachers' expertise in ICT is limited, and this means that pupils do not receive all the elements of the ICT programme of study such as control technology and remote sensing.
16. The teaching of literacy skills is good and numeracy skills are well taught. Teachers' planning in English, mathematics and science uses the results of assessments well to ensure that work planned for pupils of different abilities and different ages in the mixed-age classes is closely matched to pupils' individual needs. In a good mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, for example, Year 5 and lower-attaining Year 6 pupils worked on simple multiples with the classroom assistant, while higher-attaining Year 6 pupils were challenged with more difficult work by the class teacher. Teachers generally ensure that work for older and higher-attaining pupils is challenging enough in literacy and numeracy so that they make good progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
17. In other subjects, work is not always matched so closely to individual pupils' needs. As a result, some pupils occasionally find the work too easy. This occurred in an ICT lesson in Years 2, 3 and 4, for example, where there was a lack of more challenging tasks.
18. Good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a cheerful and productive atmosphere. Effective class management is reflected in high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes to work. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and usually concentrate well. This was clearly evident in a drama lesson in Years 4 and 5 where the pupils were totally involved in their roles as Celtic warriors.
19. Learning support assistants work closely with teachers during lessons and provide valuable assistance for pupils with special educational needs. They help with work that closely matches pupils' needs and, consequently, these pupils make good progress.
20. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources, and this helps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. In a numeracy lesson in reception and Year 1, for instance, the teacher introduced a number line and a hand puppet to count to ten, used a large dice for identifying numbers to six, and made good use of small plastic elephants to perform simple additions and count larger numbers. Pupils occasionally use computers for word processing or use the Internet to research information in science, geography and history; but, generally, teachers do not use ICT enough to assist teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Assessment

Assessment is **satisfactory** in reception and in English, mathematics and science; it is **unsatisfactory** in other subjects in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Careful analysis of English, mathematics and science test results helps to improve standards.
- The approach to sharing individual and group targets with pupils in English and mathematics is inconsistent.
- Marking gives insufficient guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
- Assessment procedures in all subjects apart from English, mathematics and science are unsatisfactory.
- Assessment is underused as a tool for planning pupils' work and for responding to their individual needs.

Commentary

21. Insufficient attention has been given since the previous inspection to the thoroughness and use of assessment. Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory and the headteacher carefully tracks pupils' progress and analyses test results to improve provision. This has made a significant impact on the high standards achieved in these subjects. However, this information has not been used to set individual or group targets in mathematics and has not been used consistently to share targets in English with pupils to raise their achievement. Because of unsatisfactory marking, some pupils do not know the level at which they are working and have insufficient knowledge of how to improve their work.
22. Assessment procedures in all subjects apart from English, mathematics and science are informal and remain unsatisfactory, as in the previous inspection. Assessment is underused as a tool for planning pupils' work and responding to their individual needs. Throughout the school, pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and it is a complex task to track what pupils have been taught and even more difficult to identify what pupils know, understand and can do in all subjects. Teachers lack this important information when planning their work and this can lead to inappropriate tasks for individual pupils and insufficient challenge for higher-attaining ones. This has a negative impact on their learning and achievement.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the foundation stage provides a good start to their education.
- Older pupils enjoy a curriculum that is much more balanced than at the time of the previous inspection.
- A good range of after-school clubs, together with many visits, residential trips and visitors, enriches the curriculum.
- The outdoor environment has been developed imaginatively and provides many interesting opportunities for recreation and study.

Commentary

23. The curriculum for the foundation stage is good. It is broad and balanced and includes all the six areas of learning. There have been improvements to the breadth and balance of the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 since the last inspection, yet it remains only satisfactory. This is

because inadequate resources for ICT mean that the subject cannot always be taught well and aspects of the subject cannot be taught at all. The school has worked hard to remedy this situation, but some resources, such as unreliable computers and printers, make it difficult to give good curriculum coverage.

24. Policies are in place for all curriculum subjects, but detailed schemes of work are available only for English, mathematics, and science. Schemes of work for design and technology and for ICT are in the process of being finalised. There is an urgent need to ensure continuity and progression in the teaching of other subjects. Different year groups are sometimes taught the same topic, resulting in a restricted programme.
25. A new system of planning, linking all the subjects, is being piloted this term. The aim is to plan more creatively, developing literacy, numeracy and ICT more widely across different subjects of the curriculum. The school provides for a daily act of collective worship, which is wholly or mainly Christian. It has implemented the locally agreed syllabus for the teaching of religious education. There is an appropriate personal, social and health education programme.
26. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils are achieving well. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that individual education plans reflect pupils' needs accurately. These plans are reviewed termly, but, at present, pupils do not attend with their parents and, consequently, some are unaware of their own targets. Learning support assistants are well trained and they interact effectively with the pupils. Appropriate resources have been purchased or modified as required and outside agencies are involved when necessary.
27. The school seeks to keep up to date with innovative practices, by capitalising on the school environment, the locality and the local community. The school grounds, including the playgrounds, school field and garden, have been developed well over the last five years to provide a living resource for a variety of activities, such as science trails, mathematics games, outdoor play and environmental studies.
28. There is a wide range of after-school activities that enrich the curriculum. These include football, country dancing, netball, chess and drama. There is a residential trip every two years for pupils in Years 5 and 6. All activities are well attended. A good range of visitors has included the local police, African musicians and storytellers. The school works closely with other local primary schools on dance and drama projects and multicultural music events.
29. The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers. Learning support assistants are deployed in every class to support pupils with special needs and to provide assistance to teachers. These class teams work very effectively.
30. The accommodation provides a well-organised and well-maintained environment. It is attractive and bright and pupils have enjoyed being involved in the planning and choice of décor. Each building has had considerable development over the past five years, and plans are in hand to improve the provision both inside and outdoors for the youngest children. Learning resources are good for all aspects of the curriculum, except for ICT, where unreliable computers and printers and insufficient software restrict opportunities to deliver a satisfactory curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for pupils' welfare, guidance and support is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The health and safety of pupils is supported well by regular risk assessments.
- Effective child protection procedures are in place.

