

INSPECTION REPORT

POWELL'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cirencester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115681

Headteacher: Mr R Pattenden

Lead inspector: Mrs Christine Huard

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 May 2004

Inspection number: 257222

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 aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	421
School address:	Gloucester Street Cirencester Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL7 2DJ
Telephone number:	01285 653799
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Visser
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Powell's is a large primary school close to the centre of Cirencester. It caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven and, although most attend from the local area, some attend from nearby villages. Pupils are from a range of backgrounds and there is a broad social mix although there is little deprivation. The area is above average in socio-economic terms. There are 421 pupils on roll and slightly more girls than boys. Boys and girls are fairly evenly spread amongst classes but there are considerably more girls than boys in Year 6. Children join the Reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. Nearly all children have attended some form of pre-school activity. When children join the school their attainment is generally above average. The school has a very small percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups, and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. Six pupils are eligible for free school meals – which is well below average. About seven per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is also below average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Extra support is provided for pupils who have difficulties with learning and hearing impairment.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Art Information and communication technology (ICT) Music Personal, social, and health education (PSHE) and citizenship
8986	Mr Philip Andrew	Lay inspector	
17263	Mr Andrew Bond	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Physical education
	Mr Martin Marjoram	Team inspector	Science Geography History
12116	Ms Christina Morgan	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Powell's C.E. Primary School provides a good education for its pupils and gives good value for money. The results of last summer's national assessment tests showed that standards were well above average in English mathematics and science. High standards have been sustained over the last four years and inspection evidence confirms that this trend is likely to continue. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and this ensures that pupils achieve well. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. There is a strong emphasis on continuous review and taking positive action on areas needing improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, art and physical education are above average across the school and ICT (information and communication technology) is above average in Years 1 and 2.
- The leadership and management of the school are good.
- Teaching is good across the school.
- Pupils are keen and eager to learn. They apply themselves well in lessons and produce a good quantity of high quality work.
- Assessment is satisfactory overall but there is a lack of consistency in the methods used across the school.
- Children get a good start to their education in the Reception classes.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used fully in every subject.
- The school offers a broad curriculum which is enriched by a wide range of activities outside of school.
- Because they are new to the position, the foundation subject¹ leaders do not have a full overview of their subjects.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 1998. Overall, attainment has risen across the school. There have been particular improvements in the areas identified in the last report - mathematics, ICT and in the Reception classes. The quality of teaching has significantly improved and teachers' subject knowledge is good. Behaviour is good throughout the school and no incidences of poor behaviour were observed during the inspection. The governors are fully involved in the school and play an active part in planning future developments and monitoring progress. Subject leaders have considerably more responsibility than at the previous inspection. However, there is still more to be done because most are new in post and financial constraints have prevented them from completely fulfilling their responsibilities.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
A* indicates that results were in the top 5% in the country.*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is good overall. Overall, standards over time in Year 6 are well above those found nationally, and are good in comparison with those of schools where pupils' previous attainment is

¹ The foundation subjects are: art, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education.

similar. Inspection evidence shows that current standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are above average, despite there being a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs than in previous years. Most children in the Reception class enter the school with attainment just above average. They make good progress and many will exceed the goals expected nationally² by the time they move into Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented achieve well because they are given work to match their capabilities.

Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.

Pupils' attitudes towards their work are very good. They are eager to learn and very attentive in class. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils are very polite and have good relationships with each other and the adults with whom they come into contact. Pupils are prepared well for life in an ethnically diverse society. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. Teaching is good throughout the school. Children in the Reception class learn well because the teachers have assessed their particular needs and take action to ensure they are met. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn and achieve well because they eagerly respond to the challenges with which they are presented. Pupils learn effectively in Years 3 to 6 because work is challenging and usually well matched to their needs. However, there are times when tasks are too difficult for lower attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good support.

The school provides a good, broad curriculum. It is supported by a very wide range of extra-curricular activities which further enrich pupils' learning. The school takes good care of its pupils. Relationships with parents and the local community are very good and benefit pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He has high expectations of what the school can achieve and a very good understanding of the areas where improvement is necessary. Governors challenge the school effectively and fulfil their statutory duties. They have successfully addressed recent financial problems and spending is suitably focused on actions taken to raise standards. Subject leaders manage their subjects satisfactorily. However, because of recent financial difficulties and the fact that many are new to the role, they are not yet completely meeting all their responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are very supportive of the school and are pleased with the information they receive. The pupils enjoy school. The school's survey of pupils' attitudes reveals that pupils like school, enjoy lessons and value the support they receive from teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

Powell's is a good school. The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Ensure that assessment systems are comprehensive, consistent and easy to manage across all subjects.
- Fully integrate ICT across all subjects and ensure pupils have ready access to the equipment they need in or close to the classroom.

² The early learning goals refer to the six areas of learning covered in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes). These are: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

- Fully develop the foundation subject leaders' roles so that they have a complete overview of their areas of responsibility.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, achievement is good. Standards in national tests have been sustained at a well above average level for a number of years.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good for all pupils because of the good teaching throughout the school.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average overall, and pupils complete a good volume of high quality work.
- Standards in art and design, and physical education are above average overall.
- Children in the Reception class achieve well overall.

Commentary

1. Standards attained by pupils at Powell's are high and the pupils achieve well. Documentation shows that the trend in improvement is broadly in line with that seen nationally at the end of Year 6, but at a considerably higher level than that seen nationally. In the current Year 6 there are a number of pupils with quite severe learning difficulties which may affect the overall results this year. However, these pupils are achieving well given their prior attainment. The school sets challenging targets for its own future development. The targets set for last summer were exceeded in English, although not quite met in mathematics. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 exceeded expectations in both English and mathematics. Targets for results this year have been raised in English and lowered slightly in mathematics and are very challenging, especially given the make up of the group. In particular, the percentage of pupils expected to reach the higher Level 5 has been significantly increased across both subjects. However, with the consistently good teaching the pupils receive and the level of achievement identified, the targets may be attainable.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.6 (29.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.9 (29.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.7 (30.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school successfully maintains high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science because of good teaching. There is also consistent and regular assessment and tracking of pupils' achievement. There are good systems which enable staff closely to monitor the progress of the pupils in their class and compare performance and achievement because of the consistent way in which records are kept. This has a positive effect on standards because teachers ensure that pupils' needs are met. In the analysis undertaken after the 2003 tests, the school identified that girls were not achieving as well as boys in mathematics. As a result of action taken, no particular difference was noted in the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection.

