

INSPECTION REPORT

MALMESBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Malmesbury

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126338

Headteacher: Mr Jeff Staton

Lead inspector: David Welsh

Dates of inspection: 23 - 26 February 2004

Inspection number: 256821

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Voluntary Controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 350 |
| School address: | Tetbury Hill Malmesbury Wiltshire |
| Postcode: | SN16 9JR |
| Telephone number: | 01666 823514 |
| Fax number: | 01666 823227 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Mike Langtree |
| Date of previous inspection: | 18 January 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Malmesbury School serves its local town and a number of families from outlying villages. It has rarely been oversubscribed in recent years but it is likely to be so in September 2004. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and reflects the high levels of employment in the area. The number of pupils who join the school part way through their education is lower than in most schools. With 350 pupils from Reception to Year 6, the school is larger than most others but it is smaller than it was at the time of the last inspection because of the fall in numbers of children who live locally. Attainment on entry is average overall although there is a very wide range of abilities within year groups. A significant proportion has weak speaking and listening and mathematical skills. Nearly all pupils are of white British origin. There are two pupils who are at the early stages of learning English, their home language being Bengali. Sixty-three pupils have special educational needs, a similar proportion to most schools. Two pupils have a statement and this is a lower proportion than most other schools. Pupils' needs include specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, autism and physical or behavioural difficulties.

Over the past three years, the school has been affected by considerable teacher mobility, mostly as a result of maternity leave and falling pupil numbers, and much time and consideration has been given to planning improved accommodation at the school.

The school has very recently been awarded the Activemark Gold. It is working in partnership with Bath Spa University on the Vibrant Schools Project and the Graduate Teacher Programme, and with Malmesbury Secondary School in a 'Developing Arts Partnership'. A large number of community organisations use the school for their activities. The school has a designated unit for children with special educational needs and currently there is one pupil attending.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--|
| 10992 | David Welsh | Lead inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education |
| 1311 | Barry Wood | Lay inspector | |
| 27738 | Christina Kadir | | Foundation Stage Music Personal, social and health education |
| 20534 | Nichola Perry | Team inspector | English English as an additional language French Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs |
| 18811 | Catherine Shirley | Team inspector | Science Geography History |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school which is very highly thought of by parents and pupils. Every possible care is taken to ensure that all pupils have access to a good quality education. Although standards overall are below average in Years 5 and 6, pupils throughout the school are now making good progress as a result of good teaching. Good leadership, management and governance ensure an ethos in which pupils are keen to learn. The school **gives satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In Years 5 and 6, standards in English and mathematics are below average
- Attainment in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education is above average
- The school has very recently been awarded the nationally recognised Activemark Gold
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- Pupils' personal development is very good
- The curriculum is very good, vibrant and enriched by many out-of school activities
- Accommodation, and resources for ICT, are unsatisfactory

The effectiveness of the school has improved well since the last inspection. Achievement is now higher in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology (DT), music and physical education than recorded at that time. The overall picture of teaching is now better.

The school has dealt well with the key issues of the last report. The school now has much better systems for assessment which teachers use well in their planning. Whilst accommodation, and resources for ICT, are still unsatisfactory, they have improved and pupils' welfare, health and safety are now good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

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

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.

Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6 because pupils do not attain high enough standards in English and mathematics. This is because from 2000 to 2002, there was a period of instability in staffing which adversely affected teaching and standards. The school is now much more settled and standards are rising. Achievement is satisfactory in all other year groups. The results in the table above show a decline in 2003 because there was a much larger than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs taking the tests. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are currently making at least satisfactory progress and in art and design, DT, music and physical education they achieve well.

In the National Curriculum tests in Year 2, the school's results in reading, writing and mathematics reflect a well-established upward trend that is higher than that of most schools. Current standards in Year 2 are average in English, mathematics and science.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with overall skills that are average although a sizeable number have weak speaking and listening skills and mathematical understanding. They achieve well, so that most children are likely to attain the early learning goals, the targets children are expected to reach by the end of reception. In their personal development, children are on course to exceed them. Several of the most capable children are on track to exceed the goals in all areas of learning except physical development.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They quickly learn to be sociable and form very good relationships with adults and with one another. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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

Teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons and help pupils by clearly explaining what they expect them to learn. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good and give pupils the confidence to participate fully in class discussions and to ask for help when needed. Teachers are effectively helped by teaching assistants to provide appropriate support for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.

The curriculum is very good with a wide range of extra-curricular activities which extend pupils' skills. Links with parents are very good, a number help with a wide variety of school-based activities, and the school welcomes regular involvement with the local community. Pupils are cared for well and offered very good support, advice and guidance.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school very well. They share a clear vision for its development and this is increasingly manifesting itself in the work of the school. The governors are very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses and they carry out their duties very well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very good opinions about the work of the school. The response to the questionnaires and the pre-inspection meeting reflect parents' confidence in the school. Pupils also speak highly of the school and enjoy what it offers them. They are confident of receiving help whenever they need it.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue the work to raise standards in English and mathematics
- Use all available means to continue to improve accommodation
- Provide sufficient computers for direct teaching and for pupils to be able to practise the skills they have already learnt

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in Years 1 to 4 is satisfactory. In Years 5 and 6 achievement is unsatisfactory because standards in English and mathematics are below those expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children at the Foundation Stage achieve well and start Year 1 ready for the National Curriculum
- Standards in ICT have improved since the previous inspection and are now average
- Standards in art and design, DT, music and physical education are above the levels expected
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress

Commentary

1. The school is most concerned to improve standards in all subjects, particularly in English and mathematics. It has introduced a range of appropriate strategies to raise pupils' achievement and these are currently having a greater effect in reception and Years 1 to 4 than in Years 5 and 6 because in these years there are gaps in pupils' previous learning.

Foundation Stage

Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage

| Standards in relation to the early learning goals by the end of reception in: | |
|--|---------------------|
| Personal, social and emotional development | Good |
| Communication, language and literacy | Satisfactory |
| Mathematical development | Satisfactory |
| Knowledge and understanding of the world | Good |
| Physical development | Satisfactory |
| Creative development | Good |

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

2. Children at the Foundation Stage make good progress to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. Progress in personal skills, literacy and mathematical development is particularly good.

Key Stage 1

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | [15.1] (15.6) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | [14.9] (15.1) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | [16.2] (16.6) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Pupils' results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests were average in reading at Level 2, the nationally expected standard for this age. The proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was below the norm. In writing, results were average at Level 2 and above average at the higher Level 3. Mathematics results were well below average at the expected Level 2 but above average at Level 3. Teacher assessments in science show average performance at both levels. These results were not quite so good as the year before due to a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special learning needs. Nevertheless, the slight dip in results did nothing to change the upward trend in the school's overall performance over the past five years at the end of Year 2.

Key Stage 2

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.2 (27.3) | 27.0 (27.0) |
| mathematics | 26.0 (27.4) | 27.0 (26.9) |
| science | 28.8 (28.3) | 28.8 (28.3) |

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Last year the results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 declined significantly due to an abnormally large number of pupils with special educational needs [22%] including seven pupils with statements. The proportion attaining Level 4 was below average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion attaining the higher Level 5 in mathematics was also below average but in English the proportion attaining Level 5 was average and in science, above average. Despite the dip in results the overall trend in the school's performance over the past five years was broadly in line with the national average. Statutory targets in English and mathematics have been met in the past two years. The school's tracking documents show that, based on their prior attainment, most pupils made at least satisfactory progress in these subjects, although they did slightly better in English than in mathematics.
- Current standards are similar to those shown in the National Curriculum tests. In Year 2, they are average in reading, writing and mathematics and in Year 6 they are below average in English, mathematics and average in science. The school has identified pupils' speaking and listening skills as being in need of improvement and, as a result of whole-school approaches in all subjects, there are signs of improvement. Presentation of work is very good but handwriting is not consistent through the school as yet. Pupils need more opportunity to write at length across subjects.
- Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with those expected. Despite the unsatisfactory accommodation and limited resources, pupils make satisfactory progress overall because teachers are confident in their knowledge and, through good teaching, ensure pupils understand how to complete the tasks. The high attaining pupils make even better progress because they are given opportunities to use the computers regularly outside lessons. However, the lower attaining pupils often do not have sufficient time on the computers to practise their skills and this results in below average attainment.
- Art and design has become a strength of the school and this represents significant improvement since the last inspection, as it was reported to be unsatisfactory at that time. Pupils have access to a wonderfully wide range of materials and processes which stimulate their minds. This has resulted in pupils completing very creative products in a range of media. Design and technology is being planned along similar lines to art and design, resulting in work of good quality.