- Tracking of pupils' progress works well in English and mathematics.
- Individual targets in English help pupils to improve their standards, but there are no formal targets for individuals in mathematics.
- Induction procedures are good.
- Pupils' views are valued and help to improve the school environment.

Commentary

31. The school makes very good provision for the health, safety, and personal welfare of all its pupils. All staff give appropriate emphasis to providing an establishment where pupils' personal development is a priority, supported by regular risk assessments. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection. A well-established personal, social and health education programme provides good support for pupils' personal development and the school nurse makes a valuable contribution to this programme.
32. Child protection procedures are good. The school has an agreed policy that is well known to the staff. The designated person (the headteacher) has good working relationships with all the relevant support agencies and a good knowledge of the respective procedures.
33. Procedures for checking pupils' progress work well. In English and mathematics, assessments of pupils' work are made regularly and are compared with National Curriculum levels. Pupils also take annual assessment tests. Teachers can therefore track pupils' progress effectively across the years. Termly assessments are used well to set individual targets for pupils in English, but there are no formal targets in mathematics. More detailed advice to pupils, however, on the specific skills needed to reach the next level of attainment would improve standards further.
34. A well established induction programme allows children in the privately run nursery to make pre-school visits to the reception class and allows them to feel confident in starting school. Older pupils are given good opportunities to guide them and their parents when choosing a suitable secondary school.
35. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are good. The headteacher tracks each pupil's performance in English and mathematics, and is fully aware of low levels of attainment or slow progress. Effective liaison with the private nursery on the school site ensures that appropriate support is in place from the earliest years.
36. The school welcomes pupils' views. These have been at the forefront of many recent improvements, most noticeably the multi-coloured railings and the playground markings. Older pupils share and discuss the views of other pupils at school council meetings.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The schools' partnerships with parents and the community are **good**. Links with other schools are **very effective**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents support pupils' learning well both at home and at school.
- The parent teacher association makes a valuable contribution to improving facilities.
- Information provided for parents is generally good, but pupils' annual reports lack important information on attainment and how pupils can improve their standards.
- Good community links and very effective links with other local primary schools help to enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

37. Links between home and school are good and this results in effective parental involvement in pupils' learning. Parents give vital support at home by listening to their children read and by overseeing homework. Parents support after school clubs and school visits, and a few parents help with classroom activities. Parents are invited into school to share in assemblies and school performances. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted regularly to ensure that the support provided for their children will help them to achieve their potential.
38. Parental support for the school is good. The active parent teacher association fulfils its aims by furthering the valuable links between home, school and the community. It organises a range of fundraising and social events for parents and pupils, and parents volunteer to improve the school fabric and the outdoor facilities, for example, by painting the railings. This enhances the school environment and encourages pupils' interest and involvement in learning.
39. The quality and the quantity of information provided for parents are good, overall, although pupils' annual reports do not compare their attainment to the standards expected nationally, and do not give specific targets for improvement. Clear communications between home and school include termly parents' evenings and regular newsletters. Prospective parents receive good information about class routines and this helps pupils to settle quickly into the school community.
40. The school takes an active part in the local community, including visits to the local church and taking part in local radio programmes. Good use is made of local sports facilities and a local swimming pool. The school's links with the cluster of seven local primary schools are very effective and include shared music and drama projects and training courses for staff.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The school is managed **satisfactorily**. The governance of the school is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has sound aspirations and a clear vision for the school, but some of the issues from the previous inspection have been addressed too slowly.
- Other senior staff share this vision, but the role of the subject co-ordinators has not yet been developed sufficiently, except in English, mathematics, science, ICT and design and technology.
- Strategic planning reflects the school's aims and values well.
- The governing body carries out its duties satisfactorily and is more effective than it was at the last inspection.