3. Children in the Foundation Stage enter the school with a wide range of capabilities, although overall these are above average. Children achieve well, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, numeracy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Careful on-going assessments ensure that tasks set are clearly matched to each child's capabilities and the support provided by the classroom assistants is of high quality. Nearly all the children have already reached the expected goals for their age and are beginning to work towards National Curriculum, Level 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	19.4 (18.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.0 (16.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.8 (18.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and above average in science. The main reasons for the high standards are that lessons are well structured and pupils achieve well because each lesson builds carefully on the one before, and on the learning by each pupil. Standards in speaking and listening, and reading and writing are all well above average. In mathematics, the curriculum is varied and covers all areas of the curriculum thoroughly. Pupils are encouraged to solve problems, and their independent learning skills are well developed through short, sharp opportunities to confer with their peers. Standards in science are above average. The curriculum for younger pupils is firmly built around investigative work and from an early stage pupils learn to set up experiments and devise a fair test.
5. This good, broad learning continues into Years 3 to 6. At the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are above average, with a good percentage of pupils attaining well above average standards. However, there are a few pupils with special educational needs operating at a significantly lower level than would be expected for pupils of this age. Pupils' writing is of a good quality and the examination of pupils' work shows how it develops as they move through the school. They write for a wide variety of audiences, read a wide range of genres and have ample opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through classroom debate and informal reporting back of work carried out. However, in some lessons, lower attaining pupils were set tasks which were too challenging for them which they were unable to complete independently. In mathematics, the curriculum is carefully structured, building on previous learning. Teachers carefully identify on a day-to-day basis which topics require further reinforcement or extension and appropriately adapt their planning. This means that most pupils are enabled to perform to their optimum potential. However, as in English the expectations of what lower attaining pupils could achieve were occasionally too high. In science, pupils are given ample opportunity to devise and carry out investigations and experiments and have a good knowledge of understanding of the subject. In all subjects pupils produce a high volume of good quality work.
6. Standards in the foundation subjects³ are all at least in line with those expected. Standards in art and design and physical education are above average. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for ICT and pupils in Years 1 and 2 exceed the requirements although those in Years 3 to 6 attain average standards. Although pupils have acquired a good level of skills and understanding, they have too few opportunities to apply these skills in subjects across the curriculum because there is insufficient equipment in or near their classrooms.

³ The foundation subjects are: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education.

7. The school has very few pupils from ethnic minorities and there are no pupils currently at an early stage of learning English. However, the school has appropriate procedures should such pupils join the school. The effectiveness of these was borne out by speaking to parents of bilingual pupils who confirmed that support provided by the school was very good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well overall because work is generally well matched to their needs. Pupils who have been identified by the school as being especially gifted and talented in particular areas of the curriculum are provided with tasks which appropriately challenge them enabling them to achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good. Behaviour is good and that in the playground shows significant improvement. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are both very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Important elements of personal development are promoted very well at an early stage and are built on effectively throughout the school
- Very good relationships and curricular enrichment opportunities in the school increase pupils' confidence and attitudes to learning
- Pupils work very well together and are always willing to help one another

Commentary

8. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour show improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They want to learn and do well and this makes an important contribution to their learning. Most enjoy school and the vast majority of parents feel that their children are happy at school. For its part, the school sets high standards for pupils' conduct that are consistently reinforced by staff. This results in a positive and supportive learning environment for pupils, who gain increasing confidence and self-esteem as they progress through the school. Behaviour in lessons is good throughout, but it is particularly good in the Foundation Stage and in the infant classes. Pupils move around the school in a very orderly fashion and are very polite to each other, adults and visitors. Behaviour is also good at break-times and lunchtimes. On these occasions, pupils relate very well to each other and make good use of space and the facilities provided.
9. Teachers create a pleasant and purposeful atmosphere in lessons and consequently, pupils know they are valued and respond with very good attitudes to learning. Little time is wasted in lessons in managing pupils' behaviour or concentration. Pupils are keen to answer and ask questions to extend their understanding, demonstrated in science and mathematics when volunteering answers. Teachers regularly involve pupils in relevant and sensitive discussions, guiding them to a greater understanding of environmental and ecological issues. During group activities, pupils co-operate very well, agree decisions and carry out investigations correctly, as observed in science and ICT. Pupils with special educational needs respond and behave well due to the focused support provided. All staff work hard to ensure those pupils with special educational needs enjoy the same very good relationships with adults as all other pupils. As a result, they too have positive attitudes to their work and are keen to do well.
10. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and permeates all of its activities. This reflects the judgements made at the last inspection. Individual staff members are themselves good role models. Their consistent reinforcement of positive moral and social standards is reflected in pupils' understanding and respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Certainly, pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong because of this good provision. Pupils enjoy school and speak well of it. Their social skills are well developed. They show good levels of self-discipline, reacting enthusiastically to opportunities to exercise responsibility. They demonstrate initiative,

independence and personal responsibility. The recently formed school council successfully provides pupils with a structured opportunity to make relevant contributions to school improvement.

11. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted mainly through religious education where pupils are given opportunities to learn about the beliefs and practices of world faiths. Acts of collective worship allow pupils to have time for reflection and reinforce their spiritual development. Opportunities to explore further the spiritual dimension of learning are provided in subjects such as art, music and science. Pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and develop their knowledge of British culture through visits to places of cultural and historical interest such as museums, churches and other sites. The school is actively seeking ways of developing the multi-cultural element of provision. Overall, curricular enrichment opportunities are a strength of provision.

