

INSPECTION REPORT

**AYLBURTON C of E (VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Near Lydney

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115610

Headteacher: Mrs N J Ford

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward
18605

Dates of inspection: 16th - 18th June 2003

Inspection number: 259871

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Aylburton Near Lydney
Postcode:	GL15 6DB
Telephone number:	(01594) 842426
Fax number:	(01594) 844992
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elaine Hayes
Date of previous inspection:	14 th October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18605	Fred Ward	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Music Physical education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19716	Katy Blake	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16761	Melvyn Hemmings	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design technology Information and communication technology Religious education Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Aylburton is much smaller than most primary schools, currently attended by 65 pupils, aged four to 11 years, having increased from 44 pupils at the previous inspection. The school serves the village of its name but two thirds of the pupils come from the surrounding area. Pupils start school in the year they are four-years-old with a wide range of attainment and nearly all have attended a pre-school setting. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average (20 per cent) covering mainly moderate learning difficulties (most are in Years 5 and 6); two have statements (above average). One pupil is eligible for free school meals (well below average). All pupils are white British. There are a few talented boys in the juniors.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has very successfully come through an unsettled period when some staff faced personal tragedies. The headteacher, governors and staff are a strong team, much appreciated by parents, and know what needs to be done to improve the school further. Overall, standards are average. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils like school very much. They behave very well and grow in confidence. The school has a Christian family atmosphere and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well across the school in speaking and listening, reading, writing, craft skills, games and swimming; the youngest pupils have made good progress in their communication skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs and the few talented boys make good progress.
- Pupils really enjoy learning and behave very well, showing increasing maturity; relationships are very good.
- Overall, teaching and learning are good and very good in the Reception Year.
- The curriculum, in and beyond the classroom, is rich and varied; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils are very well cared for by teachers and assistants; their personal development and progress are carefully checked and problems quickly tackled.
- Parents are very supportive and appreciative of the school.
- The school is very well led by governors and the headteacher.

What could be improved

- Older pupils' skills in finding efficient ways of solving mathematical problems, interpreting results in science, evaluating designs and composing music.
- Recording and reporting on pupils' progress.
- The role of co-ordinators in supporting and developing teaching and learning.
- Ways of finding out if plans to improve the school are working and worthwhile.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997 and has made good progress in tackling the key issues raised:

- Schemes of work are in place for all subjects and pupils' progress is regularly checked.
- The headteacher has sufficient time to combine her class teaching and management responsibilities.
- Governors and teachers are more aware of their management role.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably as a result of nationally initiated training and support from the headteacher. Learning resources and the buildings are now of a higher standard. The school is far more popular and the number on roll has increased by a third. Governors and staff are very well placed to move the school further forward.

STANDARDS

The table showing the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on National Curriculum test results has been omitted, as the number of pupils is fewer than ten. Such small numbers in both Years 2 and 6 make trends and comparisons of results in national tests with other schools and over time unreliable. For this reason, judgements in the inspection are based on how well individual pupils achieve as they move through the school.

Children at present in Reception make good progress but with five of the seven having birthdays in the summer term, only just over half will reach the Early Learning Goals¹ in their personal development. However, nearly all are on course to reach the expected standard in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development; all have already exceeded the expected level in communication, language and literacy.

Pupils' performance in national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, compared to where they were on entry at four years old, shows that nearly all made progress as expected in reading and mathematics and half did better in writing. According to the teacher's assessment, nearly all Year 2 pupils reached the expected level for their age in science in 2002. The performance of Year 6 pupils in national tests in 2002, compared to when they were in Year 2, also shows that nearly all made progress as expected in English, mathematics and science.

The inspection found there has been an improvement in pupils' achievement in writing this year as shortcomings in their learning have been tackled. All have achieved as predicted in reading and mathematics. In Year 6, nearly all pupils made steady progress in English, mathematics and science since leaving Year 2. Generally, across the school, standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average as pupils achieve well. However, older pupils do not confidently search to find the easiest way of solving mathematical problems and also have difficulty in interpreting results in science; they do not give sufficient thought to improving what they make in design and technology or have the skills to compose their own music to an appropriate level. The school is working at improving standards in these areas.

On the evidence available during the inspection, pupils achieve as expected in most other subjects, including religious education and do well in craft skills, games and swimming. The school has set suitable targets for the oldest pupils to reach in national tests in 2003 and 2004 based on their capabilities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school, taking a full part in the wide range of activities available.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils generally behave very well when playing and working.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils are very helpful and considerate. They grow in maturity and are very pleased to take on responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. There is no unauthorised absence and no exclusions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

¹ Early Learning Goals are the nationally accepted levels in six areas of learning that children should reach by the time they leave the Reception Year.

Overall, the teaching and learning of English and mathematics are good. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well with considerable importance given to speaking and listening. The recent emphasis on helping pupils to use writing to support their learning in other subjects has proved successful. The youngest pupils are helped to settle and quickly become independent. They are enthusiastic learners because the teacher and assistants work very well together to make sure activities are interesting and very well matched to pupils' capabilities. In the infants, the teacher sets high expectations and helps pupils do their best, making very good use of assistants and resources and keeping a careful check on pupils' progress. In the juniors, teachers have very well managed lessons, giving pupils plenty of practical experiences. As a result, pupils are interested and involved in their learning, generally achieving well. However, older pupils still have difficulties with problem solving in mathematics, investigating in science, evaluating designs and musical composition although they are now being given more practice in these skills. New technologies are being used more as staff gain in confidence. Teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a rich and varied curriculum that extends beyond the school day. Links with other schools, the church and local community are good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good, including for the few talented pupils. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and individuals are given appropriate support that helps them to be fully included in lessons and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. A special effort is made to help pupils learn about the contribution minority groups make to British society and, as a result, they are open to and interested in new ideas and experiences.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well looked after. Staff check carefully their personal development and progress in some but not all subjects, helping them to overcome difficulties, gain confidence and generally achieve well.

Parents are kept well informed about school activities and their children's progress in English, mathematics and science but not always in other subjects. They are appreciative of the school and very understanding and supportive of staff. They raise significant additional funds from social events.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The experienced and committed headteacher leads and manages the school very well, with very good support from staff and governors. She has been particularly successful in helping staff improve their teaching in English, mathematics and science. Less attention has been given to other subjects but teachers with management responsibilities are keen to check and develop teaching and learning in these areas.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are interested and well informed about the school's strengths and areas for development. They play a full part in discussing and deciding what needs to be done to improve the school further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff systematically look at information on pupils' performance to identify and tackle shortcomings in most subjects. However, current plans to develop teaching and learning do not show clearly the hoped for improvements in standards, making it difficult to tell if actions have been successful.
The strategic use of resources	Governors have handled their finances very well, increasing numbers and attracting more funds. They work within the principles of best value.

Increased numbers mean higher staffing levels are possible, keeping three classes and giving the headteacher time to carry out her leadership and management role. Resources, including new technologies, have been improved considerably. The accommodation has been well maintained and is well used. Outside toilets have been creatively converted to a meeting room and further improvements to staff and administrative facilities are in hand.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children are expected to do their best.• The school is well led and managed.• Behaviour is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside of lessons.• Information about pupils' progress.• Working with parents.

The inspection confirms parents' positive views. The range of activities outside of lessons, for such a small school, is good; information on pupils' progress is good in some but not all subjects; the school works closely with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The youngest pupils make good progress in communication skills. Overall, pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieve as expected for their capabilities but do better in speaking and listening, reading, writing, craft, games and swimming. Older pupils are not confident in mathematical problem solving, scientific investigation, evaluating designs and in music composition. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

As the number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 is small and varies from year to year, trends and comparisons of overall results in national tests do not give a reliable picture of standards in the school. For this reason, judgements in the inspection are based on how well individual pupils do as they move through the school and the achievement of pupils in each year group. Also, it is not possible to make valid comparisons about improvement in standards since the previous inspection, as the size and composition of year groups are so different.