Commentary

41. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. He has clear priorities and realistic plans for the future. He is committed to meeting the needs of pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs. He has good relationships with parents and keeps them well informed of school events. He works closely with other teachers, but some of the issues from the previous inspection have been addressed too slowly. The school is moving forward steadily.
42. The school has good aims and values that are reflected in its work. It provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced, which motivates and interests and helps to develop each child's potential. The school aims to develop pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem, independence and

responsibility through the curriculum, and encourages each child to understand and respect

others. The school works in partnership with parents and the wider community, and promotes literacy as the key curriculum area. The school is successful in achieving its aims.

43. The management of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher works closely with the other teachers and has a clear overview of planning across the school. He monitors children's work informally when he teaches in class. He regularly observes teaching informally, and makes suggestions on how to raise pupils' attainment. In addition, more formal observations form part of the performance management programme that is operating successfully in the school. The headteacher has a good grasp of pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science. He analyses National Curriculum test results and optional test results to track pupils' progress from year to year and successfully identifies weaker areas of the curriculum needing attention.
44. Responsibility for curriculum areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators who develop schemes of work, co-ordinate teachers' planning and monitor pupils' work. This was an area identified for development at the previous inspection, but there has not been a full review of schemes of work in some subjects and co-ordinators, except in English, mathematics, science, ICT and design and technology, are still not being given sufficient opportunity to help their colleagues to raise standards. Developments have not moved quickly enough in these subjects since the last inspection, and there is still more to do that would help to improve standards further.
45. The special educational needs provision is managed well. Identification of pupils' needs and intervention strategies are appropriate. Good advice is given to teachers and support staff, who are well-informed about pupil's needs and how to address them. Liaison with outside agencies and secondary schools is effective. Pupils' individual education plans address their needs well and are updated regularly. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully to ensure they are achieving well.
46. The governors provide good support for the headteacher and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They have a satisfactory working knowledge of the school and a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept well informed by regular reports from the headteacher. Several governors, including the Chair, visit the school on a regular basis. All governors have responsibility for monitoring a specific aspect of the school improvement plan. This ensures that the governors are more actively involved and better informed than at the previous inspection. Governors debate standards, performance management and budget issues and help to determine the priorities facing the school. All governors have taken part in training sessions to improve their effectiveness.
47. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate targets and ensures that resources are directed towards raising pupils' attainment. The school makes good use of resources allocated to assist specific groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs. The governors' finance committee monitors the school's budget regularly and satisfactory financial controls are in place. The principles of best value are applied well. The school seeks competitive tenders for all major spending decisions to ensure it receives good value for money. It assesses its performance in comparison with other schools, sets challenging targets for each pupil and consults widely to gain the opinions of parents and children. Day-to-day administration is efficient and computers are used effectively for handling invoices and for keeping pupils' records.
48. Staff and governors share a firm commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning and the school has the capacity to succeed. Appropriate targets have been set for raising standards in English and mathematics in the national tests in 2004.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	294,000
Total expenditure	291,340
Expenditure per pupil	2,081

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	35,240
Balance carried forward to the next	37,900

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. The school makes good provision for young children. The quality of teaching for children of reception age is consistently good and the curriculum is well planned to help them learn effectively. Informative displays and good resources also help them to learn quickly. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
50. Most children attend the privately run nursery on the school site and join the school at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were twenty children of reception age on roll. For the first four weeks of the autumn term, all children join the school on a half-time basis. During the inspection, the older reception children were attending during the mornings while the younger pupils joined the afternoon sessions. The children were due to swap sessions for the following two weeks. Most parents agree that the children cope well with these part-time arrangements when they first start school, though some parents find the change from morning to afternoon sessions inconvenient because of their own work commitments. The school works closely with the privately run nursery, however, and children can attend the nursery for the other half of the day if necessary.
51. While the attainment of pupils in the small year groups varies widely from year to year and has fallen over the past few years, children's basic skills are better developed this year than in most previous years and the majority have a range of skills broadly typical for their age. Children of reception age join with five less mature Year 1 pupils in a mixed-age reception / Year 1 class. This arrangement works well for both age groups and all children make good progress. By the time they leave reception, most children will reach the levels expected in communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Their personal and social development is better than expected for their age.
52. The teacher and the learning support assistant have a good understanding of how young children learn. They plan and work together well, provide a good range of interesting activities and manage the children effectively. Children play happily together, co-operate sensibly and are well motivated. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good because the teacher's expectations are high, tasks are explained clearly, and work is matched well to the needs of individual children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children form good relationships with other pupils and with adults.
- They begin to select their own activities and use resources independently.

Commentary

53. The class teacher and learning support assistant are effective in helping children to develop good social skills. Children are happy to leave their parents and enter the classroom confidently in the mornings. They enjoy choosing from a good range of activities for the first quarter of an hour and then sit quietly with other pupils and listen attentively to the teacher. They quickly learn to put their hands up when answering questions and soon understand they must take turns when speaking or when sharing resources. They get changed for physical

education sensibly and put their own socks and shoes on afterwards. Children make good progress in developing social skills and their level of personal, social and emotional development is above what is normally expected for their age.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children listen carefully and respond sensibly to what they have heard.
- They speak clearly and audibly and show some awareness of their audience.
- They enjoy books and learn to read a range of common words and simple sentences.
- They identify the initial sounds in words and recognise the letters of the alphabet.
- By the end of the year, they write their own name and copy simple sentences.

