

## ERRATUM SLIP

### **Minsterworth CofE Primary School**

**Unique Reference Number:** 115691  
**Contract Number:** 263831  
**Date of inspection:** 14/06/04  
**Reporting inspector:** Philip Schofield

**INSPECTION REPORT** - the following paragraphs should read as follows:-

#### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Minsterworth CE Primary School is a Voluntary Aided school providing education for children aged 4 to eleven in the village of Minsterworth, which is situated six miles west of Gloucester. The 56 pupils on roll include eight from the traveller community and two with English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs and a further eight receive additional support for identified special needs which is similar to the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The number of pupils joining the school at times other than the beginning of the school year is above average. Attainment on entry to school varies widely, but overall is in line with what children of this age normally achieve.

The school won a School Achievement Award from the DfES in 2003 for the high standards achieved. There are three mixed-age classes that benefit from small numbers and the school has recently been remodelled and extended to provide a computer suite and hall facilities. There are close links with the privately-run pre-school group that shares the site.

#### **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

##### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is consistently good. Attendance levels are below average which reflects the lifestyles of the families of some pupils.

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MINSTERWORTH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Minsterworth, Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115691

Headteacher: Mrs J Etheridge

Lead inspector: Mr Philip Schofield

Dates of inspection: 14 – 16 June 2004

Inspection number: 263831

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



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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 56

School address: Main Road  
Minsterworth  
Gloucester  
Postcode: GL2 8JH

Telephone number: 01452 750283  
Fax number: 01452 750283

Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr Jon Smith

Date of previous inspection: 25/1/1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Minsterworth CE Primary School is a Voluntary Aided school providing education for children aged 4 to eleven in the village of Minsterworth, which is situated six miles south of Gloucester. The 56 pupils on roll include eight from the traveller community and two with English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs and a further eight receive additional support for identified special needs which is similar to the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The number of pupils joining the school at times other than the beginning of the school year is above average. Attainment on entry to school varies widely, but overall is in line with what children of this age normally achieve.

The school won a School Achievement Award from the DfES in 2003 for the high standards achieved. There are three mixed-age classes that benefit from small numbers and the school has recently been remodelled and extended to provide a computer suite and hall facilities. There are close links with the privately-run pre-school group that shares the site.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1616	Mr Philip Schofield	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language
9079	Mrs Ann Moss	Lay inspector	
11777	Mrs Carolyn Poulter	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Design and technology Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school that provides high quality education to its pupils.** Standards were very high in the end of year tests in 2003 and, overall, are well above average. Pupils make very good progress as they move through the school. The school has a very positive ethos that encourages the inclusion of all pupils. This helps them to achieve very well. Teaching is good and often very good and this enables pupils to learn effectively. The governance of the school is a strength and adds significantly to the overall quality of provision. The school is very well led and managed and gives good value for money. The school is reorganising the curriculum into creative themes and still has work to do in this area.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and make very good progress;
- The school is very inclusive and ensures high quality provision for all its pupils;
- Teachers plan lessons, have high expectations of the pupils and manage the mixed-age classes effectively;
- Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution that enables the pupils with whom they work, particularly those with special educational needs, to make rapid progress;
- Assessment is used to very good effect in monitoring the progress of pupils and shaping subsequent work;
- The school makes good efforts to minimise the impact of irregular attendance by some pupils;
- Strategic planning to introduce a more creative curriculum is at an early stage of development;
- The school provides high standards of care, support and guidance for its pupils;
- Leadership and management are very good, although the school improvement plan does not focus sufficiently on the school's main priorities.

The school has made significant progress since the last inspection. It now offers high quality education and has many strengths. The staff and governors form a strong and effective team and now provide very effective leadership and management. The school improvement plan requires improvement as it did at the time of the last inspection. There is a very determined focus on inclusion and the school has introduced some very innovative ways of engaging all its pupils. The quality of teaching has improved and teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to lessons. All these factors have enabled the pupils to make very good progress and attain very high standards in the national tests.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The small number of children in each cohort makes comparison over time and with other schools very difficult and unreliable as the performance of one child can alter the overall picture substantially.

**The achievement of pupils is very good and they attain standards that are well above average.** Year 2 pupils gained very high standards in the end of year tests in 2003; those in Year 6 gained A\* results in the English, mathematics and science tests which represents very high standards. Boys and girls perform equally well. Standards seen during the inspection were well



above national averages in English and mathematics and above average in science. Pupils are very confident in the use of ICT. The small numbers of children of reception age achieve well and meet the goals which children of their age are expected to reach. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and make very good progress. Those with English as an additional language gain the skills they need to communicate in English very quickly. Pupils from the traveller community are fully integrated into the school and make good progress.

**The development of pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and their behaviour is good. They learn to take responsibility through their involvement in the school council and in other ways. The programme of international links helps them to gain understanding of life in different countries and cultures. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and appreciate special moments in their lives. They are eager to attend school and arrive punctually, although some do not attend regularly.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

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

**Teaching is good.** Lessons are planned and managed well. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and set challenging targets to help them focus on the learning objectives. In most lessons, teachers have very good subject knowledge and can explain and demonstrate very effectively. Many lessons are very imaginative and this helps to make them fun for pupils. The teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to the quality of provision and give very effective support to all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Assessment is used to very good effect and this enables teachers to match work very closely to the needs of the pupils. Teachers use new technology very well to enhance the quality of lessons.

The curriculum is planned very carefully to match the needs of all the pupils. The school is making very good progress in introducing a creative curriculum but does not yet have a strategic overview or the monitoring procedures to ensure that overall curriculum provision remains in balance or that there is continuity and progression within the teaching programme. The school adds richness to the curriculum through its programme of extra-curricular activities, international links and life-skills programme. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those from the traveller community, have full access to the curriculum and benefit greatly from the school's provision.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The school is led and managed very well.** The governing body has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school. All statutory requirements are met. The headteacher has built a strong and effective team to help her achieve her vision of an inclusive school providing high quality education. She manages the school well. Subject co-ordinators lead and manage their subjects well. Support staff make an important contribution that helps the daily routines to run smoothly and effectively. Financial management is good. The school improvement plan is muddled and does not identify clearly enough the main priorities of the school.

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

Parents have very positive views of the school and support it fully. They appreciate the openness of the staff and the high quality of communications. They have great confidence in the headteacher and her team and appreciate the care taken to provide individualised support for their children.

