INSPECTION REPORT

ANDOVERSFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Andoversford, Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115735

Headteacher: Mr J Kinane

Lead inspector: Geoff Burgess

Dates of inspection: 15th to 18th November 2004

Inspection number: 266309

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary

School category: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll: 97

School address: Gloucester Road

Andoversford Cheltenham Gloucestershire

Postcode: GL54 4HR

Telephone number: 01242 620407

Fax number: 01242 821067

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of Lorie Farrell

governors:

Date of previous December 1998

inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a four class foundation school in a mix of older buildings, impressively modernised and extended, and some less impressive temporary buildings. It is situated on a spacious and attractive site in the middle of the village of Andoversford near Cheltenham. The number on roll has been between 90 and 100 for several years with most children coming from the village and parish, and the rest from the surrounding villages and hamlets, some by choice. Unusually, there are currently more than twice as many boys as girls in the five younger year groups. Very few pupils have ethnic backgrounds other than British and the percentage of pupils who qualify for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils on the special needs register is low, although currently one has a statement of special need. Most children who attend the school start at the pre-school group, which moved on site into the old canteen recently, or attend other pre-school provision. With low numbers starting each year, overall attainment on entry is much affected by the presence of any lower attaining children. In most years attainment on entry is similar to that in most schools but the recent boy/girl imbalance has made the overall picture lower than usual.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities		
23708	Geoff Burgess	Lead inspector	Special educational needs, Area of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Mathematics Information and communication technology, Art and design Design and technology, Music Physical education.		
9487	Frances Hurd	Lay inspector			
21313	Harold Galley	Team inspector	English, Science, Geography, History, Religious education, Personal, social and health Education.		

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is essentially a good school with both strengths and weaknesses. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Most pupils attain high standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.
- Achievement is good in the reception and infant classes.
- Teaching is good overall and very good in Years 5 and 6 with some excellent lessons.
- Teaching is less effective in Years 3 and 4 and progress is much slower.
- Boys and girls behave well, enjoy learning, and get on well together.
- Pupils enjoy a very good range of extra opportunities to take part in activities, extend their learning and perform, but the time devoted to some subjects is less than recommended.
- In-class and extracurricular provision for music is very good, and singing and performance standards are much better than usual.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about and celebrate the richness and diversity of other faiths and cultures.
- Parents make an excellent contribution to their children's learning and the life of the school.
- Current strategic planning arrangements are not good enough to provide a sufficiently rigorous agenda for improvement and bring these improvements about.

Since its last inspection, the school has made satisfactory improvement by sustaining high standards achieved by pupils in Year 6, making substantial improvements to the school facilities and environment inside and out, and increasing the variety of enrichment activities available for pupils to enjoy. However, aspects of the curriculum and of leadership and management have not improved as much as seen in most schools.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end		Similar schools		
of Year 6, compared with:	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	А	В	А	С
Mathematics	A*	А	A*	А
Science	В	С	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.

Overall achievement is good. Children in their foundation year are achieving well and most will attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Standards in Year 2 are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science with pupils achieving well in Years 1 and 2. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science with very good achievement in Years 5 and 6. However, progress is much slower in Years 3 and 4 where achievement is not satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) match expectations and good provision in history and

music ensures that pupils are doing better than expected. In the table above A* indicates that this result was in the top 5 per cent nationally. Boys and girls have developed good personal standards with the youngest children responding well in their class. Relationships are good throughout the school and pupils make a good contribution to their own learning. To this end, the school makes good provision for most aspects of pupils' personal development but their awareness of other faiths and cultures is less well promoted. Attendance levels are well above average thanks to the efforts of parents and the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Andoversford School provides a good quality of education. Teaching overall is good with strengths in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2, and Years 5 and 6, but learning in Years 3 and 4 is less well developed. The increased numbers of teaching assistants are making a positive contribution to enhancing learning. Provision for music is a strength of the school, as is the very good range of extra learning opportunities provided to supplement and enrich the curriculum. Staff provide a satisfactory range of learning opportunities in class, although coverage in some subjects is inhibited by the limited time spent on them. Adequate care is taken to ensure pupils' safety and happiness, and staff know the boys and girls they work with well. Parents make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and the life of the school. Links with parents are judged satisfactory overall and the school has good links with the community and other schools and pre-school providers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Thanks to the efforts of the head and chair of governors, difficult issues have been faced up to and dealt with to good effect but the process placed great strains upon the management of the school and inhibited other necessary developments. Monitoring arrangements are improved but are not yet good enough to provide the information necessary to inform planning, and improvement planning is at a very early stage of development. The role of staff in subject and curriculum management is underdeveloped. Day to day management is efficient and user-friendly and the school's finances are now managed efficiently and monitored closely to ensure good value for money. Most of the governing body are very new to the role but governors are very keen and supportive and willing to learn. The overall governance of the school is satisfactory with the chair providing very good leadership and support in her role.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally pleased with the school, especially the quality of teaching and the progress their children make, but have reservations about communications with the school including information about how well their children are doing, and approaching the school with a question or a concern. Pupils are happy with their school and particularly enjoy the wide range of extra activities available and taking part in performances.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that pupils achieve equally well in all classes by improving teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4.
- Use the requirement for an action plan based on this report as an opportunity to involve the whole school community in initiating rigorous systems for evaluating standards and provision, making decisions based on this information, and acting upon them to bring about continuous improvement. With this in mind:
 - o Empowering staff in their management roles to take full responsibility for improving provision and standards in their areas of responsibility;
 - Accelerating the development of, and make best use of, systems for monitoring classroom practice and the progress made by individual pupils against national expectations to inform this process.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall achievement is good. Children start school with average attainment, and standards in literacy, numeracy and science are well above average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Boys and girls in the two infant classes are making good progress in their overall development.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are achieving very well in almost all subjects and Year 6 will again attain high standards by the end of the year.
- Progress is much slower in Years 3 and 4 and standards observed in literacy, numeracy and science are now below expectations.