Commentary

54. Communication, language and literacy skills are taught well. The teacher and learning support assistant take every opportunity to talk with the children in order to develop their confidence and widen their vocabulary. They ask many open-ended questions and encourage children to discuss what they are doing. In one lesson, for example, children explained clearly how they had cut out and assembled finger puppets. Children take part in role-play activities to stimulate their language development. During one lesson, two children played happily together in the *café*, preparing and serving 'meals'. Children who are more hesitant when speaking are given constant encouragement and good assistance to develop their speech and vocabulary. As a result, all children achieve well, and reach the goals expected in language development by the end of the reception year.
55. Children enjoy listening to stories, and are keen to look at books. On joining the school, they know how to handle books and turn the pages carefully. During one lesson, several children enjoyed sharing their books with the inspector. They concentrated well, looked carefully at the illustrations, and answered questions sensibly as they followed the story. During the reception year, children take reading books home regularly to share with their parents and other adults. They enjoy looking at large text books and listening to talking books and recorded stories. In one lesson, children developed their listening skills by hearing recorded nursery rhymes and identifying the correct rhyme by choosing an appropriate picture. They are taught the sounds and the names of letters, and can identify the initial sounds of words. By the end of the reception year, all pupils recognise a variety of simple words. Some use a range of strategies to identify unknown words and read simple stories confidently. Children achieve well, and most read as well as expected for their age.
56. Children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. At the beginning of the year, they develop their pencil control by drawing lines accurately and joining dot patterns. They learn to overwrite the letters of the alphabet and then copy them freehand. They are taught the sounds associated with each letter and are shown how to identify words with similar endings. During one lesson, for example, children identified rhyming words such as *five* and *drive*. By the end of the year, pupils copy sentences such as *There was a gigantic giant* in a legible script, and higher-attaining children write their own simple sentences. Most children achieve well and standards in writing are similar to those expected nationally.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children count reliably up to ten and identify numbers 'more than' and 'less than'.
- They solve practical problems by carrying out simple additions and subtractions.
- They recognise simple shapes and recreate simple patterns.

Commentary

57. Teaching of mathematical skills is good. The teacher makes it fun to use numbers and to explore shape and size. In one lesson, for example, the children pegged the numbers one to ten onto a 'washing line' in the correct order. The teacher then used a hand puppet to urge the children to count up to ten and back correctly. When the puppet made a 'mistake', the children were keen to correct it! In another lesson, as children sang *Hickory Dickory Dock*, the teacher made very good use of a 'mouse' climbing up a model of a grandfather clock to encourage the children to count up to five. By the end of reception, most children write numbers to 10 or beyond and add and subtract within five correctly. They recognise common two- and three-dimensional shapes and use coins to add together small sums of money. Higher-attaining pupils use numbers to 20 and add and subtract within ten correctly. The teacher and learning support assistant ensure that those who are more hesitant are fully involved and make good progress. Children achieve well, and by the end of the reception year, most children have mathematical skills in line with those expected for their age.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn well from practical activities and their own investigations.
- They have a good understanding of how living things grow.
- They make good use of computers to assist their learning.

Commentary

58. Teaching is good and involves many opportunities for children to learn about the world around them during practical investigations, outdoor activities and visits in the local area. In one lesson, some children discussed their favourite foods, while others mixed hot water and icing sugar to make sugar mice. Children observe the growth of a bean plant, discuss their own development and recognise the stages by which a baby becomes a toddler. Children investigate the properties of different materials, and describe their uses. They use the computer mouse to sequence six steps in the life cycle of a frog and learn to use the keyboard to type and print their own names. Children achieve well and their levels of knowledge and understanding are usually typical for their age by the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children move imaginatively and with confidence.
- They handle tools and small equipment safely and with increasing control.

Commentary

59. Good teaching ensures that there are many opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills and co-ordination by using pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. They pour water into containers, build models in the sand tray, assemble jigsaws and construction toys and use scissors correctly. Children take part in more energetic activities both indoors and out of doors. During a dance lesson, for instance, children moved around the school hall like a mouse, creeping quietly, twitching their head nervously and sniffing for danger in response to the music. The class teacher gave imaginative instructions such as “scratch your whiskers” and the learning support assistant gave good demonstrations of how to move like a mouse. Outside, children developed better co-ordination by balancing a beanbag on their head or shoulder, by bouncing and catching a ball, or by rolling a rubber ring. Children followed instructions well when asked to hop or skip during the warm-up, and ‘froze’ instantly when the whistle was blown. Children achieve well and their physical development is in line with that expected nationally.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use a good range of materials, colours, textures and forms in two and three dimensions.
- They recognise simple sound patterns and sing simple songs from memory.