The pupils like school very much and are eager to learn. They respond well to the challenge of their lessons and appreciate being consulted about different aspects of school life.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Continue to analyse patterns of attendance, develop innovative and imaginative ways of encouraging regular attendance and provide suitable work for children who are travelling;

- Review curriculum provision to ensure that the new creative curriculum is broad and balanced and gives pupils full access to the National Curriculum;
- Restructure the school improvement plan so that it shows clearly the key priorities of the school and the steps needed to bring about improvement in each area.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Comparisons with other schools are unreliable because of the small size of the cohorts. Pupils in Year 2 achieved very high standards in the end-of-year tests in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 achieved very high standards in English, mathematics and science. This represents very good achievement against the average attainment of pupils on entry to school. The current cohort of pupils continues to achieve standards that are well above average.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above national averages and they are above average in science;
- Pupils make very good progress from the time they first started school;
- Standards in mental mathematics and problem solving have improved significantly since the last inspection;
- Standards in investigative science are improving;
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are well above average and ICT is used very effectively to enhance performance in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

1. Standards are compared with both national results and the results of similar schools at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The most recent validated data compares pupils' performance in 2003. The number of pupils in each cohort is very small and any comparisons with national results must be treated with great caution as the results of one pupil can have a disproportionate effect on overall averages. Standards have risen steadily since the last inspection and are now well above national averages.
2. The results of the 2003 tests show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics had improved since the last inspection and were very high in Year 2. Similar improvement took place in Year 6 where results were very high in English, mathematics and science. There was no obvious difference between the performances of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the very carefully planned teaching programme and the additional support they receive and make very good progress. The school provides very well for pupils from the traveller community who are fully integrated into the school and make good progress; they often add richness to lessons by sharing their life experiences with the other children. The small numbers of pupils with English as an additional language have been helped effectively to learn the language and are making very good progress.
3. Children enter the reception class with skills, knowledge and understanding that is similar to most other children and make rapid gains in their learning. Most achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and exceed the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional education. They respond well to working alongside the older pupils and often try to emulate their performance.
4. Pupils in Year 1 work hard to achieve the targets set for them by their teacher and often reach high standards. By Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are developing well and they are able to recount experiences, describe observations and offer ideas and suggestions. Their reading skills develop quickly and they enjoy reading from a wide range of texts. They make good progress in learning to write. Their mathematical skills develop rapidly and they achieve high standards. They have good understanding of scientific concepts and processes and, as

the school focuses increasingly on investigation, they are able to carry out their own experiments more effectively. Standards in those subjects where it was possible to make a judgement, including ICT, are high, although the dance aspects of physical education need further development to bring standards up.

5. The good progress continues through the subsequent years and, by Year 6, the pupils have very good command of English and mathematical processes and good understanding of scientific concepts and processes. Their ICT skills are very good and they use ICT as a tool to enhance learning across the curriculum. Their thinking and problem-solving skills are developing well and they can draw on a range of experiences to contribute to lessons, offering explanations and ideas about their work. They benefit from the small classes and the challenge of working with children of different ages; this aspect is managed very well by teachers and is used as a spur to higher achievement.
6. There are clear links between the good quality of teaching and the high standards achieved by the pupils. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and use targets very effectively to challenge them to work hard and to a consistently high standard.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is consistently good. Attendance levels of a significant minority are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in the classroom help them to achieve very well;
- The very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are the result of the very caring ethos of the school and the very good example set by the staff;
- Pupils' cultural development is very good because the school takes very positive steps to ensure that pupils experience the traditions of a wide range of cultures;
- Pupils are becoming confident members of the school because they are being given an increasing number of opportunities to take responsibility;
- Attendance levels of a significant minority of pupils are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and collaborate very well with other children. They listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is the result of good teaching where teachers maintain a high level of interest and set appropriately challenging tasks that ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment have the opportunity to achieve very well.
8. Standards of behaviour are good in the classroom and around the school. At playtimes pupils play harmoniously together. All pupils discuss their personal targets and agree class and playground rules. They are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The very caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. The pupils are very proud when they are rewarded for doing something worthwhile. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen and both parents and pupils confirmed that bullying does not occur. They also confirmed that any instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and efficiently and racial harmony is promoted very well. There have been no exclusions.

9. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to become independent and willingly take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. These range from acting as monitors, being members of the school council and acting as mediators to try to sort out issues between their peers. Pupils take their responsibilities of living in a community seriously and achieve very well, developing increasingly good levels of maturity as they move through the school.
10. Pupils play harmoniously together and work very well in pairs and in groups. For example in a Year 5/6 personal, social and health education lesson, pupils collaborated well in small groups, showing consideration towards others. They show respect for the feelings of others and enjoy the activities they engage in. Staff give a very positive lead in engendering good relationships, for example, by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as very good role models.
11. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The very good ethos of the school helps to promote spiritual development, and subjects such as personal, social and health education and religious education make a good contribution. The school ensures that pupils experience the traditions of a wide range of cultures as well as their own. It has initiated teacher-exchange programmes with Finland and Italy and the older pupils have designed and set up websites so that their Finnish and Italian friends can view their photographs and writing. Pupils also learn about life in an Indian village and have sent materials for the school in the village as well as correspond regularly with Indian children.
12. Attendance levels at the school, although they have risen recently, are well below the national average. This is due mainly to the prolonged absences of a significant minority of pupils. The school makes the promotion of better attendance a priority and has developed imaginative and innovative ways of monitoring attendance and analysing trends, for example, the correlation between attendance and performance. The school recognises that some children will travel and provides travel packs containing suitable work for them. It is well supported by the local authority's education welfare service in its drive to improve attendance. The punctuality of the pupils is satisfactory overall.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall the school provides a good quality and very inclusive education. Appropriate decisions have been made to develop a more creative curriculum in line with government recommendations. Teaching is good overall and often very good. The school provides high levels of support and guidance for its pupils.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good and often very good. Teachers plan lessons well and have high expectations of the pupils. Teaching assistants give excellent support and add significantly to the quality of lessons. Teachers plan a very inclusive teaching programme and ensure that all pupils receive work that is matched well to their individual needs. This encourages the pupils and enables

them to learn well and achieve well above average standards. Arrangements for the assessment of pupils' progress are very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use assessment and target-setting very effectively to monitor and promote learning;
- Most pupils have a very good understanding of how they can improve;
- Teaching assistants make an important and valuable contribution to pupils' learning;
- All staff work very hard to ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum;
- Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and challenge them to meet or exceed their targets;
- Mixed-age classes are managed very well.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	9	13	4	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

