

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEEN'S CRESCENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chippenham

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126294

Headteacher: Mrs G Clark

Lead inspector: Mr R Fry

Dates of inspection: 4 – 7 May 2004

Inspection number: 257252

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	342
School address:	Windsor Close Chippenham
Postcode:	SN14 0QT
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Underhill
Date of previous inspection:	2 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Queen's Crescent Primary School is a larger than average sized school. Children's attainment on entry to the school is slightly below average overall. The school draws pupils from a wide area across Chippenham and has grown significantly in the last five years. Many teachers are relatively new to the school. There are mixed age classes in Years 3 to 6. The socio-economic composition of the school is mixed. Three and a half per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is a below average proportion. Eleven per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. Some of these pupils, for example, need extra help with reading and writing skills or have specific other learning difficulties. Three pupils have statements of their special educational needs. Five per cent of pupils have minority ethnic backgrounds and all speak English fluently.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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27240	Tony Hooper	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Queen's Crescent Primary is a very good school. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to attain well above average standards in national tests at the end of the year. Pupils' achievement is good across the school. Teaching and learning are good. The headteacher and staff lead and manage the school very well. Governors make a very good contribution to the work of the school. The school is very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has high expectations for the school and provides outstanding leadership.
- Pupils' achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science and is good overall.
- Pupils' standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 this year and are above average in Year 2.
- The teaching and pupils' learning are good. A significant proportion of the teaching is very good. A few teachers have a limited understanding of information and communication technology (ICT) and music.
- Pupils' attendance is well above average. Links with parents and the community are very good.
- The support and care for pupils are very good. Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are very good.
- The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural education is very good.
- ICT is not used often enough to support work in other subjects, however the provision is much improved.
- Some literacy lessons are too short and pupils do not have enough time to complete all their work.

There has been good improvement with the key issues identified during the last inspection. Pupils' standards of work in religious education and ICT have improved and meet the required standards. There are schemes of work for all subjects, which help teachers to plan courses of lessons. The management of subjects by subject leaders is now good. Checks on teaching and pupils' learning are strengths of the school. Teachers' lesson planning is systematic and thorough. The systems the school has to assess pupils' learning are good. There are now many good resources for teachers to use in lessons. The school has sustained strengths identified previously.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The school's results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6:	Queen's Crescent compared with all schools			and similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	B	A	A
Mathematics	D	C	A	A
Science	D	A	A	A

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

Pupils' achievement is good. The table above shows that in comparison with schools with broadly similar intakes in 2003, Year 6 pupils' standards of work were well above average in English, mathematics and science. The improvement ('value added') made by pupils since Year 2 has been well above average. Year 2 pupils' standards in 2003, in comparison with broadly similar schools, were well above average in mathematics and above average in reading and writing. Overall, the school's improvement in Year 2 results has been above average since 1999.

In Reception this year, children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals set for them nationally. In Year 2, pupils are on course to attain standards above those expected nationally. In Year 6 indications are that pupils' standards of work are well above those expected nationally. Overall, pupils achieve well in each key stage. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers across the school. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well. Pupils reach the expected standards in religious education and ICT. Boys' results compare very well with boys' results nationally. Variations in results from year to year reflect differences in pupils' abilities. The good teaching significantly improves pupils' achievement.

Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Virtually all pupils arrive at school on time. Standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school. The attendance rate at the school is well above the national average. **Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils' spiritual development is good. Relationships are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. The systems for assessing pupils' progress are good. The teaching allows pupils to make rapid progress in English, mathematics and science in many lessons across the school. Teachers motivate pupils by making lessons interesting and fast moving. Teachers insist on very good behaviour and concentration. Pupils respond enthusiastically and learn effectively. Literacy lessons are sometimes too short. In a small number of lessons teachers' knowledge of ICT and music was limited and prevented pupils from making good progress.

The curriculum is good. Teachers enrich lessons well with visits and visitors. Teachers do not use ICT enough to help pupils learn in some other subjects. Partnerships with parents and the community are very good. The school provides very effective care for pupils. Teachers value pupils' views greatly. Links with other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. Governors lead the school very well, and all legal requirements are met. The headteacher provides excellent leadership with the deputy headteacher in areas such as the school's own evaluation of its work. The effects of the growth of the school and of changes of staff have been very well managed. The school's improvement plan identifies the school's areas for development well. Subject leaders co-ordinate their responsibilities effectively and have good plans to improve further the provision and standards of pupils' work.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value the school's work. Inspectors judge that end-of-year progress reports for parents are of good quality but that more information about pupils' progress compared with national standards might be included. The home-school reading record is a successful system for communication with parents of younger pupils. The arrangements for borrowing books from the library are good and the school is looking to improve them further by increasing the stock and the time available for pupils to change books.

Pupils have very positive views about their school. They enjoy participating in all school events.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do are to:

- Provide additional training for some teachers in ICT and music to improve their knowledge.
- Develop further the use of ICT to support pupils' work in some subjects.
- Extend the length of some literacy lessons so that pupils have time to complete their work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils attain standards that are above average in English and mathematics in Year 2. In Year 6 pupils' standards of work are well above average in English, mathematics and in science. Pupils' achievement overall is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils' standards of work are well above average in English, mathematics and science this year.
- Pupils achieve well overall and very well in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.3 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1 (14.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (27.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.8 (26.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	33.5 (30.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The tables above show that in comparison with schools nationally in 2003, the school's standards have been higher than average. In 2003, Year 6 pupils' standards of work were well above average in English, mathematics and science. The improvement ('value added') made by pupils since Year 2 has been well above average. These standards were attained because of, for example, the good teaching that motivates pupils to do their very best and pupils' very good attitudes to work. The high quality of leadership of the headteacher and senior staff has also had a major positive effect on raising standards. The teaching meets the capabilities of groups, including for higher and lower-attaining pupils in mixed age classes. Year 2 pupils' standards in 2003 were similarly well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, the school's improvement in results has been above average in the last four years.
2. The school has set realistically high targets for Year 6 pupils to attain in 2004. Indications now are that their standards of work are well above average compared with schools nationally. These expected standards reflect their prior attainment and the good teaching.
3. The school's records of pupils' results for each year show that pupils make good progress year on year and that pupils meet and sometimes exceed their targets. Pupils' achievement is consistently good in each key stage (Reception, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 to 6). Pupils from

minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers across the school. There are no significant reasons for the differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Boys' results compare very well with boys' results nationally. Girls were found to be participating as well as boys in lessons and the improvements that the school has put in place to improve girls' attainment are working well. Improvement in standards generally has come about because of the improved teaching. Teachers, for example, have used the National Numeracy Strategy successfully to improve pupils' standard of work in mathematics.