Commentary

60. Good teaching helps children to make good progress in developing their creative skills. Children use a wide variety of paints, paper, card, fabrics and construction materials. They use egg boxes and pipe cleaners, for instance, when modelling spiders and create large mice with straw whiskers and painted bodies. They create a sparkling spider’s web by drawing a web pattern in glue and sticking glitter to it. In one lesson, children cut out felt finger puppets and learnt a variety of techniques (including glue, staples and sticky tape) to join the parts together. Children sing nursery rhymes and enjoy playing percussion instruments such as drums and tambourines. They listen to a range of music during whole-school assemblies, are beginning to join in the hymns and songs, and enjoy performing actions in time to the music. As a result, children achieve well and their artistic and musical skills develop in line with those normally expected by the end of the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** overall, with good teaching in reading and in some aspects of speaking and listening, and some weaknesses in writing.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching, overall, ensures that pupils generally achieve well.
- Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory overall, with some good aspects.
- Standards in reading are good amongst most younger and older pupils.
- Standards in writing are satisfactory overall.
- There is insufficient use of literacy to assist learning across the curriculum.
- Marking, assessment and target setting are used inconsistently to improve standards.

Commentary

61. Standards in **speaking and listening** are generally in line with national expectations.
62. Good teaching ensures that younger pupils are given varied play, partner work and teacher-led activities to develop their speaking and listening skills. In Year 1, for example, pupils were encouraged to talk to each other when designing a pattern to be developed on the computer. Pupils are frequently invited to talk openly in front of their classmates. This builds their confidence. Teachers often use drama activities such as role-play and *hot seating* with older pupils. In a good Year 4 lesson, for example, this helped pupils to speak appropriately to a larger audience. Last year, the oldest pupils wrote radio scripts and broadcast these on local radio. Their performances benefited from professional advice.
63. Standards in **reading** are usually above those expected nationally.
64. Reading is of great importance in this school and is taught well. Younger pupils choose readers from a variety of schemes. Shared reading activities led by the teacher support the development of skills and confidence, as seen in Year 2 when pupils shared and enjoyed a rhyming song and made up extra lines for the song, using and developing their phonic knowledge in the process. Many pupils are supported and encouraged in their reading by parents. As a result, they learn to read confidently and accurately.
65. Older pupils have the choice of a wide range of class and library books. They share challenging texts with their teacher. Guided reading develops good book skills, as seen in a lesson where pupils developed a clear understanding of how contents, sub-titles and indexes organise non-fiction texts. Most older readers are fluent, and talk animatedly about their favourite books, predicting the endings and evaluating their impact. Standards in the current Year 6, however, where over half the class have learning difficulties, are not as high as in previous years.
66. Pupils usually achieve standards in **writing** in line with national expectations.
67. Younger pupils develop writing skills effectively by copying their teacher's writing, though as phonic skills and pencil control improve, many begin to write alone. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils made books by copying rhyming words, while in Year 2, pupils wrote their own descriptive stories based on observations.
68. Pupils' writing has benefited from the focus on writing in the School Improvement Plan. Older pupils practise different styles of writing such as poetry, narrative and autobiography during English lessons, but do not develop these skills sufficiently in other subjects. In a well-taught

lesson in Year 6, for instance, pupils learnt about journalistic styles of writing, and wrote snappy headlines in response. Although pupils achieve well, standards are below the national average in the current Year 6 as many pupils have learning difficulties. In the scrutiny of pupils' books, some examples of stories, letters and play script writing were seen, though there was little evidence of the more extended writing that might be expected from the oldest or more able pupils. This limits their opportunity to develop a more fluent writing style. In addition, when marking work, pupils are not given sufficient guidance on how to improve their writing.

69. Evidence of sound teaching of **handwriting** was seen, beginning with correct letter formation. **Spelling** is taught effectively.
70. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. Assessment in English is in the process of development, and pupils' standards are tracked and recorded termly. Marking of pupils' work is not consistent or thorough enough. It does not guide pupils sufficiently towards improvement, or give clear indications of their current stage of development. Pupil's targets in English are not always shared; some pupils are unaware of their existence and are not benefiting from this advice on how to improve their standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. Pupils do not use their literacy skills enough in other subjects. There is little use of writing to support and develop the wider curriculum. In the scrutiny of pupils' work, most writing in other subjects by younger pupils was simply re-telling what had been taught in the lesson. Use of English to support other subjects is also under-developed with older pupils. They write in history, geography, religious education and science, but it is largely brief, and again often confined to re-telling and reporting. There is little use of different writing styles such as diaries, play scripts, autobiographies or newspaper reports in these subjects. Opportunities to develop writing skills and enrich other curriculum areas are being missed. The school has already recognised this and changes in planning will ensure the wider use of literacy skills across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching has a positive impact on pupils' achievements.
- A strong emphasis is placed on improving basic number skills.
- Insufficient attention is given to using and applying skills to problem solving activities.
- Marking does not inform pupils sufficiently how to improve their work.
- Insufficient use is made of mathematical skills in other subjects across the curriculum.