Attendance

Attendance is very good and the incidence of late arrival is minimal. The school has good procedures for promoting attendance and these are well supported by the parents.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.0
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.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions during the last year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and enable pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is good and is well planned. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress are satisfactory. Pupils are cared for very well and the school has a very good partnership with parents other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very few weaknesses in teaching.
- There has been a good level of improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
- Although assessment procedures are satisfactory, there is scope for further improvement.
- Pupils learn well together. They apply themselves very well to tasks and produce a good quality of work because teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	12 (24%)	26 (52%)	12 (24%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. In the teaching observed during the inspection there were many strengths and very few weaknesses. Teachers have a good command of the subject areas and teach confidently across the range of curriculum areas. They ensure that pupils develop good levels of knowledge, improve their skills and deepen their levels of understanding. Planning is thorough with clear objectives to indicate what is to be learnt by pupils. Teachers form good relationships with pupils, show a high level of interest in their welfare and give praise and encouragement to spur pupils to higher levels of achievement. Effective teaching methods are used, such as good question and answer sessions during the introduction of lessons, which make pupils reason and allow them to express their views clearly. In the best lessons, the plenary session⁴ not only consolidated learning, but also showed pupils what they should do next, in preparation for the following lesson. Learning resources are used well, particularly individual whiteboards to make jottings and to draft answers. Classes are generally well managed and teachers insist on high standards of behaviour. There were few weaknesses in teaching. In a small number of lessons the pace of working was a little slow and the introduction over-long, so that pupils became fidgety. On a few occasions, tasks were not well matched to the complete range of ability within the class. However, this does not detract from the overall, positive picture of the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
13. The school has a good number of committed and knowledgeable support staff. They provide a valuable role when addressing the particular learning needs of individual pupils or groups of pupils. They are generally used well throughout lessons to support pupils. However, sometimes the focus of this support is helping pupils to access the curriculum and supporting them in the same tasks as the rest of the class rather than working on activities which are carefully matched to their specific learning needs. For example, in one lesson support staff helped pupils to read and interpret text which was beyond their understanding.
14. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. Specific weaknesses were identified in mathematics, because of a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. In Years 3 to 6 there is an effective system of setting by ability groups in mathematics which enables teachers to plan work with sufficient challenge for pupils to achieve the higher levels of performance by the end of Year 6. In ICT the quality of equipment has been improved and teachers teach confidently. The introduction of a comprehensive monitoring system of teaching and learning by the headteacher appears to have made the most significant impact on the quality of teachers' work. There is a regular programme of observations undertaken by senior staff and the headteacher using an approved system covering set criteria. Staff are given details of the successful elements of their practice and clear guidance on areas for further development. Pupils' work is also reviewed regularly with a specific focus on agreed areas, such as the quality of marking and presentation, the progress being made over time by pupils and the suitability of the match of work. The headteacher's written comments to teachers are incisive but sensitive and show a very good understanding of how teachers can improve the quality of their teaching.
15. Pupils' learning is enhanced by their own very positive attitudes to school. They collaborate well and form good relationships with each other. This aspect was illustrated very well in a Year 6 mathematics lesson when a teacher began by giving each group an envelope containing a set of cards printed with percentages, decimals and fractions, which they were expected to sort into equivalent values. Pupils worked enthusiastically and systematically in groups making suggestions and rearranging the cards until they were satisfied with the

⁴ Plenary session- the final part of the lesson, which is used to consolidate pupils' learning.

outcome. When questioned by the teacher the pupils gave good reasons for their particular arrangements. Pupils apply themselves well, present their work neatly and produce a good volume of work in the time available. This is because teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and ensure that everyone is included and does their best. A good quantity of homework is also completed by pupils on a weekly basis.

16. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but there is scope for improvement. At present, the leadership of this area is shared between three senior staff and is this is seen as an interim measure. Although there are examples of good assessment practices in some classes, arrangements throughout the school are too piecemeal and a cohesive approach is lacking. The tracking of pupils' progress is undertaken, but information is not easy to extract so that it is difficult to discern clear patterns as pupils move through the school. Marking is thorough and some teachers make valuable comments which help pupils to understand what they have to do to improve, but this is not a well established practice with all staff. Some comments made by teachers are too bland and are not focused sufficiently on ways in which improvement can be made. Some pupils have specific targets for improvement and many older pupils know exactly how their performance in English and mathematics can be improved. However, the practice of setting targets is patchy and not all pupils know the next step expected to improve their own learning. Assessment is used well to identify those pupils who will benefit from intervention strategies. These are comprehensive and regular and result in pupils making good progress.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, and meets all statutory requirements. A very good range of out-of-school activities enriches it. The accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum enables pupils to achieve well in most subjects and promotes high standards
- The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is very good
- Resources and the school's accommodation are very good
- ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning in other curriculum areas
- The development of cross-curricular links and curriculum development are slow
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Commentary

17. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which is significantly enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Throughout the school a good balance has been achieved between the teaching of sound basic skills, knowledge and understanding and opportunities for pupils to use their skills creatively and in investigative work.
18. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Information from assessment is used well to identify those pupils who would benefit from extra help. These are wide-ranging and effective. Setting for mathematics enables teachers to adapt the curriculum to the needs of different ability groups. However, in English lesson planning does not always reflect or respond to the particular requirements of lower attaining pupils. When withdrawn for additional help, lower attaining pupils make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. The monitoring of provision for pupils with special needs does not always ensure that the precise and targeted additional help pupils receive is effectively reinforced within lessons.
19. The school organises a number of clubs for pupils, including a wide range of sporting, music and art activities. These are very well attended. Pupils go on a number of regular visits to support and extend classroom learning. Residential visits make a valuable contribution not

only to the geography and history curriculum but also to pupils' personal and social development. The school welcomes many visitors including musicians, theatre groups and resident artists. An extensive programme of instrumental teaching benefits a large number of pupils.

20. The school is aware of the need to develop the use of ICT across other curriculum areas. Although teachers in those classes which have digital projectors use them well in their teaching, opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning are not built systematically into teachers' planning. This is mainly because there are too few computers in or near classrooms.
21. The school is in the process of developing meaningful cross-curricular links between subjects. It has an on-going process of further developing the curriculum to meet its own needs. In some subjects such as art, the school has already successfully developed a scheme of work which is distinctive and reflects the school's particular circumstances. In some other subjects, including geography and history, national guidelines have been adopted in order to guarantee coverage of the National Curriculum but have not yet been significantly evaluated and modified.
22. Staffing and resources are very good and used well. The extremely attractive buildings and grounds are used well as a learning resource. A proposal to develop the grounds further through a conservation project with the Royal Agricultural College will provide further opportunities for their imaginative use in all curriculum areas. Links with the two secondary schools to which most of the pupils transfer have widened opportunities in the physical education and design and technology provision. They have also provided technical support for information technology.

Care, guidance and support

The care and welfare for the pupils are very good and pupils are well supported in their personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes very good care of the pupils and ensures their physical well-being.
- The school values pupils' views and ideas.
- Induction into the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The school provides good support to pupils so that they can develop to their full potential.

Commentary

23. The school's provision has improved considerably since the previous report. The Christian ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are cared for and supported whatever their needs. Child protection procedures are fully in place and all the staff are very well briefed. The school has good relationships with a number of outside agencies.
24. All routine health and safety checks have been carried out to the agreed schedule. The health and safety procedures are regularly reviewed by the governors. Six members of staff have been trained in first aid procedures. The procedures for the evacuation of the school buildings are fully understood by the pupils as discussion with 12 pupils across all age groups confirmed, and they fully understand the reason for the procedures. The supervision of playtimes and lunchtimes has been significantly improved since the previous inspection and the play area, which now has all-weather surfaces, has been significantly increased.
25. The school takes very good account of the views of its pupils. It has established a thriving school council drawn from all the classes in the school. The members ensure that the pupils' ideas and suggestions are presented clearly and confidently to the school management. This is a very good forum for pupils to gain an understanding of the duties and responsibilities of members of a community. A discussion with members of the council during the inspection was lively and informative and demonstrated the range of issues covered, from the refurbishment of the toilets to the range of playground games and equipment.

