

## INSPECTION REPORT

### THE CHALET SCHOOL

Liden

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126554

Acting Headteacher: Kathie Bryan

Lead inspector: Dr Mick Megee

Dates of inspection: 22-24 June 2004

Inspection number: 265852

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	25
School address:	Liden Drive, Liden Swindon Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN3 6EX
Telephone number:	01793 534537
Fax number:	01793 435244
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Michael Briggs
Date of previous inspection:	5 <sup>th</sup> October 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Chalet School is a day school for boys and girls aged 3 to 11 located in Liden, Swindon in Wiltshire. Currently, 25 pupils attend the school, of whom 4 are girls. Most of the pupils have autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), but 6 pupils have communication and learning difficulties. Since the school was last inspected, the school has begun to accept pupils over the age of 8. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and when they come into the school, their attainment is well below average. Pupils come from a wide catchment area around and from within Swindon and although individual pupils' socio-economic circumstances vary, in general they are above average. Most pupils are from white (British) backgrounds, and six pupils are from different heritages, including Asian and African. There are 3 pupils who come from families who speak English as an additional language. During the previous year, 3 pupils joined the school and 2 pupils left the school other than at the usual time of leaving, which is well below the national average.

The school has developed partnerships with two mainstream schools, one of which is adjacent to the school. Through these partnerships, pupils from The Chalet are able to attend mainstream schools each week for lessons or half days.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23629	Mick Megee	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music History Religious education Physical education Geography
19639	Gill Anderson	Lay inspector	
15600	Colin Richardson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Personal, social, health and citizenship education English as an additional language
18261	Tony Hill	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The Chalet School is a caring school which makes **satisfactory** provision for its pupils. All pupils, whatever their educational needs or background, achieve well in most subjects because of the good teaching and teamwork which ensure that all pupils are involved fully in their lessons. The governance, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, and the school provides satisfactory value for money. Progress is hampered because the LEA has been considering the school's future for the last two years, and the governors have been unable to make permanent appointments, including the post of headteacher. The acting headteacher was appointed temporarily to the post two years ago. Before this, she had been the acting deputy headteacher, and so did not have the chance to develop her skills as a manager or leader. The longstanding and continuing uncertainty is a significant barrier to higher achievement and has hindered the school's development.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Staff have very good skills in teaching methods specially developed for pupils with autism.
- The school does not have a good whole-school system for planning or assessment, and this means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they might.
- The new accommodation contributes greatly to the progress which pupils make.
- While the curriculum meets the needs of the current pupils, further development needs to take place to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of older pupils who have been newly admitted to the school.
- The school's partnership with other schools makes a very good contribution to the development of pupils in all the schools involved.
- The staff maintain friendly, warm relationships with pupils and parents, and this further supports the good progress which pupils make.
- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage gives children a good start at the school, and teachers are skilful in developing children's skills in all areas of learning.

The school has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. The most significant improvements have been in the accommodation, resources, and the achievement which pupils make. There are still outstanding issues with the curriculum, and the school has not yet done enough to resolve the problem with assessment. The key issues from the last inspection included two statutory requirements which have now been met, but two further requirements are presently unresolved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	Personal and social education
Year 2	Good	Good
Year 6	Good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.*

Achievement is **good** overall. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning. The achievement of all other pupils of all ages, including those with additional special needs, is good. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls, or pupils who speak English as an additional language. Achievement is good in English, mathematics and ICT, and it is satisfactory in science. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** for all children and pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage. This is because staff know the pupils' needs well, there are very good relationships in the classroom, and teachers are skilled with pupils who have autism, and know how to get the best out of them. As a consequence pupils settle well in their lessons and make good progress. Teachers have not yet developed good strategies for continually assessing how well pupils are doing, and planning requires further improvements.

The curriculum for all children and pupils is satisfactory. The curriculum is broadly suitable for the pupils except that the curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education is not fully in place, and the curriculum for older pupils has not yet been fully developed. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The school's accommodation has vastly improved with the move to a new refurbished school. The care, welfare, health and safety offered to pupils are good, and advice, guidance and support are satisfactory. Staff maintain good links with parents, and the school has developed very good relationships with other schools. These partnerships, together with good community links, further support pupils' good progress.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The acting headteacher provides satisfactory leadership, and has begun to draw up appropriate plans, for example, for developing the curriculum provision. The subject leaders have now put planning in place to maintain and develop their subjects. Governance is satisfactory. The acting headteacher receives timely and satisfactory support from the governors, who are developing their role as critical friends of the school. The school does not meet the statutory requirements about the provision of sex and drugs education.

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

Parents express good levels of appreciation and support for the school, and they feel that the school provides and cares well for their children. Parents feel that they are well informed about their children's education, care and welfare. Pupils speak well of the school, and staff encourage them to express themselves in lessons. More work is needed to allow pupils as a group to give their opinions on the school's work, for example through a school council.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the curriculum so that it will continue to meet the needs of older pupils.
  - Improve teachers' planning and assessment throughout the school.
- and, to meet statutory requirements:
- Develop and implement policies for sex education and drugs education.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects**

Standards are well below those expected for pupils of this age, but are similar to those expected for pupils with autism or communication and learning difficulties. Achievement overall is good. There are no differences in achievement for boys and girls, pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), or those with different levels of ability.

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

- The good teaching in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT) has a direct and positive impact on pupils' achievements.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning.
- Teachers' comprehensive knowledge of specialist methods ensures that pupils generally make good progress in all lessons.
- When teachers plan lessons, they do not always consider ways in which staff can support pupils to achieve against their individual personal and social targets.

