

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WARDEN HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115740

Headteacher: Mr J R Jones

Lead inspector: Paul Edwards

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Inspection number: 258303

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:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	411
School address:	Durham Close Warden Hill Cheltenham Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL51 3DF
Telephone number:	(01242) 523 827
Fax number:	(01242) 227 810
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Fay
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Warden Hill Primary School has 411 pupils on roll, 229 boys and 182 girls. Almost all pupils are from a white British background and a small minority are from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Just over 11 per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below the national average, and 1.7 per cent have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupil mobility is low, with five pupils joining and six pupils leaving the school at times other than the normal admission and leaving times. The school gained a School Achievement Award in 2003 and has recently gained both Artsmark and Activemark awards. Attainment on entry to the school is above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21069	Mr Paul Edwards	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs
31758	Mr Edward Tipper	Lay inspector	
17756	Mrs Heather Monaghan	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology
24137	Mrs Gail Robertson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage History Physical education
18502	Mrs Viv McTiffen	Team inspector	Science Geography Religious education Personal, social and health education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very effective school.** Leadership and management of the school are good and these, together with the good teaching, ensure that the pupils achieve well. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of activities. The school provides very good value for money.

### THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- The children are provided with a good start to their education in the Reception Year.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are above average, well above average in mathematics and science, and the pupils' achieve well.
- Standards are above average in music and information and communication technology (ICT) and well above average in art and design.
- The curriculum is rich and varied and provides many interesting activities for the pupils.
- Teaching is good overall and some of it is very good.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision and manages the school well.
- The roles of co-ordinators are not well enough developed to ensure they have a clear understanding of teaching and learning across the school.
- Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very good.
- The provision for special educational needs is very good and the pupils are well supported by knowledgeable teaching assistants.
- Teachers do not always make effective use of assessment information to set curriculum targets and their marking of pupils' work is not sufficiently evaluative.
- Attendance is well above the national average.

### 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	B	B
mathematics	A	A*	A	A
science	A	A*	A	A*

*Key: A\* – very high; 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.*

**The pupils achieve well overall.** The 2003 National Curriculum test results show that by the end of Year 6, standards attained by the pupils were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Pupils currently in Year 6 perform at the same standards in these subjects. In Year 2, standards are above average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. As a result of the good teaching and effective support, children in the Foundation Stage progress well and most are on course to achieve beyond the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils also progress and achieve well in these areas. Despite the improving standards in writing, the pupils could do better if they had more opportunities to practise writing skills in other subjects. Standards in ICT are above average

and the pupils achieve well. Very good teaching in music and art and design enables the pupils to achieve well in these subjects.

**The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.** The pupils' attitudes towards learning are good and they behave well. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall.** As a result of the good teaching in the Foundation Stage, the children make a good start to learning. Throughout the school, teaching and learning are good in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. Occasionally, insufficient use is made of assessment information to plan work and the teachers' marking is not as evaluative as it should be. The school provides the pupils with a good range of learning opportunities, which is enriched by a very good number of out-of-school activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, enabling these pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. The school has satisfactory arrangements for promoting the care and welfare of pupils. Monitoring of personal development and academic development is satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall** and have resulted in continued improvements. The headteacher leads and manages the school very well and he is well supported by his colleagues. All share a commitment to provide the pupils with the best opportunities. There have been a number of changes to staff and responsibilities and subject leaders need to develop their roles to enable them to have a greater understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The governors know the school well, are very supportive and carry out their duties effectively. They ensure that the school meets statutory requirements.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Most parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and feel that their children make good progress. They feel confident in approaching the school with any concerns.

Most of the pupils express a liking for the school and enjoy their lessons. They appreciate the support they are given by staff and enjoy very good relationships with other children.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO ARE:**

- Develop the roles of the co-ordinators so that they have a better picture of the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking to that of the best.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Achievement is **good** in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 to 6 it is also **good**. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are above average and in mathematics and science they are well above average.

#### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- High standards of reading and speaking and listening skills throughout the school.
- The pupils develop very good numeracy and scientific skills.
- Standards in art and design, ICT and music are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in most subjects.
- The children make very good progress in the Reception class and their attainment is above the expected level.
- Standards are not high enough in some foundation subjects.

#### COMMENTARY

1. Table 1 below shows that in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, standards in reading were above the national average, in writing they were below average and in mathematics they were well above average.

**Table 1 Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.3 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.5 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Table 2 below shows that in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, standards in English were above average, and in mathematics and science, well above the national average.

**Table 2 Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (29.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.1 (30.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.0 (31.0)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average in English and are well above average in mathematics. In science they are



above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Overall, the pupils achieve very well in these key areas of the curriculum.

4. The children in the Reception classes achieve well and most are likely to exceed the expected standards for their ages in communication, language, literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, and creative development. They are likely to meet the expected standards in physical development. The children's achievement is good because the staff have a clear understanding of the needs of young children and work together very effectively as a team, providing an interesting and lively learning environment. The curriculum is very well planned. The lack of an enclosed, secure play area for the children limits the opportunities for their physical development.
5. In English, speaking and listening skills are very good in all year groups. Pupils of all ages discuss well in class. They ask and answer questions sensibly and listen well to other pupils and teachers. Standards in reading are high. Pupils are confident and read very well when reading fiction, using a variety of strategies to help them make sense of text. Early reading skills are well taught and there are good opportunities for the pupils to use their reading skills in other subjects. Standards in writing are not as good as they are in other aspects of English. The pupils need more opportunities to practise writing at length. Occasionally, there is an overuse of worksheets that inhibits the pupils' length of responses.
6. Achievement in mathematics is good overall. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils develop a good understanding of number and use a range of strategies to work out calculations in their heads. They measure accurately and compile charts and graphs satisfactorily using data they have collated. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their knowledge and understanding well and acquire a good range of strategies to carry out mental calculations. The pupils have a secure understanding of place value. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress because of the good level and quality of support they receive.
7. Standards in science are above average by the end of Year 2, and well above average in Year 6, and the pupils achieve well. This is because of the good leadership in the subject and the effective teaching. Standards in ICT are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. The pupils are provided with a well-structured curriculum that ensures all elements of the subject are covered and the good level of resources, both in the computer suite and in the classrooms, is used effectively and systematically by the teachers.
8. Standards in art and design are well above average by the end of Year 6. The subject is very well structured and taught and the teachers make very effective use of the wide range of resources to provide the pupils with a stimulating and rich curriculum. Skills are well taught and the pupils enjoy the good range of activities on offer. Standards in music are above average by the end of both key stages. A clearly defined scheme of work ensures that the pupils are effectively taught all elements of the subject. Skills of composition are developed well and the pupils are given good opportunities to perform in front of an audience.
9. Standards in other subjects where judgements were made are in line with national expectations by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Co-ordinators have not yet

determined how they can make the most effective use of assessment information to set curriculum targets and raise standards further in these subjects.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES**

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work and towards others in the school are **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social development is **good**, but their cultural development is limited. Attendance is **very good** and punctuality is **good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Pupils are very enthusiastic in their approach to lessons and other activities provided for them.
- The school actively encourages pupils to develop very good relationships with each other and with adults working in the school.
- Very high expectations for pupils' behaviour are set by the school, which they work hard to meet.
- The school instils in its pupils a strong moral code and helps them to become good citizens.
- Pupils are given limited opportunities to learn about other cultures.
- Attendance is well above the national average.