26. The induction arrangements for the pupils into the Reception class are wide-ranging and very thorough, fully involving the pupils, parents and all the pre-school groups.
27. The school's monitoring of pupils' personal development is good. This is mainly informal. However, the staff know the children very well and the written comments in the annual reports are kept in a folder for each child so that any new staff can read the past reports for initial guidance. There is very good, monitored support for pupils with individual education plans and these are discussed with the parents on an annual basis.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with the parents, with the local community and with the other schools is very good. This has a very positive impact on the achievements of the pupils.

Main strengths and weakness

- The parents have a very positive view of the school and of the very good opportunities for learning and social development that the school provides.
- The school's partnership with the parents and the parent's involvement with the school enhance the pupils' achievement.
- The school has very good links with the community and the other schools to which pupils transfer.

Commentary

28. The school has very good links with the parents and these have been improved since the previous inspection. This is confirmed by the meeting with parents, answers to the parents' questionnaire and in discussion with parents during the inspection. Some parents expressed the view, at the meeting, that there was little opportunity for them to give their views on any changes or planned changes taking place in the school. The inspection found no evidence to sustain this view but rather that both formal and informal communication is very good. This is an open school where all the staff are readily available for daily contact.
29. The school has a good range of open evenings. There are two evenings for parents to meet teachers and discuss their children's progress and two open evenings when the children show their parents round the school and show them their work. These evenings are particularly enjoyed and valued by the parents. The annual reports to parents are well written and indicate appropriate targets in core subjects for future development.
30. The parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning both at home and in the school. This help enhances the children's learning and progress.
31. The school has strong links with the community both through the parish church and other organisations in the community. The links with the local secondary school are strong; for example, the school buys ICT technical support from their ICT department. In addition the school has established a partnership with the Royal Agricultural College to develop the environmental area in order to make it a viable and useful resource, not just for Powell's, but for schools in the wider community.
32. The transfer arrangements for pupils to go to the secondary school are very well planned and implemented. This helps to ensure that the pupils are able to sustain and develop their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The governance of the school is very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and the management of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership, management and governance of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The headteacher knows the school very well and his ebullience and enthusiasm motivate staff and pupils.
- The ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are valued and provided for.
- The school's finances are now well managed.
- The school's policy for monitoring and evaluating its own performance is rigorous and effective,
- Governors know their school very well, they provide good support and are aware of the need to continue to challenge the school.
- Foundation subject leaders do not yet have a full overview of their areas of responsibility.

Commentary

33. At the previous inspection, the leadership of the school was judged to be good, and its management satisfactory. Since then, there has been a change of senior management and, because of astute appointments, the leadership and management show good improvement and are now good overall. The governance of the school has improved significantly since the last inspection when several weaknesses were identified. The governors now take a more active role, are more aware of their responsibilities and appropriately and effectively challenge the school.
34. The headteacher, who has been in post two years, has an inspirational vision for the future direction of the school. His vision builds on the strong aims and values of the school and the maintenance of high standards. There is a commitment by the whole staff to an approach that involves the teaching of a broad curriculum which enable pupils to leave the school as well-rounded individuals. Although the school has very few pupils from ethnic minorities it has an appropriate policy for racial equality which is monitored by the school and governors. The school is not complacent in its approach and constantly challenges itself to do better. Careful monitoring is carried out to ensure all pupils are achieving their full potential. The school aims for the highest possible results. It never makes the pupils an excuse for achieving less than their full potential. The school carries out regular and extensive self-evaluation and monitoring. This includes regular, high quality, on-going observations of teaching and learning in all areas. This has been carried out by the headteacher, deputy headteacher – who has only been in post a short while - and senior management team, and identifies appropriate strengths and areas requiring improvement. This has a positive impact on standards as the gradual improvement in national test results shows. Planning has been recently updated and children's work is examined to ensure that they achieve well, given their starting points on entering the school.
35. Subject leaders carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily. They are conscientious and have a very good understanding of what their roles entail. However, because many are new and there have been funding difficulties which have meant that there has not been enough money to give them non-contact time. This means that many have not yet had the chance to carry out lesson observations although they have examined the quality of pupils' work. Good use is made of subject leaders' skills, and where these require updating or improving, training is provided to enable them to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible. As a result they provide good quality advice to colleagues. The school welcomes input from other sources and

- involves various educational groups and visitors to help further advance its provision. It seizes every opportunity to apply for additional funding in order to help the pupils' learning.
36. The leadership of special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides good administrative support but, because of recent financial restraints, there has been insufficient monitoring of provision in the classroom. She ensures that targets on pupils' individual education plans are precise and measurable. However, the degree to which these targets are addressed in lessons is variable across the school.
 37. The school's approach to strategic planning is good. There is a detailed three-year development plan, which continues to emphasise on-going improvement and a broadening of the school's curriculum - for example, through the continuation of recently introduced 'arts week'. Good use is also made of information available to evaluate the quality of the school's work. This includes results from national and other tests, as well as the monitoring of teaching and analysis of pupils' work, and the outcomes of surveys of parents' views.
 38. The governors are effective and fulfil their statutory duties. The impact of the governors on the school has improved considerably. At the last inspection the governors were judged not to know their school very well and were described as being distant and unresponsive to staff and parents. This has changed significantly. Many new governors have joined the school. They have a good understanding of their role - particularly that of 'the critical friend'. Governors demonstrate a good overall understanding of the many strengths of the school, including its ethos. They feel that one of the reasons for the school's success is its consistency of approach and point to evidence of this ethos in class, in the playground and throughout the school. They now help to shape the overall direction of the school more effectively, for example through contributing to and reviewing the improvement plan. In addition, they visit the school regularly as part of the 'governor of the month' scheme, in order to monitor the quality of the education provided on a regular basis and provide written reports.
 39. The administrative staff are very experienced and contribute positively to the running of the school. There is now highly effective budgetary control, both on a short, day-to-day and longer term basis. The financial planning is very well organised. At the last inspection a considerable surplus was identified. However, subsequently, the school ran into a near deficit situation from which they have successfully extricated themselves following careful budgeting and housekeeping over the last two years. The financial information presented below shows a small carry-forward figure of about 3 per cent which is relatively low, but does mean that the school can begin to plan in order to meet the requirements of the workplace reform requirements. All recommendations after a recent audit have been carried out. The headteacher and members of the governing body make good use of the four principles of compare, challenge, consult, and compete to ensure that the school provides best value in its educational provision. All elements of the school's spending are evaluated to ensure that the most economic, effective and efficient quality of education and support is provided for the pupils in its charge.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	848,009.16
Total expenditure	820,167.10
Expenditure per pupil	1,907.37

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-10,000.00
Balance carried forward to the next	17,842.06

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for pupils in the Reception class is good overall.