#### **Commentary**

1. A good climate for learning is maintained within the school, and pupils and children generally achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection when achievement overall was satisfactory. The improvement has come about because the acting headteacher and her staff provide good support to the pupils, and know ways to make them feel secure and happy and to keep on task. Skilful teaching means that children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics and ICT. Achievement in science, art and design and technology is satisfactory. Although pupils' personal development is good, they do not yet have the opportunity to formally study all aspects of personal, social, health and citizenship education.
2. Teachers in the Foundation Stage ensure that children make a good beginning when they enter the school. Staff have good specialist knowledge about autism, and develop communication and social skills so that children of this age achieve well in all the areas of learning. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move up through the school. Achievement is good both by the end of Year 2 and for the oldest pupils by the end of Year 5.
3. Pupils generally achieve well against their individual social skills targets, and achieve their targets within the expected time-scale. However, individual objectives are not routinely incorporated into lesson plans and so teachers are missing opportunities for all pupils to make even faster progress. This is not being picked up when the acting headteacher monitors the planning. The school places a high emphasis on developing pupils' self-confidence and independence, and does this through the effective use of teaching methods specially developed for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). These include the Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) approach and the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). For example, through the good use of symbols, pupils are constantly encouraged to communicate their individual choices. Good teaching ensures that there is good achievement for pupils who have communication and learning difficulties or who speak English as an additional language (EAL).
4. In Years 1 to 5, pupils achieve well in reading and writing, and very well in communication, speaking and listening because the teachers are skilful, and relationships are good. In mathematics, teachers do well to combine ASD methods with the national approach to numeracy and so all make good progress. In science, pupils achieve only satisfactorily because teachers sometime miss learning opportunities in their lessons. Achievement in ICT is generally good, because teaching and resources in the subject are improving.



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

Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are good. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are keen to come to school and have very positive attitudes to work.
- Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good, and these are encouraged by adults' high expectations of good behaviour.
- Whilst spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory, not enough structured opportunities are planned for pupils to experience and consider other cultures, or to develop their spiritual awareness.
- The confidence and self-esteem of pupils with autism is raised by the consistent and sensitive use of specially developed teaching methods.

### **Commentary**

5. Pupils enjoy their time in school and work well to achieve as much as they can. They start each activity by checking their personal 'schedules', which have been ordered into a symbol line at the start of the day. All pupils are encouraged to do this independently as far as they are able and they are clearly pleased to take some responsibility for this. This is a good system specially developed for pupils with autism (ASD). Pupils are given small tasks to encourage independence, such as taking the class lunch order to the school office. It was clear from observation that they are pleased and proud to be trusted with such tasks.
6. Spiritual development is satisfactory. The pupils develop their self-knowledge and spiritual awareness incidentally rather than through a planned set of experiences. In the classroom, staff often try to arouse curiosity and get the pupils to experience moments of excitement. For example, in one English lesson the teacher put on a very dramatic voice while reading aloud the 'Hungry Giant' and really brought the story to life by a good use of props. On these occasions there is fun and excitement in learning which contributes to good achievement. However, when planning lessons teachers do not routinely consider how to build in opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual awareness and so opportunities are missed.
7. All staff have high expectations of good behaviour and are prepared to be firm with pupils who are not attentive. As a result pupils are always well behaved and sometimes demonstrate very good behaviour. In an exemplary lesson in English they listened patiently whilst their classmates explained how they had approached their homework. They then went on to their individual tasks without fuss and made very good progress against their individual test targets. In and around the school pupils are well behaved and considerate of others. The caring but firm approach enables a calm, positive ethos to be maintained in the school.
8. There are some good, individual opportunities to develop an awareness of other cultures, such as the visit to the Sikh temple and the visit of a local group playing African drums and showing them African traditional clothing. However, the school has not developed a consistent, structured way of helping pupils to become aware of other cultures. For example, lesson plans do not contain ideas of how this may be achieved and many opportunities for learning may be missed.
9. The consistent effort made to encourage pupils to become independent in their daily lives is a prevailing strength in lessons and at break times. For example, the TEACCH programme is used effectively to encourage pupils with ASD to take responsibility for the daily learning targets they are faced with. At snack times they use the PECS to choose the snack they want.

10. The good ethos of the school enables pupils to develop respect and concern for others and to consider their feelings when they are upset or angry. Staff value pupils' views and encourage them to express themselves in appropriate ways, although as yet the school does not have a pupils' council so that their views as a group could be taken on board. Their achievements are celebrated through the display of certificates in the hall and the special mention given to those achievements in assembly. Staff work well to praise effort and achievements during lessons and pupils respond positively to such encouragement. Adults provide good role models for pupils and encourage them to distinguish between right and wrong.
11. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and this was seen in many lessons. Pupils take turns and demonstrate patience in listening to stories and generally relate very well to each other. They handle books and treat computers with care, generally showing respect for the resources they use and the property of others. They are encouraged to work together, share things and take turns in activities such as 'rebound time', when the trampette activity is rotated. At break times they are learning to share their playground area with pupils from the adjoining primary school. This is a developing experience that is proving beneficial to both the host and primary schools.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.9
National data	6.6

Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.0
National data	0.9

*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**

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is satisfactory overall but well enriched, and pupils are well cared for. The school maintains a good partnership with parents, and it works very effectively with other schools. The school has a good relationship with the community.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good, but assessment is unsatisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good in most subjects because teachers know their pupils and their needs very well, and they use specialist ASD teaching methods well.
- Staff develop and maintain good relationships in the classroom which ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to support pupils' learning.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory across the school and so teachers may not have an exact idea of how well pupils are doing.
- Teachers do not always plan lessons in sufficient detail to ensure that all pupils make the maximum progress.
- Parents receive good feedback on how well their children are doing.

**Commentary**

12. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good throughout the school. Teachers are developing a reasonable knowledge of their subjects, and are becoming very skilled in using specialist teaching methods. However some planning requires further improvements. Lesson plans state what the class will do, but some teachers do not clearly say what is expected of the pupils, and what they will be able to do at the end of the lesson. Each class contains only 5 or

6 pupils with a wide spread of age and ability. There is insufficient consideration by some teachers of how old the pupil is, or how their needs vary. In these classes, the plans do not contain information about each pupil's individual targets, so that staff can make sure that progress is achieved in these as well. Most lesson plans do not contain sufficient information about how the teachers can develop pupils' basic skills like numeracy in each subject.