## **COMMENTARY**

10. Most pupils are very keen to come to school. Except for the few who find the teaching does not provide them with sufficient challenge, the pupils approach their lessons with enthusiasm. They also attend activities outside the school day with the same keenness. During the inspection, good examples of this were the gymnastics club in the infants and the rehearsals for the forthcoming musical production in the juniors.
11. The strong ethos of the school, supported by the bond that exists between parents, pupils and staff, creates an environment where pupils develop caring and sharing relationships with each other and adults. They work and play well in pairs and groups and are very supportive of each other in lessons. Older pupils look after the younger pupils in the playground as well as helping them with their reading.
12. The school has a clear set of rules prominently displayed, understood by pupils and supported by parents. The rules are consistently applied with the result that there are few major problems. There were no exclusions during the previous year. Pupils are very attentive during assemblies and move around the school in an orderly fashion. In most lessons they behave well but in some classes they become restless easily and have a tendency to be noisy. In the playgrounds they play well with each other but there is some boisterousness which could be addressed with a more organised system of play activities at lunchtime. A small number of parents had concerns with bullying but the overwhelming majority felt that when the issue was raised it was dealt with effectively. No instances of bullying were observed during the inspection and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups were well integrated.
13. Pupils are taught respect for other people and their belongings through their lessons and by the direct example of adults within the school. Most start school with an understanding of right and wrong that is constantly reinforced through activities such as circle time. Their many opportunities to take responsibility and perform in front of colleagues help build

their confidence and self-esteem. This, in turn, enables them, as they get older, to mix well with children from other schools and to relate to adults in a mature way.

- Pupils study foreign cultures such as Kenyan in Year 3 and the Caribbean in Year 4 and are introduced to the major faiths in religious education. However, there are limited opportunities for the pupils to study the lives and cultures of people from different ethnic groups. Consequently, pupils are not well enough prepared for life in a multi-racial society.

## ATTENDANCE

- Attendance has been consistently very high since the last inspection and the school is within the range of the top ten per cent of schools nation-wide. This reflects the importance the school places on it and the support the school receives from parents in ensuring the regular attendance of their children. The school, in conjunction with the educational welfare officer, works closely with families of the small number of pupils who have difficulty either in attending regularly or arriving at school on time.

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning and the curriculum are **good**. There are **good** links with parents and procedures for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils are **satisfactory**.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching and learning are good overall and there are examples of very good teaching in both key stages.
- There are very good assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage.
- The pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Assessment information is not used effectively to set curriculum targets in some areas of the curriculum.
- The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is variable.

## COMMENTARY

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
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1 (2%)	14 (25%)	28 (50%)	13 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
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*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.*

16. The children are provided with a secure start to their education in reception as a result of teaching that is always at least good and occasionally better. The teachers and support staff work very well together and have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-chosen activities which helps to develop the children's personal and social skills. There is a very good emphasis on developing the children's speaking and listening, reading and mathematical skills. The staff provide a very caring environment and this helps the children to feel happy and secure. Throughout the Reception classes, the children make good progress.
17. The teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy skills are generally good throughout the school. Numeracy sessions begin with a brisk mental arithmetic activity and the main activity is used effectively to extend the pupils' understanding of mathematics. The teachers provide the pupils with good opportunities to practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Good attention is paid to developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills. The teachers question the pupils well, enabling them to respond with answers beyond a simple 'yes' or 'no'. Early reading skills, taught effectively in the Foundation Stage, are built on well in the infants and the pupils develop into very confident and fluent readers by the end of Year 6. Writing skills are well taught and by the end of Year 2 the pupils have learned how to use punctuation correctly. However, the teachers do not give the pupils sufficient opportunities to practise writing at length and this inhibits the standards attained by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This is occasionally compounded by an overuse of worksheets in some classes.
18. Very good lessons were seen in both the infants and the juniors during the inspection. In the best lessons the teachers ensure there is a very good balance between teacher talk and pupils' activity so that the pupils have maximum opportunity to produce work of a good quality. They use questioning effectively, ensuring that the pupils give extended answers to questions. In these better lessons, the pupils are very well managed and there is a good balance between individual, group and whole-class activities. Where teaching is less effective, the pupils are required to sit for too long and do not play a sufficiently active role in the lesson. This reduces the amount of progress the pupils make in the lesson.
19. The school has identified the need to make more effective use of assessment information when teachers plan lessons. Although some use is made by the teachers, it is not done systematically and consequently, particularly in some of the foundation subjects, the pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Assessment information is used very effectively to plan work for those pupils with special educational needs. The needs of these pupils are identified early and they are provided with a good range of strategies and support, enabling them to make good progress, particularly in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are very good. Very detailed records of the children's progress are kept and the information collated is used very well to ensure they make good progress.

## THE CURRICULUM

Overall the curricular provision is **good** and the way in which the curriculum is enriched is **very good**. The accommodation and resources are **good**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The activities that pupils are involved with are exciting and promote good quality learning for all.
- The school provides many extra-curricular activities, including sport, drama and music. These are very popular and well attended.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in classes and small groups and achieve well.
- There are good links made between subjects, ensuring learning is a coherent experience.
- There is no secure outside play area for the children.

## COMMENTARY

20. The school has maintained the good curriculum provision found at the time of the previous inspection. The school provides a curriculum that meets all statutory requirements, including the provision of religious education and personal, social and health education. Pupils have a rich curriculum experience that is broad and well matched to their needs. It is well planned and staff make pupils' learning interesting and often fun. Subjects are taught in a lively and stimulating way. This year the school has focused upon improving pupils' writing. Really exciting topics are taught through the literacy strategy to promote interest and fun in learning through the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils had the task of writing a newspaper article informing readers of the first moon landing. Pupils learnt about this famous historical event through English and the teacher had cleverly brought into the planning science and geography. Pupils were charged with enthusiasm and wrote riveting titles such as 'Kennedy's words come true'. Further activities through the curriculum included drawing space pictures in art and learning about large numbers in mathematics.
21. In addition to teaching all the subjects that it should, the school continually strives to ensure that French is taught to the older pupils. The school measures the impact of its curriculum by looking at the pupils' behaviour and attitudes as well as their learning. The school is successful in planning subjects so that they successfully capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. All staff are active in developing the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils. The National Curriculum is greatly enriched through trips out of school and visitors to the school.
22. The rich curriculum starts in the Foundation Stage where children have a secure, welcoming and calm environment in which to work and stimulating, creative tasks to do. This richness extends throughout the rest of the school and is brought about, for example, by pupils participating in choir singing, playing in the orchestra, acting, making presentations and entering competitions as well as visits to castles, field study and science centres and music events. In addition, the school has frequent visitors such as different artists including an artist in residence, storytellers and sports coaches. The school also offers after-school clubs and always mounts a major dramatic event involving large numbers of pupils.
23. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum takes account of the different styles of learning and of the need for stimulating and relevant experiences for all. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective because it meets the needs of the individual pupils and is fully inclusive. Pupils' individual education plans are useful working documents that are regularly and

thoughtfully reviewed and updated. The more able pupils are able to extend their interest and knowledge through this good curriculum.