4. The upward trend in results is also due to the very good leadership generally in English, mathematics and science and the school's capacity to understand and act on trends in standards. Teachers have isolated several significant factors to improve standards. Teachers make lessons even more interesting by teaching about subjects in topics, for example, about China and Africa.
5. There is a wide range of abilities amongst children when they start school. Children's achievement is good and by the end of the Reception year, most children attain the expected levels in all Areas of Learning. Children have good routines and know how to behave in school by the time they leave Reception, which allows them to make the most of their education to come. Pupils' progress and achievement are enhanced by the way that activities are well matched to pupils' differing abilities.
6. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills. Pupils write in a variety of styles across different subjects of the curriculum. Interesting examples of extended writing were seen, for example, when pupils discuss different types of homes in geography, recount a visit to Chepstow Castle in history and describe the features of the Great Wall as part of a whole-school project on China.
7. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in science or to measure components in design and technology. In geography they look at lines of latitude and longitude and measure distances on maps. However, these opportunities tend to occur coincidentally, rather than as part of systematic planning of mathematical development.
8. In art pupils achieve well because teachers have extended pupils' skills rapidly. They have provided pupils with an extended curriculum. 'Artists in residence' and other initiatives have raised standards considerably and pupils' interest in art is high.
9. Pupils reach the nationally expected standards in ICT, because they are taught the key skills and have some opportunities to use what they know in different subjects. Many teachers are confident when teaching ICT skills, but pupils' progress is limited by the lack of expertise of a few staff. ICT is not used often enough in some subjects, such as science, to develop pupils' skills further.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets in English and mathematics because the teaching assistants provide effective support under the direction of well informed teachers and the special educational needs' co-ordinator. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported effectively and also achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' personal development is very good. Their spiritual development is good and their moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes rigorous checks on pupils' attendance.
- Pupils display very good attitudes towards school, and a keenness to work.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.

Commentary

11. The school has very good systems for promoting and maintaining pupils' good attendance. Parents have a clear understanding of the school's high expectations and virtually all parents respond very well to them. Pupils' attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection because of the high priority the school places on regular attendance and a thorough system of checks. Very few pupils are regularly late in the morning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Pupils' attitudes are very good. Pupils are very willing to take responsibilities and undertake a variety of duties. For example, older pupils help prepare the hall for assemblies and operate sound and vision equipment. Young children enjoy classroom tasks. The active school's council gathers pupils' views and ideas for improvements that all may enjoy, such as the quiet garden development, and makes them happen. Staff support the school's council very well. Pupils are very happy and take part in the good range of after school clubs.
13. Pupils' attitudes have improved since the last inspection because pupils are at the centre of all the work of the school. Pupils behave very well in and around school. They are very polite to others and to visitors. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic learners. Behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes is very good and it is very well managed. Expectations of good behaviour are made clear; 'Golden Rules' for pupils to follow are well displayed around the school. Pupils indicated in the questionnaire that they feel behaviour is satisfactory but that some pupils do not always behave well. During the period of inspection, behaviour was very good. Pupils expressed no serious concerns because adults respond very well to any requests made of them.
14. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Pupils have very good relationships with all others, including adults. Pupils' personal development is very well monitored. The personal and social education programme and very interesting assemblies contribute very well. Pupils have high moral standards and effectively distinguish right from wrong. They respect and understand the values and beliefs of others and have a very good awareness of their own and others' cultural traditions. Pupils learn about people in other countries and how they live. Children in Reception experience good personal, social and emotional development. They are well supported by all adults, who prepare them very well for entry to the main school.
15. There have been no exclusions in the current school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good and teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are good. The curriculum is good. The school provides a good range of activities to make learning interesting. The accommodation is very good. Pupils are very well cared for. Links with parents and the community are very good. The school takes very good account of pupils' views.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good, and there are aspects of very good teaching in all age groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning for pupils of Reception age are consistently good.
- Teachers' planning and insistence on high standards of behaviour are very good and assessment is used well to match work closely to pupils' needs.
- Innovative teaching has helped to raise standards in spoken language and writing skills.
- Very effective use is made of visiting specialists in art and design.
- Some teachers require additional training to improve their expertise in certain subjects.
- ICT skills are taught satisfactorily, but computers are not used sufficiently to assist teaching and learning in some subjects.
- English lessons are often too short and pupils do not always complete their written tasks.

Commentary

16. During the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed and was good or better in eight out of ten lessons. The school has maintained the good features of teaching since the previous inspection when the quality of teaching was good throughout the school. However, the teaching is now more effective and pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	13 (26%)	27 (54%)	10 (20%)	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.

17. Teaching and learning for children of Reception age are consistently good. Teachers and classroom assistants have a good understanding of how young children learn and they work together well. They have high expectations of children's attitudes and behaviour and constantly encourage them to increase their confidence. The curriculum is well planned and co-ordinated. Lessons have clear targets and children make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals for young children. Staff frequently check children's knowledge and understanding, and provide tasks that are well matched to children's individual needs. They give good support to children with special needs.
18. In Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1), and in Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2), teaching is good, overall. It is at times very good in English, mathematics and science, and at least satisfactory in all other subjects.

19. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a happy and very productive atmosphere. Constant encouragement and very effective behaviour management result in pupils' good concentration and very positive attitudes to work. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn and make good progress throughout the school.
20. Teachers often use time effectively in lessons, especially in mathematics. But often there is insufficient time available in English lessons for pupils to complete the written exercises set to consolidate their learning. Teachers make satisfactory use of teaching resources in order to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. The teaching of ICT has improved. Most teachers have at least a sound knowledge of computer systems, and ICT skills are taught satisfactorily.
21. Teachers' planning is very thorough and usually builds well on the outcomes of previous lessons. Teachers generally show a good command of subject knowledge. Occasionally, however, individual teachers lack sufficient expertise in certain areas, and this limits the effectiveness of their teaching. This was observed in lessons in music, French and ICT. Very effective use is made of visiting artists in residence to inspire pupils and to pass on new skills to non-specialist class teachers.
22. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. Pupils benefit from daily guided reading sessions where they enjoy a good variety of activities to develop and improve their reading, comprehension and spelling skills. The teaching of spoken language and writing skills has been assisted greatly by the school's participation in an innovative oracy project. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum.
23. Assessment systems for checking pupils' progress are good in English, mathematics and science, and are satisfactory in other subjects. They are used effectively to set targets for the whole school and for individual pupils. There is also a good emphasis on pupils evaluating their own progress at the end of lessons. Therefore, pupils generally have a good idea how to improve. Teachers' marking of pupils' work, however, is inconsistent. It does not always contain helpful suggestions indicating how pupils could improve.
24. Teachers use the results of assessments well to ensure that work planned for pupils of different ages and abilities and those with special educational needs are well matched to their needs. In a good literacy lesson in Year 2, for example, higher-attaining pupils compiled their own lists of words containing *er*, *ir*, and *ur* sounds and used them in complete sentences. Meanwhile, lower-attaining pupils, working with the class teacher, made a common list of words with *oi* and *oy* sounds, and worked together to fill the gaps in simple sentences with suitable words.
25. The special educational needs' co-ordinator liaises effectively with teachers to ensure that targets set on pupils' individual education plans are appropriate and support pupils' learning. Well-deployed teaching assistants are used to support pupils with special educational needs. Where pupils have statements of special need, teaching assistants are used very well to ensure that learning is well supported but that pupils participate in all class activities. Classroom assistants have a good understanding of the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and use a variety of ways of teaching to help them. Younger pupils, for example, join cards showing initial sounds to those displaying word endings to create complete words, and play Lotto games with rhyming words. Older pupils use a thesaurus to widen their vocabulary.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall. There is a wide range of learning opportunities for pupils and the curriculum is enhanced by a variety of innovative activities. Accommodation and resources are good, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning of topics promotes a good range of learning and motivates pupils.
- Opportunities for curricular enrichment through the oracy project and the use of visiting experts are very good.
- The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are implemented well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Teachers prepare pupils very well for the next stages in their education.
- ICT is not used effectively to support work in some subjects.
- Good use is made of the building to create a stimulating learning environment.