8. Pupils achieve above average standards in music. They have a good musical knowledge and understanding because of the good teaching and the opportunities that arise from the broad curriculum, including learning individual instruments.
9. Standards in physical education are good. Pupils achieve well because adults have a good understanding of the subject and communicate clearly to pupils what is expected of them. Pupils have many opportunities to develop skills across a wide range of activities and this gives them the confidence to tackle new skills in a positive manner.
10. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in all age groups because they are well supported in their learning. They are offered a curriculum similar to that of other pupils, but the work they are set is appropriately modified. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide good support by helping them to concentrate fully on their work and contribute to discussions. There are two pupils learning English as an additional language and who are in the early stages of its acquisition. The youngest pupils are offered the right level of relevant support and so they make appropriate progress. Teachers with the help of other staff closely monitor their language development. The school does not have easy access to teachers with appropriate expertise to help the older pupils who only speak Bengali but it is making efforts to do so.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in the reception class make a very good start to their school lives and develop very good attitudes and behaviour
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the classroom improve to very good levels as they progress through the school
- Pupils' very good behaviour around the school makes an essential contribution to its smooth running and sense of purpose
- Pupils are very proud of their school and totally trust the headteacher and teaching staff
- Pupils build very good relationships with each other and they work and play together with confidence
- The school's very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is highly effective in shaping pupils' personal development
- Although pupils' attendance improves as they progress through the school, authorised absence is above national average levels

Commentary

11. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained attendance levels at above the national average in most years. It has managed to correct last year's dip in performance during the present year. This was caused by the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils. Pupils' attendance by Year 6 is good but the school's authorised absence is presently above the national average, due to high levels of absence in both reception classes.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data: | 6.0 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| 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.

12. Children in the reception classes respond very well to the empathetic staff and quickly show independence and enjoyment in having a go at the many activities. They understand the classroom routines and show increasing motivation. They are often fascinated by their learning, such as when employing all their senses to investigate the properties of fruit. Pupils develop very good attitudes and behaviour, so that their progress in achieving their early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development is good.
13. The school's slogan of 'let's make our best better' communicates to all pupils and they have a good understanding of the headteacher's and staff's requirements. Pupils aged six to seven, show good attitudes and behaviour and there are few incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils, aged seven to eleven, show consistent progress in their levels of confidence, enthusiasm and concentration, and develop very good attitudes and behaviour. By the age of eleven they are self-disciplined and mature beyond their years. They realise that hard work will bring them success, and they look forward to the challenge of their new secondary school. Pupils with special educational needs or challenging behaviour have little affect on the orderly learning in classrooms and in older classes are indistinguishable in attitudes and behaviour from other pupils. The school has not needed to exclude any pupils during the last year.
14. Around the school, pupils have very good behaviour and are polite to adults. They relax and play safely together without fear of bullying or harassment. They value each other's differences and contributions either in the classroom or in the many clubs and activities. They show obvious respect for their environment of which they are justifiably proud. Pupils are given meaningful responsibilities and the school's sharing assemblies show their inventiveness and enthusiasm when showing their personal work or engaging together in group activities, such as vibrant dance routines.
15. Pupils with special educational needs behave well because staff consistently have high expectations of behaviour from all pupils. Where any pupil occasionally displays inappropriate behaviour, teachers continue to insist on high standards of behaviour and remain calm and insistent throughout their negotiations with pupils. This results in improved behaviour patterns. Very occasionally, however, the time taken to deal with these pupils does have an effect on the learning of others.
16. The headteacher and staff use spiritual, moral, social and cultural education to strengthen pupils' learning of academic subjects. Good personal, health and social education in the classroom contribute to the very good provisions for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The school is strong in making pupils' aware of their feelings and creativity, and developing their curiosity and questioning skills. Collective worship helps pupils learn about and have respect for the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths, often through visitors to the school. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They are taught to share and to be fair with each other and to accept losing as well as winning. They are challenged by their teachers on moral issues, such as bullying and friendship. The school's ethos is very strong in valuing the individual and developing the pupils' confidence and self-esteem, but within the context of friendship and team work. Relationships are very supportive in the school, although those between lunchtime supervisors and pupils are not yet of quite the same quality as others. The school is an essential part of the local community and pupils take pride in their own cultural roots and traditions as well as appreciating art, sport, music and theatre. School displays are colourful and communicate thought provoking messages about pupils' own and other cultures. Africa week, India day and the learning of French in the upper school are examples of the opportunities pupils have to learn about the multicultural world.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good and the curriculum is very good. Pupils are very well looked after and they very much enjoy being at school. Strong partnerships have been established with parents and the local community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together and are good role models for pupils. Assessment procedures are increasingly used well to help teachers with future planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection
- Teachers make lessons interesting so that pupils are much involved and keen to learn
- Pupils are expected to behave very well
- Teaching assistants effectively help teachers in assessing pupils' performance and teaching small groups
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very good throughout the school and are significant in engendering trust and an ethos of learning
- There are some inconsistencies in the use of learning objectives and the involvement of pupils in assessing their learning

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 63 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 7 (11%) | 41 (65%) | 14 (22%) | 1 (2%) | 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.

17. The headteacher and leadership team are clearly aware that if standards are to be raised, the quality of teaching and learning has to be improved. A variety of strategies has been used to bring about improvement, including professional training for teachers, the use of targets through performance management, team planning, scrutiny of work and direct observation of teaching and learning with appropriate feedback to staff. In spite of the many staff changes over the past two years, the overall effect has been most effective, with nearly three-quarters of lessons observed during the inspection judged to be good or very good. This is a considerable improvement on the findings of the last inspection.
18. Teaching is consistently good at the Foundation Stage. Teachers have benefited from involvement in the Effective Early Learning project and have created an inspiring learning environment in which children make good progress towards the goals they are expected to achieve by the end of reception year. Teaching is consistently good in Year 1 and for the lower attaining pupils in Year 2. It is satisfactory for the remainder of Year 2 pupils. This is because in most lessons, there is a lack of pace and challenge seen in the good lessons, which causes some pupils to become restless. Also, on occasions, a few pupils still do not comply with regular routines, as they have not yet understood what is expected of them. This results in insufficient learning. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall. Teachers benefit from planning in teams across the mixed-age year groups where they can discuss effective strategies for learning. Subject expertise is shared with colleagues for the benefit of all pupils across the year groups.
19. Teachers endeavour to make learning interesting, relevant and fun so that pupils want to learn and to do their best. For example, pupils in Year 1 learnt about their addresses and how to

label an envelope so that it arrived at their home with an invitation for their parents to visit the school. They set about this task with enthusiasm. In association with this pupils entered onto a database how they travelled to school. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils spent the day dressed as Victorian children at a Victorian school and learnt from first-hand experience. This led to much work in other subjects, such as English, which the pupils found stimulating.