Commentary

72. Standards in mathematics are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve well. While pupils in the current Year 6 also achieve well, standards are below average because over half the class has learning difficulties. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, and are usually in line with, or above, the national average by the end of Year 6. Teachers are confident in using the National Numeracy Strategy. High emphasis has been placed on improving mental computation and fact retention, which has a positive impact on raising pupils' basic number skills. This year, the headteacher is giving valuable support to different groups to help improve their confidence and raise achievement. The school recognises the need to improve opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills and knowledge to problem solving activities, and has begun to organise activities such as those

seen in Years 4 and 5, where pupils were successfully solving word problems and writing their own number stories.

73. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and this ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by learning support assistants to ensure they achieve well. In most lessons learning is effective because pupils of all abilities are well motivated and challenged by high expectations of work. Good attitudes and behaviour are evident where pupils are encouraged to work individually or in groups. Pupils have very good relationships with their teachers and with other pupils and this has a positive impact on their achievement. The headteacher has co-ordinated the subject until recently and has monitored teaching successfully. He has made good use of assessment information to inform future planning. However, no individual or group targets have yet been set to help improve individual pupils' achievement. Written comments in the marking are rarely evaluative and insufficient information is given to pupils to help them improve their work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

74. Mathematical skills are not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning in most other subjects. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicated that very limited use had been made of ICT to promote mathematical skills such as data handling. However, the school has begun to address this issue by using computers more for mathematical games and producing bar graphs to support work in science and geography. Appropriate use is made of measuring skills in design and technology and of number lines in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils learn effectively though conducting many practical investigations.
- Subject leadership is good. This has a positive impact on standards.
- Some older pupils are not always involved sufficiently in deciding how to carry out their own investigations.
- A minority does not always record their predictions so they can test them afterwards.
- Marking does not indicate sufficiently how pupils can improve their work.
- There is not enough use of ICT to assist teaching and learning in science lessons.

Commentary

75. Standards in science are in line with the national average in Year 2 and pupils achieve well. Standards are usually in line with or above the national average by the end of Year 6. Although pupils in the current Year 6 achieve well, standards are below average. This is because over half the pupils have learning difficulties. Standards have improved, overall, since the previous inspection as pupils now have better investigative skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants and make good progress as a result.
76. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2, but a scrutiny of pupils' work showed that pupils conduct many practical investigations. They test the electrical conductivity of different materials, for example, and measure the temperatures of hot and cold liquids. They use the school grounds well to examine different trees and leaves, and use a computer program to study the life cycle of a butterfly.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, in Years 3 to 6. There is a good emphasis on pupils carrying out their own practical and investigative work and, as a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. In a good lesson in Years 4 and 5, for example, pupils investigated friction on different surfaces. They discussed what

evidence to collect and recorded their predictions of what might happen. They were careful to conduct a fair test as they dragged the same weights across vinyl, sandpaper, grass and tarmac in the playground, measuring the force accurately with a Newton meter. Afterwards, pupils compared their results with their predictions. Pupils concentrated well on this task, were well behaved and achieved well.

78. In another investigation, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 investigated different habitats in the school garden, the pond and on the school field. The teacher introduced the lesson thoroughly, but pupils were not encouraged to suggest how they might carry out the investigation. Pupils suggested what kind of animals they might find in each habitat, but did not write down their predictions so they could not test them later. Pupils worked sensibly and enthusiastically in pairs and small groups, but did not achieve as well as they might have done.
79. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. She manages the subject well by monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work. Pupils' progress is checked regularly and the information gained is used effectively to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but there are few comments informing pupils how to improve their standards. Resources for the subject are good, but there is insufficient use of ICT resources such as remote sensing equipment, computer programs or the Internet to assist teaching and pupils' work. The school grounds and the local area are used well for habitat studies and investigative work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national expectations by the end of Year 6 and statutory requirements are not all met.
- Older pupils underachieve due to inadequate resources, teachers' lack of confidence and subject knowledge, and insufficient time to practise their skills.
- The co-ordinators have produced a detailed three-year development plan to improve teachers' competence and expertise and to give more opportunities for pupils to practise their skills.
- They are given insufficient opportunities to work alongside colleagues.
- The scheme of work and assessment of pupils' skills are not developed sufficiently to support effective learning.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to assist teaching and learning across the curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics. The school is aware of this and is introducing positive steps to widen the use of ICT.

Commentary

80. Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations in Year 2 but are below expected levels in Year 6. Although the school has made considerable progress since the last inspection, including setting up two new computer areas and providing more opportunities for training, it has failed to keep up with the rapid pace of change and provision is unsatisfactory. The school does not have the full range of resources or sufficient staff expertise to teach all the elements of the ICT programme of study including adventure games and modelling, control technology and remote sensing. During the inspection, many computers and printers were unreliable, and this had a negative impact on pupils' learning. Many older pupils' experiences are too narrow and insufficient time has been given to using computers and developing appropriate skills. As a result some older pupils are underachieving. The co-ordinators are fully committed to improving provision for the subject and have produced a detailed three-year development plan in consultation with the local authority advisor to improve teachers' confidence and subject

knowledge and to give more opportunities to develop pupils' skills. However, they are given little opportunity to work alongside other colleagues in class.