13. Overall teachers offer an inventive range of experiences, which allows pupils to learn well. There is really good teamwork within lessons, involving the teaching assistants and sometimes the speech and language therapist. Teaching assistants are well trained and experienced, and thoroughly briefed on how to manage the pupils. They are proactive and use their own initiative to keep all pupils fully involved throughout the lessons. Pupils of all ages enjoy warm, friendly and fruitful relationships with staff. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and take every opportunity to develop their self-esteem and independence.
14. Staff make good use of specialist teaching methods like TEACCH and PECS which are known to be effective with pupils with ASD. These approaches are vital to the teaching and are used consistently in every class. Staff continually use symbols in lessons to enable pupils to communicate their needs, clarify their understanding and deepen their knowledge.
15. Teaching is effective in the Foundation Stage in all the areas of learning. From day one children are given a structure to their school day which enables good relationships to be established very quickly. English, mathematics and ICT are taught well and pupils learn well throughout the school. Teaching and learning in science are satisfactory. The teaching and learning of pupils with additional special educational needs and those whose language at home is not English are good, and behaviour is well managed.
16. The acting headteacher has made a good start in finding out the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and in agreeing plans to remedy gaps. She has observed teaching in all classes and has had her judgements checked by the LEA adviser. Teachers work effectively in their own classrooms but have not yet adopted common approaches to areas like assessment and planning. Because the acting headteacher has not received good quality support during her tenure, she has found it difficult to make secure judgements about the quality of teachers' plans, and to give authoritative guidance. However, she has recently introduced a performance management system which works well, and there are appropriate links established with the school development plan. There are satisfactory staff development arrangements which are likely to have a positive impact, once the performance management system has had time to bed down. Induction procedures are informal and need to be further improved to ensure that all staff receive full training on the way in which they monitor achievements and personal development.
17. The school is weak in assessment. Staff do not have a common understanding of the use of 'Performance' ('P') levels – a special system of assessing pupils who have not yet reached Level 1 of the National Curriculum – and so the levels are not used well for setting targets. Staff have not met regularly to ensure that their judgements are all to a similar standard. This means that as pupils move up through the school, teachers will not have a precise understanding of what their ability is, and what skills they need to learn. This, with the shortcomings in planning, is a barrier to high quality teaching, achievement and learning. Parents are pleased with the fact that the acting headteacher has improved the formal information which they receive about their children's achievements.
18. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school has maintained the good quality of teaching, but in the last report there were significant weaknesses in assessment and these have not been resolved.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	6	13	8	0	0	0

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

### The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. Enrichment opportunities are good. Resources are good and accommodation is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a wide range of relevant curricular opportunities that cater for the increasing complexity of pupils' needs.
- The current curriculum programme will not meet the future requirements of older pupils.
- A good range of interesting and motivating class visits adds to the work covered in lessons.
- Pupils' learning is well supported by the good resources and very good accommodation.
- Uncertainty about the future continues to hamper the progress which the school can make.
- Pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to study personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE).

### Commentary

19. The school provides a balanced and relevant curriculum which meets the needs of all the pupils currently at the school, including those from cultural backgrounds other than English. The curriculum for English and mathematics follows the national strategies and provides a carefully sequenced programme of learning. The school meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All subjects follow, or are shortly to follow, schemes of work which are nationally recommended and adapted for the learning needs of the pupils. This means that next year pupils should be able to study the full range of subjects of the National Curriculum. PECS and TEACCH are very effectively used throughout the curriculum.
20. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements apart from ensuring sex and relationships education. Although the governing body has agreed to provide this, it will not be in place until the Autumn term when an appropriate scheme of work and policy will be in place. Although social education and awareness is partly covered by the daily circle time, the curriculum is too limited. The school has made a modest improvement to its curriculum since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory. Since last year, the LEA has changed the school's admission policy and pupils are now being admitted into Years 3 to 5. The two-year rolling programme that was originally sufficient to meet the needs of the younger pupils will not be appropriate for next year, when the current Year 5 pupils will be in Year 6.
21. Speech and language therapists provide a very valuable and effective support to the many pupils who have speech and communication difficulties. They work closely and very effectively with classroom staff. Support staff provide very good support to pupils, particularly those with additional special educational needs. Educational visits and visitors are well used to enhance the curriculum and provide good opportunities for pupils to apply skills taught in school. For example, provision for art and music is enhanced by visitors from "Soundabout" providing musical therapy and "No Added Sugar", a community art group widening pupils' appreciation of art. Pupils also regularly visit local places of interest in order to bring subjects to life and provide opportunities to discover the real world.
22. Overall, the skills, qualifications and experiences of teachers are good and are appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. They are enthusiastic

and keen to continue to develop their expertise and improve their subject skills and knowledge. There is currently a vacancy on the teaching staff which the school has decided to fill for a year, beginning in September 2004. A permanent appointment would be preferable given the nature of the pupils and the need for the teacher to develop the required range of specialist methods, as well as subject leadership. However, the LEA will not sanction any permanent appointments. Given the small number of teachers employed at the school, this will continue to be an obstacle to the progress which the school can make, especially in curriculum development. The school does well in identifying particularly skilled teaching assistants who are deployed in the best interests of the pupils. For example, a qualified swimming instructor coordinates the physical education provision.

23. The school moved to refurbished premises in September 2002, and this present accommodation is very well maintained and welcoming. There are very good facilities such as soft play, sensory, relaxation and music rooms. The large conference room with an interactive whiteboard is being used well for the teaching of skills in ICT. Classrooms are spacious and airy with non-flickering silent lights, and work bays which support the learning of the pupils with autism. Outside play areas are also very good with a wide range of climbing and activity play frames, and games marked out on the ground. Good quality resources support teaching in all subjects. In English there are very good resources including an excellent library, and the widespread use of PECS provides good support for pupils' language development, particularly in speaking and listening.