1. Four-year-old children in Reception make good progress because they quickly settle in and respond well to the very good teaching. With five of the seven having birthdays in the summer term, only just over half are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals² in their personal development. Nearly all are on course to reach the expected standard in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding and creative and physical development. As a result of very good teaching, nearly all have already exceeded the expected level in communication, language and literacy.
2. Around two thirds of Year 2 pupils reach the standard for seven-year-olds in speaking and listening and a third attain the higher Level 3. They are confident speakers and attentive listeners. Around half of Year 6 attain standards as expected and a quarter reach the higher Level 5. They communicate clearly in class and to larger audiences, putting forward and defending their views assertively. Pupils throughout the school develop their speaking and listening skills well in all subjects.
3. Around two thirds of Year 2 pupils read with enjoyment and interest and have a range of skills to understand new words; around a quarter reach the higher level 3. By Year 6, just over two thirds of the group are discerning, fluent readers of fiction and non-fiction, able to use books and the printed word for a range of purposes. Around a third reach above average standards in reading.
4. In Year 2, just under three quarters of pupils reach the expected standard in writing, using full stops and capital letters in the right place and spelling familiar words correctly. A quarter reach the higher Level 3. Just over a half of Year 6 write easily to support their learning in all subjects, with a quarter reaching a higher standard. However, a few older boys sometimes rush their work and make simple errors and not many junior pupils are good at note taking. Handwriting throughout the school is generally neat, well formed and joined from Year 3 onwards.
5. Around two thirds of Year 2 reach the standard for seven-year-olds in mathematics. They use numbers well in mental and written calculations and are developing appropriate skills in using measure, shape and data handling. Around a third attain a higher standard. Just over a half of Year 6 pupils reach the standard for their age in mathematics, with a third attaining at a higher level. Pupils confidently carry out calculations and can clearly explain their methods. They have a firm grasp of shape and measure but are less confident in searching out the easiest way of solving mathematical problems. Generally, they achieve well in numeracy and use these skills in other subjects competently.
6. In science, around two thirds of the pupils in Year 2 attain as expected for seven-year-olds and the rest reach a higher standard. They have a sound foundation in all aspects of science and carry out

² Early Learning Goals are the nationally accepted levels in six areas of learning that children should reach by the time they leave the Reception Year.

simple experiments carefully. In Year 6, two thirds reach the level expected for their age and the rest attain the higher standard. While they have a good understanding in science, they do not always identify and comment on the trends and patterns found in their investigations.

7. Around three-quarters of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the standard expected for their age in information and communication technology. A few pupils are quite skilful, particularly in using computers because of experience at home. Generally, standards are rising as pupils have more opportunities to use new technologies and teachers are becoming more confident in its use.
8. Only a small number of lessons could be observed in other subjects, including religious education. On the evidence available, around three-quarters of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the standard expected for their age in the work seen. Pupils' craft and games skills and swimming are above the average standard. Older pupils are less confident in finding ways of improving things they have made in design and technology and in composing their own music. There was not enough evidence to report on pupils' overall attainment in physical education and music.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are identified quickly and are given very good individual and group support by teachers and assistants. As a result, they are able to take a full part in lessons and make good progress.
10. Generally, the more able pupils achieve as expected. The school has identified a few junior pupils talented in sports. They make good progress because they are given opportunities to work at a higher level and given specialist coaching. There are no other significant differences between the performances of other groups in the school.
11. The performance of individuals in national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, compared to where they were on entry at four years old, shows that nearly all achieved as expected in reading and mathematics; around half did better than expected in writing. According to the teacher's assessment, nearly all this group reached the appropriate level for their age in science, but no higher. The performance of Year 6 pupils in national tests in 2002, compared to when they were in Year 2, shows that all achieved as expected in English, mathematics and science. The school has set suitably challenging targets for individuals for 2003 and 2004 based on their capabilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils respond very well to their school experiences. Their attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are all very good. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection.

12. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and the rich experiences provided for them. They respond with enthusiasm, are proud of their work and achievements and are very keen to learn more. While some of the youngest four-year-olds still have difficulty socialising and sharing, they really enjoy school; as one reported with evident delight, *'My teacher gives me hard work and I love it'*. Pupils are very attentive in their lessons, join in eagerly, work hard and sustain concentration. This is a result of consistently good teaching and interesting well-chosen activities. It was not possible to tell whether some Year 2 pupils had felt pressurised when preparing for national tests, as reported by a few parents.
13. Behaviour in lessons and in and around the school is consistently very good. The school functions as an orderly community and has a happy family atmosphere. Pupils respond very well to the school's clear routines, such as when moving from playground to class.
14. In the playground, boys and girls play happily together and show great enjoyment playing with the very wide variety of play equipment. In classrooms, they behave very well and listen carefully to teachers. At lunchtime, the youngest pupils ate sandwiches while sitting on picnic benches in the shade of trees with very little need for adult intervention. This was a very civilised and friendly occasion.

15. Pupils are courteous and polite to adults and respectful to each other. Pupils warmly welcome visitors. They are very careful with resources both in class and on the playground. In a science lesson, pupils in Year 6 handled microscopes and flowers with care and, on the playground, pupils sensibly folded tennis nets away.
16. The atmosphere in school is friendly, welcoming and caring and there is no oppressive behaviour or bullying. Pupils show knowledge of and great respect for other people's beliefs and cultures and are open to and interested in new ideas and experiences. They respond positively to different values as shown by one boy's remark, *'Cool, I'd love to be a gypsy'*.
17. Pupils form very good relationships with each other and with adults. They consistently collaborate and work very well in pairs, groups and teams. In Year 4, pupils worked very well together sharing ideas and getting excited about making persuasive radio adverts. Pupils are also appreciative of each other's work, such as when Year 6 pupils spontaneously applauded those who read out letters against banning playtimes. The very good relationships with class teachers and assistants make a most helpful contribution to pupils' learning and care. This is particularly apparent in Year 5/6, where there are a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Older pupils help younger ones especially on the playground, as when two older girls drew hopscotch patterns for a group of younger children.
18. Throughout the school, pupils show initiative. They comfort anyone feeling upset and tidy up or organise special events, such as charity sales. Pupils grow in maturity and confidence. They are very pleased to take on a variety of responsibilities, like serving on the school council. Pupils also take responsibility for their learning, particularly when class teachers provide activities that require pupils to organise themselves.
19. Attendance is above the national average, with no unauthorised absence. There is no problem with late arrivals and no time is wasted. There have been no exclusions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Overall, teaching and learning are good and very good in Reception. Literacy and numeracy are well taught. However, teachers do not always give older pupils enough opportunities to solve mathematical problems efficiently, interpret findings in science, discuss ways of improving things they make or compose their own music.

20. During the inspection, the teaching and learning in nearly all lessons were good or better and in four in ten lessons, very good. The teaching and learning in Reception were very good in half the lessons, excellent on one occasion and good in the rest. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching and learning in one in five lessons were very good and in the rest good. In the juniors, the teaching and learning in four in ten lessons were very good, in half good and in one satisfactory. Overall, the teaching and learning of English and mathematics are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection as the proportion of very good or better teaching has more than doubled.
21. The consistently very good teaching of four and five year olds occurs because the teacher is very experienced and she has a clear understanding of how young children learn. She plans very carefully to overcome the difficulties of teaching in a mixed aged class that includes pupils in Years 1 and 2. She works very closely with the two assistants, and together they set very high standards. Lessons are very well managed and very good use is made of the wide range of learning resources. As a result, the reception children work very well together with older pupils, despite the considerable differences in ages and capabilities. All infants are interested in learning, develop independence and generally achieve well.
22. Teachers in the two junior classes are confident and, where appropriate, work closely with assistants, planning interesting and appropriate learning activities, often making good use of the local area and practical activities. Lessons are very well managed to enable pupils with special educational needs and the more able to receive the attention they need in small groups and when working on their own. As a result, these pupils make good progress.

23. Literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school and pupils are given many opportunities to use these skills in other subjects. This is particularly evident in the confident way pupils discuss and write.
24. Recent training in information and communication technology has been of considerable help to teachers who now make more use of new technologies in lessons.
25. Teachers have recognised the need to improve junior pupils' skills in problem solving in mathematics and interpreting scientific results. They have begun to introduce more activities where individuals can try out their own ideas and refine their way of working.
26. Not enough lessons in subjects other than in Reception, English, mathematics and science could be seen during the inspection to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and plan well but there are aspects of design and technology, particular evaluation and music composition, where they lack confidence.
27. Homework is regularly used throughout the school. Younger pupils benefit from practice in reading and learning spellings and number facts, as well as completing written exercises. Older pupils enjoy following up topics at home, which develops their study skills.
28. As a result of the high proportion of good teaching, pupils are being well prepared for the next stage of their education, when they move to secondary school at 11.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

All pupils are able to take part in a wide variety of interesting and stimulating learning experiences that extend beyond the school day. Links with other schools, St Mary's Church and the local community are good. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good, an improvement since the previous inspection.

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. In Reception, there is strong emphasis on giving children lots of enjoyable practical experiences to develop their learning. The curriculum throughout the school is enriched by visits to places of educational interest, including a residential stay for pupils in Years 5 and 6. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that further extend pupils' learning.
30. The requirements of the National Curriculum and the Gloucestershire agreed syllabus for religious education are fully met and frequently extended. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been wisely introduced and this has been an important factor in the way that pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. There has been recent emphasis on giving pupils more opportunities to use writing to support their learning in other subjects and this has proved successful. However, older pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to find efficient ways of solving problems in mathematics or to interpret results in science. In design and technology, pupils' evaluative skills have not been developed sufficiently and, in music, their composition skills are undeveloped. Throughout the school, pupils are given very suitable activities to extend their speaking and listening, reading and swimming skills. While the use of new technologies is improving, the school recognises more opportunities need to be planned.
31. The planning of the curriculum has much improved since the last inspection, with good use being made of programmes of study that are regularly reviewed. Staff take great care to avoid overlap and repetition of experience for pupils in mixed age classes as they move through the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and enables them successfully to take part in lessons and other activities. They are given very helpful individual and small group support by assistants, particularly in Years 5 and 6 for literacy and numeracy. The more able pupils and the few who are talented are well supported by visiting specialists, in addition to being given suitably challenging work.

32. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school provides many opportunities to help them to learn to respect the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults and to develop their self-esteem. Programmes on sex and relationships, drugs and health education are good, with issues being dealt with sensitively to reflect the maturity and age of pupils.
33. The school's links with the community are good and make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Good use is made of visiting specialist teachers and groups to support learning in art, drama, French, music and physical education. Good contacts with local businesses enable pupils to visit a garden centre and a printing company to learn about the world of work. There are strong links with the local parish church and Methodist chapel that help deepen the pupils' understanding of the Christian faith.
34. The school has good relationships with its partner institutions. Links with the local cluster of primary schools support developments across a range of educational issues. The school works closely with staff from the nearby secondary school to prepare pupils in Year 6 to make a smooth transfer. A teacher from the further education college comes into school each week to provide specialist teaching of French for the juniors.
35. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils of all ages are given space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns. The way the school works so closely with St Mary's Church enables pupils to take part in a variety of services and celebrations that are a focus of renewal and affirmation. In music and art, pupils are able to explore experiences that reflect moods such as happiness or sadness. Staff make sure pupils are valued and appreciated through praise and acknowledgement in all they do.
36. The provision for pupils' moral development is also very good. There is a positive behaviour policy that helps pupils to be clear about what is acceptable and not acceptable. The pupils are encouraged to develop good moral values through the very good examples set by staff. Adults work hard to promote a sense of fairness among pupils and are successful in teaching them to be tolerant of each other and to know the difference between right and wrong.
37. Pupils' social development is very well catered for. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, as was evident in nearly all lessons. There are very good relationships throughout the school, being based on mutual trust and respect between adults and pupils. The good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities and educational visits supports their social development well. The strong community links help to develop the pupils' understanding of how to become responsible members of society.
38. There is very good provision for pupils' cultural development, a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. They are able to experience stories, music and art from a range of cultures and to work with visiting musicians, authors and poets. The displays of pupils' work reflect different cultural traditions well. The school has worked hard to help pupils learn about and celebrate the contribution that minority groups make to British society and, consequently, they are receptive to new ideas and experiences.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Overall, the school takes very good care of pupils. Staff know children very well and check their progress carefully in Reception, English, mathematics, science and in other subjects.

39. The school is a very friendly caring community and does all it can to keep pupils safe. All staff know the pupils very well, are well aware of their various needs and respond in a positive and supportive way. This means that pupils feel happy and secure, having confidence in staff for advice and support. Pupils with specific needs are given very good support. Overall, this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
40. The school works hard to maintain attendance levels by keeping careful daily checks on registers. The school secretary follows up absence on the first day and ensures that there is no excessive holiday absence.

41. The school is very good at making sure pupils behave well. Pupils know what is expected of them. All staff, including the experienced and well-trained midday supervisors, have high expectations of good behaviour and consistently manage pupils very well. The school does not tolerate bullying or racist behaviour.
42. Pupils' personal development is very well supported through personal and social education lessons and the frequent informal contact possible with small class numbers. In lessons, teachers' positive comments to pupils on their work increases their confidence and raises their self-esteem. The school is keen to make all pupils feel appreciated as valued members of the school family. Their efforts, attitudes and behaviour in school are celebrated regularly in class and assemblies.
43. In Reception, there are good arrangements for establishing children's attainment when they start school and in checking their progress through the year. This has been useful in the early identification of children who need extra support with their learning.
44. There are also good procedures to check pupils' attainment and their progress in English, mathematics and science. The results of national and other tests are analysed carefully and used to identify and tackle weaknesses in pupils' performance. This information is used well by teachers in planning their lessons and also to set targets for individuals. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection. While new checking procedures have been introduced in other subjects, the recording of pupils' progress does not always show what pupils do well and where they need to improve. This makes it difficult for staff other than the class teacher to know pupils' prior attainment and in making helpful reports to parents.
45. The checking of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator keeps comprehensive records that she discusses with teachers and assistants. The individual educational plans have clear and realistic targets. Staff use these to plan carefully for the needs of individuals and, consequently, pupils make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Parents are very supportive and appreciative of the school. They are generally kept well informed, although not always about their child's progress in some subjects. Parents are interested and involved in what goes on in school.

46. During a recent unsettled period when some staff faced difficult personal problems, parents were very supportive of the school. They find it easy to approach the headteacher and staff. A very small number of parents expressed some concerns that were partly justified. Information on pupils' progress is good in some but not all subjects. However, other concerns about the range of activities outside lessons and working with parents were not justified.
47. The school's links with parents are good, as shown by the high degree of satisfaction expressed by parents both in the parents' meeting, in the questionnaire and during the inspection. New parents are particularly appreciative of the welcoming arrangements when their children start school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are also pleased with the very high quality of support given to their children. The quality of information provided by the school is good. The school prospectus and the annual report of governors are both informative; an improvement since the previous inspection when there were omissions. Very good, regular newsletters keep parents well-informed about school activities. The new initiative to inform parents of topics for study in each subject, every half term, has been welcomed by parents and encourages them to support their child's learning.
48. The school has an open door policy and parents appreciate that they can readily talk to teachers about urgent issues. In addition, there are three formal opportunities a year for parents to discuss their child's progress. Parents are given good information in the annual written report on what pupils need to do to improve in English, mathematics and science but not always in other subjects. Insufficient information is given on what pupils do well and what they need to do to improve. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved with reviews of their individual education plans and their views are taken into account.