13. Pupils' learning is good because they enjoy school and work hard to succeed and achieve high standards. They sustain concentration and focus very well on the targets they are set. Most pupils understand very well what they have to do to improve and this helps them to achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the support they are given and make very good progress. Those learning English as a second language benefit from the effective teaching and parental support and quickly become confident in its use. The life-skills programme provided for pupils who are repeating Year 6 is very relevant to their needs and they gain great pleasure and interest from it which helps to reinforce the importance of learning to them. For example, pupils who visited an Internet café were very excited about sending and receiving e-mails from their friends and were beginning to appreciate and understand how they could use the Internet as a tool to keep in touch with each other when travelling.
14. The quality of teaching is good overall with many lessons being very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are able to convey this to the pupils in clear and effective ways. They manage the range of ages and abilities in their classes very skilfully and often encourage younger pupils to emulate the older pupils. They also ensure, through carefully targeted work and very effective support from the teaching assistants, that all pupils understand the lessons and can take part fully in them. In the very small number of satisfactory lessons, very hot weather and organisational changes, that necessitated teachers teaching from plans that had been prepared by another teacher, had a negative impact on the overall quality of these lessons.
15. Teachers use interactive whiteboards very effectively to enhance the quality of lessons. This enables the pupils to gain understanding of new concepts far more quickly than with traditional teaching methods. For example, older pupils rapidly learned how to translate shapes and plot positive and negative coordinates. Lessons are planned well and teachers use targets very effectively to show pupils what they are expected to achieve and to set high challenges. This helps them to focus on the lesson and they take great delight in getting a stamp that tells them the target has been achieved.
16. The pace of lessons is brisk and the management of the introductions and group work is very efficient and effective. Teaching assistants are deployed very well and work extremely effectively with the pupils. They have very good teaching skills and add significantly to the

quality of lessons. Other specialist teachers and support staff work in a systematic and structured way with individuals and small groups who have special needs, and enable these pupils to gain knowledge and understanding very well.

17. Assessment is used very effectively to confirm the teachers' knowledge of the progress the pupils are making. The assessment systems are comprehensive and provide valuable information about academic progress, attitudes to learning and personal development. Although the cohorts of pupils are small and comparisons are unreliable, the school does compare its performance with other schools and uses the information to develop and shape its teaching programmes. It is developing sophisticated ways of assessing and analysing the performance of minority groups of pupils.
18. Teachers use the plenary session at the end of the lesson well to encourage pupils to evaluate their performance and suggest ways of improving. Pupils often make suggestions in lessons as to how they might improve what they are doing. Teachers now place emphasis on investigation and problem-solving skills in mathematics and science and this is helping the pupils to learn about processes such as fair testing and accurate observation. A governor added to the quality of one lesson significantly by teaching the children how to make a life-sized coracle. Another governor, in his role as vicar, is leading an important initiative that gives the children insight into the lives and challenges of children in an Indian village.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum of the school is good overall. It caters very well for the needs of all pupils. The taught curriculum provides a secure base for learning and is enriched by a large number of other learning opportunities and activities. The curriculum content is in a transitional stage as the school moves from a traditional, subject-based curriculum to a more creative and thematic programme. The quality of accommodation and resources is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for English, mathematics and science is good;
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are catered for very well and they achieve high standards;
- Excellent provision is made to ensure all pupils are included in the school's rich and varied range of activities, including international links, clubs, trips, sports, visiting experts, community projects and cultural activities;
- Information and communication technology is used very well across the curriculum;
- Strategic planning for the breadth and balance of a more creative curriculum is at an early stage of development;
- The accommodation is cramped and this makes it difficult for specialist staff to work effectively with small groups.

## **Commentary**

19. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and statutory requirements are met. The national strategies for numeracy and literacy help to develop pupils' knowledge and skills very effectively and high standards are achieved. Skills in information and communication technology are very well taught and are used to help teach other subjects. The school has a successful and effective programme for personal, social and health education, which is linked to individual target-setting with a strong focus on team working. This programme includes drugs education, sex education and relationships education. The school uses nationally agreed plans as the basis for planning other subjects. Greater links between subjects through the development of a more creative curriculum is an identified priority and the school has made a good start in developing this. However, the school does not yet have a strategic overview or

the monitoring procedures to ensure that overall curriculum provision remains in balance or that there is continuity and progression within the teaching programme.

20. The school is totally committed to including all pupils and very successfully provides equality of opportunity. Pupils with special educational needs and the few with English as an additional language are provided for very well, both in classes and beyond and, as a result, they achieve very well. They are fully included in all activities. Lessons are planned carefully to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. The support staff and visiting support teachers make a significant contribution to pupils' learning through well-targeted work matched to the needs of individuals. Gifted and talented pupils are identified through the very good assessment practices in place; they are given suitably challenging work. The school makes effective use of problem solving on the worldwide web. This programme helps to challenge and extend all pupils, especially the more able. The school is particularly successful in providing appropriate and relevant education for pupils for the traveller community.
21. Pre-school staff plan their programme in collaboration with the reception class teacher to ensure there is continuity for the children across the Foundation Stage curriculum. The school makes appropriate provision for those transferring to the next stage of education by arranging visits for pupils and providing advice and help for parents. Some pupils have remained at the school at the request of parents for a further year. This arrangement suits their current needs and the school is making good progress in finding suitable and receptive secondary placements for next year.
22. The school enriches the curriculum very effectively. There are a large number and wide range of activities offered to the pupils that go on beyond the school day to enable greater access to the curriculum or to extend the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to take part in sports activities and competitions. They sing in a range of festivals. Trips outside the school are a very important part of the curriculum that help to enrich the work. Teachers have been involved in curriculum innovations through exchanges with teachers in Finland and Italy. These visits have significantly added to the pupils' social and cultural development and have stimulated their desire to learn. Opportunities for writing and email exchanges to pupils in these other countries provide effective cross-curricular links. There are also opportunities to learn about India through the Kings World Trust that is supported by the local parish. Letters are exchanged between pupils at the school and those supported by the Trust.
23. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. The school is very well staffed and there is a good range of skills and expertise among both teachers and support staff. The accommodation is well maintained and the new hall has improved the organisation for teaching. Its use is managed well to provide a classroom and space for dining, assemblies and physical education. There is a lack of space, particularly for teaching pupils in small groups. The new ICT room has improved opportunities for pupils' learning but lacks adequate ventilation, particularly in hot weather. The school benefits from extensive hard and grassed playing areas that includes well-designed environmental and adventure play areas; these give the pupils excellent opportunities for work and play. Plans are being prepared for the development of an outdoor classroom. Resources are sufficient to deliver the curriculum across the school.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The care, welfare and guidance of pupils are very good and support pupils' learning very well. Pupils are well involved in the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils feel very secure and cared for in school. They have very good and trusting relationships with all adults in the school;
- They achieve very well because their progress is closely monitored;



- The school seeks the views of the pupils and acts on them when appropriate;
- Children are introduced to school life very well.