81. Younger pupils are introduced to computers at an early age where they learn to use the keyboard and mouse confidently. They represent information graphically using pictograms to show their favourite foods and create pictures using a paint package. Although many pupils are slow when word processing, their achievement is satisfactory.
82. By Year 6, pupils have learnt how to combine graphics and text, but many pupils use only one finger on the keyboard and their work is slow. Pupils use different fonts, colours and effects confidently to make a cover page for a book about Romans, and search the Internet for historical information. During a residential trip to the Isle of Wight, some older pupils had the opportunity to use a control program to help a racing car to win a race.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and the school is now committed to more direct teaching to improve pupils' skills and achievement. However, the scheme of work has not been developed sufficiently to help teachers plan appropriate activities. In many lessons tasks are too prescriptive and many pupils, including higher-attaining ones, are not challenged sufficiently. This has an adverse effect on their achievement. There are no procedures for assessing pupils' skills and work is not well planned to match the needs of individual pupils in the mixed age classes. Pupils enjoy the computer club and benefit from learning and practising new skills.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. Pupils do not use their ICT skills enough. Younger pupils use computers to write sentences using appropriate punctuation, and play a rhyming game to support their literacy skills. In science, they find information about spiders and import pictures to show the stages in the growth of a bean. Older pupils send e-mails to their friends, but there is very little evidence of word processing skills being used to practise skills in literacy, geography and history. Opportunities are missed to use graphs and spreadsheets to present findings in mathematics and science. Some good use is made of the Internet to research information about World War II and the Romans in history, about flight in science and about the new Severn Bridge in geography. However, there are very few examples of ICT work on display or recorded in pupils' books. The school recognises that the use of ICT to assist teaching and learning is an area requiring more development, especially in English and mathematics, and it has already begun to identify more opportunities to use these skills in its planning.

HUMANITIES

Two lessons were seen in geography. No lessons were seen in history or religious education, but inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and teachers' planning.

Geography and History

Provision in geography and history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of resources and visits to support learning.
- Schemes of work need reviewing thoroughly to ensure continuity and progression in the teaching.
- Assessment is too informal and work is not well matched to individual pupils' needs.
- Marking does not help pupils to improve their work.
- Co-ordination of both subjects is underdeveloped.

Commentary

85. Standards in geography and history are in line with national expectations throughout the school and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Teaching is satisfactory and good use is made of visits and resources to support pupils' learning. However, the schemes of work need reviewing thoroughly to ensure continuity and progression in the teaching. Assessment procedures are too informal and, as a result, many activities are not well matched to the needs of different pupils in the mixed-age classes. In such instances some pupils are underachieving. Marking does not contain sufficient information to show pupils how they can improve and pupils are often not aware of their achievements. The co-ordinator's role is underdeveloped and she has few opportunities to assist colleagues.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils study Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam in line with the recommendations in the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus.
- A satisfactory amount of time is now allocated to religious education lessons.
- Writing is not used imaginatively to help develop pupils' literacy skills.

Commentary

86. No religious education lessons were observed during the inspection. It was not possible, therefore, to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. An examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work, however, confirmed that teaching and learning throughout the school cover the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on the last inspection when insufficient time was being spent on the subject.
87. Standards are in line with expectations in the local syllabus in all year groups, as at the time of the last inspection. Younger pupils study Christianity and Hinduism, while older pupils cover Christianity and two other major world faiths, usually Judaism and Islam. Pupils understand some of the main festivals and beliefs of these faiths at a level appropriate for their age, and explore similarities and differences between them. As a result, pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily. Concepts such as belonging to a loving family are well promoted in pupils' early years, together with comparisons between major festivals such as Christmas and Divali. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 compare the Christian harvest festival with the Jewish festival of Sukkot, while those in Years 5 and 6 look at the causes of famine in the world and the problems that accompany it. However, too many Bible stories are simply re-told by pupils as straight narrative accounts, instead of using a range of literary devices such as autobiography, diaries, newspaper reports and play scripts to help develop a wide range of writing styles.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One lesson was seen in each of art and design, music and physical education. Two lessons were seen in design and technology. Inspectors looked at portfolios and displays of pupils' work, and spoke to pupils about their work in art and design and in design and technology.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with those expected nationally.
- Pupils have many opportunities to use different media including paint, chalk, crayon and collage.
- Pupils enjoy studying the work of important artists.
- Imaginative and creative work is underdeveloped, however, especially among the oldest pupils.

Commentary

88. Many examples of sound individual and collaborative work were seen in classrooms and public areas. In the lesson seen, pupils mixed colours effectively when painting, and had satisfactory brush control. Observational pencil drawings of buildings by older pupils are carefully crafted, using line and tone effectively. Collage decorations of flowers are brightly-coloured, and pupils use different textures to advantage. Portraits executed in chalk show deft handling of a challenging medium.
89. Pupils study a variety of famous artists from different times and cultures. They responded well to discussing Rousseau's *Surprise* and produced an attractive collaborative work using similar techniques involving accurate colour mixing and technical skill. Much of the pupils' work is skilfully executed, though some drawings by older pupils are immature and rudimentary. The curriculum would benefit from further development of creative and imaginative work across the age groups.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities for younger pupils are challenging and fun.
- Those for older pupils are less challenging and more prescriptive.
- Good progress has been made on developing a suitable scheme of work.
- Suitable resources have been obtained.
- More guidance from the subject co-ordinator is needed to help teachers improve standards further.