49. Parents make a good contribution to their child's learning, both at home and in school. Their help with pupils' learning is much appreciated by the school. Good use is made of parents' expertise through help in classrooms, on school trips and in extra-curricular activities. A parent trains the senior netball team. Parents support their children's learning at home through shared reading and other homework. There is a very active association for parents. Social events raise significant additional funds to support pupils' learning, such as through supporting the conversion of outside toilets into a splendid additional room. The school increasingly seeks the views of parents; for example they were consulted over changes to the home / school agreement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

The headteacher leads the school very well with good support from staff with management responsibilities. Governors are interested and well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They spend wisely. The development plan does not show clearly the hoped for improvements in standards, making it difficult to tell if actions have been successful.

50. The school has successfully come through an unsettled period when staff, including the headteacher, faced personal tragedies. Governors, teachers, assistants and parents showed great understanding and team spirit in making sure that pupils' education did not suffer from the inevitable staff changes and absences at the time. In particular, the senior teacher most ably took on additional management responsibilities for two terms, as well as carrying on her full-time class responsibilities.
51. The committed and experienced headteacher has made a smooth return to school, showing that she is a very good leader and manager. She has been instrumental in moving the school forward, having a very clear idea of what is possible and has shown by example how this can be done. Standards are rising and the number of pupils on roll has increased from just over 40 to 65, as the reputation of the school's caring and family approach has spread.
52. The school has successfully improved pupils' achievement in English, craft skills, games and swimming and is producing pupils who are enthusiastic learners and well prepared for the next stage of their schooling. The recent emphasis on developing pupils' writing skills in all subjects has had good results but actions to improve older juniors' skills in mathematical problem solving and scientific investigation have not yet had time to take effect. There are also shortcomings in the way pupils evaluate in design and technology and compose in music that have not yet been tackled successfully. However, staff work very well together, continually looking at ways of improving what they do and they have the necessary expertise and commitment to achieve what they want.
53. The headteacher and three teachers, two full-time and one part-time, have recently redistributed management responsibilities. As they are such a small staff, each teacher has a number of responsibilities. The teacher of the older juniors is in her first years of teaching and has only taken on a management role this year. She has done particularly well in supporting colleagues with mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education. The part time teacher has also recently taken responsibility for music and religious education and made a good start. The experienced infant teacher and the headteacher share the other subjects and, in addition, special educational needs and the Foundation Stage³, which are particularly well led. The headteacher also has a class responsibility but now has more time to carry out her other duties; this was a key issue at the previous inspection. While she has undertaken regular classroom observation and successfully supported staff, other teachers are less experienced and recognise the need to improve their judgements about the quality of teaching and learning they see.
54. The governing body meets monthly during term and works well through its committees. Governors are closely involved in the life of the school, regularly visiting and meeting with staff. The chair is in frequent contact with the headteacher and fully involved in discussions about most things affecting the life of the school. The governors are well informed by reports from the headteacher and other staff. As a result, they have a clear and accurate picture of the school and what is being improved.

³ Foundation Stage covers the education of young children from three to five years – in this school only Reception Year.

55. Performance management procedures are very well used to help the headteacher and other staff to review the way they work, set targets for improvement and agree areas for training and development. This has been most successful in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, where teaching and learning have improved considerably as a result of training. However, as checks on teaching and learning have not been carried out in other subjects to the same degree, staff and governors do not have a clear overall view of what needs to be done to raise pupils' achievement across the board.
56. The school has identified appropriate priorities to improve the school by a systematic and thorough examination of tests and other information on pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Indeed, the school is already dealing with most of the key issues identified in the inspection. The current development plan focuses on raising achievement in writing, the use of new technologies and on subjects not looked at recently. While the plan shows clearly what is important and what needs to be done over the next year, it does not indicate specifically in what ways pupils' achievement will be improved. Therefore, governors and staff cannot tell whether the actions being taken are working and worthwhile. All staff and governors are involved in drawing up these plans and parents and pupils are consulted about major changes.
57. Financial budgeting is very well managed and funds are used wisely. The rise in pupils' numbers has brought in more money that has been well employed to increase staffing and improve resources and the buildings. Specific funds are particularly well spent, such as in support of pupils with special educational needs and to convert disused outside toilets into additional teaching/meeting spaces.
58. New staff are very well supported and warmly welcomed as members of the school community. Assistants are also helped to take a full part in all aspects of school life, being encouraged and supported in their ongoing training.
59. The administrative support in the school is very good. The secretary provides a most helpful first point of contact and, because of her efficiency, takes pressure off the headteacher, who teaches for two days a week. New technologies are being more widely used to reduce bureaucracy by staff carrying out management duties and in the preparation of lessons.
60. The school is very well looked after by the cleaner-in-charge. The library is well stocked and used frequently. The infant classroom is well laid out and includes an outside secure area for creative play. The lower junior room is large with good facilities for quiet, active and practical activities. The upper junior classroom is a little cramped. The hall is just adequate for assemblies but not suitable for active lessons, such as gymnastics. The recently refurbished meeting rooms will provide much valued additional space. The staff room and administrative office are to be upgraded in the near future.
61. The playground is adequate and well used, with plenty of games and small equipment. The grounds are small and include a shaded grassed area with picnic tables, a garden and wild area. These are all well used for the benefit of pupils. The school also makes use of the nearby village hall and playing field for activities requiring more space.
62. The school has improved resources considerably since the previous inspection. There is a wide range of suitable books, apparatus, equipment and materials of good quality, supporting pupils' learning in all subjects. The recently purchased computers and other technological equipment are also making a good contribution to pupils' education.
63. The headteacher and governors are very careful when making major spending decisions. They consult widely, applying the principals of best value. There has been a considerable carry forward in the budget over the last two years but this has been earmarked for building improvements, which have been held up by difficulties gaining planning consent.
64. Children start school with a wide range of attainment and by 11, are very good communicators and generally achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and the few talented make good progress. This is as a result of the consistently good or better teaching they receive, which means the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors and headteacher should:

- I. Develop junior pupils' mathematical problem solving, scientific investigation, design evaluation and musical composition skills by providing more opportunities where they can discuss, try out and refine their own ideas*.

(Paragraphs 5, 6, 8, 25, 26, 30, 52, 82, 88, 99, 100, 101 and 116)

- II. Record pupils' progress more accurately and provide parents with reports that clearly show what pupils do well and need to do to improve in each subject as well as giving an indication of their achievement in relation to their capability.*

(Paragraphs 44, 46, 48, 97, 102, 108, 113, 118, 123 and 128)

- III. Help and support co-ordinators carry out checks on teaching and learning so that they can identify and tackle shortcomings and raise pupils' achievement further.*

(Paragraphs 53, 55, 86, 97, 102, 108, 113, 118, 123 and 128)

- IV. Include targets for raising achievement in development plans in order to give governors and staff measures they can use to show whether the actions to improve teaching and learning are working and the efforts and funding worthwhile.

(Paragraph 56)

The governors and headteacher may wish to include the following shortcomings in their action plan:

- Note taking skills.

(Paragraphs 4 and 76)

- Drama and role-play.*

(Paragraph 80)

- Using new technologies.*

(Paragraphs 84, 89 and 111)

- Observational drawing.

(Paragraphs 93 and 95)

* This issue is included in the school's development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	12	16	1	0	0	0
Percentage	3	40	54	3	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	65
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	5	3	8

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	4	3	7

Where the number of pupils in the year group has a total of ten or fewer, the table showing the test and examination data for each group must not be included in the report.