The children in the Reception class learn effectively and achieve well, because a good range of exciting and interesting activities are provided for them. The teaching is good and shows a good understanding of the needs of children of this age, and the support provided by the trained assistants is of high quality. The curriculum has substantially improved since the last inspection and now matches the six areas of learning for this age well. Pupils with special educational needs receive well targeted support carefully matched to their own capabilities. There is very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. Teaching time is well organised and there is good monitoring of pupils' progress and good record keeping which is building up into a comprehensive record of achievement. The accommodation for the pupils is good and has improved since the last inspection because a secure play area where pupils can use large outdoor equipment has been provided.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and are self-confident because of the good organisation and well established classroom routines.
- Very good relationships are evident, which make the children feel secure and cared for.

Commentary

40. When pupils enter the school they have well developed personal and social skills. They make good progress because they are taught well. Most will exceed the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. The staff build well on pre-school experiences. The children respond well to daily routines, with which they are now fully at home. They know exactly what to do on entering school, the routine for taking the register, getting ready for play, milk and lunch times. They relate well to one another and show concern and care where appropriate. There is a good variety of activities and these ensure that children are purposefully employed and enable them to move confidently from task to task. They work very well in small groups together and with a member of staff. Adults work constructively with the children, helping them to take turns and encouraging sharing. Adults provide good role models and children respond positively to the care shown towards them. Children make good progress and work independently and unsupervised, maintaining their concentration well. When working as a class group, children are expected to take turns, put up their hands when answering questions and listen carefully to each other. Behaviour is very good and children are kind and courteous to each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan and organise activities well so that the children can practise and develop a full range of skills.
- Adults' skilled interaction with the children ensures that they learn to reason and use language with increasing expertise to tell, explain and describe.

Commentary

41. Children are confident speakers and listeners. All can recognise most letters and know letter sounds. Many can already read and sound out simple words confidently. Some more competent children can read fluently with expression and recognise words such as *opened*, *picked* and *glowing*. They have learned correct letter formation and many already write in a joined hand, neatly, and spell simple words correctly. Many children have already met the learning goals required for this area and are working at early National Curriculum levels. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection when children were found to be working at well above average levels. Teaching is good and children achieve well because they are given a wide range of activities to develop their speaking, listening and early reading and writing skills. Whole group sessions ensure that pupils learn to listen carefully. They answer questions and are encouraged to do so in full sentences. When they work in small groups, adults take every opportunity to encourage the children to talk, ask questions for themselves and generally increase their vocabulary. Children listen eagerly to stories, and books are always put out for them to look at. They respond pleasurably to fairy tales such as *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* and eagerly act out the story using stick puppets. Routines for reading with adults at home and at school are firmly established and parents make a good positive contribution towards children's enjoyment of reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of children exceed the expected levels by the end of the Reception year and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Commentary

42. Children achieve well in the Reception classes and by the end of the school year, the vast majority exceed the expected levels in their mathematical development. Children enjoy mathematical activities because the teachers make them lively and interesting. They sing the song *Ten Green Bottles* whilst individual children hold up simulated bottles showing the numbers to ten. Almost all the children can count in twos to 20 and in tens to 100, chanting the numbers as a class. The teachers encourage children to write the number in the air so that they get used to the shape of the digits. Children recognise the value of coins up to two pounds and use large cardboard coins to make up the cost of items, such as four penny coins to pay for a cake costing four pence. Some more able children are completing simple calculations, such as $6p + 2p = 8p$ and have a good understanding of the process. Children are achieving well because teachers prepare thoroughly and provide a good range of stimulating activities. They give clear explanations and encourage independence and mature behaviour. They interact well with children, as do other adults in the classroom. A brisk pace is maintained and supplementary, more challenging activities are provided to extend each group. The high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers provide a wide range of activities in order to develop pupils' knowledge of the world around them.
- Children's computer skills are developed well.
- Pupils are taught to observe carefully in order to learn about their environment.

Commentary

43. Many children enter the school with a good knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. They make good gains and achieve well because teachers present work in an interesting way. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of this year. The high standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained. Activities linked to topics, such as the current one on mini-beasts, develop children's understanding well. Children understand appropriate vocabulary, such as *arachnid*, and understand why a spider is not an insect. Excursions into the school's environmental area enhance their knowledge through direct observation of spiders in their webs and children take the opportunity to show off their current learning - for example by spotting and correctly identifying aphids on a leaf. The children are very articulate and communicate their ideas and knowledge orally with confidence. Inside, children can recreate appropriate habitats for insects in the sand tray where a range of rocks, twigs, leaves and moss have been provided.
44. Timetabled sessions in the new computer suite benefit the children greatly. The class is divided, with some working in the computer suite and the rest learning to program a robot toy. This means that all children have good access to the equipment. Most children have good computer skills although a few still have some problems manipulating and controlling the mouse. When using a painting program, most correctly selected the paintbrush, changed its size, selected colours and used the mouse to paint a recognisable mini-beast. Children learned to program the controllable toy to move forwards, backwards and turn right and left. There was very good interaction between the adults and children, with lots of encouragement and praise which motivated and encouraged the children to do well. The children learned very effectively in this lesson and achieved well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of the Reception year.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Assessment procedures are well developed.

Commentary

45. Children achieve well in this area of learning and by the end of the Reception year the vast majority are exceeding the expectations of the early learning goals. The quality of teaching and learning is good because sessions are well planned and teachers use clear explanations, which the children understand. The activities provided are interesting and this encourages children to be imaginative; for instance, in dance they match their movements well to the mood of the music. They watch the performance of others patiently and use this as a model to improve their own movements. Children have mature attitudes for their age and show good levels of independence when putting on their socks and fastening their buckled and velcro shoes.
46. The provision for physical development and the achievement of children has improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The children have regular access to a wide range of equipment, including wheeled toys and receive many other opportunities to enhance their physical development.
47. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching in **creative development** since too few sessions were observed. However, from planning and the work

on display, it is evident that this is appropriately planned and pupils have opportunities for painting and experimenting with a range of modelling materials. In addition, the role play area provided opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and play out situations. One music lesson was observed. In this the children responded well to the good teaching and learned a rhythmic poem, adding accompaniment using their hands and feet and later untuned percussion instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment is well above average by Year 2
- Pupils' attainment is above average in Year 6
- The quality of teaching in English is good
- Assessment data is not used sufficiently to plan for lower attaining pupils in some lessons