Commentary

26. The quality and range of the curriculum are good and overall they have improved since the last inspection. For example, the school now offers French language teaching to pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school meets all statutory requirements and satisfactorily implements the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum is kept under constant review and the school is conscious of the need to ensure that all pupils get as much as they can from lessons. The school has devised a successful two-year cycle of teaching topics to ensure that pupils in the mixed age classes cover all the areas of the schemes of work.
27. The needs of different groups of pupils are addressed well in mixed age classes. Teachers prepare pupils very well for the next stages in their education. Consequently, pupils make good progress with their work in a short time, when for example they move from one year to the next.
28. Teachers' planning in some subjects is based on a topic approach, which develops links between subjects. This process successfully motivates pupils. In a science lesson, pupils studying friction experimented with materials for the soles of the BFG's shoes (a character from Roald Dahl's story 'Big Friendly Giant') to find which would help him to run faster. Teachers' clear focus on developing pupils' understanding of scientific enquiry has contributed significantly to their understanding of collecting evidence through observation and measurement.
29. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are implemented very well and consequently pupils make very good progress in both literacy and numeracy. The school's involvement in national projects, such as that focused on oracy, has made a significant contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills and to pupils' understanding and enjoyment of stories.
30. The range of activities that is made available to pupils enhances the curriculum and the quality of learning. The school regularly arranges 'residencies,' where an artist spends a short time in school working with pupils to develop both their skills and appreciation of art. The finished work that results significantly enhances the school building and is reflected in the good standards achieved by pupils in art. The curriculum is further extended through a variety of clubs led by members of staff and through sporting fixtures with other schools.
31. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and appropriate action taken as needed to help them learn effectively. Pupils' individual education plans meet the needs of pupils and are kept under constant review. Pupils receive good support from teaching assistants who know the pupils well. Consequently, pupils achieve well. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs works effectively with staff and ensures that all procedures are in place to track and review pupils' progress.
32. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. Whilst it is used to support work in some subjects, opportunities for pupils to use it as a tool for learning are limited in other subjects, such as mathematics.

33. The school's buildings are modern and have been very well maintained. The internal space is used effectively to create a stimulating learning environment. The shared areas of the school and individual classrooms have interesting displays of a balance of pupils' work and information. Outside, the grounds are being developed to provide quiet and shaded areas, as well as interesting play spaces. The accommodation has a very positive effect on pupils' education. There is a good range of expertise and experience amongst staff overall.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Pupils receive very good support, advice and guidance. The school seeks and acts on pupils' views very effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very good standard of care and has a very good regard for all aspects of health and safety.
- Induction arrangements help children to settle well.
- Pupils' views are regularly sought and are highly valued, helping to raise pupils' self-esteem.

Commentary

34. The comments about the promotion of the health, welfare and safety of all pupils contained in the last report were positive. The staff has become more aware of pupils' individual needs since the school was opened. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are very good. The staff has been appropriately trained in first aid and minor injuries are carefully recorded and monitored. The site and equipment are regularly checked and tested and any health and safety concerns dealt with very well. The standard of daily maintenance is high. The diligent caretaker and his team look after the building very well and pupils learn to respect their surroundings because adults do. The office manager manages the accommodation very well.
35. The staff understand child protection procedures very well. A senior teacher discharges these duties very well. The school places a high value upon this important aspect of care and the headteacher and a member of the governing body are due to update their training in the very near future. The school has good systems in place to offer support and guidance for those pupils with special educational needs. A very close liaison is maintained with support services, ensuring that all pupils' specific needs are very well supported. Attendance is very well monitored and has led to the well above average rate of attendance.
36. Induction arrangements are very effective. Close contact is maintained with parents, so that their children feel happy and secure when they first join the school. Children quickly make good progress in lessons. Older pupils have a good introduction to secondary schools.
37. The school greatly values, encourages and supports pupils' expression of their views. Consequently, pupils feel happy and valued at school. The elected school's council representatives share pupils' ideas with members of staff who support them well within the council. The headteacher has provided much encouragement too for this initiative. Teachers and other adults in the school know the pupils and their families well and provide very good personal support. The school has a good knowledge of pupils' academic progress and provides good support in lessons so that pupils' needs are met.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very successful link with parents and keeps them very well involved in school life. There are strong links with the community and very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with parents and the local community support learning well.
- There are very good arrangements for the transfer of pupils.
- The school deals very effectively with parents' suggestions and complaints.

Commentary

38. The school provides very good information about the school to parents, including a fortnightly newsletter. It provides good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's attainment and progress. Specific curricular information meetings have also been held to enable parents to understand fully their children's work at the school, as well as providing guidance about statutory attainment tests. Parents find these meetings very helpful and reassuring. Full information is also provided in the school brochure and in the annual governors' report to parents. This information allows parents to be fully aware and very well involved in the life and work of the school. The Friends' Association gives generous support to the school, such as by purchasing extra equipment for pupils to use in lessons.
39. The school seeks parents' views effectively and often through questionnaires or personal visits. The school is keen to respond to most of the suggestions made. Most parents help their children at home with homework and reading. Parents of younger pupils use the reading record effectively. A few parents do not use this well, or regularly, as a means of communication with the school. The school is at the heart of the local community and welcomes visitors. The school deals very effectively with parents' suggestions and complaints. The headteacher records parents' views thoroughly and seeks to meet all parents' needs. The end of year progress reports for parents are of good quality. Some parents feel there is not enough information about their children's progress compared with national standards in them. The school might consider including this information every year. Parents attend musicals and other events held at the school enthusiastically. A Methodist church group meets regularly at the school at weekends and the school visits the local church. A church worker regularly takes assemblies successfully.
40. Very well developed links have been established with the two main receiving secondary schools. Liaison teachers visit the school so as to offer good guidance to pupils before transfer. Primary headteachers in the local cluster of schools meet regularly to enjoy professional development opportunities or discuss concerns. This helps pupils to be well prepared for their next stages of learning. The collaboration with other schools stated in the last report has become more structured and therefore much more effective.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good, overall. The leadership and management skills of the headteacher are excellent. Senior staff are very effective. Governance is very effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff have developed a very successful school built on the high aspirations of the headteacher and close teamwork.
- The management structure is very efficient.
- Governors' leadership of the school is very effective.
- School development planning identifies issues for improvement very well.
- Subjects are well co-ordinated.