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	65	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.1
Average class size	21.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	190,795
Total expenditure	194,246
Expenditure per pupil	2,899
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,244
Balance carried forward to next year	36,793

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	42
Number of questionnaires returned	26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	35	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	54	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	35	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	50	12	4	0
The teaching is good.	54	42	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	27	19	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	38	4	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	31	15	4	5
The school is well led and managed.	62	27	4	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	38	0	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	19	19	8	8

Other issues raised by parents

The pressure felt by some Year 2 pupils preparing for the standard assessment tests/tasks.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Strengths

- Children quickly settle in school and make good progress, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills.
- The teaching and learning are generally very good.
- Learning activities are interesting and give children plenty of practical experiences.
- Staff know the children very well and quickly identify and tackle problems.
- Equipment, toys and materials are good and well used.
- Staff make good use of the buildings, school grounds and the local area.

Areas for development

- Planning special activities for the youngest four-year-olds to help them develop their social skills.

65. Children start school at the beginning of the year in which they are five with a wide range of attainment. At the time of the inspection, there were seven children attending full time; they are taught in a mixed age infant class with older pupils. The very good teaching in each area of learning is as a result of the experienced teacher's very good understanding of how young children develop, her high expectations and the way she manages lessons. She works very closely with two assistants to make sure activities are very suitable and interesting. They know the children very well. Consequently, children work hard, achieve very well and are given the support they need. Resources and facilities are also very good, a considerable improvement since the previous inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. As five of the seven children are very young, on occasions, they still find it difficult to socialise and share. A racing game with straws was too difficult and they squabbled. However, they have made good progress but are not likely to meet the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time they start Year 1. Children have learnt simple routines and quickly settled into school. They have great confidence in the staff, feeling safe and secure. Generally, children find the wide range of activities, set out for them and those they choose for themselves, interesting and enjoyable. They move around safely and orderly. Staff set very good examples, showing children how to get on with each other and look after things properly. Nearly all show independence, such as when going to the toilet without fuss and changing for physical or creative activities. There is a very caring atmosphere and any child having difficulties, especially those with special educational needs, is sensitively helped to take a full and active part in activities.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Nearly all Reception children are achieving better than expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and have already exceeded the early learning goals in this area. They listen attentively to stories, concentrating for quite long periods and are eager to engage in discussions about what they have heard. They love to talk about their own experiences and ask each other questions, as they did so well in a short session on Monday morning talking with the assistant about their experiences on the weekend. They enjoy playing creatively in an area currently designed as a tourist office, taking on different roles. Reception children have short sessions with older children learning letter sounds with the help of a puppet, well used by the teacher to focus their attention. They also have longer, intensive teaching as a group and, because of the excellent teaching during these sessions, work very hard and have made very good progress in their reading and writing skills. All can follow print in books and recognise familiar words, making suggestions about the story and what happens next. They all write their name and simple words, sounding out the letters and, often, making the shape in the air before writing. The classroom has attractive displays, collections of children's work and good quality books to celebrate and value their writing and encourage reading.

Mathematical development

68. Nearly all the children are on course to reach the early learning goals for mathematical development by the time they start Year 1. They are encouraged to think mathematically, such as when counting or comparing things they see around them. They recognise numbers up to ten and nearly all can count to 20. They are beginning to use ordinal numbers correctly, as they did when taking turns to get on an imaginary bus in the playground. All can identify 'largest' and 'smallest' and have a good understanding of words that describe the position of things. Nearly all can recognise common shapes and name circles and triangles. There are daily sessions where they join with older pupils and then complete follow-up exercises, such as sorting, matching and making repeating patterns. They enjoy singing counting songs and rhymes, particularly where there are actions, as in 'Five little speckled hens'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. The programme for the infants' class has been constructed around topics suitable for the wide range of ages and capabilities. Activities are based on first-hand experience, with plenty of interesting practical work and investigations, such as visiting the local garden centre. Staff successfully help children to become aware of themselves and how they relate to the world around them. They took a toy bear, Barnaby, on a walk around the village and, in the classroom, were able to suggest what features he liked and those he disliked. All agreed the busy road was dangerous. Nearly all children confidently use the computer to reinforce their learning, such as identifying letter sounds or making colourful patterns. As a result of these activities, nearly all are likely to reach the early learning goals in this area by the time they start Year 1.

Physical development

70. Nearly all are on course to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals in physical development by the end of Reception. They are given many opportunities to develop their control of large and small movements. They have good eye-hand co-ordination, as when playing with balls and other small equipment on the playground. They have specialist lessons, along with older pupils in their class, where they learn gymnastics, dance and games skills. They gain much from following the good example of older pupils and working in a small group with the assistant. In the classroom, they use small tools, such as scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and crayons, competently and carefully. There is a good range of games and toys, which encourage precise movements, as when playing with jigsaws and bricks creatively. They also benefit from using wheeled toys and larger equipment in the secure, outside play area. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Creative development

71. The infant classroom is large and well arranged to give children many opportunities to play and work creatively. As a result, nearly all are on course to reach the early learning goals in creative development by the end of the Reception year. They experiment with a wide range of different material to create interesting models and pictures, often based on topics they are studying. They made junk model vehicles as part of a toy project and collage animals when looking at farm life. They also enjoy cooking, having fun making and decorating cakes. Staff frequently involve children in role play activities, encouraging them to make creative suggestions, such as what interesting places would they like to visit on an imaginary bus they were using to learn about ordinal numbers. Children sing familiar songs with enthusiasm, sometimes using pitched and un-tuned percussion instruments as accompaniment.

ENGLISH

Strengths

- Pupils generally achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- They enjoy expressing and sharing their views.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Literacy skills are used well to support learning in all subjects.
- Systematic checks on pupils' progress help staff identify and tackle shortcomings in learning.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Areas for development

- Older more able boys self-checking their written work.
- Developing note-taking skills.
- More opportunities for drama and role-play.

72. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 have speaking and listening skills that are at least as expected for their age and a third are at a higher standard. They enjoy asking and answering questions and confidently express their views. They listen attentively to adults and to each other, commenting sensibly on what they have heard. Around a half of Year 6 are responsive listeners and confident speakers, achieving as expected for their age with a further quarter of pupils reaching a higher level. They express and defend their opinions, making thoughtful contributions. Pupils throughout the school use these skills well in all subjects.
73. Pupils achieve well in reading across the school. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 read with obvious enjoyment and interest. They use letter sounds competently to help them read new words and more able pupils independently break difficult words into more recognisable parts. Around two thirds read as expected for their age and a quarter reach the higher level.
74. Just over two thirds of Year 6 read widely and with enjoyment. They express opinions about the characters and the plot and how the author retains the reader's interest. All can use a variety of sources to find information, including the Internet. A third of the group read at a higher standard than expected for their age. Throughout the school, pupils use their reading skills well to find out information when studying topics in different subjects.
75. Just under three-quarters of Year 2 use full stops and capital letters in the right place, with most spellings correct, when writing complete stories. Their handwriting is neat and well formed. The more able, around a quarter of the year group, are beginning to join letters and often make their writing more interesting by having characters speak and using colourful words.
76. Just over a half of Year 6 write easily in English lessons and to support their learning in other subjects. A quarter of pupils reach a higher standard in writing. Generally, they think carefully before putting down their thoughts, although a few more able boys are inclined to rush and not check their work sufficiently, making simple errors. Junior pupils are not confident in recording their thoughts in note form, often taking a long time writing sentences when planning or recording information. Nearly all pupils take care with their handwriting, which is joined and legible.
77. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for and generally make good progress. Their needs are identified accurately so that the support they receive matches their rate and style of learning. Assistants are particularly skilful in helping pupils gain confidence and feel good about their achievements. More able pupils also benefit from small classes and are given harder work, sometimes with older pupils.
78. In the five lessons seen covering each year group, the quality of the teaching and learning was always good. Teachers have benefited from recent training and have adapted national guidance material well. Consequently, their lessons are well planned and meet the wide range of capabilities in each class.