Commentary

1. Results achieved by seven-year-olds in national tests in the past were consistently above and sometimes well above average. However, in 2003 and 2004 results fell to average and in the case of mathematics in 2003, below average. In reality, girls did as well as usual in 2003 and even better in 2004, while among the boys, with a significant number finding aspects of learning difficult, results were well down. In addition, since both these year groups contained twice as many boys as girls, this made the overall picture look worse than it really was. Eleven-year-olds have regularly achieved well above average results in English, mathematics and science over the years with occasional above average scores. This trend continued in 2004 with mathematics and science well above average when compared with schools in a similar situation, and English above average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 - average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results	
Reading	16.0 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)	
Writing	14.4 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)	
Mathematics	16.2 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3)	

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 - average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (28.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.8 (28.7)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	31.3 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 2. All the trends noted above were observed in pupils' work in Years 2 and 6 during the inspection. Year 2 again contains twice as many boys as girls. The small number of girls are again doing well whilst among the boys attainment is a little below the national average. Overall this gives an average picture in reading, writing and mathematics. The situation in Year 1 is even more out of balance with just one girl and five boys in the infant class and another Year 1 boy with very special needs in the reception class. With three pupils out of seven requiring considerable help to succeed, overall attainment in this group is below average. However, achievement in both year groups is good and all pupils are making good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics from a wide range of starting points. The boy/girl imbalance continues in the reception class, as does the increase in numbers of pupils with significant special needs. However, all children are achieving well and all those without special requirements will achieve the early learning goals during this school year, a few well before the end.
- 3. Very good achievement in Years 5 and 6 is seeing the older pupils again attaining standards well above average in English, mathematics and science, while Year 5 pupils are catching up fast. However, the evidence of pupils' work in Years 3 and 4 shows that achievement among many pupils is unsatisfactory and that overall attainment in Year 4 is now below expectations in English and mathematics, having been average when the year group took national tests in Year 2. The achievement of pupils with special needs throughout the school tends to mirror that of the rest of the children in their class although the group of pupils receiving focused help with literacy in Year 3 is achieving better than other classmates.
- 4. The school and parents make a substantial investment in provision for music and swimming and standards are much better than usual in the older classes. However, the quantity and quality of work observed in religious education and design and technology in the older classes is not as good as expected, partly because of the limited time spent on these subjects. Standards in other subjects tend to reflect standards in the core subjects except that pupils in Years 5 and 6 are working at expected levels in information and communication technology (ICT). However, given the history of limited provision in the subject, this is commendable.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is good overall. Attendance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school and parents work together well to ensure high levels of regular attendance.
- Sports and performances make a good contribution to pupils' social development.
- Provision for pupils' understanding of their own heritage is very good, but provision for pupils to understand and celebrate other cultures is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to develop a spirit of enterprise and take responsibility.

Commentary

5. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are generally attentive and interested in class, although their concentration levels dip when teaching is inappropriate for their ability level. In the best lessons, as in a Year 2 mathematics class which introduced pupils to

multiplication, pupils were enthralled and hard working from beginning to end. Boys and girls generally get on very well together and older pupils, particularly girls, enjoy playing with, and caring for, the younger ones. Staff expect good standards of behaviour in and out of class, and pupils know right from wrong. Pupils willingly accept the simple responsibilities they are given. Relationships with staff are generally good and often better. The personal projects undertaken in Year 6 show how impressively pupils can work independently, but pupils have few opportunities to do so before this. Similarly, they do not organise their own charitable events, help to draw up school rules, or take on responsibilities during breaks.

6. The school offers many opportunities for pupils to perform in musical and dramatic productions, and these help spiritual and social development, as well as pupils' knowledge of their own culture. In particular, all pupils learn to sing confidently, competently, and unselfconsciously. The rich extracurricular provision benefits personal development as well, and most assemblies make a good contribution to spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils' social development during playtime is to some extent hampered by the dominance of football in a limited space, and the lack of any other toys. Pupils have little experience of the richness of other cultures' art, music and literature, and only limited knowledge of other faiths. The library contains only a minimal number of books from other cultures, and displays around the school reflect the school's focus on its native heritage.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence			
School data 4.2			
National data	5.1		

Unauthorised absence			
School data 0			
National data	0.4		

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

7. Attendance is very good, being well above national averages. The school follows up any unexplained absence on the first day but this is hardly ever necessary, as parents are very conscientious in reporting absence. Attendance is recorded and monitored electronically, and its importance is strongly promoted to parents.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Asian
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background

No of pupils on roll	
93	
2	
1	
1	

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions		
0	0		
0	0		
0	0		
0	0		

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning

Overall teaching and learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 ensures that pupils get a good start to their education.
- Very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 ensures that pupils achieve high standards by the time they leave.
- Teaching and learning is barely satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and progress is much slower.
- The teaching of music is consistently very good.