24. A bright new library is the latest addition to the already good accommodation. The large classrooms are housed in two separate blocks which is a barrier the school has overcome in its development as a primary school. Outdoor provision is good; the grounds are spacious and the valuable well-used environmental area is securely fenced. The Foundation Stage, however, does not have its own secure area to provide the reception children with an outdoor curriculum on a daily basis. Resources for learning are good and well organised. The school is an attractive place in which to learn.

## **CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

The school makes **satisfactory** provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils and provides them with **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance. It **actively** seeks the views of pupils and acts on them in a **positive** manner.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Pupils receive a high level of support for their personal development, which is not matched by that for their academic progress.
- Pupils are cared for in a safe and healthy environment but the arrangements for child protection and risk assessment need improvement.
- Pupil surveys and the school council enable pupils to become actively involved in influencing the life of the school.
- There are very good arrangements for pupils joining the Reception class.

## **COMMENTARY**

25. Pupils develop very trusting relationships with adults in the school. These reflect the concern staff have for ensuring the pupils' stay in the school is a happy one. The recording of their emotional, behavioural and social development is not sufficiently formalised to enable progress to be tracked from class to class and to enable new teachers to quickly understand individual personalities. The shortcomings in the assessment process, for example, in the way it is used to respond to individual needs and develop an understanding of how they can improve, is reflected in the confusion in pupils' minds as to what their targets are and what they need to do to get better.
26. The school is a safe and healthy place. However, the procedures for ensuring this need improvement. Apart from an annual audit by the local education authority, the school relies on the constant awareness of the caretaker and other members of staff to identify any potential hazards. There is no system for the regular examination of the premises and grounds, for example, to produce an action plan to address identified areas of concern such as for the fire escape, which is beginning to corrode. Risk assessments for educational visits are carried out but there are few of sufficient detail for activities within school, such as the use of the kiln. The school has spent considerable time and effort in seeking to resolve the traffic situation on the road outside, with some success. Pupils are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle through the provision of water in classrooms, the 'fruit on Fridays' scheme and through lessons such as science and personal, social and health education. The headteacher is the fully trained child protection

officer who is clearly experienced in addressing any situations that may arise. However, he does not have someone similarly trained to deputise in his absence and training for other members of staff on their roles and responsibilities is not rigorous enough.

27. The school council consists of elected representatives from each class in Years 3 to 6; younger pupils are not represented. Its members meet regularly to discuss aspects of life in school and feel that their views are taken seriously and action is taken to reflect them. They also analysed a survey of all pupils' views, discussed reasons for the results and came up with suggestions for changes. Examples of situations where their views have counted are the development of the adventure playground, the purchase of toys for 'wet play' and the school travel plan. This is a good start, which can be developed through extending opportunities to younger pupils and by involving all pupils more in how they are taught.
28. There is a clear system for the smooth introduction of pupils into the Reception class. As early as the previous November, prospective parents visit the school to see a normal day in operation. The Reception teachers then visit the main playgroups, from which most of the pupils come, to begin profiles of them. The children visit the school to attend story sessions where they meet their teachers and each other. Their parents have an informal meeting with teaching staff where they are informed of all the arrangements on joining and the roles they are expected to play in helping in their children's education. The children then enjoy a phased introduction into the school in September. This system is clearly appreciated by the vast majority of parents as well as the pupils themselves.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY**

The school has developed **very good** relationships with its pupils' parents and carers and the wider community. Its links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning at school and at home.
- Links with the local community do much to improve pupils' learning and develop their social skills.
- There are very good relationships with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer.
- There are some shortcomings in the information the parents receive about how they can support their children's learning at home.

## **COMMENTARY**

29. Most parents are very supportive of the school and are keen to help in their children's education. Their enthusiasm to do so can be seen in the 70 or so entries in the flower tub competition, each one reflecting the time and effort taken by the parents working with their children. The parents are also welcome to work in the school and several take the opportunity to do so. While keen to support their children's learning at home, they are given limited information on what the children will be studying in each subject and how they can best help them. Also, while they receive regular reports on their children's progress supported by meetings with teachers, which parents appreciate, the information received on what the children need to do to improve is limited. The school is keen to listen to parents' views and act on them where appropriate. For example, 90 per cent

were in favour of an after-school club in a survey: as a result, one is to be introduced this autumn. Parents have also been fully involved in the development of the school travel plan and have been kept regularly informed over the controversial issue of class sizes. The Parent Teacher Association, run by a group of enthusiastic volunteers, organises a range of very successful fund-raising events which are very well supported by parents and members of the local community; in the previous year they raised around £12,000. The money is used to provide the school with many resources such as the new library, playground markings and interactive whiteboards.

30. The school has developed a good range of links with the local community. Visitors include the ministers of two churches who take assemblies; pupils visit their churches in return. There are also visits from the police to talk about drugs, the nursing service helps with sex and health education, and a dentist discusses the importance of healthy eating in caring for teeth. A local author opened the new library and answered questions about his latest book while a musician has run workshops with an autoharp. Pupils visit their local environment and community organisations are invited to attend the annual May Fair. Residents surrounding the school have been fully involved in the school travel plan.
31. The school has developed very good links with its main receiving secondary school, especially in the development of sport and the arts. Through the School Sports Co-ordinator scheme run by the secondary school, pupils experience expert coaching in several sports and attend several events with other primary schools. On the arts side, a woodcarver is currently working with pupils to create a totem pole to be erected in the wildlife area. Pupils also use the secondary school's facilities, such as the theatre. There is also an effective relationship ensuring pupils have a smooth transition between Years 6 and 7. Local businesses sponsor sports teams and donate prizes but links with commerce are at an early stage of development in terms of providing opportunities for enriching pupils' educational experience. On the other hand, two very good links exist with the 'Cheltenham in Bloom' competition, in which the school has been a winner and runner-up for its wildlife area. The school also participates in 'The Primary Schools Prom,' enabling the pupils to perform at the prestigious Cheltenham Town Hall.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are **good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The headteacher and senior management team provide a very clear focus for the school.
- Shared leadership of whole-school issues is good.
- The leadership encourages the staff to be creative in their use of curriculum time.
- Monitoring and use of performance data for English, maths and science are good.
- Support for newly qualified teachers is very good.
- The roles of some subject leaders are underdeveloped.