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

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety well. It provides them with satisfactory support, advice and guidance and involves them satisfactorily in its work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff are caring towards the pupils and ensure that the school is a safe and happy place to learn.
- Staff and parents work well together to support pupils who are not managing very well.
- All parents are very happy with the school's arrangements to care for their children.
- Whilst arrangements for support, advice and guidance are satisfactory overall they are not yet consistently applied by all teachers.
- There is no formal way that enables pupils to share their views and influence decisions.

### **Commentary**

24. This is a small caring school where staff are vigilant in ensuring that all pupils are carefully supervised and safe at all times. Pupils look pleased to arrive at the start of the school day because cheerful teaching assistants greet them and supervise carefully those with extra needs. The school finds out about pupils' health and dietary needs and caters for these well. The administration of medicines follows clear procedures that parents know about. The school works closely with parents to ensure that all pupils who are having difficulties with work or behaviour are well supported.
25. Child protection procedures are secure and the headteacher takes overall responsibility. All members of staff are well informed and updated about procedures and responsibilities in this area. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory and are likely to benefit from planned further developments, which are designed to involve the governing body more fully. The premises are maintained to a high order.
26. Teachers know and respect pupils and respond well to their personal needs. Each pupil knows and trusts an adult on the staff who is concerned about them. Whilst arrangements to give support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of achievement and personal development are satisfactory overall, some classes do this better than others. Good practice needs to be

disseminated to all staff, including those new to the school, through improved induction procedures.

27. The school works hard to get pupils to express their views about their own needs, for example for annual reviews, and pupils are encouraged to use signs to explain themselves. However, to date it has not felt that pupils can express their views about the school and now recognizes that it can do more to involve them in its work and development. There is neither a school council nor other formal way of doing this, and this needs to be addressed.

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

The school's links with parents or carers and the local community are good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school enjoys the confidence of its parents, who are positive about all aspects of its work.
- The parent group fosters very good communication between parents by encouraging them to be mutually supportive.
- Parents feel well informed about how their child is getting on, thus creating a positive and purposeful partnership between home and school.
- Very good links with the adjacent primary school are beneficial to the achievement of pupils in both schools.

### **Commentary**

28. Parents say they are welcome in the school at any time and feel accepted. They feel they have sufficient information from the school, both formally and through termly review meetings, and informally through the newsletters and diaries. Whilst overall the information is good the school recognises that different teachers have different approaches to using the home-school diaries and that this needs to be addressed to share best practice though all classes. Parents feel that the amount of homework set is right. Support can be tailored to meet parents' needs: there is very good support from a teaching assistant to set up programmes to support parents through home visits, when requested, to take learning forward. Parents say they would appreciate more training opportunities. The parent group helps teach parents to help their child and find out more about available support through special speakers. The very good communication between parents widens their knowledge and experience.
29. A particular feature of the school is its close working links with the adjacent primary school, which contribute very well to the work of both. Some Year 6 primary pupils foster their leadership skills and personal development through supporting lunch and play times to the benefit of pupils in The Chalet School. Both headteachers are proud of these links which enrich the work and resources of both schools. Good inclusion is promoted through pupils attending appropriate lessons with local primary schools, for example swimming. Pupils from other schools visit to use sensory rooms or share lessons. Very good links with secondary schools have been developed and these are enhanced by the effective support and commitment given by teaching assistant mentors. This has meant that older students from local secondary schools come and do really good work with the pupils at The Chalet and both sets of pupils benefit.
30. Good links with the community enrich the curriculum. Regular visits to places of interest and involvement in community activities, together with visitors to the school, contribute well to pupils' learning. Pupils' creative skills are developed by exposure to community projects and facilities with some pupils playing at the Swindon music centre, and others doing art through the creative arts group. The hydrotherapy pool and horse riding centres are used well to enhance achievement. Air cadets give good support to the school during their visits. School facilities are used regularly by a language unit, other schools and the playgroup. Good

relationships with a multicultural support group help with translations and make available a resource library to enrich cultural links.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. Leadership in the school as a whole is satisfactory. Management is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are mostly met apart from requirements about sex and drugs education. For two years the school has been unable to make permanent appointments, and so an acting headteacher has been in charge of the school during that time. This has hampered the development of senior staff and has undermined the rate of progress which pupils can make.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The acting headteacher has maintained the provision of good teaching for the pupils during a long period of uncertainty and change.
- Governors, despite being newly appointed, are beginning to develop their role as 'critical friends' to the school.
- Uncertainties about the school have meant that the school cannot develop a clear vision of its future.

### **Commentary**

31. The acting headteacher was appointed temporarily to the post two years ago when the previous headteacher became seriously ill. She had previously been the acting deputy headteacher, and so did not have much opportunity to obtain the necessary skills as a senior manager or leader. Despite this, in September 2002, she successfully managed the school's removal to its present location, where there were intentions for the school to expand in much improved accommodation. As soon as the move had taken place, the LEA told the governors that it was considering the closure of the school. Most of the governors left at this time.
32. After a long illness, sadly the previous headteacher died last October. Just before this, the LEA told the school that it should accept a small number of pupils over the age of eight and these older pupils now represent over a third of the school's population. The acting headteacher is relatively inexperienced and there have been no effective mentoring arrangements set up for her (although she has gained a national qualification for headteachers during this period). While it is to the credit of the staff and the acting headteacher that they have stood firm and continued to provide good teaching and care, the unfortunate circumstances continue to hamper the school and prevent it from moving along as it could and developing its provision.
33. Given these difficulties, the acting headteacher and her team have now begun in earnest to address some of the issues facing the school. There is now a satisfactory school improvement plan. Staff have made a start on addressing the curriculum issues and there is further work to be done since the admission of older pupils last year. The acting headteacher has been successful in keeping the staff together and in maintaining the confidence of the parents.
34. The acting headteacher, alongside governors and staff, has undertaken an accurate review of the school's work, and has established immediate relevant priorities for action. The plan is for one year only because the governors and staff do not feel that they can plan for a longer future. This is detrimental to the pupils and families whose needs are such that they need to be prepared well in advance of any changes which may occur. There are good links between this plan and the school's performance management system. One skilled governor has formally reviewed the effectiveness of the school's performance management system and her recommendations have been taken on board. The good quality of the acting headteacher's self-review system is shown by the close match between the school's judgements of itself, and those of this inspection team.