20. Learning intentions are generally shared with pupils at the beginning of each lesson under the term WALT (What are we learning today). This is a good strategy and one that works particularly well with the older children as they are able to understand the phrase. In the best lessons seen, teachers returned to these objectives at the end of the lesson to ask the pupils how well they had achieved the objective or whether they required further assistance. This strategy clearly puts pupils in the position of assessing their own learning and it also helps the teacher to know what more has to be done for all to achieve the objective.
21. Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and as a result, pupils are polite to adults and each other. They concentrate well in class discussions and in completing their tasks.
22. Pupils are well aware of class rules and most teachers deal rapidly and effectively with any transgression. Teachers allocate rewards and warnings with the minimum of fuss so that it does not interfere with the pace of the lesson. Pupils respond well to the behaviour code. They trust the adults in the school as a result of the very good relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils. This is a significant factor in the efforts pupils put into their learning.
23. Teachers' planning ensures that activities are matched to individual pupils' needs, which helps them to develop their basic skills. Teachers use questioning well to enable all pupils to participate fully in lessons and make appropriate progress. All adults work well together and they are very good role models for the pupils. Teaching assistants effectively support the work of teachers and help pupils in a variety of ways. They regularly make detailed assessments of individuals, which helps to build a profile of strengths, weaknesses and improvement for consideration when planning future lessons or reviewing targets and individual education plans. This is of particular help when pupils have special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teaching assistants also work well with small groups of pupils, helping them to understand their task and how to complete it.
24. The school's assessment arrangements for pupils, including those with special educational needs, are good, and pupils' individual progress is carefully tracked. This means that pupils' individual education plan targets are closely matched to their specific needs. Although teachers are clear about what general skills pupils with special educational needs require to benefit from lessons, this is not always evident in their planning.

The curriculum

The provision for the curriculum is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Coverage, breadth and balance are very well planned and incorporate spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision and skills development
- Provision includes a wide range of innovative activities and approaches which engage pupils and make learning exciting for all abilities
- Whilst improvements to the building have helped, accommodation is still unsatisfactory overall and the provision of computers is still insufficient to teach the subject well
- Extra-curricular provision is very good and includes a broad range of activities and opportunities in sports, arts and ICT

Commentary

25. The curriculum is a strength of the school. All aspects of the National Curriculum are well planned, with a very good balance within and between subjects. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning is a direct result of the creative approach taken by staff, who aim to provide a curriculum that matches the needs of all pupils. Rather than simply presenting factual information in the classroom, teachers arrange for visitors and plan educational trips, which pupils find exciting, as it brings the subject to life for them. This approach is an example of the systematic and rigorous evaluation of the school's curriculum. This has also led to subjects being linked in a meaningful way.
26. The school is currently participating in the 'Vibrant Schools Programme', the aim of which is to provide a wide range of innovative activities and approaches that engage pupils and make learning exciting for all abilities. There is a sense of constantly seeking new ways of enthusing pupils and putting key points across to them. Skills development is central to the curricular provision across all subjects, though it is more firmly embedded in some subjects than in others. The aim of these opportunities is to improve pupils' understanding of the subject, but it also supports the school's commitment to encourage pupils to work independently. The multi-media presentation by one pupil, who chose this method to present her homework, was celebrated in a whole school assembly and is one example of this independence.
27. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are used well across the curriculum to support learning in other subjects. The range of opportunities to enhance speaking and listening in particular is good. The few older pupils for whom English is an additional language are less well provided for, as they do not have access to someone who could assess their progress or encourage them to write in their first language. The curriculum provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and successfully underpins pupils' personal development.
28. Teachers draw on the advice and support from many sources to improve the quality of the curriculum provision. Exchange visits have been welcomed from Japan and America and links with South Africa and Zambia are planned to make use of email and teachers' direct experience. Residential trips enhance the pupils' personal development and help them to experience living and working in close proximity to each other.
29. Through both lessons and activities outside the school day, pupils are given opportunities to take curriculum decisions and learn how to interact in a range of situations. The range of extra-curricular activities is broad, providing opportunities in sports, performing arts, art and design and ICT. These enrich the curriculum and support pupils with particular talents or strengths. Informal lunchtime clubs provide opportunities for pupils to relax and be occupied with constructive activities. The school council is a vehicle for pupils to participate in taking decisions and develop an understanding of citizenship.
30. Staff expertise is used well in a range of ways to enhance the curriculum; for example, to teach subjects, run after school clubs and display pupils' work imaginatively. There have been significant improvements in art and design and ICT since the last inspection. However, the site has weaknesses, which affect the curriculum. Old mobile classrooms have recently been replaced but the amount of time needed to move pupils around the site in all weathers would be better spent on lessons. Though standards and provision in ICT have improved, the quantity of hardware is still too low and the ICT suites are too small to accommodate a class. The children in the Foundation Stage do not yet have ready access to the learning space outside the classroom. The school hall is too small for a full class of the oldest pupils, the playing field is badly drained and there are insufficient hard surfaces for the whole school to use at playtimes. These all have a detrimental effect on pupils' achievement.
31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All pupils are fully included in lessons and their contributions are valued by class teachers. The school works effectively with a wide range of external agencies, including visiting specialists who support pupils with special educational needs. The school meets the needs of pupils with more complex

difficulties very well but sometimes in lessons, this is detrimental to the needs of all other pupils and staff.

Care, guidance and support

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and staff are very vigilant in protecting pupils from dangers inside and outside the school, so that they feel secure
- The headteacher and staff give a high priority to the pastoral care of their pupils, in order that they can do their best
- Although the tracking of pupils' personal development is informal, the headteacher and staff have a very good knowledge of their pupils
- The school receives good support from outside professional agencies
- Pupils are quickly made to feel welcome as part of the school family
- The school makes very determined efforts to listen to pupils and take into account their views in its development

Commentary

32. The school has improved all aspects of support, guidance and welfare since the last inspection and the key issues for action concerning child protection and health and safety have been addressed well. Policies and procedures are rigorously defined and thoroughly implemented by diligent and caring staff. The headteacher promotes a strong sense of caring to enable pupils to achieve their full potential. He is skilled in negotiating additional resources for use in the school for the benefit of pupils and especially those with specific needs. The school is welcoming to external professional agencies and therefore receives good and well-focused support.
33. Child protection procedures conform to Wiltshire guidelines. Staff training is up to date and the school is very vigilant in monitoring risks to children. The school undertakes regular audits of the school premises and risk assessments for the many outside activities are in place. The school is a safe place as indicated by the low minor accident rate, which is associated mainly with pupils when playing in the lower school playground.
34. Pupils experience the school's culture of high expectations through the very good behaviour procedures. These are positive and high on praise; self-discipline is an expectation. Staff act as very good role models and their positive impact on all pupils is evident as pupils progress through the school. The school successfully combats any threatening behaviour and pupils feel safe. Pupils with behavioural problems are helped by the school nurse's regular stress management lessons which have a significant calming effect and raise their self-esteem.
35. The headteacher and staff give the highest priority to the pastoral care of all pupils. Pupils feel totally secure that they can trust their teachers and other adults to listen with a sympathetic ear to their problems and anxieties. Many pupils talk easily about their enjoyment and happiness in coming to the school and the fun of learning in a safe environment where they have good friends.
36. Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for throughout the school. They are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and are able to discuss any concerns they may have with teachers, support staff or lunchtime supervisors. Teachers identify pupils with special educational needs and they develop good individual educational plans with pupils and parents. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The tracking of pupils' personal development is mostly informal, but pupils with problems are soon identified and there is good feedback and discussion of issues between the teachers and the headteacher at internal staff meetings, where strategies are structured to the individual pupil.