## **COMMENTARY**

32. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. He is committed to providing a broad education for all pupils both within and beyond the classroom. An outcome of this is that, as they move through the school, the pupils develop a wide range of academic, creative and social abilities and by the time they leave at 11, they achieve a confidence



and maturity which prepares them very well for the next stage of education. The headteacher is well supported by an experienced senior management team who appreciate his open style of management.

33. The headteacher employs a policy of shared leadership relating to whole-school issues. This promotes an atmosphere of openness and co-operation and fosters a spirit of unity among all staff. School improvement evenings are held when all governors, teachers and teaching assistants contribute to group discussions relating to the school's building, curriculum and links with the local community. As a result, views are aired, concerns are raised, decisions taken and improvements made. For example, the infant toilets were refurbished and the library re-sited and developed.
34. The leadership by other key staff is satisfactory overall. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. However, although improvements in teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science have been well co-ordinated, the roles of curriculum leaders in other subjects are insufficiently developed. Subject leaders support teachers in their planning, order materials requested to facilitate teaching and check on the work pupils have done in each class. They do not at present guide teachers' planning or check on teaching to ensure that it builds most effectively on what pupils have already learned. The school is aware of the need to develop the role of these subject leaders in order to raise both the pupils' standards and the quality of teaching. There are plans to reallocate the curriculum responsibilities for some subjects in order to share the workload more effectively to facilitate these developments.
35. The school is managed well. Since the last inspection teachers throughout the school have worked effectively to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, and appropriate systems are in place. For example, teachers carry out a detailed analysis of results of national and other tests in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance. They use this information to set targets for each child and check their progress. Where weaknesses are identified, for example, in the levels achieved by infants in writing, action has been taken and improvement monitored.
36. The school makes effective use of curriculum time. For example, during inspection week the teaching timetable was adapted to accommodate a very well-organised activity day on the theme of the Second World War. The school has developed a very attractive outdoor play area with a landscaped garden and also a well-planned pond and wild area. These are very well maintained and are appreciated aesthetically by teachers and pupils, as well as providing an excellent teaching resource that is well used to promote the pupils' learning, particularly in science, where their understanding has improved significantly.
37. The school welcomes newcomers to the teaching profession and during inspection week, pupils from the local senior school observed teaching in classrooms as part of their work experience. The newly qualified teachers in the school are well supported through further training opportunities and the help of an experienced teacher who is also a member of the senior management team.
38. The governance of the school is good. The governing body is supportive and kept well informed by the headteacher. It brings together a wide range of expertise and experience to give good support across many areas. It is ably led by a committed chair who regularly visits the school. Termly governing body meetings are held and discussions and

decisions clearly recorded. There is an appropriate range of committees that meet regularly. The governing body effectively fulfils its statutory responsibilities through a wide range of policies that are regularly reviewed. It regularly appraises the work of the headteacher and successfully sets and monitors appropriate performance targets.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	831,265
Total expenditure	799,744
Expenditure per pupil	1,913

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	23,000
Balance carried forward to the next year	31,521

39. The school's finances are efficiently managed through appropriately computerised systems and recent audits identify safe and secure practices. The headteacher is particularly effective in raising additional funds through grants and initiatives. These have enabled teaching resources such as interactive whiteboards and library facilities to be improved. Taking into account the quality of education provided, the standards achieved by the pupils and all other aspects of the school's effectiveness, the school offers very good value for money.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for children in the reception classes is **good** and has been maintained since the last inspection.

Children are very happy to come to school; they are motivated, excited and keen with anticipation of exploring the good experiences planned for them. This is due to the good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and the hard work and dedication of the Foundation Stage staff. Children attend full time in the September before they are five years old. Children settle well in the reception classes as a result of the very good arrangements for beginning school. The parents appreciate these arrangements and also the daily informal contact they have with the staff.

When children first start school they have a range of knowledge and skills that are above that expected. They achieve well because teaching is never less than good. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are above expectations in all areas except writing, physical development and creative development, where standards are as expected. The strong commitment to valuing every individual child means that all children achieve equally well. All staff are fully committed to the school's educational inclusion and caring ethos.

The school has identified the need to develop the outdoor area; at present there is no securely fenced area or climbing frame for children to develop their climbing and adventurous skills. However, this is in the process of being done. The classrooms are of good size and at present there are no facilities for disabled children. The staff use the 'steppingstones' very well to plan the very good Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff closely track and monitor all children's progress. Teachers and support staff have successfully used the new national assessments to check on how well children progress and have already worked out efficient ways of recording them. The staff have made the Foundation Stage a rich place, full of interesting activities to excite and make children inquisitive and enjoy learning.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Achievement is very good in the Foundation Stage, with children attaining well above the expected levels by Year 1.
- There are very good relationships between the children and adults, which ensure that learning is fun.
- Children are well prepared for their start in school; they feel secure and safe.

### **COMMENTARY**

40. This area of learning receives a very high profile when children start school and as a consequence they achieve very well. Children have many planned opportunities to develop their self-confidence, to make choices and decisions and to become aware of

the needs of others. The staff are excellent role models, treating everyone with respect and encouraging children to give their own ideas, and valuing what they say. The children show very good attitudes towards each other, and respond by participating eagerly in all activities. They develop independence by being allowed to choose which learning activity to undertake. They tidy up well at the end of a lesson, efficiently collect up all the pieces of the games and equipment, and put them away quickly.

41. Children can concentrate for long periods of time and show sustained interest and desire to learn because the good range of activities is well planned and resourced. At lunchtime, children show that they know how to take turns and ask politely for any help they need, confidently following the routines they have learned. Good teaching ensures that, when they leave the reception class, children have exceeded the Early Learning Goals in this area.

#### **Example of outstanding practice**

**In an excellent lesson in one of the reception classes, the teacher developed children's understanding of the importance and value of being and having a friend.**

Initially the teacher played a circle game, which children thoroughly enjoyed. It helped to create the right climate for the lesson, one of trust and openness. The teacher developed children's thinking through her excellent open questions and children demonstrated through their thoughtful answers that they had formed excellent friendship networks and relationships in the class. The teacher skilfully drew out children's feelings through the use of talking partners. Every child contributed, listened very well to others and confidently talked about the qualities they had to be a good friend. The teacher gave lots of genuine praise, summarising what children had achieved ready for the next lesson. Children's behaviour throughout was excellent. The circle time teddy was much loved and hugged. He was every child's friend but shared fairly so that every child could appreciate the friendship and warmth that the teddy brought to the lesson.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Children's achievement is good.
- Every opportunity is well used to develop children's language for communication.
- Children learn to become confident speakers, listeners and readers.