Commentary

8. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was seen as a strength of the school with all teaching at least good and a significant percentage very good, especially in the infant classes. Teaching is still a strength of the school although this time it ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory with over 80 per cent at least good. The best teaching was observed in the top class and in music while the least effective occurred in the Years 3 and 4 class. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	4	11	3	1	0	0

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

- 9. In the best of lessons, pupils were stimulated, even inspired, by challenging and inherently interesting activities very well matched to the needs and interests of the pupils concerned. Lively, confident approaches by the teachers and very positive responses from their pupils meant that the pace of learning was very good and the quality of work, performance or understanding outstanding for the pupils involved. Where teaching was less effective, the activities were not well matched to the needs of the full ability range in the two year groups with the result that a majority of pupils did not take an active part in the lesson and the pace of learning was slow. The fact that an agreed system of ongoing assessment is not well developed or used throughout the school contributes to the above weaknesses.
- 10. In an excellent Years 5 and 6 literacy lesson full of pace and energy, pupils showed great maturity and a very impressive work ethic analysing the good features of the beginning of 'The Iron Man'. Very good teamwork between the Years 1 and 2 teacher and a teaching assistant made it possible for the teacher to focus on the larger Year 2 group and involve pupils with a wide range of levels of understanding in work leading to multiplication. Well thought out activities and clear explanations and questioning ensured

that all, including children with special needs, understood the concept, while higher attainers moved on to 'real' multiplication very quickly. Music is a strength of the school thanks to the school's specialist music teacher whose expertise and confidence shone through in very impressive music lessons and whole key stage singing sessions.

11. With two experienced and two relatively new teaching assistants, their overall contribution to teaching and learning is good. However, their effectiveness is largely dependent on the way they are involved in the work of the class they are supporting. Where their role is an integral part of the planning, their contribution is often very good. This was observed in the reception class working with the lower achievers, in Years 1 and 2 as noted above, in Years 3 and 4 working with a group requiring help with their literacy, and in the Years 5 and 6 class, working with Year 5 while the teacher focused on Year 6.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of activities are provided outside the school day and provision for enrichment is very good. Pupils' participation in sports and arts events is very good.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics and science is good.
- Time restraints mean that some other subjects are not covered in enough depth.
- The curriculum is not monitored with enough rigour.
- The well developed external accommodation provides a good resource for learning and personal development.

- 12. There is an unusual mix of significant strengths alongside some important weaknesses in the curriculum provision. The core curriculum is strong with good amounts of time devoted to English, mathematics and science. Children in their first year in school experience the full range of activities based on the Foundation Stage curriculum. Teaching time for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is above the recommended minimum for all pupils in the country. However, for pupils in Years 3 to 6, teaching time is below the recommended minimum. This situation is exacerbated by the policy of allocating one afternoon each week throughout the year to swimming. The time left for other subjects is, therefore, well below that seen in other primary schools. Although provision does just meet statutory requirements, subjects such as design and technology, religious education and some aspects of physical education, are not covered in enough depth.
- 13. Provision for enrichment is very good, with a wide range of visits and visitors that bring the curriculum to life. The school has developed a well deserved reputation for musical and dramatic performances. Music, especially singing, is given a high priority by the school. Good links with the community help to enliven lessons and pupils much enjoy the chance to, for example, visit a local superstore to take part in cooking lessons. A well balanced personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) curriculum supports pupils' learning effectively and makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. The school provides a very good range of activities outside the school day and pupils take good advantage of activities such as football, rugby, tennis, athletics, cross

country running, cricket and netball. Staff work hard to give older pupils the chance to take part in a wide range of local sporting competitions, often with great success. Teachers make good use of cross-curricular links to support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in subjects such as science and history.

- 14. The school employs appropriate numbers of staff to cover the curriculum, and a music specialist provides invaluable support. Increased provision for teaching assistants brings the school into line with the minimum level found in most primaries. As yet, the new assistants have not had any training for their role. Resources are at least adequate for all subjects, and good for physical education and music. The school is aware that the library needs new stock, in particular books to support multicultural education, and that the computing facilities need upgrading.
- 15. The spacious grounds provide a well designed and attractive sensory garden and wildlife area in addition to the playground and sports field. The new hall is a major resource but at present it is underused in the mornings. The classrooms converted from the old hall are spacious and attractive. However, pupils in reception to Year 2 are housed in 'temporary' structures now 25 years old and requiring increasingly expensive maintenance. The fact that the children have to use the main school toilets is inconvenient and wastes learning time.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements for pupils joining the reception and older year groups are good.
- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are much improved.
- Other than in the Foundation Stage, the monitoring of pupils' progress and personal development is weak.