37. The induction of pupils new to the school is very good, including those who are learning English as an additional language. Children and parents in the reception class are quickly integrated into the school family and children make an enthusiastic start to their school lives. Parents are very appreciative of the school's efforts to give them high quality advice on helping their children and in giving their child a successful start.
38. Older pupils are well aware of their individual academic targets which they feel can influence their performance. However, pupils would benefit from agreeing individual non-academic targets with their teachers for personal development. The school has a very good record in consulting with pupils on wider school issues that affect them. Pupils willingly participate in the school council and review and implement projects to improve their well-being such as the organisation of the dining room and games. In the reception class, children have been consulted on their likes and dislikes and this has influenced the agenda of activities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents are very pleased with the school and the education it provides. The partnership between the school and home is very good. The school's links with the community are very good. The school's links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a very good level of respect and admiration for the integrity of the headteacher and staff and their vision for their children's education
- The very good partnership with parents makes a highly effective contribution to their children's learning and happiness at school
- The headteacher and staff work very hard to be approachable to all parents and take their views into account in the school's development
- The school provides parents with very good information on all aspects of the education of their children
- The school has good relationship with other primary and secondary schools

Commentary

39. The headteacher gives a high priority to the school's relationships with parents. Currently, there is a big increase in parents' overall satisfaction with the school. They show large increases in confidence in all aspects of the school, especially behaviour, information, homework and standards of work. There are no areas of significant dissatisfaction although homework causes concern to a minority of parents. However, the inspection team judged this as satisfactory. The headteacher endeavours to be approachable to parents; for example, by being available in the playground when parents arrive and leave the school. In this way he is able to allay their concerns and these have now reduced to minimal levels. Parents feel that the school respects and values their role and many at the school gate expressed the opinion, "I'm delighted with the school."
40. The statutory information for parents is very good and is informative and interesting. Annual reports to parents are comprehensive statements of what children can do in all National Curriculum subjects and contain academic targets for the following year. These reports are supplemented by pupils' own written reviews of their year at school. Parents also receive written reports in the other two terms setting out how well pupils are attaining and the effort they are making. Parents feel comfortable with the opportunities they have for engaging with school and recognise the feedback and descriptions of their children and their achievements. The school has established very effective links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. The views of both parents and their children are actively sought through regular meetings with teachers and staff so that parents are kept fully informed about the progress their children are making. Parents enjoy an informative weekly newsletter and letters

to home are timely and respectful of the demands on parents' time. The termly edition of the *Malmesbury Primary Times* is lively in its portrayal of the school's activities.

41. Although there is no parents' policy, parents have signed the home-school agreement and fulfil their pledge through their children's attendance and assisting them with homework. The school has been proactive with parents in discussing how they might help their children and explaining new education strategies and initiatives. Parents make very significant contributions to the school's development through annual questionnaires. Many parents are energetic in helping the school and attending the many school functions. The Malmesbury Primary School Association is energetic in involving parents and fundraising.
42. The school enjoys very good relationships with the local community and pupils benefit greatly from the close ties, which give them many additional activities. Relationships with Malmesbury Abbey are close and the church is filled to overflowing with pupils and parents at the major Christian festivals. The vicar makes regular visits for assemblies and to be part of school life. The church, the medieval town's buildings and the adjacent countryside are important resources for the practical teaching of some subjects of the National Curriculum. People from the local community are welcomed into the school to support the spiritual and cultural agenda and the school is well used by local organisations. Local businesses have been very generous in their support of the school and the parents association; for example, pupils have been assisted by a team of local engineers in designing and building a 'Mission to Mars Project.'
43. The school has good links with local primary schools, the secondary school and higher education institutions. It holds joint training days for staff. The secondary school helps with sports activities and senior pupils attend for work experience. Parents receive knowledgeable and informative advice as the time for transfer to secondary school approaches. The school's positive efforts and the pupils' natural confidence enable them to feel excitingly challenged by the transition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher and deputy head's leadership and shared vision for the school are very good. The management systems are good and play a major part in the school's success. The governors provide very good support and hold the school to account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and deputy head share a clear vision for the school and its development
- All staff share this vision for the future, leading to very good consistency in planning and teaching and learning
- Standards are now rising and this is due to effective strategies for recruitment and retention of staff and implementation of very good initiatives
- The reflective and flexible management through detailed planning has modified the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils and a changing intake

Commentary

44. The leadership and vision of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are very good and these have been the major factors in raising standards in the school since their appointment in September 2000. The key senior managers in the school share this vision and through very effective teamwork ensure high quality teaching and learning. The very good management overall inspires a sense of commitment, and purposefulness, to provide the best and most appropriate education for all pupils. The detailed monitoring of pupils ensures that those from different backgrounds, including those from ethnic groups are generally well provided for and the school has an effective race equality policy.

45. The governing body is very effective in ensuring that statutory duties are fulfilled and in supporting the headteacher and his staff in a critical but supportive manner. It has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Best value principles support and influence all management activities and decision-making. Most of the governors have immediate experience of the school through being parents of pupils and former pupils.
46. The headteacher has a clear holistic vision of pupils' education. As a means to this end, high priority is placed on learning through a vibrant and creative curriculum. This is matched with a commitment to expect high standards from all pupils in all subjects. Through this practical provision there is a very high commitment to providing equal access to the curriculum for all its pupils. The headteacher leads by example and inspires this confidence in all staff in the school. He is committed to detailed curriculum planning that will ensure statutory curriculum requirements have been met whilst at the same time he encourages teachers to be innovative. Teachers and pupils respond with enthusiasm. Both teaching and support staff form effective teams, which involve and inspire pupils in their learning.
47. There is a common approach to the co-ordination of subjects. This helps in the consistent development of the very strong practical and flexible curriculum organisation. This also ensures the very effective management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, and indeed all pupils regardless of background. The co-ordinator liaises effectively with staff to ensure that pupils receive appropriate levels of support so that they can make progress in their learning.
48. With the exception of design and technology, where leadership is satisfactory, the leadership of subject co-ordinators is good overall. Teachers are enthusiastic about their area of responsibility and some are very knowledgeable. Co-ordinators have an overview of whole-school strengths and areas for development and they all have individual subject action plans that include systematic monitoring and evaluation of their subject areas.
49. Staff have a reflective approach to their work. They constantly review and change their practices to benefit the needs of pupils. This very effective continuous review ensures that teaching and learning is interesting, relevant and engages all the pupils. Through very good performance management procedures, professional development and very good induction of staff new to the school the headteacher ensures that standards and a common approach to teaching and learning is maintained. Effective guidelines are set to enable teachers to manage their workload.
50. It is the high quality and holistic philosophy of leadership which has attracted and retained high quality staff to this school. Staff enjoy working at the school because they share the vision of the headteacher. A period of staff turbulence over the period 2000 to 2002 adversely affected school development and standards. The school is now much more settled and standards are rising.
51. The financial management of the school is good. Although the balance carried forward in the table below is small, full consideration has been given to all the factors. The balance is planned to be greater at the end of the next financial year. The governors regularly monitor spending patterns after first establishing the budget. The bursar is well trained and supported in the use of data systems. Good care is taken when ordering to ensure best value.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 79,5540 | Balance from previous year | 14,144 |
| Total expenditure | 803,747 | Balance carried forward to the next | 5,937 |

| | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,178 |
|-----------------------|-------|

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage are good and have improved since the last inspection, reflecting the good leadership and management. The Early Years co-ordinator and her staff team have created an inspiring learning environment based on effective Early Learning principles. The new procedures adopted to monitor progress are effective; in many activities the teachers and assistants can be seen closely monitoring children's individual achievement and progress. Children with special educational needs are well provided for and fully integrated into all activities; they achieve well and make good progress. Indeed all children, regardless of background and including those with English as an additional language are given good opportunities to succeed.

All six aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum are fully implemented and there has been good development since the previous inspection. Standards on entry are in line with expectations for their age for approximately three-quarters of the intake and, for one quarter of children, standards are below average. A significant proportion of children has weak speaking and listening skills and mathematical understanding and are quite immature when they start in reception. Despite having attended various pre-school settings, in many instances, children are not well prepared for school and have much ground left to cover. The quality of teaching is good overall in all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum because the teachers have good subject knowledge, are well organised, plan efficiently and use time, resources and assistants effectively.