### **COMMENTARY**

42. Staff use every opportunity to promote language and speaking skills by encouraging the children to discuss and describe their activities. Teachers talk to them in an easy and relaxed way and, because of the warm relationships that exist, children are confident about joining in. Children's confidence and the outcomes of their work and efforts show that they have achieved well. Teachers effectively encourage all children's efforts and conversations, supporting them very well. Staff are very good at promoting listening skills by reading stories with expression and excitement to encourage the children to listen attentively. There are very good links between the 'big books' and role-play activities to promote the use of language.
43. Each reception room has a very good supply of attractive books and the children enjoy choosing and sharing stories, particularly with an adult. There is a strong focus on

learning the sounds of words and letters. Children soon recognise their own names and those of their friends. They enjoy learning skills for reading and teachers think of fun ways to teach phonics and high-frequency words. At this stage in the term there are already many children who are independently reading beginners' books.

44. Children are encouraged to see themselves as writers. Teachers provide a good range of writing activities where children develop skills from early mark-making to making books and creating stories. There are good supplies of paper, pens, crayons and pencils. Teachers carefully teach children individually how to form letters correctly and they develop good hand control skills. By the time these children reach Year 1, most children will exceed the Early Learning Goals in speaking and listening and reading, and most will reach the Early Learning Goals in writing as a result of the consistently good teaching.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The school uses a range of good resources to help children become confident in number.
- It builds well on their mathematical experiences gained before they come to school.

### **COMMENTARY**

45. The good teaching focuses children's attention on what they need to learn. Children are active and achieve well because of the practical nature of the tasks they are given. They estimate how many objects they can hold in their hands and are reasonably successful in their efforts. The activities provided give children many opportunities to develop the skills of counting, measuring and comparing, and to become aware of space and shape. Already many are familiar with large numbers, and more able children show that they can solve simple number problems. Children confidently identify odd and even numbers, and the more able can count to 100 in units of 5s, 10s and 2s. Further support for children occurs through bright teacher displays that help children to recognise and order numbers and continue patterns. Most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Teachers are good at providing children with numerous opportunities to explore the world around them.
- Good use is made of the environmental area and ICT to promote learning.

### **COMMENTARY**

46. Children play and explore confidently; they are inquisitive and curious. Children start with a good experience of the world beyond their own home. The well-planned activities provide a wealth of first-hand experiences from which children extend their knowledge and have a tremendous desire to learn more. They enjoy watching the seasonal changes when exploring the environmental area. The children are investigating the use of different materials and tools and love screwdrivers and construction equipment. Through stories and celebrations, for example, Christmas, they are taught about cultures and beliefs. They are extending their knowledge and understanding through well-planned topic work. For example, they showed good levels of interest and enthusiasm when dressing up as astronauts and going into the imaginary space rocket. Good input from the teacher encourages them to look carefully and with curiosity. Children enjoy using the computer. They use programs to paint pictures and confidently use the mouse to send their work to the printer. The children will exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of reception.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Children do not have immediate access to the outdoor area because it is not securely fenced.
- There is no climbing or adventurous apparatus for the Foundation Stage.
- Staff have made the outside environment a priority.

## **COMMENTARY**

47. The planned activities for children to play outside and to participate in activities contribute well to their physical development. For example, children construct buildings with large different-sized boxes. This also contributed well to their mathematical knowledge and their personal and social skills. Children enjoyed playing on the wheeled toys under close supervision in the infant play area. There is no climbing apparatus. Reception children take part in the school's physical education programme. However, work on the large apparatus is not always appropriate for this age group. Many children come to school able to use scissors, pencils, felt tip pens and paint brushes correctly. Teachers show children how to get on in an independent way through active learning and successfully develop children's fine hand control. The teachers ensure the children's physical development is at the expected level by the time they are ready to start Year 1.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Children have lots of good opportunities to explore and experiment with many different media to help their creative skills.

## COMMENTARY

48. Children achieve well in their creative development and they will attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Staff plan opportunities for children to try out their own ideas and successfully develop children's abilities through good questioning, support and well-timed interventions. A wide range of resources is available for creating pictures and patterns and children are given time to experiment and explore. Children mix paints and create models, and their level of concentration is very good. Children sing enthusiastically and love experimenting with the musical instruments. They are confident and enjoy music making very much. Role-play is supported effectively and the adults extend children's imaginative play by well-timed intervention.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards in reading, and speaking and listening across the school are high.
- The teaching is well structured.
- There are good links with other subjects.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is not always effective.

## COMMENTARY

49. On entry to Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment is in line with that expected nationally, although they achieve better in reading than in writing. Pupils make good progress throughout the infant classes and by the time they are seven they attain standards that are above those seen nationally, although the standard of writing remains below that of reading. In the 2003 tests, standards for Year 2 pupils were above average, although, compared with the previous year, fewer pupils achieved at the higher levels in writing. This year, provisional results show a significant improvement at all levels. The 2003 Year 6 test results were above average and dipped from the previous three years owing to a drop in the number of pupils achieving at the higher level: the pupils did not do as well as expected in the writing task. In both Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils currently work at similar standards to last year's test results; the standards are above average and the pupils achieve well.
50. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills throughout the curriculum. When they enter the infants, many have a wide vocabulary and are confident speakers. Good teaching strategies encourage pupils to listen to others and take turns to speak and, by the time they enter the juniors, pupils share ideas in paired talk and all can contribute to group and class discussions. Older pupils have a wide vocabulary and good command of oral language. For example, when drafting a letter, Year 5 pupils were able to improve their work by substituting 'relinquish' for 'give up'. They are able to listen and talk confidently in a range of contexts and adopt a formal tone and vocabulary where appropriate. Year 5 pupils confidently took part in a good-humoured role-play activity, with one pupil in the role

of a school governor eloquently and formally defending an unpopular 'decision' to sell off the school field for housing development.

51. Standards in reading are high because there is a strong focus on the teaching of reading throughout the school. The timetable has been adapted to facilitate this development and all pupils now have an extra 20 minutes reading each day. There are many planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to apply their reading skills. The introduction of 'jolly phonics' in the infants has been successful in increasing pupils' confidence and encouraging them to attempt to read new words. The junior library has been re-sited, refurbished and restocked with books that appeal to both boys and girls. A timetable for its use ensures that all pupils are taught library skills. Consequently, pupils throughout the school enjoy reading both at home and at school. They are taught the characteristics of different authors from an early stage. Infant pupils were excited to receive a reply to their letter to a favourite author whose books they enjoy. Throughout the junior school, good teaching and regular opportunities for reading ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, develop a love of reading a range of literature. By the end of Year 6, pupils are very knowledgeable about fictional characters and styles. They have opinions about favourite authors, which include Shakespeare, and they can explain why they prefer tragedy to comedy.
52. Pupils' standards in writing are not as high as those in reading, particularly in the infants. The school has carried out an analysis of test results, has worked with a consultant and continues to develop successful teaching strategies. The teaching of writing is well structured and all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, develop writing skills systematically. Infant pupils learn to write in different genres and can write instructions, invitations and letters as well as stories. Infant pupils have insufficient opportunities to complete extended pieces of writing so the skills taught are not fully developed and standards remain lower than those of reading. As pupils progress through the school, their writing improves and many junior pupils develop a good literary style, strongly influenced by their love of reading. Pupils respond well to imaginative teaching. They achieve well and demonstrate obvious enjoyment, for example, Year 5 pupils in writing 'Mr Men' books for younger children and Year 6 pupils writing spells for Macbeth's witches and an obituary for Scrooge.
53. The teaching of English is generally good. Some satisfactory and some very good lessons were seen throughout the school. Teachers plan what pupils are going to learn in each lesson and most share the learning objectives with pupils and explain to them what they need to do to succeed, but this is not consistent practice throughout the school. Lessons are well organised so that no time is wasted. Pupils settle to work quickly and complete tasks conscientiously. Those with special educational needs are very well supported in lessons, their contribution is sought and valued and they make good progress in relation to their abilities.
54. Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils work is underdeveloped. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but marking is inconsistent across the school and many teachers write generalised statements which do not help pupils to improve. In the best lessons, teachers' comments are analytical, identifying where learning objectives have been achieved and where improvements could be made.
55. The subject leadership for English is good and is managed well by the two co-ordinators who share responsibility. The recently-appointed junior literacy co-ordinator has made a clear analysis of the present position and has plans for further improvement. She has