Commentary

48. Pupils enter the school with above average language and literacy skills. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 builds on these so that pupils achieve well. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are all well above average by the end of Year 2. Almost all pupils are confident speakers with a wide vocabulary and general knowledge. Pupils not only read fluently and with good understanding but discuss what they have read with mature reflection. They already have a wide knowledge of a range of children's literature and express firm preferences for particular writers. Pupils of all abilities read expressively and with enthusiasm. By Year 2 nearly all pupils have a firm mastery of the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and joined handwriting. They write confidently and enthusiastically for a wide range of different purposes, using sophisticated vocabulary and complex sentence structures.
49. Learning is underpinned by the very good attitudes of the pupils. They are responsive, eager to answer questions and join in discussions intelligently. They listen well to the teacher and to each other and concentrate for impressive amounts of time. Lessons are very productive; almost all pupils have completed a considerable amount of good quality work over the year.
50. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average. The majority of pupils are articulate and engage in informed discussion of a wide range of topics. Their wide vocabulary informs their reading and enlivens their writing. Pupils have well developed reading skills; for example, they can analyse why characters behave as they do and make informed predictions of how a plot might develop. They understand the term 'genre' and can give examples of different types of book they enjoy. They can compare the styles of different writers, using evidence from their wide reading to justify their views. Higher attaining pupils are already developing distinctive writing styles and an individual 'voice'. Both the quality and quantity of work achieved are impressive and well above average.
51. The quality of teaching of English is good throughout the school. The pace of most lessons is brisk and pupils are given adequate time to consolidate their learning. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. For example, in Year 2 pupils are asked to reflect on the sea's different moods and to look at the dangers of an oil spill from a sea creature's point of view. In Year 3, pupils are expected to incorporate several different aspects of previous learning into their writing, including grammatical elements but also how to show what characters are feeling and ways of reinforcing the element of fear. Teachers' introductions are informative but provide regular opportunities for pupils to present their own views and experiences. Lessons

are conducted in a calm and purposeful atmosphere, based on good relationships both between pupils and teachers and between pupils.

52. Teachers use information from assessment to plan well for the needs of higher attaining pupils. However, the tasks in lessons are not always appropriately matched to lower attaining pupils. Although support staff are used well, the focus of support in lessons is helping pupils to access the same tasks as the rest of the class rather than to tackle work which more precisely meets their needs. The analysis of pupils' work indicates that, occasionally, when thrown back on their own devices, lower attaining pupils struggle to complete the tasks and have difficulty reading the texts being studied. Assessment information is used well to identify pupils who will benefit from additional support and when pupils are withdrawn for specific help, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
53. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop aspects of the English provision without losing essential aspects of the current successful teaching strategies. Guided reading is currently well established and successful, both in developing pupils' knowledge of a wide range of literature and in developing their literary criticism skills. Key links are made between pupils' reading and writing development. The recently relocated and restocked school library is a valuable asset.
54. At present there is limited use of ICT in English although pupils have developed good word processing skills and classes have learned how to use a publishing program in order to produce a class newspaper. However, because the equipment is rather remote from classrooms there are too few opportunities for ICT to be used on a daily basis.
55. Pupils in most classes respond well to relatively formal teaching methods and thrive under the expectation that they will consistently produce high quality writing. Regular evaluative monitoring by the headteacher and subject leader, both of lessons and pupils' books, ensures that already good practice is constantly being refined. At present, parallel classes follow precisely the same planning. While this ensures parity of provision within classes in the same year group, it also stifles teachers' initiative and prevents teachers from responding creatively to the needs of their particular class. The leadership and management of English are good. The subject leader is aware of the need to revise and adapt current assessment and recording procedures and to ensure that information from assessment is used to plan effectively for the needs of all pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Currently there is evidence of history and geography being used as a focus for work within the literacy hour. Pupils are encouraged to write extensively in other areas of the curriculum. Their wide general knowledge and vocabulary allow them to make informed contributions to work across all other subject areas.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 and above average by Year 6; pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils' attitudes are good; they are keen to learn, show good levels of interest and work hard.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory, but there is scope for further improvement.
- ICT is insufficiently integrated into the mathematics curriculum.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but there is a lack of consistency throughout the school.

Commentary

57. Inspection evidence shows that standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Standards remain high at the end of Year 2, although not quite as high as the 2003 test results which were outstanding, being in the top five per cent nationally. Almost all pupils reach at least average levels and approximately 40 per cent are expected to attain the above average Level 3. Standards in Year 6 are above average. Standards are not as high in this particular year group as in previous years because there is a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs and this depresses the overall level of performance. Pupils throughout the school achieve well. Generally, they enter Year 1 with above average standards and leave Year 6 with well above standards in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly, based on their prior attainment, because they are supported well and the work they receive is well matched to their particular needs.
58. Standards are high and levels of achievement are good because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and generally provide well-matched work for the pupils in their classes. The setting system of grouping pupils by ability in Key Stage 2 is working well; it allows teachers to provide suitably challenging tasks within each age group. Classes are managed well and relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers frequently give praise which encourages pupils to do their best. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 class where the teacher's style of persuasive, sensitive management proved very effective in obtaining good responses from pupils to the questions that were raised. Pupils' confidence was lifted and their achievement levels increased as a direct result. Teachers' expectations of pupils are high, in that a good quality and quantity of work will be produced in the time available. A very good example was observed in a Year 2 lesson. In a data handling lesson, the pupils completed a tree diagram of different mini-beasts and wrote up their own detailed interpretation of their individual findings. The pupils were well motivated and cleared away their own equipment at the end. Finally they settled down to a very useful plenary session, led by the teacher, which took them on to the next level of understanding regarding setting out a pictogram to scale. There are few weaknesses in teaching; occasionally pupils' concentration wanes towards the end of lessons and sometimes in the final session the teacher does not consolidate the prescribed learning objective. Pupils are keen to learn and show good levels of interest, especially when teachers use novel methods or use resources to good effect. They collaborate well in lessons and are capable of working independently for sustained periods.
59. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The subject leader is comparatively new to the role and has made a good start to developing the subject. Some monitoring of teaching throughout the school has taken place and an appropriate action plan produced, which sets out future priorities. Analysis of test results is carried out by the senior staff but the co-ordinator is not closely involved in this activity. There is also further scope for improvement through the monitoring of teachers' planning, in order to gain a complete overview of the subject. Although the curriculum provision is generally good, there is little evidence of the use of ICT in the subject. The school has the potential to develop this element much more, especially in the use of data handling.
60. A wide variety of assessment procedures is in place, but arrangements are piecemeal and often left to teachers' own discretion. The usual Qualifications and Curriculum Authority tests are undertaken annually and these provide a useful guide to pupils' performance. Teachers make comments on how well groups of pupils within their classes achieve, in relation to their planned learning objectives. This enables them to modify their planning successfully in the short term. Some pupils, especially those in Year 6, have targets for improvement which they understand, whilst other pupils are not completely clear of the next step in their learning.
61. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. Achievement levels and standards have improved, largely because the quality of teaching is much stronger.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily across the various curriculum areas. There are some good examples in science when pupils collect data but in other subjects, teachers miss opportunities for pupils to measure their own performance, as in athletics. Links with ICT could also be developed more effectively.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach above average standards in science.
- The quality of teaching is good, making good use of a range of resources.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good
- Assessment procedures and systems for recording the results of assessments are not yet sufficiently well developed.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their ICT skills to learning in science.