Teachers and assistants work very closely together, making very good use of the wide range of appropriate resources. Lessons are very well managed so that no time is wasted and pupils are interested and enthusiastic learners. In a Year 5/6 lesson on persuasive writing, the teacher skilfully initiated an animated debate on the arguments for and against having morning and afternoon playtimes. Pupils made strong and forceful points but, such were the very good relationships and teacher's management skills, opposing views were examined in depth and in a mature way. The resulting letters to the chair of school governors were well argued. As a more able boy wrote: *"I think it is preposterous that teachers should propose such a stupid idea"*.

79. There have been considerable improvements since the previous inspection. The headteacher has been a very good manager, successfully helping staff develop their teaching and improving the way they check and help pupils make good progress. The emphasis on developing literacy skills through all subject lessons has been a particularly successful initiative.
80. Resources, including the library, are good and well used. New technologies are being introduced more, particularly for editing and publishing pupils' work. Staff are committed and know what needs to be done to raise standards higher. They are keen to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their drama skills through role-play and creative ways of exploring ideas in other subjects, particularly citizenship, geography and history.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths

- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support.
- Pupils very much enjoy mathematics.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been wisely introduced.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Resources, including new technologies, are well used.

Areas for development

- Older pupils' skills in finding the easiest way of solving problems.
- Supporting and developing teaching and learning.

81. Just over two thirds of Year 2 pupils attain as expected for seven-year-olds and the rest reach a higher standard. They work confidently with numbers to 100, with higher attaining pupils using larger numbers. They are aware of sequences, such as odd and even and can use suitable methods for dealing with addition, subtraction, division and multiplication problems. They use halves and quarters in number and area problems and recognise angles, including right angles, as measures of turn. They also recognise sequences of numbers and can count on in twos, fives and tens. They identify and name common two-dimensional geometric shapes and can use information to complete Venn diagrams. Most pupils use number skills accurately to solve problems involving money, length and time. Their learning in mathematics is particularly helped by the many opportunities to carry out practical activities and, as a result, they achieve well in numeracy.
82. A half of Year 6 pupils reach the standard for their age in mathematics, with a third attaining at a higher level. Pupils are competent in the four rules of number and have a secure knowledge and understanding of fractions and decimals. They have suitable mental recall skills and can explain their working out. They check the reasonableness of a result, with or without a calculator and can use halving and doubling to aid multiplication. Higher attaining pupils interpret first quadrant co-ordinates and use all four operations to two places of decimals. Pupils quickly and efficiently recall multiplication factors to 10 x 10 and can explain their method of calculation. The school has begun to concentrate on problem solving, where all but the more able have difficulty working out what they need to do to find the easiest and quickest way.
83. Pupils with special educational needs are identified quickly and given work that matches their capabilities. They also receive extra individual support to break their learning into smaller steps so

that they can take full part in lessons and make good progress. This was evident in a lesson in Year 4 when they were cutting out a variety of shapes and then drawing in lines of symmetry. More able pupils are also given suitable work and can work at a faster rate.

84. In the three mathematics lessons seen, covering each year group, the quality of teaching and learning was always good. Teachers plan and organise their lessons well and use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Teachers and assistants are a close-knit team giving pupils a high proportion of direct teaching, ensuring that they work hard. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the numeracy strategy and use it well to set challenging work for pupils of different capabilities. Teachers give good explanations and demonstrate new techniques well, so that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and how to set about their activities. In a Year 5/6 lesson, the teacher's expertise helped pupils investigate patterns of numbers and find out for themselves the rule to show what happens when two consecutive numbers are added together. All teachers make good use of resources and increasingly use new technologies to reinforce and extend pupils' learning; this is an area the school is eager to develop further.
85. In all lessons, pupils have very positive attitudes and show a lot of interest and enjoyment in their work. They are very well behaved, concentrate well and treat the mathematical resources with care. These attitudes are an important factor in the good progress that they make.
86. The co-ordinator is a very good leader and manager. She knows what needs to be done to raise achievement further but has not had sufficient opportunity to support and develop teaching and learning in the classroom. Pupils' progress is regularly checked and the information is used well for lesson planning. Numeracy skills are well developed in other subjects, particularly in science, design and technology, geography and history. Overall, this is an improvement since the previous inspection.

SCIENCE

Strengths

- Pupils achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given extra support and make good progress.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Areas for development

- Older pupils' skills in recognising trends and patterns when drawing conclusions.
- The use of new technology to support learning.
- Supporting and developing teaching and learning in the classroom.

87. Just over two thirds of Year 2 pupils attain as expected for seven-year-olds, with the rest reaching a higher standard. They make sensible predictions before carrying out experiments, such as when finding out which materials magnets will or will not pick up. Pupils know and understand that pushing and pulling create a force that can change the shape of some materials and move objects. They also know the dangers associated with electricity and can construct simple electrical circuits. Pupils explain the difference between natural and man-made materials and know the conditions necessary for the healthy growth of plants. More able pupils can carry out a fair test, independently of the teacher, as was seen when they were investigating how different surfaces affect the distances that model cars travel.
88. In Year 6, around two thirds of pupils reach the level expected for their age and a third attain the higher standard. They have a secure, all-round foundation in science. Pupils know the location and function of some of the major organs in the human body. They also know that light travels in a straight line and that shadows are formed when an object blocks a light source. Pupils appreciate the need for a healthy lifestyle and diet, as well as having a good understanding of the harmful effect of some foods on their body. They have a suitable understanding of the differences between solids, liquids and gasses and which materials are good thermal insulators. Higher attaining pupils have a good

understanding of the predator-prey relationship and can use diagrams to construct a variety of electrical circuits. While pupils have improved their skill in reading and interpreting the information on graphs, they still lack confidence in identifying trends and patterns in their investigations. The school recognises the need to further develop pupils' investigational skills so that conclusions to experiments are discussed fully, rather than being just a description of what they have done.

89. In the three lessons seen, covering all age ranges, the quality of teaching and learning was good, which helped pupils of all abilities to make good progress and achieve well. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and make sure pupils are clear about what they are to learn. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and so are able to ask relevant questions to find out what pupils know and to develop further their scientific understanding. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they can do and, consequently, teachers set challenging and interesting work. The activities build well on previous work, so that pupils can use prior scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. This happened well in a Year 5/6 lesson about plant reproduction when pupils quickly identified the parts they had to examine on real plants, having studied diagrams previously. Pupils also made good use of an electronic microscope in their investigation. However, the school is aware that, currently, new technologies are under-used in science.
90. Pupils are interested and keen to carry out practical investigations. They show much enjoyment and interest in what they are doing. They are very well behaved and have a good work rate.
91. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in report writing, as well as in labelling scientific drawings and diagrams. In experiments to find out the rate at which different solids dissolve in hot and cold water, pupils used their numeracy skills well to take accurate temperature readings.
92. The co-ordinator gives a very good lead to the subject. Pupils' progress is regularly checked and the information used well to identify and tackle individuals' strengths and weaknesses, in addition to planning lessons. However, the co-ordinator has not yet had sufficient opportunity to observe in the classroom to suggest what needs to be done to improve teaching and learning further. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, as marking is more helpful and the range of resources has been extended.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths

- Pupils greatly enjoy art lessons.
- Pupils have many opportunities to experiment creatively.

Areas for development

- Pupils' observational drawing skills.
- Recording and reporting on pupils' progress.
- Supporting and developing teaching and learning.