already improved the library facilities and introduced some effective teaching strategies, although they are not yet consistently in place across the school. The co-ordinators attend literacy conferences and are well informed of local and national initiatives. They carry out a comprehensive analysis of assessment data which is effectively used for setting targets and tracking the progress of individual pupils.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

56. There are very good opportunities for pupils to use and extend their skills in speaking and reading across the curriculum. Discussion is used very effectively in most lessons and pupils are given confidence to express their views. The teachers make good links with other subjects to encourage the pupils to develop their writing skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Standards are well above average at the end of both key stages.
- The pupils achieve well because of the good teaching.
- The school has good arrangements for recording pupils' progress.
- The use of information and communication technology has developed teaching and learning.

## **COMMENTARY**

57. In the 2003 Year 2 and Year 6 national test result, pupils' standards were well above the national average. Inspection evidence confirms the findings of the test results. Over time, the school has been successful in attaining standards that have been above the national trend. Since the last inspection, the school has made good overall improvement to both the mathematics curriculum and standards. Generally, teaching is good, enabling the pupils to achieve well throughout the school. Lessons are well planned and good use is made of resources. The use of ICT is effective. There is good provision of interactive whiteboards. These are effectively used to give pupils a visual image of concepts. They also enable teachers and pupils to demonstrate methods, procedures and achievements. Useful supplementary computer programs support pupils' learning when practising skills independently in class. Occasionally, the balance between teacher talk and pupil activity is inappropriate and the pupils do not have sufficient time to complete tasks.
58. Teachers and assistants work well together providing additional good support for pupils. The setting arrangements for mathematics enable all groups of pupils to be given work that is well matched to their ability. In particular, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this helps them to achieve as well as other pupils. Where appropriate these pupils are given practical activities that consolidate their mathematical understanding. Pupils enjoy lessons and accept the challenges provided by their teachers. They work hard to achieve success both individually and collaboratively. The pupils' mental arithmetic skills develop particularly well because of the effectiveness of oral starters at the beginning of lessons. Throughout the school pupils have a good grasp of mental calculation strategies. Pupils' written calculation methods, developed from their mental strategies, are well supported by a variety of forms of recording. In all year groups, pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of problem solving. They can represent information in other ways to help them find patterns and interpret data. Year 2 pupils can represent data in a table to identify the rule generating a

sequence of numbers and can use this to predict further values. Year 6 pupils can solve a problem by extracting relevant data from a table and represent it as a graph.

59. Response to completion of homework is good. There are good arrangements in place for assessing and recording the progress pupils make. Information is used effectively to analyse individuals' improvement from year to year, and also to set targets for pupils' annual achievement. However, in some cases there is the need for teachers to use the information more effectively to set further targets for improvement for groups of pupils and to share these targets with them.
60. The teachers work together very well and make very effective use of parental help. For example, in Year 1, the teachers use role-play sessions to develop the pupils' understanding of money. Parents help to run the six 'shops' that operate in the two classes and the activity is very effective in helping to develop the pupils' ability to purchase goods. They learn to offer the correct amount of money and determine how much change they should receive.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. There are some useful practices in place to oversee the effectiveness of the curriculum and pupils' work. Further development is now required to extend her role into determining how the teachers can make more effective use of the assessment information.

## **MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

62. Numeracy is effectively promoted across the curriculum. Pupils use computers to produce graphs and charts, not only in mathematics but also in science. Different measures are also used in science, for example, in the calculation of temperature. History timelines visually demonstrate lengths of eras and important events.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Pupils achieve high standards.
- Teaching is good.
- There is a good balance of practical activities to develop skills.

## **COMMENTARY**

63. In the 2003 national tests, the Year 6 standards were well above average. These standards are also reached by the pupils in the current Year 6 and the pupils achieve very well. Infant pupils achieve well, so that by the end of Year 2, they reach standards above those expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were average. Through a range of practical activities, the pupils in the infant classes find out for themselves and record what they discover. To learn about forces, they test magnets and use scooters in the playground to discover the effect of pushing and pulling. Access to the school's nature area allows good development of observational skills, which is further promoted in the classroom when they grow cress and beans. They look for changes and write about what they see in a 'Bean Diary', identifying and labelling root, shoot and stem. Pupils know that changes occur when they grow, or when chocolate melts or sugar dissolves.

64. The high standards in Year 6 have been consistently maintained over recent years. Building upon the good foundations laid earlier in the school, pupils engage in experimental and investigative work, often working together and sharing resources very well. Because of the stimulating nature of their learning, pupils are enthralled to discover the shadow a comb casts when light is shone through it or when they see wax solidify. Soil studies enable them to predict what will happen and record the actual results in table or graph form. Science lessons make an effective contribution to health education. Pupils develop a good understanding of how their bodies work, the effects of a healthy diet and exercise, and changes that occur as they get older.
65. High standards are achieved because pupils receive well-organised and systematic teaching that allows them to investigate, experiment and consolidate skills. Less able pupils and those with special needs receive a good level of support which means they achieve well. In the best lessons seen, the teachers:
- organise activities well and present them in a lively and interesting way which makes learning fun;
  - encourage pupils to find out for themselves;
  - demonstrate with confidence so that pupils are clear about what they need to learn and why;
  - use scientific language and expect pupils to do the same;
  - ask probing questions which challenge pupils to predict, describe and explain; and
  - make links across subjects to help pupils make sense of their learning.
66. Marking in books shows that pupils' efforts are valued, although often, teachers' comments do not sufficiently inform pupils of how to improve or move forward in their scientific thinking.
67. Pupils benefit from opportunities to attend science and nature clubs and work in the well-developed wild garden, which has a very positive impact on the quality of provision. The subject is well managed and good systems are in place for tracking how well pupils are doing, although there is little monitoring of the quality of teaching or learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- There are good quality resources including interactive whiteboards and laptop computers linked to the Internet.
- The subject is led well and benefits from involvement in a local information and communication technology project.
- The subject is used effectively to promote learning in other subjects.