The accommodation inside is satisfactory although access to the toilets is somewhat problematic. Outside facilities still need further development because current arrangements do not allow for the children to have continuous access to the separate secure outside area and resources for outdoor activities are also limited. The school has planned for building works to create a new door to the outside during the Easter holiday.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and the high expectations set by staff enable all children to achieve well
- The inspiring learning environment and very good organisation of the classrooms enable children to play and learn together independently and with adult support
- The very good range of activities helps children to develop their independence and good attitudes to learning. They are given very good opportunities to collaborate with each other and develop maturity when working and playing together
- Most children quickly become confident, are happy at school and will speak out in discussion time
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's development

Commentary

52. Children achieve well and most mature quickly in reception. The teachers and their assistants have established a harmonious working environment and through good teaching ensure that all children are valued, comfortable and confident in class. The majority of children are in line to achieve the expectations for their age, with some exceeding these. A small number of children need additional support and encouragement and this is made readily available to them.
53. Teachers have established an environment of high expectations for behaviour and learning and children are helped to live up to those expectations by well-established routines and

appropriate resources that encourage independence. For example, the activity walls in each class encourage children to choose from a range of activities such as playing in the 'rainforest swamp or pool' or to play the 'cheeky monkey' number game. Children are involved in planning the activities at the beginning of a topic and raise their own questions for investigation; these are displayed on the classroom wall to enable teachers and children to evaluate learning progress over the whole range of activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communication and literacy are well taught and resources are used effectively
- Lessons are well planned with simple and clear objectives that children understand
- Much attention is paid to developing literacy skills and there is constant interaction between staff and children, making the most of all available learning time
- Most children speak and listen well

Commentary

54. The majority of children are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. Good teaching has enabled all children to achieve well. Teachers have made a concentrated effort to raise standards in this aspect of learning. Lesson planning and preparation show much imagination with all lessons following a central theme. During the inspection it was 'The Rainforest'. Visitors from Bristol Zoo aroused the children's interest by bringing snakes, giant cockroaches and stick insects for the children to handle. Good questioning by teachers and their assistants helps to develop children's vocabulary and understanding. For example, children in the role-play area explained that this was their rainforest and they were explorers looking for rainforest creatures underneath the kapok tree.
55. The recently introduced 'Jolly Phonics' programme has already made a good impact on children's reading, spelling and writing ability. The tightly structured programme, based on visual, auditory and kinaesthetic strategies enhances children's learning potential and develops their confidence. Children can be seen and heard applying the strategies during free reading and writing activities as well as guided sessions with staff.
56. Very good relationships mean that children have the confidence to talk and all adults are genuinely interested in what the children have to say. Already children are making good progress as a result of the many opportunities they are given to talk and listen. The staff take every opportunity to develop the children's vocabulary through probing questioning, which challenges children to explain their answers. For example, during circle time, when the teacher supported by 'Rosie' the puppet dog reinforced the jointly constructed golden rules, children were able to explain what they needed to do, when they stated 'we need to listen carefully'.
57. Children enjoy books and listen attentively when a story is read to them. For example, when the teacher read the story of the 'Mixed up Chameleon' children shared in the reading with expression and excitement. Children take books home regularly to share with parents and there are many opportunities during each day when children can look at books. Most of them appreciate that text is read from left to right. They recognise the difference between print and pictures and some are already reading familiar words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of activities to support learning
- Opportunity for mathematical development is well planned and put into contexts that children can understand and relate to
- Assessment for learning is very effective

Commentary

58. Teaching and learning are good, which results in children achieving well. Children have the opportunity to experience learning in mathematics through well-planned and interesting activities. Most children are working at levels expected for their age and a small number are achieving beyond that.
59. Songs, rhyme and other visual, listening and action strategies are used effectively to support children's learning in mathematics. More able children can count their frogs in 10s, can put the correct bundles of tens to make one hundred and order 101 into the correct place value pots. They even record that number on their whiteboards. The majority of children can count, recognise numerals and order them correctly. They are able to copy and repeat a pattern and can even create their own repeat patterns. Using the leapfrog addition game, pairs of children can add two groups of numbers, write their number sentences and explain what they are doing. The majority of children are able to order monkeys with the numerals 1 to 20 and know when and where numbers are missing. Children use mathematical language correctly and with confidence during activities, referring to long, short, longer and shorter snakes, light and heavy fruit, fat and thin, big and small creatures. All children including those with special needs and the more able, achieve well in mathematics because teaching and assessment strategies are effective. Good questioning encourages children to think through the answers, enabling them to make their strategies explicit.
60. During all sessions children work with sustained concentration and the majority are on course for meeting the expected standards by the end of the reception year. A few will attain higher standards.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's natural curiosity is fired through exposure to exciting, first-hand experiences
- Good teaching fosters new understanding and achievement
- Sensitive questioning encourages creative and deep thinking

Commentary

61. This area of learning is a real strength. Nearly all children are expected to achieve the desired level and about a quarter of the children are on course to exceed the early learning goals. All adults have a good understanding of what inspires young children and how to channel their natural enthusiasm into reliable learning. Activities are well planned to be stimulating and fun. Staff make excellent use of internal and external resources and seize opportunities, such as the visiting exhibits from Bristol Zoo. Sensitive questioning challenges children to express their ideas coherently, such as the focused group work on exploring fruit from hot climates, where children were able to explain how they used their senses to look, handle and smell. Children

were asked to predict what they might find inside the fruit and then explore the cut fruit comparing prediction with outcome. Children who selected the computer from the activity wall could be seen to control the mouse with considerable skill to draw short, long and patterned snakes, making mixed up rain forest creatures and naming the animals that represented the different body parts of their creature. Working the 'Roamer Pixie' they explained and demonstrated with considerable accuracy how they would program it to move in a predicted direction including left or right turns.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make the most of the limited accommodation outside
- Currently there is no continuous access to an outside play area
- When outside sessions take place there is a lack of focus and no rigorous planning for these sessions

Commentary

62. No hall sessions were observed during the inspection, so no judgements can be made about teaching. Planning and discussion with staff and children indicate that focused dance and drama sessions do take place. Children were observed in the outdoor area and indications are that children are on line to meet the expected goals by the end of the year. Achievement is only satisfactory because children have limited opportunities for outdoor play. The outside area is small and sloped, so it is difficult to organise activities with balls. Wheeled toys can only be ridden with great care and vigilant supervision. Outdoor play lacked focus and was really a session for children to let off steam. Currently only the teaching assistants are timetabled to supervise outdoor activities and planning in terms of learning outcomes is not specific enough. Children develop their manipulative skills well by handling dough, scissors and brushes and manipulate small construction equipment with dexterity. Children handle pencils with confidence and shape their letters correctly during 'Jolly Phonics' sessions and also when choosing to write independently.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching provides children with a wide range of stimulating activities
- Children's creativity is encouraged through praise and probing questioning
- Excellent opportunities for role-play are available at all times

Commentary

63. Most children are expected to achieve the expected standards for their age with a considerable proportion of them achieving above average standards. Children achieve well because they receive good teaching in creative skills and are given many rich opportunities to develop their personal creativity. For example, several groups of children printed their own jungle tee-shirts and made African masks to be used for their jungle dances. Children learnt African drumming, composed their own talking jungle drum patterns and chanted animal names. The learning environment of each class, the outside corridor and the reception art and design portfolio provided a wealth of evidence of children's growing competency in different techniques, their ability to observe closely and to express themselves creatively with confidence.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are still not sufficiently high in Years 5 and 6
- The curriculum, including the wider English curriculum, is very good
- Leadership and management of English are good and the managers and staff are working very hard to bring about improvement
- Assessment and pupil tracking systems are now good but have not had time to impact sufficiently on achievement
- Pupils behave well and demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning

Commentary

64. Although standards are still below average in Years 5 and 6, this does not reflect the very significant effort the school is making to bring about improvement. Subject leaders have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and are fully aware that standards are not high enough. They have correctly prioritised areas of weakness and put in place a range of strategies to bring about change. Effective leadership understands that this cannot bring about change quickly. The school has found it difficult to raise standards significantly due to varying whole class SEN profiles and individual pupil differences which have a definite impact on achievement overall. Nevertheless there is very clear evidence of improvement where strategies have been established. Younger pupils show increased understanding and use of phonics (letter sounds) in their reading and writing because these are now being taught systematically. The same programme is now being used in Years 3 and 4 to fill gaps in pupils' learning. This is also having a positive impact which can be seen, albeit to a lesser extent, in lessons and in pupils' work. There is good evidence of improvements in Years 5 and 6 as a result of teachers being able to focus fully on appropriate literacy objectives through the establishment of ability sets. Teachers' individual strengths and skills are being used very effectively in these lessons so that pupils of all abilities have access to good and very good teaching.
65. Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to their learning. They respond very well to the curriculum which is stimulating and particularly well enriched through effective links with other subjects. This is developing their basic literacy skills and contributing to raising pupils' achievement. Pupils experience excellent planned opportunities for collaborative and paired working in almost all lessons so that there has been a significant improvement in speaking and listening skills. Opportunities for talking to 'chat partners' or 'hot seating' (where pupils take the part of a character and answer questions from the rest of the class) have developed pupils' confidence in speaking very well so that more able pupils are now using language effectively to communicate ideas and feelings. Lower attaining pupils still lack both the vocabulary to speak clearly and confidently. This also applies to reading. Higher attaining pupils read very well using expression and tone effectively to bring meaning to their reading. Many other pupils, particularly those in Years 3 to 6, are still at basic levels and are not using phonics (letter sounds) and other strategies to help themselves with their reading. This is because they have not been taught the correct strategies consistently in the past.
66. Assessment and pupil tracking procedures are now good but these have not yet had sufficient time to have the desired effect by helping staff to identify pupils who are not making sufficient progress in their learning. The recent introduction of reading and writing targets is already having a positive impact on pupils' achievement with clear evidence of some pupils making very good progress. These also contribute well to helping pupils understand how they can improve so that they are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning.

67. Standards of presentation are high and teachers' marking is developing into a supportive, evaluative style which is helping pupils to understand more about what they can do to improve. Pupils of all ages and abilities do not have sufficient confidence to write at length and teachers' expectations of what pupils will produce within a timescale are too low. Whilst there is a need to develop quality in short pieces there remains an urgent need for pupils to practise writing longer pieces so that they are fully aware of the need and able to write at length when it is required. Handwriting is not yet showing a consistently neat and cursive style across the school because teachers are not consistently modelling the agreed style in all lessons. This also affects the standards pupils achieve and the school has identified this as an area for further development. Planning and teaching styles are varied and well focused so that planned activities are appropriately matched to meet individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as additional language are well supported so that they achieve in line with their abilities. There were no significant differences in achievement between girls and boys observed in lessons.
68. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection in spite of limited improvement in end of Year 6 test results.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

69. There is very effective use of English in other subjects such as art and design, design and technology, history, science and geography which are developing pupils' basic literacy skills. However, pupils' writing is not yet being sufficiently well developed as part of a planned, whole-school approach. ICT is well used for word processing and research purposes.

French

70. The school is providing a good opportunity for pupils in Year 5 and 6 to learn basic French. The teaching assistant is a French graduate and is well placed to teach these groups. Her teaching style follows that used by the school so that pupils are very clear about expectations. She is supported ably by another teaching assistant and they work very effectively together. There is effective liaison with the feeder secondary schools so that pupils are being well prepared for their next stage of learning.
71. In the one lesson seen, planning was good and resources supported learning well. Good links were made with speaking and listening and basic literacy and numeracy. Although it was only their second lesson in French, pupils showed good understanding of numerals up to ten, colours and basic classroom instructions. They are making appropriate progress in their learning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection relating to standards
- Teaching and learning are good overall
- There has been good progress in the development of the subject across the school as a result of good leadership and management
- Procedures for assessing pupils' learning are developing well but are not yet implemented consistently through the school
- Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently stretched

Commentary

72. By Year 2, standards are similar to the national average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, there is a wide range of ability. Nearly all pupils can count to 100 but there are a few who find difficulty in counting back. The higher attainers can count in fours, fives and tens and readily recognise number patterns but a small group of lower attainers are not secure with counting on and back in fives, especially if asked to start at a number other than zero.
73. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below the levels expected because the strategies adopted by the school to raise achievement have not had time to make sufficient impact in Years 5 and 6. Gaps in pupils' learning, which emanate from the past, cannot be overcome in short periods of time. However, there is a group of higher attainers who are achieving standards above those expected. For example, they are able to calculate the area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes and to measure angles accurately. There is also a significant number of pupils who are working at a level below those expected. For example, they need a significant amount of support to identify lines of symmetry in regular shapes.
74. Leadership of the subject is a shared responsibility and is good. It is the main reason for the improvement in teaching and learning which is helping to drive up standards. The school has provided a significant amount of in-service training to ensure a consistency in the delivery of the National Numeracy Strategy. In addition, an external consultant has supported staff in their quest to develop subject knowledge and to raise expectations. Regular monitoring of teaching and scrutinies of work have ensured a more consistent approach to teaching and learning through the school. Analyses of National Curriculum and QCA tests have ensured staff are aware of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and strategies to address the weaknesses have been adopted. Teachers now track individuals' progress through the school to ensure sufficient progress is being made. The school has recently developed a process of setting targets for each pupil. Where this is in place, it is already having a positive effect on pupils' learning but it is not yet consistently in use in every class.
75. Teaching and learning are good overall. In the best lessons, strengths include:
- carefully planned lessons with clear learning objectives
 - encouragement and engagement of pupils
 - good emphasis on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary
 - opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills
 - insistence on high standards of behaviour
 - teaching assistants are well briefed and often effectively lead groups on specific tasks or carry out assessments of pupils with special educational needs
 - involving pupils in assessing their own learning
 - In Years 5 and 6, teachers make very good use of interactive white-boards to stimulate pupils' learning
76. To enable teachers to match work more accurately to pupils' abilities, pupils have been placed in ability sets. These groups include pupils from more than one age group and this results in some of the higher attaining pupils being in the same set for two years. There are times when such pupils, for example in Year 6, are not being sufficiently challenged as the work they cover is too similar to that learnt in the previous year.

Mathematics across the curriculum

77. When planning lessons, teachers are increasingly looking for opportunities to use mathematics in other areas of the curriculum. Good examples were seen during the inspection; for example, in a Year 1 geography lesson pupils used their knowledge of a data base to put in information about how pupils travel to school and in Years 5 and 6 pupils used their mathematical knowledge to calculate the relative sizes of the sun, moon and earth.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is improving as a result of the well planned curriculum
- Scientific investigation skills are being developed very well in every lesson and pupils collaborate effectively
- Standards for some pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not high enough