93. During the inspection, insufficient lessons of art and design could be seen in order to make a secure overall judgement of the quality of teaching and learning. However, based on the one lesson seen, looking at pupils' sketchbooks and their work on display around the school, as well as talking to pupils and staff, all achieve as expected for their capabilities, overall, but lack confidence in observational drawing.
94. Just over three-quarters of the pupils in Year 2 suitably experiment with line, texture and colour and then use these skills in their drawings and paintings. They confidently mix primary colours to create a variety of secondary colours to be used in their paintings. Pupils know about the lives of some famous artists. They recognise patterns and talk with enthusiasm about the textures they make. After a visit to the 'Sculpture Trail' in the Forest of Dean, pupils made interesting models from clay, showing an appropriate skill level. As a result of another visit to a church, they confidently used different brushstrokes to create a painting of a stained glass window.

95. The work of pupils in Year 6 shows they make good progress in developing the skills of working with a wider range of materials. Just over three-quarters of pupils attain as expected for their age and a few achieve higher standards. They show an appropriate knowledge of proportion in their charcoal drawings of people. Suitable vocabulary is used, such as 'perspective', 'contour', 'shadow' and 'texture', when they talk about their work. The pupils talk with suitable understanding about the techniques of famous artists. After studying the painting of 'The Black Cross' by the American artist Georgia O'Keefe, some more able pupils painted their own good quality versions to depict an Easter theme of sorrow and joy. The school is now concentrating on developing pupils' skills in making more accurate and detailed observational drawings.
96. In the one Year 3/4 lesson seen, the headteacher built well on the previous lesson so that pupils had time to reflect on how they would paint an imaginary journey. She used praise and encouragement appropriately and this gave pupils the confidence to experiment with different media. The activity was interesting and the teacher let pupils work at their own pace and think creatively. Pupils were well behaved, showing much interest and enjoyment in their work.
97. The co-ordinator leads the subject well but has not had sufficient opportunity to support and develop teaching and learning in the classroom. Since the previous inspection, curricular planning has much improved, following the introduction of national guidelines. However, recording and reporting on pupils' progress are not always sufficiently helpful for new teachers and parents. Increasing use is being made of new technologies to support pupils' learning, in addition to the wide range of good quality resources available.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils' craft skills.
- Links with the secondary school.

Areas for development

- Pupils' skills in deciding how to improve what they have made.
- Recording and reporting on pupils' progress.
- Supporting and developing teaching and learning.

98. During the inspection, only one lesson could be seen and, consequently, it is not possible to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, evidence from looking at pupils' work, displays and talking to pupils and staff shows that, generally, all are achieving in line with their capabilities.
99. Just over three-quarters of pupils in Year 2 know and understand about the properties of different materials and how best to shape, assemble and join them. They have good skills in making a variety of models, using different construction kits. They know how simple mechanisms work and can use this knowledge to make wheeled vehicles with working axles. In their work on making puppets from traditional tales, they showed good sewing and finishing skills. They are better at designing and making than in deciding how the finished product could be improved.
100. Just over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils have well developed craft skills in using a range of materials and tools. They are aware of the need to work safely. They have successfully used a variety of material to design and make good quality, attractive headwear on the theme of 'Carnival'. They have a suitable understanding of the need to use materials for specific purposes, as is seen in their designs for a variety of shelters. The school is looking at ways of improving pupils' skills in deciding how to improve what they have made.
101. In the one lesson observed in Year 5/6, the teacher's expertise enabled her to explain and demonstrate confidently the techniques required. As a result, pupils made good progress in learning how to use art straws to make a mock-up of their design for a shelter. However, there was insufficient time given at the end of the lesson to discuss what they had learnt and how to improve their work. The pupils responded well in the lesson, being very well behaved and working collaboratively.

102. The co-ordinator is a good leader but she has had insufficient opportunity to support and develop teaching and learning. Planning is now more thorough and better matches the capabilities of pupils. However, recording and reporting on pupils' progress are not always very accurate or helpful. Good links with the secondary school enable pupils in Year 5 to spend a day to design and make a product with the help of specialist teachers. This has helped them apply and extend their craft skills when working with a wider range of materials and tools. While some use is made of new technologies to present pupils' work, other aspects are under-used. The school has made good progress since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Strengths

- Pupils enjoy fieldwork and visits.
- Older pupils are keen on using the Internet and library for independent study.
- The curriculum is well planned to avoid repetition in mixed age classes.
- Co-ordinators know what they need to do to raise standards further.

Areas for development

- The care some older pupils take with their topic books.
- Recording progress and informing parents what pupils do well and need to do to improve.
- Checking and developing teaching and learning.

103. No lessons of geography and history could be seen during the inspection so no judgements can be made on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Evidence from looking at pupils' work, talking to Year 2 and Year 6 and discussing plans with teachers shows that all pupils are achieving as expected for their capabilities.
104. In geography, around three-quarters of Year 2 have a good knowledge and understanding of the local area. Pupils know what makes a typical village and why certain facilities, such as shops, garages, schools and churches are important. They can point out the British Isles on a world map and find the countries visited by a toy bear that parents, children and staff have taken on holiday. They know that people are affected by the climate and seasons, as in Canada and Australia. They enjoy making comparisons between the way of life in cold and hot countries and in the Forest of Dean.
105. Just over three-quarters of Year 6 can find places on maps and use reference books, newspapers and the Internet to find out information. They can contrast different localities in terms of physical features, buildings, industry and home life. They have made detailed studies of Llandudno in North Wales and Lydney. While most work is carefully organised and well presented, some pupils do not take enough care. This makes their recorded work difficult to follow. Pupils also take an interest in environmental and conservation issues. They produced persuasive letters and pamphlets to raise people's awareness after a visit to a mini-recycling centre. This also helped reinforce their literacy skills.
106. In history, around three-quarters of Year 2 pupils show they have a sense of the past from their study of different events and the way people lived. They used copies of paintings and sketches of the Great Fire of London to retell what happened and discussed why the flames travelled so fast. They particularly enjoyed finding out how seaside holidays had changed by asking their grandparents and looking at original postcards and photographs. Discussion is a large part of these lessons and plays an important part in the high standards of speaking and listening.
107. Just over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of different historical periods. They made a detailed study of different aspects of Ancient Greece, being encouraged to look for clues like historical detectives. They examined the writing and pictorial designs on Greek pottery, to find out about some of the customs. As part of the study, they discussed why the Athenians beat the Spartans at the Battle of Marathon and also retold the story of Theseus and the minotaur. They make good use of books from the library and the Internet when studying historical topics and many like following up their work at home. However, some pupils do not take enough care organising their topic books.

108. Both subjects are well managed. Detailed programmes of study have been produced to make sure topics are interesting and are not repeated for pupils in mixed age classes. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. A new way of recording pupils' progress has been introduced but records do not always show where pupils have problems and what they do well. As a result, reports to parents are not always very informative. Good use is made of new technologies to find out information and present pupils' work. Teaching and learning in geography and history have not been looked at for some time and co-ordinators do not have an accurate picture of what needs to be improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils and teachers are more confident in using new technologies.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Equipment and resources for the subject are good.

Areas for development

- Supporting and developing teaching and learning.
- Recording and reporting on pupils' progress.
- Using new technologies to support learning in other subjects.