- 16. Under the guidance of the headteacher, good improvements have been made to ensure the safety of the site. The site perimeter is now secure and visitors gain access by an entryphone system. Fire, electrical and physical education appliances are now regularly checked. All staff have had first-aid training. There is a designated child protection liaison officer, and procedures follow local authority guidelines. Detailed risk assessments are carried out before offsite visits. A few points relating to health and safety have been brought to the attention of the governing body but provision is satisfactory overall.
- 17. Provision for the support, advice and guidance for pupils is satisfactory. This is a smaller than average school in which all pupils are known to all adults. The wide range of extracurricular activities gives pupils the chance to develop constructive relationships with adults other than their class teacher. However, there are some weaknesses in terms of the school's formal arrangements for assessing pupils' development. Positive features include the good records kept in the Foundation Stage and good procedures for assessing pupils'

progress in writing in the younger classes. However, records in other subjects and aspects, including pupils' personal development, are weak. One consequence is that necessary intervention for pupils who find learning difficult is sometimes not as early as it could be. Provision for pupils with special educational needs largely reflects overall provision within each classroom and is overall good with weaknesses in the Years 3 and 4 class. Identified pupils have sound individual education plans but the way that these plans are followed, reviewed and new targets are set, is not as rigorous as usually observed.

- 18. The school has very good links with its neighbouring playgroup, and welcomes its children and those attending other pre-school groups to several storytime sessions before they start school. An evening meeting is held for parents to outline the school's ethos and routines. Pupils joining older year groups are generally made to feel very welcome by their new teachers and quickly settle in, although there have been some difficulties for those entering Year 3.
- 19. A school council has just been established, and some of the older pupils have become councillors. There are no other formal procedures through which pupils can give their views, although in such a small school, most feel confident enough to offer any ideas to their teachers.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory overall, although the support parents give to the school and to their children's learning is excellent. Links with the community and other educational establishments are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents maintain an extraordinary level of financial and practical support for the school.
- The school has good links with the community, other local schools and pre-school providers.
- Information for parents is not always clear or timely enough.
- A significant minority of parents feel that their concerns are not dealt with well enough.

- 20. Parents and carers regularly raise about £7,000 annually (an essential part of the school's budget) and are constantly looking for new ways to fundraise: one swam the Channel and another organised a public auction. The parents' association, whose committee represents a third of the school's families, additionally organises social events. Most governors, including the chair, are parents. Governors, parents and staff painted the whole of the school exterior, and contributed labour and artistic skill to the landscaping of the grounds. Many parents help in school and on trips, as in a very well organised infant science lesson where well briefed parents supported groups very well. Parents pay for the swimming lessons for the four oldest year groups.
- 21. Nearly three-quarters of the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaires were returned, an unusually high percentage, and many parents sent comments as well, often stressing they supported the school whilst voicing specific criticisms. Parents believe their children enjoy school, that they behave well, and become more mature. However, a significant number

felt poorly informed about how their children were progressing, that the school paid insufficient attention to parents' views, and some parents were uncomfortable about voicing concerns. Written comments expressed particular concern about the pastoral care and curriculum management in the Years 3 and 4 class.

- 22. The findings of the inspection confirm most of these views, both positive and negative. In particular, information for parents could be better. The quality of pupils' annual reports is satisfactory (although those for reception pupils are good). Reports outline pupil achievement, but do not clarify whether pupils are working at, above, or below, the expected standard. Some comments on personal development are confusing. Parents are given full information about school events in newsletters, but some changes to school routines were announced, in the opinion of some parents, without consultation, with inappropriate brevity and with too little or no notice. The attractively designed website is not updated sufficiently. Although most members of staff are extremely approachable and welcoming, there have been instances where parents have felt their concerns were brushed aside, or not treated seriously.
- 23. The school forms a social focus for the local community, in and beyond its own village. Local people expect to enjoy its special events, and willingly provide expertise or materials to support learning. All the materials for the sensory garden were given free of charge. The school makes good use of the surrounding area for visits and curriculum enrichment. The village playgroup is now housed on the school site, and works closely with the reception teacher. The school has good links with two secondary schools, both of which provide specialist cross-phase teaching, and help with transport. It competes regularly in a large number of different inter-school sporting events, and local music festivals. Staff at neighbouring small primary schools co-operate over in-service training and special visitors for the pupils. The school makes the hall available for its smallest neighbouring school to undertake indoor physical education each week.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the head, the management of the whole staff and the governance of the school are all satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Long standing difficult issues are being resolved.
- The school does not have an adequate agenda for improvement based on good information and agreed by the school community.
- The role of staff in improving provision and standards in their areas of responsibility is underdeveloped.
- Systems for monitoring classroom practice and the progress made by individual pupils against national expectations are not detailed or rigorous enough.

Commentary

24. Although the last report said that leadership and management were 'strengths of the school', this was not reflected in the systems and organisations which the relatively new head inherited when he took over. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating classroom practice and pupils' attainment at the level of detail now expected were not in place.

Subject co-ordinators and governors were not empowered or expected to make the sort of contribution to the leadership and management of the school as a whole, and their special responsibilities in particular, as is now commonplace and necessary. Governors were not provided with the levels of information required for them to make informed decisions or really be aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