Commentary

41. Governors have helped to shape the direction for the school very effectively since the last inspection. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well. Governors bring their expertise to meetings and make very good use of it, such as in the areas of finance and health and safety. Governors know that standards have improved and why this is so. The school seeks best value for its purchases and the very efficient administrators have been successful in doing this. At the end of last financial year, the school had a significant surplus. Most of this money will be spent on resources for teachers to use in class, to fund a building extension and to buy interactive computerised white boards for some rooms in the school.
42. The school has improved in effectiveness. Standards are higher and pupils' achievement is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. One reason for this improvement is that performance management (the yearly appraisal of teachers' effectiveness), which identifies and addresses teachers' training needs, has focused teachers' attention on raising standards. Each teacher has one target in common with all staff to complete. This is the most important area that the school needs to do to improve pupils' learning. There has been a high turnover of staff but recruitment and training have been very well managed. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers, for example, are thorough and very well organised. They feel part of the school and have opportunities to see colleagues at work in other classes and schools. The process has helped to improve their teaching skills.
43. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has managed the school with a clear vision, for example, in maintaining open channels of communication with pupils, staff and parents. She, the deputy headteacher and the staff work very well together. The headteacher has a deep knowledge of teaching and motivates her staff with deserved praise, as well as asking for their best efforts at all times. She is constantly looking for ways to improve the provision whilst maintaining equal opportunity for all. The inclusive nature of the school is a strength, which was confirmed by several parents.
44. The headteacher has led the school outstandingly well and previous weaknesses have been addressed thoroughly. The management structure is very efficient. The very effective deputy headteacher has a role at all levels and keeps a close watch on the quality of the school's work. Each group of teachers, such as subject co-ordinators, senior management team members and year team leaders have specific roles that are clearly defined. There is no repetition of duties and decisions made amongst different groups all feed into the very efficient process for making decisions. The general high level of efficiency of the school has raised standards in many areas of its work.
45. The headteacher and staff have evaluated lessons very effectively, for example in English. The headteacher's reports to teachers are very informative and detailed. The information gained has enabled senior staff to determine what the school should do term-by-term to improve the provision. There is a shared understanding of what needs to be done, which reflects the very good leadership of senior staff. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science manage their subjects very well. They have good plans for improvement that reflect the checks they have made on their subjects.
46. There is a very good school development plan in place, spanning several years. It highlights all the main areas the school has identified that need improvement in the future and explains what has happened in the past. It is well focused and reflects the intention to provide high quality experiences for pupils in all aspects of the school's life. The layout of the plan is complex and it is not straightforward to find the school's key priorities this year. However, the plan is a very good reference point in all other respects. It reminds teachers, for example, to record and check individual pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science and make adjustments to the curriculum or to pupils' targets when required. This process has raised standards.

47. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well. The co-ordinator has developed effective systems to ensure that the progress of individual pupils is followed. Consequently, this group of pupils achieves well. Pupils have enough adult support for them to make good progress towards their individual targets. The co-ordinator efficiently administers the provision, ably helped by all adults in the school whom she trains in the necessary skills. The extra support for individuals and groups of pupils outside class lessons provided by teaching assistants is effective and has helped to raise standards generally. The school evaluates the overall provision very effectively and ensures that all activities give a very good return for the time and money spent.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	732 109
Total expenditure	730505
Expenditure per pupil	2 214

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46 179
Balance carried forward to the next	67 645

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children in the Reception classes receive a good start to their education. The provision of equipment in the outside learning environment has improved since the last inspection and now provides a range of opportunities for children to climb, balance and jump. Teaching and learning are good in all Areas of Learning and children achieve well. Teachers share detailed planning and ensure that all members of staff are well informed about activities. Part time teachers are clear about which activities they are leading. Therefore children make good progress and feel equally confident with all adults in the classroom.

Assessments of what children know, understand and can do are good and influence what teachers plan for individual children and for groups. Children's standards on entry to Reception cover a broad range but overall the abilities of many children are assessed by the school as below the standards of children nationally. On entry inspectors judged that children enter the school with skills and knowledge typical of children nationally or slightly below in some years. By the time they enter Year 1, they have made good progress and have attained the expected goals for children of their age in all areas. In some elements of communication, language and literacy children in the current Reception year are expected to exceed what is expected as a result of the very successful oracy project.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop their levels of personal independence well.
- Routines are well established.
- There are good opportunities for children to work collaboratively.

Commentary

48. Teaching in this area is good and results in good achievement. Adults create a calm and purposeful atmosphere that fosters good attitudes and good behaviour. Children quickly develop confidence and establish good relationships with other children and with adults. Routines are familiar to the children and help them to manage their time and to work effectively in the classroom. They know that when they hear the wind chimes they must stop and listen and that counting down means they are nearing the end of an activity. They know that at some times during the day they will work with an adult and at others they will be expected to complete a task without direct supervision. The good planning and high expectations of the adults around them ensure that children are interested in what they do and concentrate well. Children work well together in groups. They discuss their work sensibly and help each other. When playing outside they are able to share toys and wait patiently for their turn to ride the bikes. The children receive plenty of praise and encouragement, which builds their self-esteem and confidence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed effectively.
- Early reading and writing skills are well supported.
- Children communicate confidently.

Commentary

49. Teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good in this area. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their communication skills. Teachers extend pupils' speaking and listening skills through the school's involvement in a national oracy project. Children confidently join in the telling of familiar stories and change the elements of the story to construct one of their own. They contribute confidently. The high expectation adults have of them, coupled with sensitive support for individuals, foster children's confidence in speaking to the group and answering questions. Stimulating activities are planned to develop reading and writing skills. Some of these are led by the teacher and focus clearly on early reading skills, such as knowledge of sounds and building words. Well organised activities and good use of resources help children to establish their understanding of language. The children initiate some activities, such as those in the role-play area. During the inspection, the role-play area was set up as a café. Children took orders, wrote them down and then served their customers.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a range of activities to develop mathematical understanding.
- Children are beginning to use numbers with confidence.

Commentary

50. Teaching is good overall. The range of activities that are planned support children's developing understanding well. In one session children counted to 10 in 2s and then sang a familiar song about 10 fat sausages taking away 2 sausages each time successfully. In the group activities some children played skittles, counting how many they had knocked over and how many were left. A good range of resources helps children to consolidate what they have learned. Games and construction materials are also used to interest and support children in their understanding of number. Therefore, children choose appropriate pieces to make a model and cut paper to size accurately when completing a worksheet.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- Activities are interesting and are linked to the current topic.