35. The acting headteacher is the special educational needs (SEN) co-ordinator and SEN governor in the school and ensures that the needs of pupils with additional special educational needs are met, and that there is an appropriate policy for special educational needs. Staff receive sufficient training on the appropriate skills to enable them to support communication development and any other specific needs. This training is continually supported well by the speech and language therapist.
36. Management in the school is satisfactory. Staff are clear about what is expected of them, from classroom staff managing pupils' difficult behaviour to office staff running the school's administrative systems. All staff have sufficient access to training and guidance. Subject leaders have produced good action plans for the further development of their subject. Most subject leaders have not yet had an opportunity to see other teachers teach their subject. This means that the school cannot be entirely certain about the quality of the provision in subjects from year to year.
37. The governors are relatively new and inexperienced. However they are dedicated and very caring about the school, show a willingness to learn and are catching up with what is necessary to improve the school and take it into the next period. They have an accurate view of the broad strengths and weaknesses of the school, and are determined to make the school a success. The inspection team felt that the acting headteacher, staff and the governors have the commitment, capacity and drive to make the school even more effective. They are well aware that they have not yet complied with the statutory requirements for sex and drugs education, but have made a conscious decision to introduce the relevant measures having given them due consideration rather than rush them through. The governors keep a check on the school's finances through regular, frequent scrutiny of the figures. The school ensures through competitive tendering that it obtains best value for money when purchasing resources and services. The most recent audit contained a relatively long list of minor weaknesses in the school's accounting systems, but these were all immediately dealt with. Governors are beginning to offer good support as well as challenge to the acting headteacher and are developing their role as 'critical friends'. Link governors visit the school regularly and informally monitor teaching in the classes.
38. Improvement in governance, leadership and management has been satisfactory since the last inspection. At that time, there were a significant number of unsatisfactory aspects.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	540821
Total expenditure	445362
Expenditure per pupil	17814

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	148931
Balance carried forward to the next	244390

The large balance which was carried forward to the current financial year was the result of the LEA's earlier decision to reduce admissions to the school, while not reducing the school's income. The governors have wisely decided to keep carrying forward this amount until the school's future is ascertained.



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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the few children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very effective in developing children's communication skills through the use of symbols.
- Children have good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills.
- Children have access to a good range of learning experiences.
- Planning and assessment are not yet as good as they could be which means that pupils may miss opportunities to make progress against their individual targets.

#### Commentary

39. Because they are well taught, children achieve well overall. They achieve very well in learning to communicate and in developing personal and social skills. This is because the staff have a very good understanding of the particular special educational needs of children with ASD. Leadership and management of the provision are satisfactory because there are shortcomings in planning and assessment. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection when children's achievements were also good.
40. The encouragement of **communication, language and literacy** forms a vital part of most lessons. Whenever possible, staff encourage children to communicate by using pictures, symbols or spoken language. Staff are skilled at teaching children who have little or no spoken language to communicate using symbols following PECS. Throughout the day children are directed regularly to the visual timetable and they quickly learn that the symbols have meaning and importance. Children have small group or individual sessions with a speech and language therapist to teach them how to use the symbols, and she makes good use of singing to the children in order to stimulate them. Children have daily practice during the morning snack time when they have to use their symbols to request drinks and food and to make choices. In circle time, children are encouraged to sing 'hello' to everyone else either in words or by pressing the button on an electronic 'Big Mac' switch. Children are highly motivated by these activities and they are very effective in promoting their desire and skill to communicate.
41. Children make good progress in learning to read. Every day, each pupil learns to place their name card on a board next to their own photograph to show that they are at school. They begin to match symbols and pictures and by the end of the Reception Year higher attaining children can read simple or familiar words.
42. Children are given appropriate opportunities to develop pencil skills. Children's records show that they make good progress in developing pencil control. They are encouraged to develop their hand control with inset puzzles and by drawing around templates, and higher attaining children are given opportunities to write their name on their work and on the interactive whiteboard.
43. Children achieve very well **in personal, social and emotional development**, because staff are very effective in promoting and reinforcing children's social skills and understanding throughout the day. Whenever there are changes of activities, children are taken or directed to the visual timetable where they change the symbol on their individual schedule. This helps them to understand the class routines and to follow them as far as they are able. Relationships are positive and staff are calm and good at managing the children's behaviour. Consequently, children feel secure, enjoy being in the provision and are ready to learn. They are encouraged to make choices and to learn independence skills such as feeding the fish, and a road safety officer has been in to teach them how to be safe on the roads. There is imaginative use of a

jabadao – a long elastic rope ring – which brings the whole class together and pupils' movements are transmitted to everyone else, so that they develop an understanding of working as a team.