## **Commentary**

24. The school provides a happy environment that is conducive to learning. Close attention is paid to health and safety issues, and the school is very aware of the position of the school on the very busy main road and the difficulties of the pedestrian access to the building across the car park. Pupils' healthy and safe living is well promoted through the personal, social and health education programme. Child protection procedures are very good and there is very good liaison with other agencies. The arrangements for collecting and dropping pupils off at the school by car, using the small lay-by adjacent to the road, are hazardous. Procedures for closing the school gates at the beginning and end of the school day are not always consistently practised.
25. Teachers and support staff know the pupils and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are thus able to provide very good support and guidance. The very good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have, knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. Pupils say that the staff are 'very nice and very kind' and parents describe the school as 'a very caring school'. Very good assessment procedures ensure that teachers track the progress and personal development of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, very well and this contributes to the standards attained.
26. Induction arrangements are very good as a result of effective liaison with the on-site pre-school group and this ensures that children settle happily when they enter the reception class. Similarly, pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school, although there have been some difficulties in placing two pupils who remained at the school for an additional year. Pupils who start school at times other than the beginning of the school year are well looked after and are made to feel welcome.
27. All pupils are valued and are able to contribute to the life of the school. They make their views known through the school council which was introduced recently with two elected members from each class. For example, the LEA's landscape officer consulted them about proposed improvements to the school grounds. They meet regularly and understand their role of representing the opinions of their classmates. They take their responsibilities seriously and are currently organising the purchase of games for the playground. The headteacher and staff listen to their views and act on them whenever possible.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The partnership with parents is very good. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are good and make an important contribution to pupils' personal and academic development.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very supportive of the school;
- The very good contribution parents make to their children's learning at school and at home makes a positive contribution to their achievement;
- The good links with the community and other schools help to enrich the curriculum and ensure that pupils transfer happily on to their next stage of education;
- The school has a very dedicated and enthusiastic group of parents who organise the 'Friends of Minsterworth C of E School'.

## **Commentary**

28. Parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel very comfortable about approaching it and are very happy with the procedures to deal with any concerns or complaints. They feel that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible and they appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities. They make a very good contribution to their children's learning by

providing good help in the classrooms, for example, hearing pupils read, and helping on educational visits. They also attend the curriculum evenings arranged by the school, and the 'Friends of Minsterworth C of E School' have raised significant funds to buy equipment to help in their children's learning. This enthusiastic group of parents involves the pupils and the community as much and as often as it can in its activities.

29. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, regular newsletters and frequent other correspondence. They are also well informed about their children's progress through consultation evenings and good annual reports. Parents appreciate that they are welcome to discuss their children whenever they want to and that time is given to explaining things that may not have been properly understood. They say that they are given lots of help to support their children's learning by, for example, sharing in target-setting and the good use of homework. Their views are regularly sought, for example through questionnaires, and these views are taken seriously and are valued.
30. The good links with the community include involvement with the church and a very positive relationship with the traveller community. The school is open to all members of the local community for social and charity events. There are joint fund-raising events with the Parish Council, the children contribute to the parish and village magazines and mark special occasions by taking flowers to people in the community. The school also makes good use of the local community as an educational resource. For example, the children visit local businesses and have recently visited the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum. The school has also organised regular visits by a library van to provide access to books, mainly for the traveller community. There are very good links with the wider community through teacher-exchange programmes with schools in Finland and in Italy. The Internet is also used to support and enhance links with other schools, including those in the international programme and neighbouring small primary and secondary schools.
31. The school takes in students from the local university for their initial teacher training and is a member of a small schools' group. It participates in activities with other local schools and these activities include, for example, sharing sporting activities and the attendance at special courses by the school's more able pupils. Good links with the local secondary schools ensure that there are satisfactory mechanisms in place to help pupils to move easily on to the next stage in their education and the school is dealing sensitively with the transfer of pupils who have repeated Year 6.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The governance of the school has improved significantly since the last inspection and is very good. The headteacher gives very strong leadership, particularly in relation to the promotion of policies to ensure the inclusion of all pupils, and inspires a very strong team to provide a good quality education for the pupils. Management is good and all teaching staff have clearly identified management responsibilities and make an effective contribution to provision.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governing body is driven by a determination to provide education of the highest quality;
- The headteacher has built a very effective team of governors and staff and has inspired them with her vision for the school;
- All teachers are confident in their management roles and work very hard to ensure high quality provision in their subject areas;
- The school improvement plan is insufficiently focused on the main priorities of the school.

## Commentary

32. The governing body has been reorganised since the last inspection into a cohesive and effective team. Each governor takes allocated responsibilities and gives considerable time and energy to discharging them fully. Individuals visit the school regularly to observe teaching and learning, discuss and monitor the quality of provision and give practical support to class teachers and the headteacher. For example, one governor supported a design and technology lesson and helped the children to build the frame for a life-sized coracle as part of their local studies. Others have produced useful evaluation reports following meetings with co-ordinators and observations in classrooms. The result of this involvement is that governors have detailed and practical knowledge of the school to guide their business.
33. Committees meet regularly and supplement the headteacher's comprehensive reports with information provided by members. This places them in a position to report back fully and with strong recommendations to the full governing body. The governing body plays its critical friend role well and often challenges the decisions and actions of the headteacher by asking what impact the action will have on the quality of provision.
34. The headteacher's very strong leadership inspires others to follow her lead in promoting an inclusive and accessible curriculum. She has put in place a sensible structure for the co-ordination of subjects and aspects of the school and trusts her staff to carry out their duties. They in turn respond very well and lead their subjects with enthusiasm and determination. They combine their teaching and management roles very well and give good advice and guidance to their colleagues. The school is going through a transition from a subject-based curriculum to one based on creative themes. The co-ordinators are aware that they still have work to do to secure the new curriculum but have a very good understanding of what they are aiming for and well-planned strategies to see it through.
35. Effective curriculum co-ordination and planning ensure that when new staff are employed, they are quickly able to adopt the teaching programmes and fit in well. The school's programme of professional development ensures that teachers and non-teaching staff remain up to date with current developments. For example, all teachers have been trained to a high level in the use of technology, including the interactive whiteboards to enhance their teaching.
36. The day-to-day management of the school is good and routines are in place to ensure that each day runs smoothly. The headteacher deploys her staff and the visiting specialists very well and ensures that provision is based on careful analysis of the needs of individual pupils. She is supported by an able administrative assistant who manages the office routines, filing and accounting systems very well. Teachers in turn manage their teaching assistants very well and ensure that they make a very strong and positive contribution to the quality of education provided. Performance management has been used to good effect to identify the strengths of individual members of staff and shape their professional development.
37. The headteacher, staff and governors know what the priorities of the school are and work constantly towards them. However, the school improvement plan is muddled and does not focus sufficiently on the school's main areas for development. There is no clear overview of the implementation of the new creative curriculum and insufficient attention is given to monitoring the progress of its development to ensure that curriculum provision is maintained in breadth and balance. Subject action plans, often containing minor actions, are incorporated into the school plan, thereby confusing the big picture.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	180,629
Total expenditure	215,625
Expenditure per pupil	3,655