Commentary

78. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the levels expected. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are able to systematically work through tasks recording differences between a range of rocks and soils provided by the teacher. They know the meaning of the term 'materials' and, with very little prompting, were able to name a number of materials that were man-made and natural. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 understand how to construct and adapt electrical circuits, the effect of light on a range of materials and how shadows are formed. Year 5 and Year 6 work is slightly more advanced in these areas, but here pupils are 'catching up' with work not taught to them at the appropriate level in the past. In Year 3 and Year 4 pupils build on their knowledge gained in the lower school and learn about the structure of soil through categorising and investigating properties. There is progression in the pupils' learning, with pupils in Years 3 and 4 making good progress in understanding why the moon apparently changes shape and in a Year 5/6 lesson pupils gained a good grasp of the relative sizes of the earth, moon and sun and the distances between them.
79. Both teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teachers plan lessons well and explore ways of ensuring that pupils gain a good understanding of new ideas. Activities are interesting and gain pupils' attention. However, the pace of lessons is too slow overall and the tasks are not sufficiently well matched to pupils' attainment which reduces some pupils' progress. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good. The teachers have high expectations, pose challenging and thought-provoking questions and manage behaviour very well. They display an enthusiasm that encourages pupils to engage in the subject.
80. Science is well led and managed, with a good action plan that focuses on improving standards. The science curriculum is very well planned and coverage is secure. Teachers liaise well to plan creative approaches to presentation of the subject and of particular note is the approach to using and applying scientific knowledge and skills. This is emphasised throughout the school and has resulted in pupils confidently learning to work collaboratively and independently and using an investigative approach to all topics. The well planned opportunities for speaking and listening and the use of numeracy and ICT skills support learning effectively. For example, the methods of recording and use of interactive whiteboard to teach science relating to the 'Earth and Beyond' in Year 6 employ mathematical and oral skills well.
81. Since the last inspection, the work in science has seen sustained improvements, with a more creative and investigative approach evident and pupils' attitudes towards science now very good. The planning, which ensures pupils experience a wide range of opportunities to employ skills for scientific enquiry, such as collaborative discussions, group recording, research using books and internet, posing questions and learning to take a systematic approach, are central to these improvements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection as a result of teachers' increased confidence and knowledge
- Direct teaching of ICT skills is good
- A significant proportion of pupils achieve high standards
- Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory and prevent pupils from consolidating their skills and knowledge

Commentary

82. By Year 6, pupils' overall standards are in line with expectations. This is an improvement upon the findings at the last inspection. In the direct teaching sessions seen in Years 5/6, good teaching prepared pupils well for the task but the lack of sufficient computers to enable pupils easy access meant that learning was at best satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils have access to the full programmes of study but too many pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop and consolidate their skills and understanding.
83. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. However, there are wide differences in attainment. The higher attaining pupils are confident in their use of computers and a small group of pupils recently participated in the Lego challenge 2003 when they were given the task of programming Lego models to complete set tasks. 'Powerpoint' presentations were also devised and shown to others. A significant number of pupils regularly send e-mails to their friends and feel comfortable about accessing information over the internet. However, there are pupils who have not been excited by technology and whose skills are below average. The lower attaining pupils know how to switch computers on and off and how to access the correct programs, sometimes with help, but they have poor keyboard skills and little idea how to retrieve programs when they disappear from the screen.
84. Teachers have received recent training in the use of ICT and now feel more confident to use computers to assist pupils with their learning in other subjects, such as English and science. The Year 5/6 classes each have an interactive whiteboard and the teachers use them effectively and with confidence. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about the learning that occurs as a result. Staff and pupils regularly use a digital camera to capture exciting moments, for example, when one hundred balloons were released into the sky. Computers are largely based in two separate rooms. One is very small and cramped in the main building, where it has been adapted specifically to house eight computers. The other available space is in a temporary classroom necessitating a walk outdoors and an additional adult to supervise the learning. Pupils nearly always have to share the use of a computer and often three pupils are involved. This makes learning slow.
85. Effective leadership is aware of the constraints and is currently pursuing a range of options to ensure that both the accommodation and resources are improved. Despite the shortcomings, the provision is considerably better than that reported at the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

86. During the inspection, little use was seen of pupils using computers outside the direct teaching lessons. Pupils report that they take turns to use classroom computers; for example, when working on writing skills in English, for art and design and to access the internet for research. Examples around the school and in their books confirm this but the level of access for individual pupils is limited by the computers available and is not yet a consistent and regular feature of teaching.

HUMANITIES

87. It was not possible to make judgements about teaching in geography or history as only two geography lessons and one history lesson were seen. Pupils' books and planning were looked at and discussions were held with pupils and teachers.
88. Since the last inspection, standards have been sustained in **geography**. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are average. Through a local study in their town and knowledge of the different surroundings gained through the Africa project, pupils have an understanding of places. In the lessons observed, pupils made good progress. They learnt or consolidated knowledge of their addresses and were able to talk about the means of travel to school. Teachers had high expectations and pupils' achievements were good.
89. No lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6, though in conversation with pupils standards look to be in line with those expected. Pupils have a good grasp of the range of environments in the world. By the end of Year 6, they are able to use small-scale maps to place major ranges of mountains and understand how mountains were formed. Through research and experience gained on a day trip they can describe a mountainous terrain. They know how rivers were formed and use terms such as 'delta', confidently and accurately. In the local study pupils researched and analysed the views of people living in the town on the traffic concerns, describing the variation in views and giving reasons why. There is good use of ICT to support learning in the subject. For example, Year 6 are in turn producing and making a multi-media presentation to the rest of the class on mountains.
90. Developments in geography have been well managed. The subject leader is enthusiastic and confident in her role and offers effective advice and guidance. The subject is well planned and fieldwork is a key part of the curriculum, through studies in the immediate vicinity of the school and on the many educational visits including the residential trips to France for Year 6 and one to Braeside Study Centre for Year 4 pupils. A recent example of this approach is the trip to the Brecon Beacons. This was arranged in response to the lack of personal knowledge of a mountainous environment which teachers identified among many of the Year 5 and 6 pupils. Rather than simply presenting factual information in the classroom, teachers planned this trip, which pupils found exciting as it brought the subject to life for them.
91. Studies of India in Year 3 and Year 4 and the Africa study in Years 1 and 2 have broadened the experiences of pupils. The focus has been on widening the pupils' knowledge of how people live in other parts of the world, with work on food, language and clothing, for example. These projects have made effective use of oracy skills, built on work in art and design and music and encouraged pupils to employ a range of reading matter.
92. In **history** as far as it was possible to ascertain from the limited work available and through discussions with pupils, standards are in line with those seen in other schools. By the end of Year 6, pupils use a time line with understanding and have a good grasp of the relationship between one period and another. They have a grasp of factual knowledge relating to different periods and can describe key events and changes. Pupils confidently compare and contrast aspects of different periods, for example the styles of government in Athens and Sparta. They can offer examples of how the past has influenced the present through language and architecture.
93. The subject is creatively planned by teams of teachers and reviewed regularly. Teachers are well supported with ideas, advice and guidance when required by their teams and the senior management team. In the lesson seen, the teacher employed a range of strategies to engage pupils in a thought-provoking way.

94. In an interim situation, the headteacher is leading the subject. The subject has clearly been well managed in the past as pupils show a high level of enthusiasm for the study of history and there is good guidance to promote continuity in the acquisition of skills. There are evident improvements since the last inspection. Pupils show a great interest in history, the review of the curriculum has eliminated the duplication of work and the skills guidance sheets are a very useful aid to teachers' planning.
95. Subjects such as DT, art and design and ICT support the research and presentation of the subject. One project on architecture in design and technology helped pupils understand the key elements of architecture in Ancient Greece.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Art and design is a strength of the school
- Pupils achieve well across the school and standards are above average
- Display around the school is outstanding
- The art and design curriculum is innovative and stimulates pupils well
- The curriculum makes very good links with other subjects
- Pupils love their art and design lessons and behave very well
- Staff subject knowledge and confidence is greatly improved
- Leadership and management of art and design are very good

Commentary

96. Very good leadership and management have made a significant impact on the status of art and design and achievement across the school. Standards are now above average and this represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
97. The new curriculum is innovative and imaginative so that pupils have access to a wonderfully wide range of materials and processes which stimulate their minds. As a result they are very creative in their ideas and approach to learning in art and design and talk enthusiastically about what they have done. Teachers' subject knowledge has also improved as a result of the curriculum and as a consequence they are very confident in their teaching. Teaching is now good overall. Pupils are taught appropriate skills systematically so that they are developing good knowledge, skills and understanding of how they can apply these to their artwork. This is evident in the quality of art and design around the school and in the delightful portfolios maintained by the subject manager. The subject is very well resourced and teachers and pupils make very creative use of them.
98. Display around the school is dynamic and outstanding. The school values pupils' work highly and much of it is framed or displayed imaginatively to show it at its best. Pupils stop frequently to show their work and talk animatedly about it. Use of visiting artists or sculptors enrich the curriculum further so that pupils have been able to make large-scale works not otherwise possible. The school further enhances pupils' learning through homework, for example the 'bring a chair to life' competition which was very well supported by pupils in Years 3 and 4, demonstrating further the high status of art and design in the school.
99. Very good links are made across other subjects, in particular English, history and ICT. There are delightful examples of water colours and pupils' writing following a trip the Brecon Beacons. Large-scale models of people make superb links with emotions. Pupils' cultural awareness is very effectively developed through working in the style of famous artists and also

when producing sculptures representing totem poles. ICT is used very effectively for research as well as for extending designs from paint to an exciting design using the 'Dazzle' program.