44. Children have access to a good range of experiences to promote **mathematical development**. For example, in a good lesson the teacher used the interactive whiteboard to motivate children to learn to count five frogs. The children loved the pictures and sounds on the program, and each child's needs were met well by the different presentations at different levels. Children's records indicate that they make good progress in matching and recognising shapes.
45. Children make good progress in developing their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They use symbols to learn what day it is and what activities they will be doing. They have access to cause and effect toys and to computer programs. Children explore the world around them through sensory experiences such as sand and water play. They enjoy cooking, smelling, observing and tasting the ingredients of apple pies and planting bean seeds and watching them grow. They benefit from using the very good resources in the sensory room.
46. Children's **physical development** is well promoted through using the soft play equipment, and large equipment such as the trampoline. In the hall, the children move and dance to music, imitating different animals. The outside play areas have been greatly improved and children make good use of the climbing and play frames for fun and exercise. Children also attend horse-riding at a local stables and swimming in a local hydrotherapy pool. Children have many opportunities to increase their control of small pieces of equipment, such as pencils, paintbrushes and construction toys. They practise spreading and cutting with plastic knives, and thread repeated patterns on a string.
47. Children have good opportunities for **creative development** and achieve well. They are encouraged to experiment with colours and textures as they make clay guinea pigs and mother's day cards, and do leaf collages. Music is used well to promote children's personal and social skills and their literacy and numeracy development. Children enjoy singing songs and joining in with the actions.
48. The provision is satisfactorily managed by the Early Years Co-ordinator. It is well organised and the coordinator has some good ideas about the future. Planning is not yet as good as it could be, because a tighter focus on individual children's needs is required. Similarly, procedures to record and measure children's progress are not sufficiently well focused. There are good links with parents to promote children's learning and to help them to settle at school. A daily diary is sent home and parents feel comfortable to come in or telephone if they have any concerns or queries regarding their child.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of the picture exchange scheme (PECS) is well used to promote effective communication.
- The good teaching enables pupils to learn to communicate effectively and to make good improvements to their literacy skills.
- Planning and preparation for lessons ensures that time is well used and pupils are effectively challenged to meet their individual targets.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons, enabling all pupils to learn well together.
- The resources for learning are very good and well organised so that teachers and pupils have good access and can make the best use of them.
- The monitoring of the subject across the school lacks rigour and the good practice across the school is not shared effectively.

## Commentary

49. The communication, language and literacy curriculum is the foundation of the school curriculum, providing strength and direction to the work of the school. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection. The TEACCH programme for pupils with autism is a particular strength and is well planned and taught in most lessons. As a result pupils achieve well in lessons across the school and become more self-confident in associating and communicating with others.
50. By Year 2 higher attaining pupils have a sound understanding of the structure in spoken language. Lower attaining pupils use a 'Big Mac' switch to answer questions such as, 'What colour is the flower'? Pupils have weekly spelling tests and the higher attaining pupils can read, write and spell ten commonly used words. They know and can identify and sequence the letters of the alphabet. Lower attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of initial word sounds and are beginning to recognise words which are used frequently, combining words and symbols together.
51. By Year 5 higher attaining pupils use a computer program to improve their knowledge of consonant blends. The most able can read picture books with simple text. They copy over words accurately in science lessons and can draw a grid on which to design a playground swing in design and technology lessons. In lessons of literacy they learn to speak confidently in front of the class and are able to listen well to the well-told and familiar stories in the Big Book scheme.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and sometimes excellent. Teachers and support staff work very well together and know the pupils very well. They have appropriately high expectations of good behaviour and application to the set tasks. Teachers plan and prepare lessons very well and pupils respond very positively, working hard to achieve the individual targets set for them. Pupils with autism benefit from the particularly well planned TEACCH programme. Many pupils with poor concentration levels and who are easily distracted were seen working hard at the targets prepared for them at their individual work stations. All staff are knowledgeable and confident in using PECS to support communication in all areas of the school. In 'circle time' they see what activities they are going to take part in during the day using PECS and grow in self-confidence as they learn to manage their school day. They are reminded throughout the day to 'check the schedule' and this becomes an important means by which they develop independence as they grow through the school.
53. Curriculum resources are very good and well used. The library is comfortable and well stocked with books appropriate for their age and levels of maturity. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The curriculum leader is well informed and has built on her skills through professional training, using that to raise the skill levels of other staff. However, the monitoring

of the subject across the school lacks rigour and the good practice that can be seen is not shared to full effect.

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

54. Because the school emphasises the importance of developing the pupils' communication skills and staff have had access to suitable training, provision for developing speaking and listening is good in all subjects. Circle time is used well by teaching and teaching assistants, who engage pupils effectively and support the development of their communication skills well. All subjects make a good contribution to communication and literacy development. In one art lesson seen, pupils were asked to explain their homework to others. They spoke confidently and clearly, with minimal teacher support, whilst others listened without interruption. Pupils were encouraged to learn key words such as 'cold', 'hard', 'solid' and 'melt' in a science lesson in which they explored the physical properties of chocolate.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- The consistently good teaching throughout the school ensures that all pupils learn and achieve well.
- There is a lack of detailed lesson planning and ongoing assessment and pupils' progress is not well tracked.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support, particularly for pupils with additional special needs.
- Leadership is good but the use of ICT is not well developed.
- Pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge are used well in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

55. At the last inspection, the provision for mathematics was satisfactory, and so there has been a satisfactory improvement. Teachers know their pupils well. They make good use of this knowledge when they individually tailor questions for pupils to assist their learning and to see if they have understood what they have learned. The PECS and TEACCH approaches are used well and effectively, and ensure that pupils focus well on their given tasks. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS), and generally make good use of it in lessons. However, not all teachers make sufficient use of the mental starter, such as using the Big Book, to focus pupils' thinking on mathematics.
56. By Year 2 pupils are able to understand the difference between the weights of a heavy and light box and the higher attaining pupils weigh boxes using standard units of weight. In their work on shapes, pupils are able to recognise and name common shapes and the higher attainers can name the number of corners and sides. In Year 3 to Year 5 most pupils are consolidating their knowledge of the properties of 3D shapes that have flat or curved sides and can roll or slide. They are able to add single numbers to 10, with higher attainers adding numbers to 20, and know that multiplication is repeated addition.
57. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the provision for the subject. They have good relationships with the teachers and provide very good support, enabling the teacher to focus on other pupils, and lead parts of lessons. However, the generally good progress of pupils is being held back by weaknesses in most teachers' planning. There is often no statement of what each pupil will be able to do at the end of the lesson. Tied to this, teachers do not consistently and regularly assess pupils' progress. This means that they do not have sufficient information to track pupils' progress accurately and to put in place intervention programmes at the earliest possible time.