Commentary

51. Children make good progress and achieve well in this area because they have a wide range of opportunities planned for them. The activities foster and develop children's natural curiosity and thus interest and motivate them. In one session children made sandwiches for a picnic. They used a knife to spread the butter and talked about what they were doing. When reading the book, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar,' children learned about plants, finding out the names of different parts of the plant and what they need to grow. Although no ICT was seen during the inspection, children's work showed they had used the computer to draw pictures. Visitors extend children's understanding using practical activities so that they learn more about their world. Visitors include staff from Bristol Zoo, who talked to children about minibeasts.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for this area is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills both indoors and out.
- The outside play area is attractive and is used regularly.

Commentary

52. Children use both the school hall and the outside area regularly. In the hall, teachers' planned activities ensure children make good progress in moving around large spaces and developing a sense of control over their own movements. Physical skills are further developed in the outside area where children learn to climb and jump and to ride large wheeled toys. There are areas for quiet play and children use these to develop imaginative games, sometimes with their own toys. Children have access to a wide range of equipment such as scissors, brushes, pens and pencils. Their hand movements are extended and developed through the regular use of these items and children are confident when cutting and mark making.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a wide range of opportunities for imaginative play.
- Planned activities foster creativity.

Commentary

53. Teachers' planning in this area is good. Children make good progress because of the wide range of opportunities available to them. Role-play is linked to the current topic. Children played in the 'café,' taking orders, selecting items of food and discussing them with the customers. Children are interested and appreciate the work done by others. In one session, a group of children were making clay tiles. The teacher demonstrated how to make a design in the clay. The children watched intently and applauded spontaneously when she had finished. They learn to sing familiar songs and rhymes. In another lesson they sang, 'Incey Wincey Spider,' and then added a good musical accompaniment. When they had finished and listened to the recording, they discussed with the teacher what they thought went well and how it could be made better. In all activities adults work alongside the children, showing children what to do where necessary and giving sensitive comments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **very good**. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, especially in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Innovative teaching through a very effective oracy project has helped to raise standards in speaking and writing.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to work and achieve very well. Consequently, standards are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6.
- Teachers' good use of assessment of pupils' progress results in work that is well matched to individual pupils' needs.
- Pupils do not make enough use of computers to draft and re-draft text.
- Lessons are often too short for pupils to finish written assignments.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

54. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject, work sensibly and achieve very well by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs receive plenty of assistance from teachers and teaching assistants. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English.
55. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. Pupils throughout the school make very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills.
56. Pupils in Year 2 talk confidently to their teachers. Both girls and boys give full responses using a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils are successfully developing their spoken language skills through an innovative oracy project. They learn to re-tell well known stories together and then amend and adapt the framework of these stories to develop their own writing styles. In Year 2, for example, pupils joined in re-telling the story of *Billy Goats Gruff* enthusiastically, and then re-wrote the outline of the story in their own way. Older pupils regularly use a thesaurus during lessons to find interesting words with similar meanings to broaden their vocabulary.
57. Pupils respond well to their teachers' questions, take an active part in class discussions and share ideas sensibly. They enjoy role-play and drama lessons. In a very good drama lesson in Year 3, pupils acted out snapshots from Oscar Wilde's story of the *Selfish Giant*. This helped them to evaluate and portray how the characters felt in different situations. Pupils who are elected to the school's council receive a valuable opportunity to develop their debating skills. Each year, all pupils take part in drama and musical productions that enable them to improve their performance skills in front of a large audience. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, recently presented a production of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang!* While those in Years 5 and 6 are working on play scripts of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* in preparation for their summer show.
58. Standards in reading are above average in Year 2 and are well above average in Year 6. Pupils of all ages are keen to read and achieve very well by the end of Year 6.
59. Teachers and parents work together well to promote good reading habits. Staff listen regularly to pupils' reading during guided reading times, while parents are encouraged to share books with children at home on a daily basis. Home-school reading records are used

well to monitor pupils' progress. There is a good variety of interesting activities during daily guided reading sessions to develop pupils' reading and comprehension skills. In Year 1, for instance, one group, working with the teacher, took turns to read aloud while another group learned new spellings. Some pupils looked at non-fiction books on their own, while others used words on cards to form complete sentences. In other guided reading sessions, older pupils in Years 3 and 4 answered questions on a passage about castles, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 explained the layout of a magazine article.

60. Pupils in Year 2 talk with interest about the books they are reading and re-tell the story in some detail. They use a range of ways to read unknown words, and most read simple stories confidently. By Year 6, most pupils read a wide variety of texts fluently and with good expression. They understand the subtleties in the text and infer additional information by reading between the lines. Pupils use library skills well to locate information on a variety of topics. They use the school library regularly to borrow books from the good range of fiction and non-fiction books. The library is well organised, but the space available for issuing and reading books is quite restricted for a large school, and this limits the amount of use pupils can make of the library at lunchtimes and for recreational reading. There is not enough time allocated for all pupils to change their books every term. The school is looking to improve arrangements by increasing the stock and the time available for pupils to change books.
61. Standards in writing are above average in Year 2 and are well above average in Year 6. Pupils achieve very well throughout the school.
62. Pupils in Year 2 write in full sentences and most make consistent use of capital letters and full stops. They use a range of different writing styles successfully including instructions, stories, diaries and poetry. They use interesting vocabulary when writing, and often use a thesaurus to find a range of similar words. One pupil for instance wrote, "My dog woke up and did a very scary, loud yawn", while another observed, "Peter Pan yanked the door wide open." Teachers encourage pupils to write at length by using joining words such as *first*, *next*, and *finally*. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils improved their first attempts at writing a letter. Pupils suggested a range of interesting vocabulary such as *petrified*, *speechless*, *shocked* and *excited* to describe the girl's emotions.
63. Since the previous inspection, the school has provided more opportunities for writing in a variety of styles and across different subjects of the curriculum. Good examples of descriptive writing were seen in subjects such as geography and history. Different styles include book reviews, play scripts, persuasive leaflets and formal letters of complaint. Pupils use expressive vocabulary and plan thoroughly before starting to write. In a very good lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils used their own detailed planning to write an autobiographical account of Charlie exploring the chocolate factory. One boy wrote, "As I entered the Chocolate Room my mouth was watering with joy," while a girl wrote, "Wonka winked as he led me to the room of my dreams. I felt all the blood rushing through my body like the water on the Niagara Falls." ICT is used on occasions to improve the presentation of finished work, but computers are not used enough to draft and re-draft text, and there is little use of ICT as a resource for teaching and learning.
64. Teaching and learning in literacy lessons are good, overall, and are sometimes very good. Teachers have high expectations and plan carefully, taking into account the individual needs of pupils. Often, however, pupils do not have enough time during lessons to complete the written exercises planned by teachers to consolidate their learning. Pupils' capacity to make very good progress at those times is limited. Pupils' work is assessed thoroughly, and the results are used well when teachers plan future lessons. Individual targets are clearly displayed at the front of pupils' exercise books. In addition, there is a good emphasis on pupils' evaluating their own progress at the end of lessons. Both these practices help pupils to understand how they can improve further. Teachers' marking, however, is inconsistent, and does not always include sufficient advice on how pupils might improve their work. Good support by teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs achieve well during lessons.

65. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. There is a clear action plan to improve pupils' spoken language and writing skills further and this is already having a positive impact on standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. The school appreciates the importance of developing language and literacy skills across the whole curriculum. Interesting examples of extended writing were seen, for example, when discussing different types of homes in geography, when recounting a visit to Chepstow Castle in history and when describing the features of the Great Wall as part of a whole-school project on China. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills by writing in a variety of styles across different subjects of the curriculum.
67. Work in **French**, provided for pupils in Years 5 and 6, was sampled. It is not possible, therefore, to judge overall provision or teaching. A teacher from a nearby secondary school began the initiative with the school last September, and it is a productive link. Years 5 and 6 teachers devote 30 minutes each week to conversational French. Pupils can introduce themselves, know basic numbers and know a growing range of answers to questions, such as 'What is it?' Pupils enjoy lessons and gain from this early exposure to a foreign language. All pupils have many opportunities to ask and answer questions in French. In the two lessons observed, pupils identified classroom objects successfully. They spoke clearly and with an acceptable accent.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection and there has been very good improvement in the provision.
- Pupils in Year 2 attain standards above the national average and pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are well above average.
- All pupils achieve very well because of the good teaching and learning.
- There is a strong focus placed on developing pupils' problem solving skills.
- The grouping of pupils by ability (setting) helps pupils achieve very well.
- The use of ICT is under-developed.

Commentary

68. In the 2003 national tests, the standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were well above the national average. Nearly all pupils in both year groups reached the expected standard for their ages. More than half the seven-year-olds and almost half of the eleven-year-olds attained a higher standard. These results are significantly better than those attained in recent years and at the time of the last inspection. There was some difference in the performance of boys and girls, with boys performing better than girls in each age group.
69. During the current inspection, the standards seen were similar. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards above the national average, while pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are well above. In Years 1 and 2 pupils add and subtract confidently, and realise that these processes are closely linked. They name two-dimensional shapes confidently and some use terms such as 'symmetry' and 'right angle' to explain the difference between regular and irregular shapes. In the Year 3 and 4 classes, pupils use their knowledge of tables to identify relationships between numbers, and use this knowledge to multiply and divide.

70. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have a clear understanding of how to tackle more demanding problems that are set out in words. They work methodically, analyse the given information, and confidently select the correct processes to use to solve the problem. They divide whole and decimal numbers by 10 and 100 in their heads. All groups of pupils achieve very well from entering Year 1 to the end of Year 2, and from Year 2 to Year 6. The good support by teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as their classmates. During the inspection there was no significant difference found in the attainment of boys and girls. The introduction of setting in Years 2 to 6 provides for different abilities and extends more able pupils, while supporting those who find the subject difficult. There are occasional sessions at one of the local secondary schools to extend the skills of the most able pupils.
71. Since the last inspection the school has worked successfully to raise standards in mathematics. This has been a major focus in recent years and the local education authority has been involved in this undertaking. Many teachers received extra training in numeracy, which has increased their effectiveness. The National Numeracy Strategy forms a firm basis for lesson planning and this ensures that all areas of the National Curriculum are taught. Because of these initiatives, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected and higher levels has steadily risen. Pupils' knowledge and ability to use number have improved as a result of the focus on mathematics in the school. Work in pupils' books shows good examples of their understanding of a range of mathematical ideas, and how mathematics can be used to solve practical everyday problems. However, little of this work was done on computers, and during the inspection there was no ICT used in numeracy lessons.
72. In all the lessons seen, teaching was good and in some lessons was very good. Overall, the teaching over time is good. The lessons are carefully planned and have clear learning targets. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and standards. Time is used well, and pupils gain the maximum benefit from lessons as a result. Most lessons have a good pace that captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Teachers develop pupils' confidence by making sure that they fully understand how new work builds on previous learning. They also take care to develop pupils' mathematical vocabulary by using technical terms such as, 'inverse' and 'symbol'. Teaching assistants are well prepared, and make an effective contribution to raising standards, particularly by supporting pupils with special educational needs.
73. Books and equipment for use in lessons are good and have improved significantly since the last inspection. A commercial scheme of work effectively supplements the planning in the National Numeracy Strategy. There is a comprehensive system of assessment that makes it easy to see if any group or individual needs extra attention. All pupils have individual targets in their books and often assess their own progress informally at the end of lessons. However, sometimes the targets are too general and the time scale for achieving them is over-long.
74. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well. She is enthusiastic and monitors learning and teaching effectively across the school. This helps her to have a good understanding of what is happening in the teaching of mathematics and to support colleagues where necessary.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in science or measure components in design technology. In geography they study lines of latitude and longitude and measure distances on maps. However, these opportunities tend to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning of mathematical development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy science and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- There is a very good emphasis on practical scientific enquiry.
- The wide range of activities linked to topic work interests and motivates pupils.
- The monitoring and development of the subject are very good.

Commentary

76. The 2003 national test results showed that pupils at the end of Year 2 attained very well in comparison to standards nationally but that only average numbers of pupils attained a higher level. At the end of Year 6 pupils attained well above average standards. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in science are above average in Year 2 and are well above in Year 6. Due to good teaching and a well-developed focus on scientific enquiry, all pupils are making good progress and are achieving well. There has been good improvement since the last inspection when progress was satisfactory overall and a lack of focus on investigative and practical skills was identified.
77. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of magnetism and forces. They enjoy science because it is taught in a practical way with a very good emphasis on practical investigations. Pupils identify some of the major bones in the skeleton and indicate where they are located using a tabard worn by one of the class. Some pupils use the correct scientific names for the bones and this knowledge is well supported by the teachers' emphasis on correct names during questioning and discussions. Pupils are excited by lessons and concentrate well.
78. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have developed good investigative skills. This has been a focus for teaching. Pupils have learned to use observations and measurements through their daily 'quick science' activities. In a lesson where pupils used shoes to investigate friction, one group pointed out to another that they must use the same shoe, otherwise it would not be a fair test. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a very good understanding of making tests fair and understand how to use what information they already have to make predictions about the outcomes of what they are doing.
79. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good teaching observed. Teachers plan lessons that are interesting and creative. Teachers explain clearly what pupils are to do and ensure that the equipment needed is well prepared before the lesson. For example, a lesson about identifying the optimum amount of water needed for seeds to germinate was well organised. The teacher ensured that everyone knew what to do through asking well focused questions that quickly clarified any misconceptions. The teacher clearly demonstrated how the experiment was to be recorded. Discussions helped pupils to extend their thinking. The activity was linked to the current topic about 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,' and everyone shared the fun by pretending that the seeds would grow into chocolate bars. By the end of the lesson, pupils had prepared their seeds, added the correct amount of water and recorded what they had done. They knew that in order to be able to draw accurate conclusions only one variable could be changed each time.
80. Whilst activities are well planned and exciting, opportunities to use ICT in developing pupils' understanding through recording and research are not used often enough.