- 25. Financial planning was a particularly weak area. The head and a new chair of governors established that the school was heading for an inevitable substantial overspend and required urgent action. To their great credit, by being proactive in recruiting new pupils, and by reducing excessively high administration costs, a potential crisis was averted. As a result the governing body has been able to agree to the appointment of two new teaching assistants to work directly with children in class. The 'front office' now provides a very welcoming and user-friendly first point of contact to the school and the school's finances are transparent to all those who need to know, and are being managed actively. Unfortunately, the process took up a lot of time and created tensions throughout the school community which meant that other necessary developments were delayed, or put on hold, and some goodwill and trust was lost.
- 26. One consequence of this was that many governors did not continue in post. Most of the current governing body are very new to the role. With few tried and tested procedures, policies and ways of working to fall back on, the whole governing body is in the process of coping with a very steep learning curve as governors learn about, and develop, their role. However, it is already obvious that, very well led and supported by the chair, the governing body have the capacity, confidence and commitment to provide the school with the balance of support and challenge necessary for it to move forward.
- 27. Other consequences are that the roles of subject co-ordinators have not been developed as much as might have been expected, and that involving the whole school community in planning for improvement has been delayed. However, there are signs of progress in both these areas as staff and governors come to terms with a new culture of shared responsibility and open management. A good example of this is the way the new literacy co-ordinator is grasping the opportunity to develop her role and expertise with both hands.
- 28. The head is to be congratulated on managing the school through a difficult time. He has shown good leadership in facing up to the issue of the finances and has been responsible for several very positive developments around the school ranging from making the school much more safe and secure to the development of pre-school and after school provision in the old dining room. As a result the school gives good value for money. However, the head has been less proactive in addressing other long standing issues and some internal and external communications have not been timely or clear enough.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		
Total income	290612	
Total expenditure	293662	
Expenditure per pupil	2996	

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	- 2466
Balance carried forward to the next	- 5516

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**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is good in all areas of learning.
- Teaching is good and good use is made of extra help.
- Good use is made of the school environment to promote learning.

- 29. Most of the 17 children in the reception class are now attending school all day. Although the class is housed in a long term temporary building, the accommodation is relatively spacious for the numbers of children involved and the teacher has created a welcoming and stimulating internal environment for children to work and play in. Children have access to a very good range of outside areas including the secure playground, the sensory garden and the nature area.
- 30. Attainment on entry into the reception class varies each year but is generally average. However, in recent years, with significantly more boys than girls in each year group, language and communication skills have been below average. The present class includes a number of children with significant learning difficulties, one of whom is a Year 1 child. Teaching and learning is good and by the end of the Foundation Stage most children reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning. All children are achieving well, particularly in their personal development and in the development of communication and language skills. Adults are skilled at promoting and developing language skills and this has a positive impact on children's learning.
- 31. Children make good progress in their **personal**, **social and emotional development** and achievement is good. Most children settle quickly into the daily routines. For example, children know they need to take an apron before playing with the sand and water or joining in a creative activity. They select their own equipment and share with little fuss. Children know the difference between right and wrong and are happy to take turns and share equipment. Relationships and behaviour are usually good although some younger boys find it hard to conform for longer periods especially when activities are active and exciting. Some children exceed the early learning goals by Year 1.
- 32. Achievement in **communication**, **language and literacy** skills is good. Children sit attentively listening to stories read or told by an adult such as 'Kipper's Book of Dogs'. Most can identify the title of the book and use picture clues well to interpret what is going on. Children handle books carefully and are beginning to recognise letters, initial and final sounds and some key words. A high emphasis is placed on developing children's communication skills and children talk confidently to adults and each other in a range of situations. Most achieve the early learning goals by the start of Year 1. In writing, children are encouraged to hold their pencil and form letters correctly from an early stage. By the

end of the reception class many children are able to write at least one sentence unaided. Attainment in writing is as expected for this age.