Commentary

90. Standards, overall, are in line with national expectations, though they are better among the younger pupils. Younger pupils' achievement is good, while older pupils achieve in line with expectations. This is a good improvement on the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory.
91. Teaching has improved and is now satisfactory. Planning follows national guidance and organises lessons into practical investigations of artefacts, focused tasks and design-and-make activities. This use of the design process made it possible for all pupils in Year 1, for example, to design and make their own simple box vehicles with axles, with some advice and guidance from adults. In contrast, older pupils in Years 4 and 5 followed instructions to make pop-up lever mechanisms. Their activity was more prescriptive and lacked the necessary challenge. As a result their achievement was restricted.

92. Suitable resources, including tools and equipment, have been obtained, and are carefully labelled and easily accessible in a central store. There is an urgent need for the subject co-ordinator to complete the new scheme of work in order to give suitable guidance and to help teachers raise standards further.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils copy rhythmic patterns well and use symbols to record their own patterns.
- They listen to a variety of music as they enter and leave assemblies.
- The quality of singing is satisfactory, but pupils often sing too loudly, and there is little attempt to improve the tone or to vary the volume during hymn practices.

Commentary

93. Only one music lesson was observed during the inspection. In a well-taught lesson in Years 4 and 5, pupils achieved well when clapping out different rhythms and devised their own way of writing rhythmic patterns using a variety of symbols. They discussed ways of scoring loud and quiet sounds, and succeeded in performing with a good variety of dynamics.
94. An examination of teachers' planning confirmed that work throughout the school covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils develop musical skills in a logical order. Pupils in Year 1, for example, explore different sounds and recognise the contrast between high and low notes, while those in Years 2, 3 and 4 develop their singing skills and accompany songs with rhythmic patterns on percussion instruments. Older pupils listen to a variety of music, learn how special effects are created by using different *dynamics* and *tempos*, and use their voices and percussion instruments to compose their own music to accompany a Roman legend. There is insufficient evidence, however, to make judgements on the overall quality of teaching or the standards of pupils' work and achievement.
95. Pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to a range of music from different times and places. A variety of music is played as pupils enter and leave school assemblies and opportunities are sometimes taken to talk about the composer and the style of music. Pupils sing a wide selection of modern hymns and songs during times of collective worship. They sing with enthusiasm, but often sing too loudly and spoil the quality of the sound. They are keen to join in when invited to clap out the rhythm or to accompany the singing with actions. They sing *Shalom* as a two-part round and successfully maintain their separate parts. Pupils learn new words and tunes at a weekly hymn practice, but little attempt is made to improve the quality of the singing. Pupils with special educational needs join in confidently and enjoy their music making.
96. Pupils in the school choir enjoy practising for performances at Christmas and on other occasions. Last year, pupils joined other local schools in an African music workshop, with visiting drummers and dancers. Instrumental tuition is available in recorder, woodwind, brass, violin, keyboard and piano. The school has a satisfactory range of recorded music and percussion instruments. Little use, however, is made of computer resources to assist with musical composition or to research different composers and instruments.

Physical education

Provision in physical education (PE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils have access to a broad PE programme that varies in focus from term to term and is supplemented by after-school clubs.
- A sound range of skills is developed and practised during lessons, and pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and individually.
- Pupils' evaluation of their own work and of each others' work is underdeveloped.

Commentary

97. The programme for PE covers a broad range of activities including gymnastics, games, athletics, dance and swimming. Older pupils attend after-school clubs in football, netball, athletics and rounders. The school achieves successes in many areas including football, netball and multi-sports which includes volleyball, cricket, uni-hoc, tennis and athletics.
98. During the inspection, only one PE lesson was observed, with younger pupils. Standards were in line with those expected nationally. Pupils were beginning to develop skills of throwing and catching, and practised these during the lesson. They worked sensibly both individually and with a partner, learning to co-operate well. Pupils understand the effects of healthy exercise, and know that their heart beats faster as a result of vigorous exercise.
99. Teachers demonstrate suitable skills, but evaluation of pupils' own and other pupils' performance is under-used as a technique to improve physical skills. The school hall is used for gymnastics and indoor games, while the school field is a great asset for outdoor sports, and is well used by all classes. Resources are kept centrally and are easily accessible. A good range of large and small apparatus is available. Resources are appropriate.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a well-structured PSHE programme that includes plenty of opportunities for pupils to share informally during class discussion sessions.

Commentary

100. The personal, social and health education programme is appropriate for pupils of different ages. It is delivered during class discussion sessions by the class teachers and partly by the school nurse. Sex and relationships education is taught during Years 5 and 6, and parents have the right to withdraw their children from this, though none has done so. Each classroom has a display of sensible and sensitive school rules, to which pupil's attention is drawn. These encourage good social behaviour including politeness and respect for others.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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