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39,658
Balance carried forward to the next	4,662

38. The school manages its finances, including those allocated for specific purposes, well. Its budget plan takes account of the needs of the school and it is possible to see clearly the benefits of major investments such as the building of the school hall/third classroom and the commissioning of the new ICT suite and classroom technology. The detailed costing of the school improvement plan appears in the budget but is not recorded in sufficient detail within the plan itself. There are appropriate arrangements for monitoring expenditure and the school's administrative officer maintains accounts accurately and promptly. She ensures that the governing body has good financial information on which to base its decisions. The school applies the principles of best value to its expenditure and, as a result, is well staffed and resourced. Although unit costs are high because of the size of the school, the school gives good value for money.

### **Example of outstanding practice**

**The school makes very good provision for pupils from the traveller community and helps them to integrate into school life and achieve well.**

- The school has developed very close and strong relationships with the traveller community and is very active in promoting the concept of an inclusive school;
- The school makes the promotion of better attendance a priority and has developed sophisticated ways of monitoring attendance and analysing trends, for example, the correlation between attendance and performance;
- The school recognises that some children will travel and provides travel packs containing suitable work for them;
- There has been very careful analysis of the barriers to learning and this has resulted in incentives being given for pupils to attend school;
- There is a clear expectation that the pupils will complete homework either at home or in the school's homework club;
- The teaching programme is planned very carefully and elements include images and experiences to which the pupils can relate;
- The school has promoted the importance of books and the Internet by arranging for the mobile library to visit school regularly and taking pupils to Internet cafés so that they appreciate that the Internet can be accessed when they are travelling. The pupils have published their own books about their life experiences that have been displayed in some prominent locations;
- The school has worked hard to secure appropriate secondary education for the pupils and has provided a very effective life-skills programme for the two Year 7 pupils.

The effect of these actions has been to make school an exciting place to be for these children and to encourage parental support. This has encouraged the children to learn and, as a result, they have made good progress.



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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well in all areas of learning.

Reception children are taught in a mixed-age class with Year 1 pupils. The joint planning between the on-site private pre-school and reception staff, and the sharing of activities, result in an easy transition for children starting school. All Foundation Stage staff have detailed knowledge of individual children and their needs. Observation and assessment of each child's progress are used to plan the next stage of their learning. Links with parents and carers are very good.

Teaching is good. There is a balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities with appropriate adult intervention to develop and extend children's understanding. The curriculum is well planned to meet each child's needs and, consequently children achieve well. Children with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress. The provision in the Foundation Stage is managed well by an efficient and knowledgeable co-ordinator who works in conjunction with a teaching assistant and staff in the pre-school; this represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection. At the time of this inspection, only two children in the reception class were under five.

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

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children settle securely into school life and become confident learners;
- Supportive relationships ensure that children feel happy and confident and able to succeed;
- Children's individual needs are met and their achievements recognised.

#### **Commentary**

39. The opening of the on-site pre-school in the next room to the reception class has improved the transition between home and school significantly. At the time of the last inspection few children had pre-school experiences. Now the majority of children attend the pre-school. A high priority is placed on children's personal, social and emotional development throughout the Foundation Stage. As a result of good teaching, children learn to work together, organise their activities responsibly and work with increasing independence and confidence. For example, in the role-play area children worked well together to buy items from the seaside shop, taking turns to be the customers. Children settle quickly to tasks and learn to concentrate on completing an activity before moving on to another. Trusting relationships ensure that children feel secure and give them the confidence to try things out for themselves. Children are on course to exceed the expected level in this area, which represents good achievement.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff develop children's language skills in a variety of ways;

- Teaching is good and a structured programme of language activities is supporting children's achievements well.

#### **Commentary**

40. Staff plan activities to develop children's speaking and listening skills, giving them first-hand experiences that they can talk about. For example, to help them learn to count, children threaded pairs of coloured cotton reels to make necklaces for their teddies and counted them out to their partner. They were able to talk about and draw what they remembered from their holidays. The purposeful talk with adults throughout the day, and opportunities to play and work together, ensure that children make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills. They know that staff are genuinely interested in what they have to say which gives them confidence in talking.
41. A programme of early reading activities results in children enjoying books and wanting to read. They listen to story-tapes and practise reading, using interactive texts on the computer as well as listening to stories read by the staff; they also take books home regularly.
42. In reception, children follow the Jolly Phonics programme and already know their initial sounds. Some were also able to identify similar word endings. Children practise writing patterns regularly and begin to form letters accurately. They understand that writing conveys meaning, can talk about their stories and most can write words and form their letters accurately. The more able are writing simple sentences. Most children are on track to achieve the early learning goals and this represents good achievement.

### **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and a range of interesting activities supports pupils' mathematical development well;
- Activities in other areas of learning support pupils' mathematical learning.

#### **Commentary**

43. Teaching and learning are good, practical enjoyable activities are planned to promote children's mathematical development. Counting their teddies' eyes, ears, paws etc helped the children to recognise and order numbers, learn to take turns and play well together. The extension of this activity outdoors reinforced children's number recognition well, when they made necklaces and bracelets using cotton reels. In the role-play area children could shop for items such as seaside rock or balls and match money and sizes. Children regularly join in number rhymes and counting games, like the star game and guess the number, which reinforces their mathematical learning. They achieve well and are on track to reach the early learning goals for mathematical development.