- 33. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children achieve the early learning goals in **mathematical development**. An appropriate range of practical activities is provided for the children and consequently they achieve well. Boys and girls know all the numerals and most can count and recognise numbers up to 20. During the inspection many showed that they could recognise the numbers on dice without having to count the spots, and say what numbers were one more or one less than a given number without counting.
- 34. Achievement in **knowledge and understanding of the world** is good. Children are confident in the use of the mouse and keyboard when using the computer as when 'dressing' a boy as part of the weather and seasons topic. Well planned activities make good use of the weather topic to make learning coherent. Children discuss what clothes to wear in different weather and sort them under different headings. In other activities, children visit the nature area to see what is happening there and make use of a visit from a local clergyman to continue a discussion on the church as a family.
- 35. In **creative development** achievement is good and most children reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children have opportunities to paint freely and during the inspection had two well planned opportunities to work with a range of materials. In one, children learned about the work of Andy Goldsworthy using natural materials, and had a go at their own floating collages and rain-shadow pictures. In the other they combined to construct, decorate and people a church. Music is well used to enrich learning as in the use of 'The Four Seasons' in a dance lesson and in the singing of the register.
- 36. Achievement in **physical development** is good and most children achieve the early learning goals by Year 1. Children ride bikes and other wheeled vehicles confidently in the outdoor area. They handle scissors, glue sticks and other tools with a good level of skill when they make models and collages, involving cutting, sticking and joining as when making the church. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children move with confidence and understanding in physical education lessons and show a sound awareness of space, others, and the equipment they are using.
- 37. Strengths in teaching include creative planning at a range of levels using the various 'stepping stones', a calm, positive response to over enthusiasm and effective teaching methods. Good use is made of all available adult help and the school's environment to make learning active and relevant. A feature of current provision is the very positive and sensitive way the staff in the reception class are including and supporting a group of pupils with very individual needs.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in English in the Years 5 and 6 class is outstanding and standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- Reading is promoted very successfully in Years 1 and 2.
- The subject is well led.
- Achievement in the Years 3 and 4 class is unsatisfactory.
- 38. Attainment on entry to the school is average. Pupils' achievement in reading and writing is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. A key factor in the development of pupils' reading skills is the very good support provided by parents who participate in the home-reading programme with considerable commitment and enthusiasm. A scrutiny of pupils' reading diaries shows that these are taken home on a regular basis, with parents and teachers frequently sharing useful and constructive comments on pupils' progress. However, this positive feature is not maintained in the Years 3 and 4 class where there is clearly not the same rapport between teacher and parents in terms of supporting pupils' developing reading skills. An improvement in the rates of progress in reading in the Years 5 and 6 class means that achievement overall in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, standards in Year 6 have risen in line with the national trend and improvement overall has been satisfactory.
- 39. Speaking and listening skills are effectively promoted through lively and constructive class and group discussions. In almost all lessons, a calm and friendly atmosphere gives pupils the confidence to speak in front of their classmates with clarity and confidence. Pupils share their personal views and relate stories and anecdotes, confident that others will listen with empathy and respect. Pupils often ask searching questions, as when a Year 2 pupil asked, "If whales are mammals, how do they sleep?"
- 40. Writing skills are not developed as consistently as other areas of English. This is a weakness that the school has recognised and is attempting to address. The school has introduced a system of evaluating pupils' writing on a regular, half termly basis. These assessments give a clear and detailed picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in writing and, in some cases are leading to improved rates of progress. This was evident in pupils' writing in Years 1 and 2 but less obvious in Years 3 and 4. One weakness of this system is that teachers do not always use the information to plan appropriate work for pupils, with the result that some pupils keep repeating the same mistakes. A very positive feature of pupils' development in writing is the outstanding progress made in the Years 5 and 6 class. The pace of work in this class is dynamic and pupils write in considerable detail in a range of different subjects. Written work covers a wide range of genre and is always superbly presented.
- 41. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. Pupils' individual education plans contain appropriate literacy targets and the 'additional literacy support' programme provides useful support notably in Year 3, whereby pupils are withdrawn from the class for well focused small group activities.
- 42. Teaching and learning are good overall. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is consistently good, with well organised, lively lessons. Teaching in this class is focusing more closely on the development of writing skills and there is evidence that improvements in this aspect of English are beginning to bear fruit. A strength of teaching is the superb manner in which stories are read to the class, enabling pupils to appreciate the joy of good literature. Although it was not possible to observe one of the job-share teachers in the Years 3 and 4

class, a scrutiny of pupils' work reveals some significant weaknesses in teaching in this class. The pace of work is pedestrian, weak marking does not give pupils a sufficiently clear idea of their own strengths and weaknesses, and the presentation of work is unsatisfactory. However, teaching in the Years 5 and 6 class is outstanding, with lively, interesting and often dynamic lessons that fully engage the interest of pupils. The teacher has very high expectations of pupils' effort, behaviour and work.

43. The leadership and management of English are good. The subject co-ordinator sets a good example with her own effective teaching and she has a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve standards in English. However, so far, too little time has been allocated to the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

44. English contributes satisfactorily to other subjects although the picture is very inconsistent across the school. In history, for example, pupils write detailed, interesting and lively accounts. However, in some subjects, such as religious education, pupils' writing is extremely limited.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6 is very good, and pupils in Year 6 achieve very high standards.
- Achievement in the Years 3 and 4 class is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching assistants and other helpers make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning in mathematics.

- 45. At the time of the last inspection the teaching of mathematics was said to be good with pupils in Year 6 achieving high standards. This remains the case although the quality of teaching is no longer as consistent as it was then. The results achieved by Year 6 pupils over the past five years have been remarkable, alternating between well above average and the top five per cent nationally, and showing well above average improvement from national test results in Year 2.
- 46. This situation is almost entirely due to the very good teaching pupils receive in Years 5 and 6 combined with the excellent attitudes to learning developed by the teacher in her pupils. This was very well demonstrated in a lesson on the properties of polygons where very high expectations, imaginative activities, and a formidable pace of work led to very good achievement. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed describing shapes using their mathematical properties for the maths police to identify and arrest. Key to the success of both year groups involved was the contribution of the teaching assistant who worked with Year 5 in another room to make it possible for both groups to be extended at their own level.

- 47. Although, with a very different profile of prior attainment, standards in Year 2 are 'only' average, in reality these pupils are achieving almost as well as their older school mates for many of the same reasons. A confident teacher using deft class management to provide imaginative and very well matched activities to enthusiastic, interested and engaged pupils ensured that the pace of work was very good. Very good use of the teaching assistant to concentrate on Year 1 and very good awareness of the needs of individuals ensured that all pupils, including those with special needs, achieved the learning objectives and understood the concept of multiplication.
- 48. Achievement is not as good in Years 3 and 4. From the evidence of a lesson on working with consecutive numbers and the analysis of work in pupils' books, it is plain that expectations are much lower and that the quantity and quality of work produced by pupils in Years 3 and 4 is well below that in the other two classes. Several factors come into play. An analysis of the timetable shows that these pupils spend less than the recommended time on numeracy. Pupils' work does not show that work is planned for the two year groups or for pupils of differing attainment within them. Extra help is not used as constructively and weak marking means that pupils are not really aware of how well they are, or are not, doing.
- 49. The mathematics co-ordinator has had very little impact on the development of provision for mathematics throughout the school. She does not provide a model of good practice and there has been minimal monitoring of provision or standards over the years. Whole school assessment arrangements are not good enough to identify trends or priorities for improvement accurately.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Appropriate cross-curricular links have been established with other subjects, particularly information and communication technology and science, often providing pupils with opportunities to use and practise their mathematical skills in practical situations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** overall, with excellent provision in the Years 5 and 6 class.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in the Years 5 and 6 class is excellent.
- There is a positive emphasis on investigative and practical tasks.
- There are effective links with a local high school.
- Pupils' work is poorly organised in the Years 3 and 4 class.