## **COMMENTARY**

68. An effective programme of staff training, the good use made of support staff and the use of laptop computers and interactive whiteboards make a major contribution to the good

achievement of pupils of all ages and abilities. By Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average. Provision and standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection, particularly in the juniors. Teachers are confident and plan work effectively to build on skills that have been attained in earlier years.

69. The wide variety of work on display and seen in photographs shows that pupils are offered good levels of challenge to develop their skills. They concentrate very well on their work and on the whiteboards when these are used to introduce their tasks. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well. The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well. The school has made rapid progress because of the enthusiasm of the staff to embrace the technology and to make effective use of it to support learning across the curriculum. The additional support given by the technician is extremely helpful in maintaining high standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

70. Skills in information and communication technology are taught effectively and used well to promote learning in other subjects. For example, classes use data-handling skills to record mathematical information and the results of scientific experiments. Older pupils use computers to give presentations about themselves, and these are used very well as a basis for informing the secondary schools. Word-processing skills are used well to write stories, poems and caption headings for project work. Teachers make very good use of appropriate programs to support literacy and numeracy through the use of interactive whiteboards.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Pupils achieve the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus.
- The range of study is appropriate.
- Resources are not sufficiently used to enrich pupils' learning.

### **COMMENTARY**

71. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, achievement is satisfactory and pupils attain the standards expected for their age. Infant pupils learn about major Christian festivals as well as those of importance to others, such as Diwali. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils used photographs they had brought to school to talk about what makes their families special. As they move through the school, pupils develop their understanding of different faiths. By studying Islam, Hinduism and Judaism, pupils learn about festivals, pilgrimage and places of worship.
72. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers remind pupils of previous learning and make links to other subjects. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils engaged in role-play to learn about pilgrimage to Mecca, whilst Year 6 pupils watched a computer presentation as their

teacher explained Judaism. However, there is insufficient focus on stimulating pupils' interest through lively, well-resourced activities which allow them to question, discuss and find out for themselves.

73. The subject is adequately managed. The co-ordinator has identified units of study and appropriate resources, including the need to involve outside visitors of various faiths so staff can more fully enhance pupils' learning. Although the monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped, she is keen to implement a means of judging how well pupils are doing by introducing a systematic way to record progress.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There are good links with other subjects.
- There is a strong focus on learning about places.
- Enquiry skills are underdeveloped.
- There is no consistent means of tracking pupil progress or monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

### COMMENTARY

74. Although no lessons were seen in the infant classes during the inspection, work seen in books and on display indicates that standards are in line with those expected nationally. For junior pupils, standards are broadly average. Pupils achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of a range of different places and locations. This is because there is a good focus on this area of geographical study. The youngest pupils compare and contrast Cheltenham with St. Ives or the fictional Isle of Struay, whilst the juniors learn about Kenya, St. Lucia and India. This learning is well supported by a good range of resources and participation in themed days, which pupils enjoy.
75. Throughout the school pupils develop mapping skills well. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils located St. Lucia on a world map and used a simple key to identify man-made and natural features. They applied their knowledge of scale to estimate dimensions of the island and used travel brochures and pictures to draw conclusions about climate, occupations and holiday attractions. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, they have undertaken local studies and present their findings in a variety of ways, employing mathematical and information and communication technology skills.
76. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Evidence from lessons seen and pupils' work indicates that teachers use resources well and often link learning across subjects. For example, work on display showed the study of Kenya had provided inspiration for artistically designed masks. In one very good lesson, the teacher successfully linked music and literature to geography so that pupils formed an impression of the hardship of 'legging' during their study of canals. As a result, pupils wrote expressively and responded very well when challenged to explain their findings from research.
77. The subject is enthusiastically led by a co-ordinator who is keen to share his travel experience with pupils and colleagues. However, there are no systems in place for the effective monitoring of teaching and learning. Although some teachers record pupils' progress, there is no consistent approach to judging how well pupils are doing.

## History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Interesting activities and good ‘hands on’ activities bring the subject to life.
- Theme days are used effectively to raise the pupils’ interest.
- Computers are used to enrich pupils’ knowledge and understanding.

## COMMENTARY

78. During the inspection there were limited opportunities to observe history being taught. Information about standards has been drawn from looking at pupils’ work, teachers’ planning, displays around school, and from discussions with staff and pupils. These indicate that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards that are in line with those expected nationally, as they did during the previous inspection.
79. Pupils in the infants enjoy experiencing a wide range of activities as World War II children. They throw themselves into the spirit of trying out ‘olden’ toys, getting tied up in yoyos and enjoying the spinning tops. Pupils in Year 6 also study the World War II period, learning about this time in more detail, such as showing great concern with the amount of rations people had and the frightening bombing episodes. This helps to develop good awareness of the social conditions of the times. Good use is made of drama to illustrate and bring history to life.
80. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infants; no teaching was observed in the juniors. Teachers are good at knowing what will interest the pupils and organise historical theme days, for example, Year 3 pupils experienced an Egyptian day when all pupils plan and make an Egyptian collar in design and technology and make clay pots in art and design. These days have an impact on pupils and are well remembered. Good visits bring history alive and visits are planned, for example, Year 4 visit Warwick Castle when studying the Tudors. Facts from this day are embedded in pupils’ memories and used in Year 6 when they write notes about some of Shakespeare’s plays.
81. Teachers make good links with literacy by exploiting pupils’ speaking and listening skills in discussions, and by recording their written findings. There is good use of computers to enrich pupils’ learning in history, for example, by accessing the Internet for information and by word processing writing. The co-ordinators are interested in the subject and are developing best practice ways of assessing the subject. They monitor by work sampling and discussions with the staff.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### ART AND DESIGN

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

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The subject is well resourced.
- There are good links with other subjects.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The subject is well led and managed.