Commentary

63. Standards in science are above the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. These results are consistent with the findings of the previous inspection except that previously, standards at Year 6 were well above the expected level. The decline is attributable to differences in ability between different groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers because of the good teaching and focused support they receive from classroom assistants.
64. The quality of teaching is good with some very good features. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and lessons are well sequenced so that pupils are effectively challenged to use their knowledge and understanding. Lessons build carefully on pupils' previous learning. Imaginative teaching and skilful questioning lead to pupils developing high levels of interest and enjoyment. Keen involvement in practical activities helps pupils of different abilities to learn well. This was apparent when Year 5 pupils focused on plants and the function of their different parts and explained how pollination occurs. In good and very good teaching in Year 6, pupils were challenged to think analytically when planning a scientific experiment that would be conducted through asking scientific questions. Pupils collaborated really well in this activity because they are used to working productively together, knowing that their ideas will be treated with respect. Good use is made of the school grounds, in particular the environmental area, so the pupils can record intended observations of mini-beasts and other living things. Planning the further development of the environmental area in conjunction with The Royal Agricultural College is well advanced. This is an exciting initiative to enhance teaching and learning in science. In addition, pupils' study of other environmental and ecological issues promotes well their understanding of moral and social issues. Most teachers are well skilled in ICT. Where available, teachers use whiteboards linked to data projectors very efficiently to illustrate and add interest to lessons.
65. Pupils apply literacy and numeracy skills well, for example when writing about their experiments and when making accurate use of measurement and graphs. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their ICT skills to learning in science. The school is aware of this deficiency and is planning to rectify it. Similarly, the subject leader has identified the need to improve the systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress over time so that information about their attainment in science is more readily accessible. Marking is conscientiously completed and often provides suggestions for improvement. Homework effectively reinforces learning undertaken in classes. The school provides very good enrichment to the science curriculum through its structured programme of visits to a local Outdoor Education Centre, science fair and science based interactive museum. This

stimulates interest and promotes learning in science as well as making a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.

66. The subject leader is relatively new in post. However, through her professional competence and enthusiasm, she has led the development of the subject well. She has monitored planning, teaching and pupils' work effectively. Consequently she is aware of what needs to be done to improve the curriculum, namely, to improve assessment arrangements, increase the opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills and plan more effectively for the teaching and assessment of scientific enquiry skills. The subject leader provides a very good role model for teaching science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good ICT skills and work confidently and competently.
- Standards in Years 1 and 2 are above those expected.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- ICT is not used fully in all subjects.
- There is insufficient equipment in or near the classrooms for pupils to be able to use it as an integral part of the curriculum.

Commentary

67. Standards in Years 2 are above those expected and those in Year 6 meet the expectations for pupils. These represent a significant improvement since the last inspection, when provision was unsatisfactory. The school now has a well resourced computer suite although there are insufficient computers around the school to enable pupils to use them as a matter of course in lessons. The knowledge and understanding of the teaching staff are good. They make good use of the resources available to develop pupils' skills and understanding in the use of ICT and the school is in a strong position to raise standards further.
68. From an early age, pupils gain confidence in using the computers and see ICT as a tool which helps them to make their work easier and more interesting. By Year 2, pupils have a wide range of competencies. In Year 1, younger pupils use a publishing program to help them create name labels. They confidently import art work and can change the size and style of font as well as adding borders to make them more interesting. In the lessons observed it was clear that pupils develop their independence to the extent that the vast majority competently use the mouse and keyboard to operate the tools and symbols on their screens without help. Year 2 pupils extend this work by using a variety of shapes to create art work and a range of mysterious creatures. When following instructions, most required little help although some lower attaining pupils needed regular support from their working partner or an adult.
69. Standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils demonstrate their skills by bringing a range of elements together to produce a brief but effective PowerPoint presentation after a limited opportunity to explore the application. They have learned to use the internet successfully - both for enhancing their own work and as a means to create links with pen friends in other countries. The school has an appropriate agreement on internet safety, which is agreed by parents and pupils alike. Most pupils successfully resize images and merge them with text to present information, for instance in a class newspaper.

70. The subject leader provides good leadership. He has ensured that teachers and support staff throughout the school are confident in the use of ICT by providing training in the areas where they lacked confidence. He is aware of the areas which require improvement, and the integration of ICT fully into the curriculum is identified in the school improvement plan. However, this is targeted for 2005/6 and in order to comply with requirements this should be brought forward. A good system of assessment has been introduced, although it is too soon to judge its effectiveness.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The quality of teaching and learning of ICT skills is good throughout the school. This judgement is formed on the basis of the direct teaching of skills in the computer suite. Those teachers who are trialling them, make good use of interactive whiteboards in a range of classroom-based subjects, and this is having a positive impact on learning. The ICT suite is used to support the teaching of other subjects but, because of its remoteness from the rest of the school it is rather limited at this stage. There are insufficient machines in or near classrooms for pupils to be able to use them regularly for research or work in subjects across the curriculum. Because of this, ICT is not used extensively across the curriculum though there are some examples of its useful application. For instance, it is used to good effect in English for word processing and publishing. Lessons in devising formulae to create spread sheets, making graphs and interrogating them, support work in mathematics well. However, in some instances its usefulness is limited. For example, in one lesson pupils were interrogating a data base to research questions about Victorian personalities; however the history topic for the term was Tudors not Victorians.