58. The coordinator provides effective leadership and has a good vision for the future development of the subject. She has identified gaps in teachers' knowledge and has arranged training to redress these. For example, there will be training involving the work of a nationally recognised expert on teaching pupils with autism leading to a pilot scheme on estimation starting in September 2004. Although the use of computers for subject teaching and learning is good, this is mainly for number work and there is little evidence to show further use, such as for handling data, in Year 3 to Year 5. Resources for the subject are good, with boxes of resources to support the teaching of the range of mathematical skills held centrally and further resources in each class.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

59. Pupils apply their mathematical skills and knowledge well across the curriculum, such as in food technology in weighing ingredients and counting the number of cubes of jelly. However, although the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well in terms of the mathematics lessons themselves the identification of what pupils are likely to know in mathematics, and what teachers may have to remind them, is underdeveloped in subject planning. If this were improved, pupils would approach tasks involving mathematics with greater confidence.

### **Science**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff work well as a team to support the pupils' learning.
- Teachers select activities which are well suited to the needs of pupils with ASD.
- There is a good range of resources designed to excite and interest the pupils.
- Teachers' planning is not precise enough to meet the wide range of needs of pupils.
- Assessment does not provide good enough information about how well pupils are doing.

### **Commentary**

60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff teams work well together to provide a busy and enjoyable working environment. Teachers take good care to choose activities which will excite the pupils and maintain their concentration. For example, lessons about changing materials focus on cooking simple foods like potatoes which will provide familiar experiences which the pupils can discuss. However, teachers do not always take full advantage of the interest generated. For example, in a lesson about toast, the teacher reinforced the idea that the material (bread) was changing its state by emphasising that it was becoming hot. The teacher did not invite the pupils to comment on the other changes which were occurring: becoming brown, crisper or tastier. Even though classes contain pupils with a wide range of abilities and ages, planning does not always include clear statements of what is expected from each pupil, or what opportunities there are for individual assessment and for pupils to use ICT, numeracy and key language. Pupils' records show that pupils in some science lessons are spending time copying over scientific words with all pupils in a class being given the same word to copy. This is unsatisfactory and this activity does not assist the pupils in making rapid progress. Despite this, pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good, they are motivated by the activities and so, by the end of Years 2 and 5, all pupils are showing satisfactory achievement in science.
61. By the end of Year 2, pupils match senses with body parts like smell/nose and touch/fingers. They take part in conducting a fair test by seeing how far toy cars will travel down a ramp which is set at three different heights. Pupils make predictions and record the results. The oldest pupils in the school in Year 5 go on the nature trail to collect resources for the science

display table. They sort objects like a teddy bear, a knife and wool into groups depending on whether they are hard or soft. They sort other objects like a spider crab shell and a fox's skull by other qualities such as 'natural', 'man-made', 'rough', 'light', or 'dull'.

62. The subject leader provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. At present she has no opportunities to see how well other teachers teach the subject. There is a satisfactory curriculum in place, which needs further development because of the recently extended age range of the pupils in the school. The subject leader has provided a good range and quality of stimulating resources which are well organised and easily accessible to all classes. The school is still a little short on software and in the lessons seen very little use was made of computers or other technology. Satisfactory progress has been made in science since the previous inspection, especially in the resources available.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is generally good throughout the school and teachers are becoming increasingly confident in using ICT. This results in pupils' good learning and achievement.
- Increased emphasis is required on applying ICT, for example in graphics and data handling.
- The scheme of work does not meet all the needs of lower attaining pupils.
- There is good use of ICT in other subjects, and a good range of programs to support subject teaching.

### **Commentary**

63. The teaching of discrete ICT skills is an improving feature of the school's provision. Teachers make good use of the class based computers where pupils tolerate working in pairs well. However, on occasion, the program used is inappropriate for the ability level of the pupils. For example, in a lesson on finding their way through a new program, most pupils found the subject content to be too abstract and their skills in using a mouse not sufficient to be successful. The teacher had to change to an easier program.
64. Although the interactive whiteboard in the conference room has only recently been available, due to a faulty digital projector, most teachers are making good use of the resource for the whole-class teaching of discrete skills. Pupils enjoy these sessions and, given the nature of their special needs, show interest and most maintain concentration while waiting for their turn to use the whiteboard. Teachers know their pupils well and generally make good use of direct questioning to guide their learning. Where teaching is less than good, the planning does not take into account the different levels and ages within the class. This means that there are less opportunities to assess individual pupils and it has a negative effect on their progress.
65. By Year 2 most pupils have emerging skills in using the program 'Clicker 4' to select simple words and are linking cause with effect. This program is particularly good for pupils with speech and communication problems to respond to questions. For example, in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were being greeted individually by their teacher the pupils were able to respond well by pressing a switch which activated an audio recording of their name. This had a positive visible effect on their motivation and they were greatly encouraged to communicate. In Years 3 to 5 higher attaining pupils show an increasing confidence in using the Clicker program to make simple sentences and in their skills in using a CD ROM to find information. A feature of all observed lessons was the good teamwork between the teachers and the teaching assistants, who showed their experience by leading parts of lessons very well and providing very good support to, mainly, the lower attaining pupils.

66. The subject coordinator provides satisfactory leadership. Although there is a breadth to the taught curriculum there is a lack of depth in the use of some applications, such as graphics and data handling. The present scheme of work for the subject is unsuitable. Although nationally recognised, it is designed to be used with pupils who are working at level 1 and above of the National Curriculum. However, the great majority of pupils are working below this on the P (Performance) scales and their relatively small steps in learning indicate little progress using the present scheme. This, combined with poor assessment procedures which do not assess pupils' current learning, makes the tracking of pupils' progress very difficult and does not give a true picture of how well pupils are doing. The subject coordinator realises this and intends to introduce a more appropriate scheme in September. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, when the provision was unsatisfactory.
67. The resources for the subject are good with a very good sensory room containing such aids to learning as fibre optics and an infinity tunnel. Pupils' ability to link cause and effect is reinforced using switch activated lights and sound. Most teaching areas have at least one modern computer and the interactive whiteboard with internet connection is increasingly used well by most classes.