## COMMENTARY

82. Standards in art and design in both infant and junior parts of the school are very good and the pupils achieve very well. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be good across the school. Judgements are based on two lessons seen during the inspection, on discussions with teachers and pupils and on the many examples of pupils' work in classrooms, corridors and in the school grounds.
83. Teachers follow national guidelines to support their planning and this ensures that all aspects of the subject are taught and are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils. Work builds very effectively on previous teaching and pupils make very good progress. The school has a very good range of resources that are well used by teachers. As a result, pupils learn to develop skills and interpret their ideas in a range of media. Pupils behave well in practical lessons and work successfully both individually and collaboratively. Teachers communicate their enthusiasm for the subject. For example, in a very good lesson seen in Year 4, pupils clearly enjoyed studying a collection of Monet's paintings. Teaching was well structured, and pupils were told and shown how to mix paints and apply colour so that all were able to begin with confidence. They attempted to copy Monet's style, taking great care to recreate as accurately as possible the colours and effect of the painting they chose while quiet music helped to provide a calm reflective mood in the classroom.
84. Sometimes art themes very effectively take their inspiration from other subjects. For example, junior pupils studying Kenya in geography examined artefacts from the country before making dramatic masks using clay, paper collage and printing. Infant children used painting very well to respond to music with pale wavy lines in pastel colours interpreting 'Gymnopedia' and dramatic strong shapes in primary colours in response to the 'Marriage of Figaro'.
85. The art club after school is well attended. Pupils have exhibited their excellent fabric pictures, pottery and glass painting recently at Cheltenham art gallery and museum. There are several examples around the school of the work of artists who have visited the school and worked with the children and during inspection week groups of pupils watched and experienced woodcarving during the construction of a totem pole for the school grounds.
86. The subject leader has considerable personal expertise. She has prepared and updates the scheme of work and consults with teachers regularly to modify and improve the teaching programme. She runs practical workshops to introduce and give teachers an opportunity to explore new media and techniques and is responsible for organising arts events and arranging for visiting artists. The school was recently awarded Artsmark status.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There are good links with other subjects.
- There is a good range of materials and resource, although the teachers do not always make effective use of them.



## COMMENTARY

87. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and the pupils achieve well. This reflects judgements at the last inspection. Two lessons were seen during the inspection and judgements are based on these, on work in the classrooms and around the school and on discussions with teachers and pupils.
88. Teachers follow national guidelines and this is effective in ensuring that all aspects of the subject are taught and that pupils have regular opportunities to work with a range of materials. Facilities for teaching are good and teachers make appropriate arrangements for teaching food technology in smaller groups using the well-equipped kitchen and ensuring appropriate attention is paid to safety and hygiene.
89. Teachers are creative in their use of contexts for design and technology and this makes the subject relevant to all pupils. For example, infant pupils visited a local park to look at the range of equipment and examine strong, stable structures. Teachers of junior pupils adapted ideas from the scheme of work to take account of pupils' learning and experience in other areas of the curriculum, for example, using fabrics to design and make soft toys, which linked to a very popular and successful literacy project involving making 'Mr Men' books. The teaching timetable is well adapted on occasion to make the best use of time and facilities. For example, pupils in Year 6 had the opportunity to work in groups of varying sizes when linking history and practical design and technology activities. This enabled them to make very good use of the small kitchen where pupils made carrot cookies from an authentic World War I recipe, while other pupils designed and made packaging for them from appropriate materials.
90. Resources for teaching and for working with a range of materials are good and should give pupils ample opportunities for individuality in the interpretation of their designs. However, teachers' planning does not take into account the materials which are most appropriate for pupils' age and manipulative abilities. Consequently, for example, pupils in Year 2 were attempting to produce playground models using wood and plastics which were difficult for them to shape and construct without considerable support and supervision, and pupils in Year 6 were using recycled materials such as card tubes to make complex motorised models, which limited the success of their models and mechanisms.
91. The subject leader supports teachers by ordering materials for the teaching they plan and there are plans to review the teaching programme for when design and technology becomes a focus for whole-school development.

## MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils develop good skills in musical composition.
- There is a very good range of opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument.
- There are good opportunities for the pupils to participate in out-of-school activities.

## COMMENTARY

92. Evidence from assemblies shows that the pupils have good singing skills, brought about as a result of the regular and good teaching. The quality of teaching ensures the pupils enjoy this aspect of music and enables them to achieve well. By the end of both key stages, standards are above national expectations. The pupils develop particularly good skills in composition. This is due to the regular and systematic approach to this aspect of music, as observed during the inspection. Pupils in the infants are taught how to record sounds using simple pictorial notation and they demonstrate good skills in following the 'conductor' and performing what they have written to their classmates. Teaching is good overall and there are examples of very good teaching in both key stages. In a very good Year 6 lesson the teacher made effective links with literacy. A taped 'rap' from 'Macbeth' was used very effectively as a stimulus and the pupils performed their version very competently.
93. A large number of pupils take up the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. In addition to recorder groups, the pupils have the option to play brass, woodwind and string instruments, and many achieve good standards.
94. Because of the enthusiasm and hard work of the teachers, the pupils have many opportunities to perform in public. At the end of the inspection week the choir was due to perform in Cheltenham Town Hall and the singing skills of many pupils were being utilised to accompany the school's performance of 'Robin and the Seven Hoods'. The talents of a large number of pupils were observed at the after-school rehearsal.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education for juniors is **satisfactory**.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school makes good use of the school halls, spacious playing fields and playgrounds.
- The subject has a knowledgeable co-ordinator.

### COMMENTARY

95. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to the range of activities that the school provides. Pupils have good levels of co-ordination and use space and equipment well. They work well together to develop their skills and their performance improves during lessons because they work hard and listen carefully to advice from their teachers. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations and they achieve satisfactorily.
96. The amount of time devoted to the subject is good. Lessons are long enough for pupils to carry out all the necessary warm-up activities and then have enough time to practise, both individually and in groups. Outside space is used well, whenever possible, for team games such as hockey and rugby. Teaching was satisfactory overall, with some good features. Teachers are good at encouraging pupils to work increasingly independently. Lessons get off to a brisk start and the teachers have trained pupils to move and use resources carefully and co-operatively. Lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their movements to others but only limited opportunities for pupils to critically evaluate them and offer constructive advice. In some lessons there was insufficient physical activity, and time was taken up by lengthy teacher explanations.
97. The subject is satisfactorily managed. The co-ordinator has a high level of personal skill and knows how to get polished performances from pupils. Resources are good and extra curricular sports activities are very well organised. The school has recently gained Activemark status.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **good** overall.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school provides a strong sense of community, in which individual effort is valued and talents nurtured.
- A time for personal, social and health education, known in some classes as Circle Time, is timetabled weekly, as well as provision being made in other subjects.

### COMMENTARY

98. Because of the school's positive commitment to personal development, opportunities for pupils to develop individual talents through drama, art, music and a range of clubs are good. Achievement, academic or otherwise, is valued and recognised. Junior pupils run a School Council that allows them to voice opinions and accept responsibility, whilst infant pupils become playtime helpers.

99. In lessons observed, good teaching encourages pupils to work together and share ideas and resources. Science lessons are often led by outside visitors and contribute well to pupils' understanding of the human body and life processes when growing up. Specific times to discuss issues such as behaviour and responsibility are allocated for all ages. As the result of a very good beginning in the Reception classes and good teaching through a range of agreed topics, pupils in the infants achieve well. During the inspection, in a very good lesson, Year 2 pupils engaged in a Circle Time activity to consider kind deeds and words. Very positive relationships and a trusting atmosphere created by the teacher meant that pupils responded very well with varied and thoughtful responses. Junior pupils reach satisfactory standards. In lessons seen, good teaching enabled them to discuss feelings and personal dilemmas and put forward their own point of view.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
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).*