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

44. Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world was sampled and therefore, it is not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching and standards achieved.
45. Varied activities are planned to stimulate children's curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. They practise shopping in the seaside shop, using dressing up clothes to take on the identity of customers. In their sand play they search for treasure and sort shells. They make their own games by building ramps and tunnels with construction kits. They work with



increasing confidence on the computer, selecting and moving pictures on screen. They are on track to reach the early learning goals for this area.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

46. Provision in creative development was sampled and judgements cannot be made about the quality of teaching and standards achieved.
47. Children's creative development is promoted through art and imaginative play. Structured role play and constructional activities develop their creativity and imagination as well as their social skills.
48. Work on display in the classroom shows children's paintings and collages of 'Our Village' and zig-zag coloured dragons from China. Painting and crayons as well as the use of different media are available to children in the Foundation Stage. Songs and rhymes are regularly used to support children's language and mathematical development, and class areas are well resourced to support 'small world' imaginative play as well as dramatic role play. Children are on track to reach the early learning goals for creative development.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planned opportunities for learning outdoors supports children's physical and social development well;
- The shared use of the small outdoor space with the pre-school group limits children's opportunities for physical development.

### **Commentary**

49. Pupils' overall physical development is good and they make good progress as a result of effective teaching. Through planned indoor and outdoor activities children develop a good awareness of space and direction, and use equipment and tools safely and with increasing control. Although the outdoor classroom offers a range of daily opportunities for free play and adult-initiated activities, the space is small and the grass surface is uneven which limits the range of possible activities.
50. There is large climbing and balancing apparatus available in the school hall and in the outdoors adventure play area but the reception class did not use these during the inspection. In the indoor classroom, activities are planned to help children develop their ability to use tools safely and accurately and to build and play with small construction equipment. Greater use of the available resources to support this area of development would improve the children's physical development. Children are on track to reach the early learning goals for physical development overall.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in English were very high in the Year 2 and 6 tests and are well above average overall;
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve very well in lessons;
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils with special educational needs and they achieve very well;
- The subject is led well;
- Procedures for assessment and target-setting are very good;
- The use of pupils' portfolios provides effective individual work programmes.

## Commentary

51. Standards have significantly improved since the previous inspection. The 2003 national test results were very high compared to the national average in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and in English at the end of Year 6. When compared with similar schools standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were also very high. However, care should be taken when analysing the results of small year groups and small schools, as the effect of one additional pupil on the school's results can be considerable. Standards in English are well above average across the school and pupils achieve very well. Standards have been rising over the past four years because of the school's clear focus on improving pupils' achievement through very effective assessment and target-setting procedures. This means that pupils in mixed-age classes are given individual work programmes to challenge and match their needs accurately. Pupils across the school respond well to this approach and are achieving very well in this subject. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants to achieve as well as the other pupils in lessons. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
52. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening skills. They enter with average skills in English and make good progress as they move through the school; they leave school with standards that are well above average. This is because they are well motivated and are offered opportunities to speak to adults and each other in a range of situations, including drama, debate and role plays. There has been a successful whole-school focus on the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills in response to the subject co-ordinator's analysis of pupils' needs. Pupils are often challenged to explain and justify their opinions and comments in assemblies and school council meetings, for example. Pupils pay careful attention to the teacher and remain well focused during discussions. When working in pairs or small groups, they listen to the points of view of others before making a contribution. In a good art lesson with the oldest pupils, for example, while discussing the work of Peter Blake, pupils were able to explain how they were going to use similar ideas for their own work.
53. Pupils achieve very well in reading. Teachers provide opportunities for reading outside the literacy hour lessons to encourage an enjoyment of books and stories from an early age. Reading of a wide range of texts and poetry is used effectively in developing an awareness of different genres and of writing for different audiences and purposes. In Year 2, pupils reach the expected level while working through carefully-graded books, playing word games, using interactive texts and practising at home, which ensures that all make good progress. As a result of good teaching of basic skills, pupils use a good range of strategies to work out words they do not recognise. By the end of Year 6, pupils read regularly and widely, many at levels above that expected nationally. Teachers throughout the school lead perceptive discussions about books read in groups, and pupils confidently voice their thoughts and opinions. There is a satisfactory range of interesting and challenging fiction books, which are supplemented by the county mobile library service.
54. Across the school pupils make good progress in learning to write and standards are high. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to write for a range of purposes in English lessons; for example, younger pupils were writing postcards about their holidays and older pupils were writing reports on the theft of food by bears in Yellowstone Park. More opportunities for writing in other subjects have accurately been identified as an area for development by the

school. There are plans to draw up a more creative curriculum but an action plan is not yet in place to guide this development. Standards in handwriting, spelling and punctuation are good.

55. Teaching is good overall. Teachers develop pupils' literacy skills through interesting tasks. This, together with teachers' high expectations, very good use of teaching assistants and very good relationships with pupils, results in pupils working with interest and concentration. Lessons are well organised. Teachers assess pupils' progress very well and use this information to plan the next steps in learning for individual pupils. The quality of marking is very good because it provides pupils with clear indications as to how they can improve their work.
56. The subject is very effectively managed. The subject co-ordinator regularly monitors and moderates work across the school in order to ensure accurate targets and challenges are set for pupils. School productions, storytellers and visitors from other countries effectively enrich the curriculum. Resources for the literacy hour are good. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning in English.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

57. The school's subject policy documents show how English skills link across the curriculum. Further work is planned to develop the curriculum into a more creative programme through cross-curricular themes, but planning for this is at an early stage. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to use their speaking and listening and reading skills within other subjects and these support pupils' learning in all subjects. Some good examples of pupils' writing for a range of purposes across the curriculum were also seen, including the use of information and communication technology.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average and pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieved standards that were very high in the end of year tests in 2003;
- Effective teaching and assessment enable pupils to achieve very well;
- There is a strong emphasis on mental agility and problem solving;
- Pupils have developed a very good range of mathematical language and are able to use this well to describe their investigations;
- The good organisation of lessons and very effective support of teaching assistants enable pupils with special educational needs to make very good progress.

### **Commentary**

58. When children enter school, their mathematical knowledge is average. Effective and challenging teaching helps them to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding rapidly and, by the time they reach the end of Year 2, most have mathematical abilities that are well above average. They continue to make good progress and achieve high standards in Year 6. The majority of pupils achieved Level 3 in the Year 2 tests in 2003 and most Year 6 pupils gained Level 5 in the tests. This represents very good achievement when measured against their attainment on entry and the Year 2 result is a considerable improvement on the previous inspection.
59. Pupils enjoy and respond well to the challenge of mathematics. They understand the targets that are set for them and work hard to achieve them. In one excellent lesson, Year 1 pupils

were able to sort shapes according to their features. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 had good understanding of fractions and those in Years 5 and 6 were able to follow instructions, move shapes on a quadrant and predict their final position. They were also able to plot the coordinates of the shapes as they moved.