81. The subject is very effectively led and the subject leader makes efficient checks on the provision. The checks have contributed significantly to the improvement in the subject since the last inspection. The focus on developing staff's confidence through improvement of their subject knowledge has been successful. Teachers have enthusiastically adopted a comprehensive scheme of work to help them plan lessons. This provision has also contributed to this improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The computer suite is of good quality.
- The subject leaders have co-ordinated the subject well and the provision is much improved.
- Teaching and learning of ICT skills have good aspects.
- ICT is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.
- Some staff lack expertise and confidence in using ICT.

Commentary

82. In Years 2 and 6, pupils' ICT skills meet the standards expected nationally. The teaching ensures pupils make steady progress and achieve adequately. In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of all aspects of the subject.
83. Since the last inspection the school has received funding from the government's National Grid for Learning. This has meant that the resources for the subject have improved considerably. The two-year-old suite is well equipped. There are enough modern computers to teach whole classes comfortably, with at least one computer between two pupils. Most teachers' confidence and expertise have developed well through training provided by the New Opportunities Fund and through the school's own response to teachers' needs. These changes have helped to improve the quality of pupils' work. However, some teachers lack in-depth knowledge of ICT and therefore do not have the confidence to teach it well. Other teachers have high levels of expertise that they use to very good effect in lessons.
84. Teachers use national guidance as the basis for lesson planning. Teachers successfully share their planning with colleagues in the same year or years. This sharing of expertise is good, but less knowledgeable staff still find the subject difficult to teach because they have not practised the skills enough to make them confident.
85. The teaching is satisfactory. In the lessons seen, teachers' subject knowledge was often used well to give pupils clear explanations and demonstrations of how to do things. Teachers used questioning effectively to confirm pupils' learning and they maintained a reasonable pace in lessons. In Year 2, pupils learned to send e-mails telling 'Barnaby Bear' where they had been during time away from school. Pupils made rapid progress in this lesson because the teacher was familiar with all aspects of the program and could foresee all potential problems. A good link was made between ICT and geography. In Years 5 and 6, the newly qualified teacher expertly guided the class through the techniques of merging text and pictures. Pupils designed and labelled a chocolate bar wrapper successfully on screen, as part of their work in design and technology.
86. There was scope in some lessons in the suite for teachers to organise other activities for pupils who had finished their tasks on the computer. Teachers keep too few examples of pupils' work in pupils' workbooks. There is little evidence of what pupils have done in some classes because the system of electronic class folders is not organised well enough. Classrooms each have exciting displays about various subjects, but there are few dedicated to

ICT itself. Teachers keep adequate records of the work that pupils have covered with reference to the standards in the National Curriculum. Teachers do not have a more detailed record of the knowledge, skills and understanding of individual pupils to refer to when, for example, planning lessons. This is an area for the school to develop so that a closer watch can be kept on pupils' progress.

87. The subject is on the timetable for all classes and pupils receive regular lessons of at least satisfactory quality. Computers are reliable and the subject leader has a good level of personal knowledge of ICT. Her plans for the future are well written. The school, for example, plans to increase the number of computers in the suite so that most pupils in any class will have a computer to use on their own.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. There has been a considerable increase in the use of ICT in other subjects. Pupils' work shows that they are learning to use ICT for word processing, to draw pictures, find information on the Internet, handle data and make multi-media presentations that combine pictures and sound. Some teachers use computers in lessons more than others, such as for writing tasks in English, and to design packages in design and technology. Teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT in, for example, mathematics, science and religious education. Computers are not used enough to gather, store, explore and analyse information. The computers for pupils to use in classrooms are not used as often as they might be and this is an area for the school to develop.

HUMANITIES

89. Insufficient work was seen during the inspection to allow inspectors to form a judgement about provision, standards, teaching and learning in **history** and **geography**. As well as the observation of a small number of lessons, pupils' work was scrutinised, co-ordinators interviewed and the content of classroom displays noted.
90. At the last inspection, there were no schemes of work for the subjects. This situation has improved and the school now uses the nationally recommended schemes of work as a basis for planning in both geography and history. They cover the requirements of the National Curriculum effectively.
91. Resources in each subject are much better than they were at the time of the last inspection. In history there is a good stock of books and artefacts and the school makes good use of the local museum's loan system. This gives pupils the opportunity to extend their understanding of past eras. There are now much better stocks of books and atlases for pupils to use in their geographical work. Teachers use the same satisfactory system to assess pupils' progress as in most other subjects (apart from English, science and mathematics) to see how successfully pupils have understood units of work. The written system is supplemented by informative interviews with pupils, which enables teachers to see how well groups and individuals are progressing. The extended pieces of writing that are set for older pupils in history are effective in developing their skills in literacy. The emphasis on class discussions in both subjects helps all pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening.
92. There is a good programme of visits and fieldwork that enables pupils to broaden their knowledge of historical and geographical topics. In geography there are visits to local sites for work on specific projects, as well as trips further afield to focus on particular areas such as the coastline. In history there are also visits to local museums and historic sites as well as to places such as Caerleon, to bring the work done on the Romans to life. Visitors to the school such as a 'Roman soldier' and 'Ancient Egyptians' enliven history lessons. The recent project on China made very good links with other curriculum areas and developed pupils' awareness of the geography of China, as well as about some of its history.

93. Pupils make some use of the Internet to research topics in both subjects. In a geography lesson for pupils in a Years 5 and 6 class, good use was made of a video camera to record the pupils' work on weather forecasting.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Although pupils have good factual knowledge of religions, they are less able to understand the moral principles behind religious beliefs.