Commentary

51. The results attained by pupils in Year 6 in the 2004 National Curriculum tests were the best ever achieved by the school. Every pupil reached the expected level 4 and 76 per cent reached the higher level 5. These results place the school in the top five per cent nationally. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 6 shows a number of positive features. All work is detailed and well organised, with a great deal of time spent on accurately recording

findings. Discussions with pupils reveal that they thoroughly enjoy the many practical investigations and experiments which clearly enhance their knowledge and understanding. Pupils write lengthy and well considered accounts of their experiments, often accompanied by graphs and statistical data. Another notable feature that makes an extremely positive contribution to the high levels of achievement is the dynamic pace of work that is sustained throughout the school year.

- 52. The school's emphasis on practical, investigative work is reflected in the Years 1 and 2 class. Although the pace of pupils' work and pupils' achievement in this class is currently satisfactory, there is very good evidence that Year 2 pupils benefit greatly from their science club run by the class teacher which starts after Christmas and runs into Year 3. There are significant differences in the quality and pace of pupils' work in the Years 3 and 4 class. The work made available for inspectors to scrutinise was disorganised and poorly presented, with the coverage of the programmes of study for science being only adequate. Pupils' achievement over time in this class is less than expected.
- 53. It follows from the above that there are significant variations in the quality of teaching across the school, representing the varying pattern of pupils' achievements in the different classes. These variations reflect differences in teachers' subject knowledge and, in particular, expectations of behaviour, work and effort. In the Years 5 and 6 class, the teacher has the highest possible expectations of pupils who respond with terrific commitment and enthusiasm. A positive feature of work in the Years 5 and 6 class is the very useful links with a local high school, whereby a science teacher from the high school visits to take science lessons. During the inspection, a very good lesson on the sun, earth and moon was enlivened by the creative use of information and communication technology and other practical aids that enabled all pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of this topic.
- 54. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. While the subject coordinator sets a superb example with her own inspiring teaching of the subject, there has been limited monitoring of provision across the school, with not enough being done to raise standards in Years 3 and 4.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff make the best of the limited resources available.
- Pupils are confident and enthusiastic when involved in ICT.

Commentary

55. Although the last report stated that pupils in Year 6 were working at a level above expectations, by the time the present head arrived at the school the dramatic improvement in facilities, expertise among staff, curriculum planning and expectations of pupils seen elsewhere had not been reflected in the school. Older pupils remember a cramped suite with equipment which was old and unreliable and which in their words, they hardly used. The new hall provided the opportunity to relocate the suite in an old classroom and better,

but not new, equipment was obtained to upgrade hardware. Financial constraints noted previously prevented further upgrading but good use has been made of matched funding to introduce interactive whiteboards as a classroom teaching and learning tool.

56. Good use is being made of a commercial scheme to ensure that the curriculum is covered fully and that the appropriate skills are learned, and there is good evidence that pupils in Year 6 have made good progress in covering all the skills and areas required. Even more impressive is the progress being made by pupils in Years 1 and 2 who have had the benefit of the suite for most of their time in school. This was well shown in a Year 2 session where mainly six-year-olds showed great confidence at the keyboard in selecting, moving and colouring various shapes to create a collage using geometric and line tools in a graphics programme.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. Evidence of pupils making use of ICT in other subjects included the use of the Internet to access information about current historical and geographical topics: for example featuring Tutankhamen during the inspection; the use of the interactive whiteboard to illustrate the relative movement of the earth, sun and moon in science; the use of different fonts in presenting work in literacy; and the use of a graphics programme to produce a Mondrian style collage of shapes combining maths and art. This represents a good use of ICT across the curriculum

HUMANITIES

Provision in geography, history and religious education is **satisfactory** overall, with significant strengths in history, alongside some weaknesses in religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in history in Year 6 are well above the expected level.
- The allocation of time for religious education is well below average compared to other schools.
- Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

58. A strength of the school's provision in humanities is the outstanding work achieved by pupils in **history** in the Years 5 and 6 class. Topics are covered in considerable detail and written work is of a very high standard indeed. Pupils develop a good understanding of the key dates, periods and main events of British history. Especially impressive was a topic on 'The Tudors' where pupils developed a mature understanding of the dilemma facing King Henry VIII in terms of his relationship with the Catholic Church. Pupils' work is always well presented and covers many aspects of life in the Tudor period. Interviews with pupils reveal history to be a popular subject, the very positive attitudes of pupils reflecting the obvious enthusiasm of the teacher. The pupils' topic this term covering the Second World War has again led to some exceptional work, with pupils' accounts of the life of evacuees showing empathy and thoughtful insights into the life of some children during that period. Pupils make good use of ICT to support their work in history, using the Internet to research their projects. The presentation of pupils' work is enhanced by the clever use of text,

photos and pictures to illustrate projects. The history curriculum is well planned throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 achieve satisfactorily, while achievement in Years 5 and 6 is outstanding.