60. A key feature of the pupils' response is the intelligent and often perceptive way in which they describe, question and challenge what is happening. They engage with their lessons well and particularly enjoy using the interactive whiteboard. Pupils with special educational needs are helped to understand the lesson and make very good progress with the help of their teaching assistants. Some elements of the life skills programme for the older traveller children extend their mathematical ability well, particularly in respect of using money.
61. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and are able to explain and demonstrate mathematical concepts and processes very well. They plan work carefully to ensure that it matches the needs of the different age groups and abilities in their classes. They set appropriate targets for pupils and make clear their expectations in respect of pupils' performance. Lessons begin briskly with challenging mental activities and move on to very good explanations of the main idea of the lesson. The interactive whiteboards are used to very good effect to enable pupils to practise, consolidate and extend their skills and understanding. Teaching assistants work from plans drawn up by the teacher and give excellent support to individual pupils and small groups.
62. Assessment is used very effectively to monitor pupils' progress and set new challenges for them. Individual targets are pasted into the pupils' books and stamped when the target is achieved. Tests and other assessments are used to confirm the teacher's judgement of pupils' performance and teaching assistants sometimes observe pupils as they work, noting how they approach the given task and where they need help. The outcomes of assessment are used very well to modify and shape subsequent teaching.
63. The subject is co-ordinated well and there is a realistic action plan for the development of the subject. Parents are invited once a year to attend a workshop at which mathematical development is explained. Resources are adequate and are enhanced by resources from the Internet. The school plans to reorganise these so that they are more accessible in classrooms.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

64. There are good cross-curricular links, for example, counting skills are developed through physical education. ICT is used to practise and reinforce numeracy skills such as decimal place. The life skills programme for older traveller pupils uses real-life situations to develop their mathematical understanding.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lessons are planned well to meet the needs of all pupils in the class;
- Assessment is used effectively to gauge how well the pupils understood the task;
- Although pupils often devise and carry out their own experiments, opportunities for children to think about how they might carry out an investigation are sometimes missed.

### **Commentary**

65. Standards in science are above average and the pupils' knowledge and understanding grow quickly. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection and are set to improve

further as the school develops pupils' ability to investigate and solve scientific problems. The standards achieved by pupils in the end-of-year tests in 2003 were very high. Pupils' rate of achievement is good and they make good gains in their understanding of scientific knowledge and processes as they move through the school. Younger pupils have good understanding of materials and their properties and their work shows that they understand about simple life processes. Older pupils know how to design and carry out simple experiments and understand the rules of fair testing.

66. Teachers used questions and descriptions well to help younger pupils find and sort objects made from different materials. By Year 1, they knew what plastic, wood and metal were and had very interesting discussions about where to place a pencil made from more than one material. They solved the problem well by placing it across two of the sorting hoops. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 made careful and detailed observations of the flora and fauna in the school's wild area. Their drawings and labelling became more accurate under the sensitive guidance of the teacher and teaching assistants. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 designed and tested string telephones and offered good explanations as to why the sound travelled along the string.
67. The pupils enjoyed their activities and learned a lot from them. They were able to draw on things they had learnt earlier and use this knowledge to make sense of their current work. They co-operated well and were confident in the questions they asked and the responses they gave. Some had very good knowledge of everyday events that linked to science; they were able to contribute to discussions well and offer explanations and ideas about their work. All the pupils co-operated well with each other and took an interest in the ideas their friends put forward.
68. The quality of teaching is generally good. Teachers and assistants have good subject knowledge and know how to explain things simply and clearly to the pupils. They often use their knowledge of pupils' prior learning to provide starting points for the current lesson and often encourage pupils to contribute ideas and explanations from their own experiences. Planning is detailed and thorough and shows clearly the intention to teach the pupils how to investigate scientific problems. Targets are set and assessed carefully, and the outcomes are used to shape subsequent teaching. However, pupils are not always encouraged to reflect on their work and suggest ways they could improve their investigations.
69. The subject is co-ordinated well and the co-ordinator draws on a wide range of resources to support the subject. Resources are brought in from local small schools, the teachers' centre and the community. Teachers benefit from demonstration lessons and training provided by specialist teachers. The school grounds provide a rich environment for studying life processes and are used well. Assessment procedures are well developed and help teachers to plan effectively based on good knowledge of the pupils' needs.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

It was only possible to sample work in ICT. Part of one lesson was seen along with portfolios of work and planning. ICT was seen in use as part of other lessons. Discussions with teachers and pupils helped to confirm the judgement that provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers use ICT to very good effect to enhance the quality of their teaching;
- Pupils are confident in the use of ICT and recognise that it is a tool to be used to enhance their work;
- ICT is used very effectively to support initiatives such as the international and life-skills programmes.

## Commentary

70. Standards in ICT are above average in Years 1 and 2 and well above average in Years 3 to 6; this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils recognise that ICT is a tool that they can use to enhance their work and enrich their lives. They develop the basic skills of keyboard and mouse control and learn quickly how to follow on-screen instructions. In the observed lesson, the pupils were able to program a robot to find the hidden treasure on Treasure Island. Older pupils talked enthusiastically about their visit to an Internet café where they received and sent emails to a friend who was travelling. Year 6 pupils had successfully designed and published their own websites to enable pupils in their partner schools in Italy and Finland to receive communications from them and learn more about them.
71. Pupils enjoy using computers and respond especially well to the real-life situations created by the international project and the life-skills programme. They are confident in the use of computer technology, including the interactive whiteboards in their classrooms.
72. Teachers plan the use of ICT into many lessons and use it very effectively to enhance learning. They regularly model the practical use of the technology, thereby reinforcing with the pupils its importance in their lives. Two teaching assistants led a lively and imaginative lesson for Year 2, 3 and 4 pupils where two groups of pirates had to find each other's treasure using a controllable robot. In this, pupils were able to predict where the robot would finish its journey and correct their commands when the robot stopped short of its destination.
73. The subject is co-ordinated well and a governor who has very good technical knowledge supports the co-ordinator very well. Investment in new computer technology has been extensive and the school now benefits from very good resources. However, the ventilation of the ICT suite is inadequate.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Provision for ICT across the curriculum is very good and this helps pupils to achieve high standards. The pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 were able to use the information downloaded from the web to find out about wildlife in Yellowstone Park as part of a humanities lesson. Internet resources were used to enhance and enliven mathematics lessons in Years 5 and 6.