Commentary

94. During the last inspection, standards in religious education were below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, standards have risen and now meet those expected. Younger pupils learn about Judaism and know the layout of a synagogue. They understand the significance of the Torah as the Jewish scripture and what a Rabbi does. Older pupils are familiar with the parables of Jesus, and the way in which prayer forms part of people's lives. Although there are often opportunities to draw lessons from Bible stories and other areas of the subject, teachers do not always take them.
95. At the last inspection, there was too little direct teaching of the subject and the syllabus was not covered. This has been addressed and pupils have regularly timetabled lessons. The planning for the subject follows the local education authority's new scheme of work. This enables teachers with no specialist knowledge to teach the subject confidently and has helped to raise standards. The school has devised an appropriate two-year cycle of teaching topics to ensure that the pupils in the mixed age classes cover all the areas of the syllabus, in common with other subjects.
96. All of the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better, and overall, the teaching of the subject is satisfactory. Consequently, all pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because of the good support they receive in lessons. Some good quality discussion in class helps to improve pupils' standards of speaking and listening. The written work that pupils do in the subject also develops their skills in literacy effectively. Much of the marking of written work is good and contains helpful comments to enable pupils to make further progress.
97. The management of the subject is satisfactory and the co-ordinator is keen to raise the profile of the subject within the school. She has developed a straightforward and clear system of recording how successfully units of work have been taught, and how well pupils have understood them. Books and equipment are better than at the time of the last inspection and there is a good range of artefacts available. Teachers make good use of these in lessons to illustrate religious practices, and there is an appropriate emphasis on treating these with respect. There are visits from local faith community representatives and pupils have visited churches in the local area. The daily assemblies contribute effectively to the pupils' knowledge of religions and visiting speakers regularly take part in these occasions. The rise in standards, the improved resources, the implementation of a scheme of work and regular timetabling of the subject mean that the improvement since the last inspection is good. The use of ICT to record written work or research topics by using the Internet is limited.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

98. Insufficient work was seen during the inspection to allow inspectors to form a judgement about provision, standards, teaching and learning in **art and design, design and technology, music and physical education**. As well as the observation of a small number of lessons, pupils' work was scrutinised, co-ordinators interviewed and the content of classroom displays noted.
99. There is a wide range of attractive and high quality work in **art and design** of good quality. In Year 1, pupils produce observational drawings of shells using pencils and pastels. They paint houses, shops and a lighthouse carefully to stick onto a picture map of the island of *Struay*, and intertwine coloured pipe cleaners with wire mesh to form attractive Chinese dragonflies. They model swans, rabbits and trees in clay, and create rainbow collages well using coloured tissues and shiny papers. A computer paint program is used successfully to produce simple illustrations for a storybook about *Hansel and Gretel*. In Year 2, pupils study the works of Turner and produce a seascape by blending pastels. They use chalks and paint effectively to create pictures of their own homes, and silhouette black houses against a red, fiery background on a collage of the *Great Fire of London*.
100. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use collage effectively to represent the Big Friendly Giant's face, and use papier mâché to create a huge giant's boot. They stuff tights to create a face and sew on features such as a felt mouth and woollen hair. In one lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used clay effectively to model the BFG's head. Pupils quickly learned how to use the *slip* technique to stick features such as the nose and eyebrows onto the face. Older pupils develop their observational skills and learn a variety of techniques, such as shading and smudging. In a lesson in Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils learnt how to use lighter and darker skin colours to highlight facial features and to add depth to their paintings. They study artists such as Monet and use oil pastels to create attractive landscapes in the Impressionist style.
101. Excellent use is made of visiting artists who share their talents and inspire pupils. During the recent China project, pupils throughout the school worked with visiting artists to produce some outstanding work. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, used tissue paper on a wire mesh framework to create colourful models of koi carp. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 used a similar technique to produce a large dragon's head, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 created life-size models of a Chinese warrior and a Chinese fisherwoman. Pupils painted Chinese *willow patterns* onto paper or ceramic plates, and tried their hand at banners decorated with Chinese calligraphy. Throughout the school, there are attractive displays of well-crafted artwork produced by pupils working with previous visitors. These provide an attractive environment and help pupils to appreciate a wide range of artistic work.
102. The subject is well led and a new scheme of work ensures that there is a logical development of pupils' skills throughout the school. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and there are now sufficient books and equipment to study artists from a range of different cultures. Sketchbooks have recently been introduced in Years 2 to 6. Pupils develop their ideas further by attending an art club.
103. Photographs of **design and technology** work from 2003 show that pupils in all year groups completed a variety of projects. These included designing a bicycle for the *Jolly Postman* in Year 1, creating a football stadium from re-cycled materials in Year 2, designing skateboards in Years 3 and 4, and making an electrical-powered buggy in Years 5 and 6. In food technology, photographs show pupils in Years 3 and 4 preparing a Chinese buffet using ingredients such as lychees, pak choi and water chestnuts, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 were involved in planning and making a sandwich filling. There is little evidence, however, of work completed during the current academic year.
104. In the lesson observed, pupils in Year 1 designed the layout of a playground in preparation for making models of playground equipment. They made good progress and began to suggest which materials they might use to construct their models during the next lesson. In the other

Year 1 class, pupils had already completed their models, using straws, pipe cleaners and string, joined with sticky tape, to make satisfactory models of swings and park benches. At the time of the previous inspection, there was no scheme of work and standards were below average by Year 6. A new scheme of work based on national guidance is now in place.

105. In **music** in Year 2, pupils clapped a steady beat as they sang simple songs at different tempos. They began to explore the characteristics of a *Rondo*, but made no more than satisfactory progress due to the limited musical expertise of the non-specialist class teacher. In a good lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils identified recorded sounds such as galloping horses and thunder, and then used a range of percussion instruments such as maracas and tambours to reproduce the sounds successfully. At the previous inspection, there was no scheme of work and standards were below average by Year 6. The school has now adopted a commercial scheme of work to help teachers plan lessons, and this includes elements of composing and performing that were absent during the last inspection. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils had created *tactile scores* where objects like a rough stone represented sounds made by instruments such as a wooden agogo.
106. Pupils attend weekly singing practices to improve the standard of singing, and they sing tunefully and enthusiastically during collective worship. They listen to a variety of music played before and after assemblies. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to sing in end-of-term drama and musical productions, but there are currently no opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument. Pupils benefit from demonstrations by visiting specialists, including a workshop on African drumming rhythms presented by an African musician.
107. In **physical education**, pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed that they could successfully improve their gymnastic skills. Initially, pupils had some difficulty with some of the skills. However, pupils' very good attitudes to work meant that they soon overcame the problems and made good progress. Most pupils can hold a balance on two or three parts of their bodies for several seconds. They combined two balances smoothly using the hall apparatus in a wide variety of ways. In both lessons the teachers encouraged pupils to work safely. Teachers stopped the lessons at different points so that pupils could watch good examples of work and learn from them. Pupils made faster progress because their attention was drawn to the good work of other pupils.
108. The school has very good facilities for physical education and they help pupils to make good progress in lessons. The hall is large and there is a large field. Pupils develop their swimming skills well. A good range of extra-curricular activities develops pupils' skills further. The subject leader's action plan reflects the needs of the school and the subject is well co-ordinated.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

109. Two lessons were seen during the inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of the provision. However from the evidence available, PSHE is seen as an integral part of the curriculum and planning covers sex and drugs education and citizenship. The scheme of work has clear outline lesson plans for each year group to use. The co-ordinator checks that planned work is completed. A range of visiting speakers including the school nurse, local police and fire officers contributes to the programme. The programme makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. They learn to share, to understand how to behave towards one another and manage difficult situations, which arise in everyday life.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	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	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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