59. Although work in **geography** is not nearly as comprehensive as in history, there are some common features in the Years 5 and 6 class. The development of literacy skills is good, with several detailed written records, such as when pupils write formal letters of complaint about an imaginary local by-pass. Pupils evaluate different aspects of urban and rural life in a sensible manner, using geographical vocabulary appropriately. Numeracy skills are developed effectively as pupils complete accurate graphs as a result of local traffic surveys. Standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations in geography. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 achieve satisfactorily, covering a sound range of topics based on local studies.

60. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of provision in **religious education**. In Years 1 and 2 pupils cover a sound range of topics, based on the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus, including a study of the Christian Church. Pupils learn about a range of stories from both the Old and New Testaments, as well as several of the main Christian festivals. Provision in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The amount of time allocated to religious education is well below average in Years 3 to 6. A scrutiny of class timetables indicates that religious education is not given enough time. This judgement is supported by an evaluation of pupils' recorded work in Years 3 to 6 where the amount of work covered is well below that normally seen in Years 3 to 6 classes at this stage of the school year. Interviews with pupils confirm that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the various themes outlined in the Agreed Syllabus is extremely sketchy. It was not possible to observe any religious education lessons during the inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not primary foci of the inspection and so were sampled. Insufficient evidence was available to make firm judgements about provision or standards in art and design, design and technology, and physical education. However, music featured strongly during the inspection and so is reported separately.

MUSIC

Provision in music is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good class teaching ensures that all pupils learn how to make and enjoy music.
- The quality of singing in choir practices and assemblies is outstanding.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn a range of instruments during and after school.

Commentary

61. The school is rightfully proud of its musical traditions which are shown in many aspects of the life of the school from the numbers of pupils who are learning to play a wide

range of musical instruments to the high quality of the many productions and musical performances which are so popular in the school and local community. Key to this is the contribution made by the school's specialist music teacher over the years in building up expectations, confidence and technical ability to the levels seen amongst older pupils today. This was well demonstrated in a music lesson and key stage singing practice observed during the inspection. In both sessions, performance levels, especially in singing, were very high without the teacher having to prompt or exhort. Typical of this was the four part rondo performed by Years 5 and 6 pupils which was then translated to an instrumental version involving every pupil using tuned percussion except for two pupils who played two of the parts on the recorder.

- 62. The school invests a good deal of curriculum time and funding to achieve these very good results. Music is well resourced and very well led and managed by the specialist teacher. It makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, although there is scope for the subject to make a bigger contribution to developing pupils' awareness and appreciation of the music of other cultures.
- 63. Although no **art** lessons were observed during the inspection, the evidence of work completed and on display showed that pupils of all ages covered a good range of topics within the subject and that their finished work was generally at the levels expected. As in other subjects, the most impressive work was observed in Years 5 and 6, with a wide range of media and techniques being used, and the least impressive in Years 3 and 4 where the volume and quality of work was much less.
- 64. **Design and technology** has a very low profile in the school as demonstrated by the fact that very little physical evidence of work in the subject was available for evaluation and that pupils in the two older classes found it hard to remember working in the subject. It is significant that an analysis of class timetables shows that no time is set aside for the subject in two classes while the other has only 35 minutes per week.
- 65. **Physical education** is another subject that suffers from the shortage of teaching time spent on it. The one aspect of the subject that takes up more than its fair share of time is swimming which historically has always taken up an afternoon for Years 3 to 6. This currently means that these pupils spend two hours in order that they can swim for half an hour. As a result staff and parents report that standards in swimming are good but inspectors note that the time available to cover the rest of the PE curriculum (and some other subjects) is very limited. This is compounded by the fact that no PE lessons are timetabled for the mornings even though the hall is free and that the hall is in use for music lessons and by a visiting school on three of the other afternoons of the week. This only leaves Friday afternoon for the two junior classes which is devoted to games and means that too little time is spent on gymnastics or dance in the two older classes. As noted elsewhere in the report, this is partly mitigated by the very good range of extracurricular activities provided in this subject and by the school's very active participation in a range of competitive sports.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education is **satisfactory**.

- 66. The school has a thorough programme for PSHCE which includes work on diet, health, sex education and personal safety. This programme helps pupils develop a clear idea of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' understanding is enhanced by the school's commitment to swimming and by a very wide range of sporting events held outside the school day. These include regular sessions covering football, rugby, tennis, athletics, kwik cricket, cross country running and netball. The value of these activities compensates, to some extent, for the limited amount of time the school allocates each week to physical activity during the school day.
- 67. The school's good range of links with the community, some involving highly regarded musical performances, provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their social and citizenship skills. Visits from organisations, such as St John Ambulance and annual cycle training, help develop pupils' understanding of a healthy and safe lifestyle.
- 68. Older pupils develop a sense of responsibility by, for example, helping younger pupils through a programme of shared reading. Younger pupils develop their knowledge and understanding through well led sessions discussing concepts such as generosity, kindness and helpfulness. The school recognises that more needs to done to take into accounts pupils' views and to encourage older pupils to take a more active part in the life of the school and has recently established a school council to further develop ideas of citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
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	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
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).