HUMANITIES

72. Religious education was not inspected as the school is of Voluntary Aided status. No lessons were observed in **history** or **geography**. Judgements about standards derive from discussion with the subject leaders, discussion with a group of older pupils, scrutiny of work completed earlier in the year and observation of a geography skills session. Current sampling of inspection evidence shows that by Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with national expectation. The previous inspection reported that standards in history and geography were in line with national standards except that by Year 6 in history, standards were above national expectation. The decline in history is attributable to differences in ability between different groups of pupils.
73. The school offers an appropriate curriculum in both subjects. Pupils showed in discussion that they had secure knowledge of various different periods of history. In particular, their recall of factual events relating to the Tudor dynasty was impressive in its detail and accuracy. Visiting Hampton Court Palace in connection with their study has clearly made a lasting impression. Elsewhere in their historical studies, pupils have opportunities to visit places of interest such as Chedworth Roman Villa and the Folk Museum in Gloucester.
74. Similarly in geography, pupils have a good recall of facts, such as those learned in their comparative study of an Indian town. When they commented on the lives of poor families living in Chembakoli in India, they showed considerable empathy with children less fortunate than themselves. As in history, the school offers curricular enrichment through its structured programme of outings and visits. These include a river study, nature in art, the local study of Cirencester and the local Post Office. All of these worthwhile experiences help to promote learning and contribute to maintaining good standards.
75. In both subjects, pupils have applied their literacy skills effectively to produce written work of sound quality. Most work is marked effectively and at best gives pupils clear guidance as to how they might improve.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Only one lesson each of **design and technology** and **music** were observed during the inspection. As a result it is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision in these subjects. However, pupils' work was examined carefully and there were discussions with them about what they had learned in both these subjects.
77. In **design and technology** evidence from teachers' planning indicates good coverage of the different strands of the curriculum. Links with a local secondary school have been valuable in ensuring that certain aspects of the curriculum such as food technology are fully implemented. The recently appointed leader has developed good subject knowledge and liaises with different year groups to ensure that skills are progressively built on as pupils move through the school. Evidence from the scrutiny of work indicates that pupils are confident in both the design and construction elements and can evaluate and modify their work according to specific criteria.
78. There were few opportunities to evaluate the quality of **music** in the school. However, it is an integral part of school life and taught regularly. The pupils were heard singing accompanied in assembly. This was tuneful and clear and they maintained the pitch of the hymns well. They have a very good sense of rhythm. Pupils listen to music from a range of cultures and also participate in a range of dramatic productions involving music. For example, the school has recently held a music week with outside performers and the opportunity for pupils to participate in music making activities as well as designing and making their own musical instruments. In addition there are a wide range of extra-curricular activities, a school choir, orchestra and recorder groups all of which perform to a high standard.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of work in different media is provided.
- The accommodation and resources are good.
- Good reference is made to the work of a range of artists.

Commentary

79. Standards in art are above those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Work in art and design is planned to introduce pupils to the required skills and understanding and to support work in other subjects, such as history, science and religious education. This is generally successful, and pupils in all year groups have produced a satisfactory variety of work to good standard in an appropriate range of media. In addition, there has been an appropriate amount of work on art appreciation and in critical studies of a range of art and design. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the work of a range of famous artists and have learned something of art from different cultures. Work is generally planned to cover the necessary concepts, and there are works of art on display to stimulate pupils. Pupils' own work is displayed to a good standard, and the entrance halls of all the buildings are enlivened with works of art created by the pupils, some of which were made during the art week. These are of a good standard and create a bright and welcoming atmosphere.
80. The teaching observed was consistently good. Pupils achieve well and benefit from the teachers' knowledge. Teachers confidently demonstrate techniques to the pupils. The enthusiasm of the teacher in one lesson transmitted itself to the pupils, and they eagerly set about a task to create a mask in the style of comedy or tragedy, which also linked well with the current work being explored on the Greek theatre. Pupils worked extremely hard, the attention to detail was good and they confidently explored a range of techniques to make their work

more effective such as blending oil pastels, paper curling and whole colour blocking. Little use is made of ICT, although computers are sometimes used for reference. Pupils throughout the school use sketch books effectively and they are used well for experimenting with new techniques and trying out ideas.

81. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has developed a good action plan and identified appropriate areas for further development. Her work in organising the art week meant that pupils were able to develop skills and techniques over a sustained period of time rather than having to work in short sessions. Art and design was found to be above expectations at the last inspection and it continues to have a high profile.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Enrichment activities, including extra-curricular clubs, are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes are good; they are keen to learn and behave well.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory, but monitoring procedures are yet to be developed properly.

Commentary

82. Standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards in their physical development and achieve satisfactorily through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. They are supported appropriately. The quality of teaching and learning is generally satisfactory, although in Year 2 the teaching is good because teachers are well organised and focus on developing pupils' skills systematically. This enables pupils to learn well. Year 2 pupils have good basic ball skills and good levels of understanding, giving clear reasons why warm-up is important before beginning vigorous exercise; they also know that exercise increases the heart rate. Standards in swimming are above average. The majority of Year 6 pupils are very competent swimmers; almost all are capable of swimming 25 metres and over half have completed distances beyond 200 metres. Most swim using a variety of strokes and a third of all Year 6 pupils have awards for water safety. Standards in athletics are good because of the good curriculum provision. The pupils' evaluation of their own performance and their understanding of health related issues are also good features.
83. The school provides a very good range of enrichment activities, including after school clubs and this has a beneficial impact on standards, especially in Key Stage 2. There are clubs and teams for a wide range of sports and a large percentage of older pupils are involved. The school arranges two residential courses for pupils in Years 5 and 6 which involve outdoor and adventurous activities, such as rope climbing, orienteering, kayaking and camping. These pursuits enhance the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and build up good personal qualities. The school has very good facilities and learning resources and these are used effectively to promote a wide range of physical activities.
84. Pupils' attitudes are good and they behave well in lessons. They share resources sensibly and collaborate with each other very well in paired work. They enjoy activities and show high levels of commitment, which enables them to reach good standards. Year 6 pupils show mature attitudes. This was demonstrated in an athletics lesson when partners discussed sensibly with each other how they could improve their performance in sprinting and jumping. They have a good understanding of tactics and although seeking to defeat opponents, they know that this should be achieved by fair play within the rules of the game.

85. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Two recently appointed leaders of the subject have responsibility for physical education. They have been successful in maintaining a good, broadly based range of learning opportunities and have invited specialist practitioners to visit school to improve teachers' knowledge and expertise. An action plan for improvement has been produced to develop the subject, but as yet no effective monitoring procedures are in place to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' performance. The school is aware of the weaknesses and have plans to address this area in the future. There has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the last in inspection. Standards and achievement levels have remained similar, but extra- curricular provision has improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.
- Assessment is good and enables staff to be able to check on pupils' progress in their personal development.

Commentary

86. The subject is treated as an important one in this school and specific lessons are timetabled appropriately. Many opportunities are taken to introduce concepts of looking after oneself and citizenship in other lessons, and, personal, social and health education does much to enhance pupils' personal development. Opportunities are taken to reinforce ideas from lessons in other areas such as religious education and worship. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the ways to keep safe and healthy and have an understanding that is as expected for their age about relationships and the problems faced by people in society. Pupils have made very good progress in developing an appreciation of personal, social and health issues since they started in the Reception class, and there is appropriate assessment of their personal development to demonstrate this. Pupils enjoy the lessons, as they are planned well and are sensitively delivered. This subject is very beneficial in promoting pupils' speaking skills, as well as their thinking skills.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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