100. The school has fully met the key issues identified at the previous inspection and art and design is now a strength of the school.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall so that pupils achieve well across the school
- Standards in Key Stage 2 are generally above average
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and work very well together
- Very good opportunities are provided for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills
- There are good links with literacy, numeracy and art and design and with developing links with history, geography and ICT

Commentary

101. The subject manager has begun to develop design and technology along the lines of art and design. A new curriculum is shortly to be implemented in Years 1 and 2 and during the summer term for Years 3 to 6. As a result the status of the subject has already been raised. Since the previous inspection teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in teaching design and technology have increased so that teaching is now good overall and pupils achieve well. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are generally above average and average in Years 1 and 2.
102. Pupils in all age groups are very creative and show great enthusiasm for their designs. They make very good use of the many planned opportunities for collaborative working which is contributing strongly to developing their speaking and listening skills and brining about improvement in standards. Planning and evaluation of designs are generally good and these also make a significant contribution to the wider English curriculum through labelling, instructions and lists. Teachers pay good attention to ensuring that pupils are aware of the need to think about their writing in design and technology. Frequent opportunities for measuring, cutting and analysis of materials contribute well to developing pupils' basic numeracy and literacy skills. The subject is generally well resourced and pupils take full advantage of this and are prepared to experiment with a wide range of materials confidently.
103. Across the school pupils show good development of skills because these are taught systematically. Pupils demonstrate good understanding of the design and make process and can explain clearly why they are doing something. They handle tools safely and can select the appropriate tool for a particular purpose. Teaching demonstrates good attention to health and safety. All pupils have the opportunity to develop their cooking skills but this is an area that the school is looking to develop once arrangements for the development of the school site are finalised. Teachers' planning shows appropriate attention to hygiene when handling food and pupils speak very enthusiastically about this element of the subject. The use of ICT is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils have developed very good knowledge, skills and understanding in this area; however, average and lower attaining pupils do not yet have a sufficiently secure knowledge of basic ICT skills. The school is aware of the need to further develop this.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are highly motivated and keen to learn
 - The curriculum is enriched by opportunities to perform
 - The subject co-ordinator sets a good example to other staff
 - Music is used to enhance learning across the curriculum making a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education
104. Lessons were only observed in Year 3/4 classes and the Foundation Stage, although the whole school was heard singing in assemblies and the school choir was heard in an extra-curricular activity and on compact disk. Two lessons in Year 3/4 were observed. All children have the opportunity to listen to and appreciate a wide range of music from different cultures and periods. During observed lessons and practices, pupils were able to apply their musical knowledge and understanding; for example, how the combined musical elements of pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and silence can be organised expressively within simple structures. During a lesson on learning to understand pitch and rhythm, children listened attentively with a focus on detail and were able to recall sound with developing aural memory. The breadth of curriculum opportunity is good. Pupils are encouraged to learn individual instruments. During the inspection pupils were practising for a joint performance with four local schools. The chosen theme on pollution and the environment encouraged pupils to reflect on the sustainability of the environment and issues of choice and responsibility.
105. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good and leads to good learning in the subject. The teachers' good subject knowledge, effective planning, full inclusion of pupils, and emphasis on effort and quality of performance are all strengths of teaching. Strengths of learning are pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of music, their very good attitudes and their creative effort.
106. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is an accomplished musician and a good music teacher and he provides a good role model for class teachers who also teach music every week. There has been good improvement in standards, planning and teaching since the last inspection. Resources are satisfactory and are used well.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved significantly since the last inspection
- The school has recently been awarded an Activemark Gold

Commentary

107. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection were above average. Five lessons were observed in total, three in dance in Years 1 and 2, one in swimming in Year 4 and one in gymnastics in Years 3 and 4. In addition extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 were observed in gymnastics, games and dance.
108. Very good leadership has ensured significant improvements in provision since the last inspection resulting in the school being recently awarded the Activemark Gold. All pupils are guaranteed a minimum of 90 minutes of exercise each week and this includes specific blocks of time for activities such as swimming in Years 4 and 6 and residential visits to participate in

Outward Bound Activities. In addition, there are many extra-curricular activities from which pupils can choose to take part, such as gymnastics, table tennis, dance, athletics, hockey and kwik cricket. These are well attended by pupils who are keen to develop their skills. The school makes very good use of outside providers with specific expertise such as Cheltenham Town Football Club and Wise Moves Dance Group. Over a third of full-time staff and nearly a half of part-time staff contribute to the extra-curricular activity programme. The school has appointed a teaching assistant with specific coaching qualifications to help lead the programme and this she has done most effectively. Self-assessment procedures for pupils have been introduced and consideration is currently being given to their further development relating to acquisition of skills.

109. In the lessons seen in dance in Years 1 and 2, teaching was good in two and satisfactory in the other. Teachers emphasised vocabulary related to the theme of Dick Whittington. Pupils were encouraged to use their imagination, to practise confident, controlled movements and to link these into smooth sequences to the music. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate good ideas and movements and on other occasions effectively exemplify actions themselves. In the swimming lesson, teaching by instructors was satisfactory overall. Pupils were taught in two groups, according to ability. The higher attaining group made good progress because the teaching extended the pupils' skills and the lesson proceeded at a good pace. The lower attaining group made satisfactory progress overall. Expertise was good and the lesson proceeded at pace but the pupils who were least confident were given some tasks which did not improve their confidence or their ability to swim. In the lesson in gymnastics teaching was very good. Expectations of the pupils were high and made clear through very good questioning, to which the pupils responded well. Their ability to devise and carry out a sequence of movement using jumps and balances was good. Rules concerning health and safety were effectively emphasised. Pupils' understanding of how the body works was extended well and good use was made of pupils' mathematical knowledge.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

110. Only one short PSHE session was seen and so no judgements are made about overall provision. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work and the concepts inherent in PSHE permeate all of the school's activity. There are very good opportunities for pupils' to discuss their feelings and reflect on their own circumstances during lessons and assemblies. The school has a strong personal development programme. This includes opportunities to educate pupils about the dangers of drugs and a sensitive approach to sex and relationships education that is compatible with the Christian ethos of the school. Year 5 and 6 pupils talk with confidence about how they have learnt to interact with each other during sports activities and circle times. They recognise all the people who are making a contribution to their school such as governors, the Malmesbury Parents' Association, the school council, teachers, support staff, midday assistants, cleaners and voluntary helpers. The programme recognises the importance of the individual and his or her place within the school community. The activities they engage in prepare children well for playing an active role as citizens in the future.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 2 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 4 |
| Overall standards achieved | 5 |
| Pupils' achievement | 5 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 2 |
| Attendance | 4 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| How well pupils learn | 3 |
| The quality of assessment | 3 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 2 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 5 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| 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).