### The use of ICT across the curriculum

68. There is good use of ICT across the curriculum. The coordinator has worked hard to ensure the use of ICT to support subject teaching and learning with encouraging results. A scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' weekly planning shows that ICT is used well in other subjects with opportunities for the use of ICT being identified in teachers' planning. For example, pupils make good use of ICT in their language and literacy development, such as through the use of the program Clicker and the phonic program 'First Keys'. In numeracy pupils use programs to put objects into sets according to attributes such as colour, size and shape and for addition to 20.

### HUMANITIES

*In humanities, work was sampled in geography and religious education. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about provision in these subjects. No work was seen in history.*

69. One lesson in **geography** was seen. In this lesson, pupils in Year 3 learned about the features of rooms and made good progress. The teacher did well in providing a range of activities that would interest the pupils including making and using plans and a model of a room with furniture. Staff made good use of symbols to assist some pupils, and other pupils could say that the bin was next to the sink. There was a good emphasis on working as a member of a team, with good reminders about being polite and caring towards each other.
70. No lessons in **religious education** were timetabled during the inspection. Discussions were held with the coordinator and pupils' work was sampled. By the end of Year 2, pupils celebrate Christian festivals and make cards for Mothering Sunday and Easter, and pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. They collect fruits and nuts for the Harvest festival table. This year, they visited a Sikh temple, tasted Sikh food and watched an act of worship. They followed this up by making models of a temple back at school. They also celebrated the Jewish festival of Sukkoth, and learned to identify a menorah, a Kiddush cup and a skull cap.
71. Pupils by the end of Year 5 do more advanced work. They watch videos on Sikhism and use the internet to search for further information. They learn the conventions of the religion like covering their head and not turning their back on the Holy Book. At their age, pupils visit and compare modern and traditional churches. They celebrate the Chinese New Year by making red banners, monkey masks and lanterns, and visiting a Chinese restaurant.
72. The analysis of planning and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that religious education has a secure place in the curriculum. The subject is satisfactorily led by the acting headteacher.

There is a good subject policy and scheme of work, which takes into account the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Resources are satisfactory, although there is a need for more relevant computer software available to teachers. Assessment of pupils' achievements is weak – the system states what areas of learning have been covered rather than what pupils know, understand or can do.

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

*Work was sampled in art, physical education and design and technology. No work was seen in music. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about provision in these subjects.*

73. In **art and design**, one very good lesson was seen in which the pupils explored shape, colour and texture in a topic on buildings. One pupil made a model house from a computer printout. The circle time at the beginning of the lesson was expertly used to encourage pupils to stand in front of the class and to explain and evaluate their work. They met this challenge very well. The policy for the subject is in the process of being re-written and the subject needs more coherent and rigorous development through the school. Of particular note, though, is the use made of a software 'paint' program, which enables pupils to explore their still life paintings in digital format.
74. In **design and technology** one lesson was seen during the inspection and that was a food technology lesson. The lesson seen was well planned to encourage pupils to use their senses. Pupils were able to explore the qualities of jelly in a varied and wholesome way. The pupils enjoyed the lesson and showed patience and respect for others. The subject is under review and a sound development plan is in place for the coming year. Resources for the subject are very good although currently underused. Food technology lessons enable pupils to make choices and prepare food with staff support.
75. In **physical education** one lesson for pupils in Years 2 to 5 was observed and further evidence was collected from discussions with key staff. In the lesson seen, there was effective teaching and the lesson began with a good warm-up. The teacher then gave the pupils a quick round of dodge-ball which the pupils found great fun, and they sportingly applauded the winner. The teacher gave the pupils good feedback and encouragement: "Well done, boys, for sticking to the rules!". The main part of the lesson represented a significant challenge for all the pupils and built on their previous experience at a local tennis centre where they had attended a six-week course. Although the teacher provided good demonstrations, many pupils found it difficult to balance the ball on the racquet or to hit the ball over the net. The teacher quickly readjusted the tasks to enable all pupils to be successful at their level. The lesson finished off with a game of 'sleeping lions' which calmed and relaxed everyone ready for the next lesson.
76. The subject is satisfactorily managed by a teaching assistant who is qualified to teach swimming. She is presently undertaking an audit to identify any gaps in resources. There are good links with the Delta Tennis Centre and with Swindon Town Football Club, which provides the school with expert coaching each term. Pupils attend horse-riding at a local stables and swim at local pools, sometimes accompanying pupils from a mainstream school. Two pupils also attend PE lessons at another mainstream school and this is a good extension to the school's provision.

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

*Work was sampled in personal, social, health and citizenship education.*

77. In the daily 'circle time' lessons pupils have opportunities to develop their skills in communication and socialising through being a member of a group. However, these are taught independently by teachers and there is no whole-school approach to the subject. Although parts of the citizenship scheme of work such as 'Animals and Us' are taught through science,



opportunities for discussing wider issues related to social, personal and sex education in pairs or groups are not provided.

78. In the circle time sessions teachers encourage their pupils to interact with each other, such as by singing greetings. Pupils respond well to the encouragement either in words or by their actions, such as placing their name cards under their photographs. Pupils with autism also appreciated the routine that these sessions offered and which had a settling influence before starting their lessons. Other pupils in Years 3 to 5 are given a good opportunity to share news and to socialise at the breakfast club. These are well prepared and run by teaching assistants and help to strengthen the good relationships that the pupils have with all staff.
79. The present coordinator has good vision for the development of the subject. Realising that the previous scheme of work was not suitable for the pupils, staff have been introduced to a more appropriate scheme which is to be used from September 2004.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

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

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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