109. During the inspection, insufficient direct teaching of the subject was seen and, as a result, no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning. However, observation of pupils working on their own and in pairs, looking at displays and their previous work, and talking to teachers and pupils, shows that all are achieving as expected for their capabilities.
110. Just over three-quarters of pupils in Year 2 attain as expected for their age. They have suitable mouse and keyboard skills, which helps them to change the style, colour and size of text when word-processing and to retrieve, process and display information. They also show suitable skills in using a paint program to make interesting drawings and pictures using different coloured shapes. When using computers, they respond well to the on-screen instructions and are able accurately to work their way through the program. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils confidently used their word processing skills to fill gaps in a poem. As part of their work in geography, pupils have used a digital camera well to take photographs of the different features in the village.
111. Just over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils attain as expected for their age, having made good progress in the juniors, as equipment and resources have improved. They are able to organise and present their ideas and use computers confidently. They know and understand the functions of icons on the toolbar and can use these to edit and save their work when word-processing. Pupils competently use the Internet to find information to help them with their work in subjects, such as history and geography. In science, they use an electronic microscope to make close observations. They enter information on a spreadsheet and then create a range of graphs and charts to present their findings. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, they used the function keys appropriately to choose font, print size and align text when word-processing a letter to present a counter argument against banning playtime. The school is keen to further develop pupils' skills in new technologies to support their learning in other subjects.
112. In the one Year 5/6 lesson observed, the teacher used the 'smart board' very well to demonstrate how to control a traffic light sequence to start a motor race and pupils quickly grasped how to make up their own program. The activity was interesting and the pupils responded positively, concentrating throughout the lesson. They were very well behaved and worked collaboratively in small groups. They also used technical words appropriately, such as 'repeat', 'control box', 'wait' and 'procedure', to explain what they were doing.
113. The new co-ordinator has made a very good start and has been able to give much helpful advice to colleagues. While checking procedures have recently been changed, recording and reporting on pupils' progress are not always sufficiently accurate or helpful. Although, she has not had much opportunity to support and develop teaching and learning in the classroom, staff have benefited from

nationally initiated training and become more confident in using new technologies. In addition, the school now has better equipment and resources. Overall, this is an improvement since the last inspection.

MUSIC

Strengths

- Pupils listen attentively and like a wide range of music.
- They enjoy singing and playing instruments.
- Published guidance is helpful to non-specialist teachers.
- The piano playing and support of a local resident is much appreciated.
- The quality of percussion instruments is good.
- The new co-ordinator has made a good start.

Areas for development

- Composing music in the juniors.
- Recording and reporting on pupils' progress.
- Supporting and developing teaching and learning.

114. Two music lessons, a school assembly and a choir practice were seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on these observations, discussions with Year 6 pupils and teachers and examining curriculum plans. This is not enough to report on the overall quality of teaching, learning and achievement.
115. Nearly all pupils in the school sing enthusiastically and with evident enjoyment. They are introduced to a wide range of songs from around the world in lessons and in daily assemblies. The after-school choir is popular, with 15 juniors regularly attending. The school benefits considerably from the piano playing of a local retired resident for these sessions. The choir performs in school productions, church services and to groups in the local community, raising the status of music in the curriculum.
116. In the Year 3/4 lesson, pupils gained much from the well-planned activities to help them compose simple sequences using pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments. The teacher set the task at a low level, as she was aware that nearly all pupils lacked confidence in putting different patterns of sounds together and their composition skills were not as expected for their age.
117. In the Year 5/6 lesson, all pupils appreciated the atmosphere created by the teacher using a recorded ballad from the 1940's to illustrate people's feelings in World War II. They entered into the mood when singing the Vera Lyn favourite, 'There'll be bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover'. They gave thoughtful comments about how it made them feel 'sentimental' and 'tearful'. By playing the rousing 'Dam busters' march straight afterwards, the teacher skilfully helped the class understand a completely different range of feelings people experienced in the war.
118. The part-time teacher has recently taken over co-ordination of music and has made a good start, particularly in making sure there are good resources available to support lessons. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Generally, non-specialist teachers find the published guidance helpful but they still lack confidence, especially in teaching composition skills. The co-ordinator is aware that teachers need help to improve their knowledge and understanding so that they can identify and tackle shortcomings in pupils' learning. In addition because of this, records and reports on pupils' progress are not very specific. Also, she has not yet had the opportunity to support and develop teaching and learning through classroom observation. New technologies are increasingly being used, particularly to find out information and play recorded music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths

- All pupils can swim well and safely by 11 years old and are good at games.
- Pupils with special educational needs and the few with talents make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in physical activities.
- The school overcomes its limited facilities by providing opportunities for pupils to attend sports and activity centres.
- The new co-ordinator is doing well.

Areas for development

- Recording and reporting on pupils' progress.
- Supporting and developing teaching and learning.

119. Only two games lessons could be observed during the inspection. This is not enough to report on the overall quality of teaching, learning and achievement. However, by the time pupils leave aged 11, all can swim 25 metres and are aware of the principles of water safety.
120. In the infant lesson, the teacher provided well for the wide range of capabilities, carefully demonstrating good practice in throwing and catching a ball. Pupils worked in small teams with others having similar skill levels. A boy with special educational needs was successfully helped to take a full part by the encouraging guidance of an assistant. Despite the very hot weather, pupils tried hard and joined in enthusiastically, improving their hand-eye control.
121. In the Year 3/4 lesson, pupils enjoyed taking part in a competitive team game throwing beanbags over a short-tennis net. They were prepared well by the teacher, discussing safety features and what should be the rules of the game. Having carefully watched their initial performance, the teacher encouraged the class to think of ways of improving their scores. As a result, the few talented boys were able to demonstrate and develop strategy skills that helped their teams win each match.
122. The programme has been considerably improved since the previous inspection. There is now a full range of activities, including a biannual residential visit for Years 5/6. The school has limited facilities but makes sure that, during the year, all classes visit off-site sports and activity centres, particularly for gymnastics and swimming. Good use is made of the village hall and playing fields.
123. The new co-ordinator has made a good start, organising tennis coaching by taking advantage of a nationally funded scheme. This has had a noticeable effect on improving the juniors' playing skills. She also wants to help colleagues by observing and discussing teaching and learning and develop more helpful ways of recording and reporting on pupils' progress. Currently, records and reports to parents do not always show clearly what pupils do well and what they need to do to improve.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths

- Lessons make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The close links with both churches in the village.

Areas for development

- Extend the range of visits to unfamiliar places of worship.
- Recording and reporting on pupils' progress.
- Supporting and developing teaching and learning.

124. As only one lesson could be seen, it is not possible to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, evidence from looking at pupils' work, displays, as well as talking to teachers and pupils, indicates that nearly all pupils achieve as expected by the Gloucestershire agreed syllabus.
125. Just over three-quarters of Year 2 pupils have a secure understanding of key Christian values and can identify the moral issue in a simple story. They know the Bible is a special book for Christians and of

the effect that Jesus had on the people who met him. Pupils show a suitable knowledge about the important events in the life of Jesus and understand the use of a fish as a Christian symbol. They understand the importance of caring for other people and the world around them.

126. Just over three-quarters of pupils in Year 6 have a secure knowledge and understanding of the main traditions and values of Christianity, including the importance of the Eucharist Service. They know that baptism is the first stage of the Christian journey. Pupils show familiarity with the life of Jesus and can give examples of how Christian belief has changed someone's life. They also know about the traditions of other major world faiths, such as Judaism and Islam, and why sacred texts are so important to different religions. They are beginning to relate readings from the Qu'ran to the way Muslim people live and to compare this with Christian values and beliefs. They can talk in a mature way about their feelings and emotions. They show respect for the feelings, needs and beliefs of others, as well as demonstrating that they can reflect on the consequences of their own actions. These opportunities have a very positive influence on pupils' personal development.
127. In the Year 3/4 lesson observed, the teacher used video extracts well to develop pupils' understanding of the significance of the Hajji to Muslims. She was well prepared and asked challenging questions that enabled pupils to use their prior knowledge and understanding of Islam to support their learning. Pupils listened carefully and were well behaved. They showed interest in the story of the pilgrimage and in the views and opinions of other pupils. There is increasing use of new technologies to extend pupils' awareness and also publish their recorded work.
128. The subject is well led by the part-time co-ordinator. She has not yet had sufficient opportunity to support and develop teaching and learning. While new procedures have been introduced to check pupils' progress, the recording and reporting are not always accurate and helpful. There is good use made of the local community, with pupils visiting St Mary's Church and Methodist Chapel, while the vicar and minister regularly lead assemblies and work with pupils in lessons. The school is keen to extend the range of visits to include unfamiliar places of worship, such as a synagogue and a mosque. Overall, good progress has been made since the previous inspection.