## HUMANITIES

75. It was only possible to sample work in geography and history and, as a result, no firm judgements on provision and standards could be made. Only one lesson of history was seen and no lessons were observed in geography. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, school policy documents and some discussions with pupils indicate that all units of history and geography are taught as required.
76. In **history**, pupils in Year 1 are gaining a satisfactory awareness of chronology through a comparison of pictures of seaside scenes from the past and present. They discuss their opinions and are able to explain the similarities and differences. They learn about important buildings in the local environment such as the church and the school. In Years 3 to 6, pupils compare different peoples who have invaded and settled in the British Isles, including Romans. They also study ancient civilizations such as Aztecs, Greeks and Egyptians.
77. In **geography**, pupils in Years 1 and 2 study the map of the British Isles and identify England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Minsterworth. In Years 3 to 6 they study the River Severn, Minsterworth village and undertake traffic surveys. Pupils have very good opportunities to learn about other countries and to develop their cultural understanding through an international programme of teacher exchanges. Teachers from Finland and Italy have visited the school and email buddies have been established for pupils to write to each

other. Good links have also been established with a school in India through the Kings World Trust, which the parish supports.

78. Both subjects have policies and action plans for development in place. The assessment procedures are good and make effective use of national guidelines using subject level descriptors so that teachers can measure progress and set targets. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection. The subject co-ordinator is the headteacher who has been responsible for leading these subjects for a year. Resources for history and geography are satisfactory. Additional resources are borrowed from the museum and library service to support these subjects and this adds effectively to the school's stock.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

79. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled. School documentation, pupils' work, displays and teachers' plans were scrutinised and some discussions were held with subject co-ordinators and pupils.
80. Only one lesson was observed in **art and design** and so it is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision or the standards achieved. However, it is evident, from teachers' planning and displays, that pupils have good opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of art. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their skills through careful observation, for example, in the production of self-portraits. They use a range of different media including paint, chalk, charcoal, pencils and crayons for their portraits. They learn about sculpture and have made mosaic patterns. Older pupils explore paper-weaving, batik fabric techniques and collage 'stained glass windows'. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study the work of Picasso, Magritte and Rousseau and have created their own interpretations of these artists.
81. In the one lesson observed, the Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils worked enthusiastically on creating their own response to the work of Peter Blake. They created bold, colourful pictures and selected images from magazines and the Internet to add detail and depth to their own ideas. Pupils demonstrated a good understanding of Blake's work.
82. Art and design work across the school is positively enhanced through projects that involve parents and the local community. These include the construction and design of a totem pole in the adventure playground, the decoration of the recycling bin and making a Gaudi-style dragon seat in the playground.
83. Teachers plan lessons using the agreed national guidelines and make effective use of level descriptors to assess pupils' work to help them improve. There is a subject co-ordinator and action plan in place to assist in the development of this subject. The school has applied for an Artsmark award.
84. One lesson was seen in **design and technology** and it is, therefore, not possible to make a judgement about the provision or the standards achieved. There were very good opportunities in this lesson to involve the wider community when one of the governors worked with the pupils to show how a coracle was made. From teachers' planning, displays and completed work it is evident that pupils have opportunities to take part in interesting projects that develop their understanding of design and technology. The school has taken part in the area SETPOINT challenge and the Young Engineers Project, for a number of years. Both these schemes provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their design and technology skills and to work alongside pupils in other schools. Pupils have the opportunity to make models with a range of materials including paper, card, textiles and wood. They have made puppets, undertaken weaving and constructed wind toys and musical instruments.
85. There is an effective policy in place and action plan written by the subject co-ordinator to guide the development of this subject. An after-school club effectively adds to the design and technology curriculum.

86. Two lessons of **music** were seen. A very experienced and skilled specialist teacher taught one lesson and a class teacher with good music qualifications taught the other. In the lesson for the reception and Year 1 pupils, the class teacher used demonstration very effectively to show the pupils how to clap the pulse of the music. This enabled the pupils to respond well and clap in time with the music, varying their pace appropriately. They then sang tunefully and with good control. Some pupils recognised the music and talked confidently about when they had heard it. The teacher made very good connections with science and drew the pupils' attention to the pulse in the body.
87. In a second lesson with Years 5 and 6 pupils, the specialist teacher taught the children very effectively to compose a tune and refine it to performance standard. The pupils enjoyed the singing games and the challenge of the composition. Lessons are planned very well and learning objectives are clear. Both teachers were confident with the subject matter and had a very good range of techniques for teaching the subject. The school's decision to employ a specialist teacher has enhanced provision significantly.
88. Two lessons of **physical education** were seen. In one, the pupils learnt the steps of a country dance, using skipping and turning in time to the music. They were a little confused by the initial instructions and some lost concentration. However, most enjoyed the dancing and made satisfactory progress. The teacher was a little unsure of the nature of the dance and this led to lack of clarity in some instructions. The school is aware that its country dance programme is underdeveloped because of the lack of facilities prior to the opening of the new hall. However, evidence taken from a local authority magazine where a dance performance was cited as an example of good practice indicates that other aspects of dance are at least satisfactory. In a second lesson, the pupils practised the skills needed for tennis. They learnt quickly and made good progress. They were able to throw and catch accurately, develop their striking skills well and improve the control and co-ordination of their footwork effectively. The quality of teaching was very good and this ensured a brisk and productive lesson. The quality of demonstration and instruction was high and the lesson included some very good coaching tips.
89. Planning documents show that the full programme of physical education is offered and planned to a high standard. The subject is led and managed well and there is an appropriate plan for its development. Resources are good and the school now has good indoor and outdoor facilities.

#### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

90. Although only one lesson was seen, the school's commitment to providing high quality education in this area is evident everywhere. Teachers and teaching assistants make very good use of the many formal and informal opportunities to reinforce personal and social development. Planned lessons to promote a healthy lifestyle make an important contribution to the children's education. The programme of international links gives many opportunities for the pupils to develop friendships and learn social conventions. The life-skills programme for the older pupils gives them the skills and value systems they need to make a success of their lives. There are an increasing number of opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility through their involvement in the school council. During the inspection, they met the LEA's landscape officer and put forward sensible and creative ideas to improve the school grounds. In one successful lesson, the pupils considered the problems of speeding traffic on the road outside the school. They assumed different roles and put forward convincing arguments and plausible suggestions to reduce the speed or provide a safer alternative access to school.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2

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