

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **BROCKHAMPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bringsty, Worcester

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116657

Headteacher: Mr J Preston

Lead inspector: Mrs F. D. Gander

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 266502

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 4 -11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 166

School address: Brockhampton  
Bringsty  
Worcester  
Worcestershire  
Postcode: WR6 5TD

Telephone number: 01885 483238  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of Ms S Handley  
governors:

Date of previous 4<sup>th</sup> May 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Brockhampton Primary School is a smaller than average size school with places for 182 full-time pupils ranging from four to eleven years in age. At the time of the inspection, 166 primary aged pupils were attending full time. The school is popular with parents transferring their children from other schools. The numbers fluctuate during the year as the school sometimes loses 4 or 5 at the end of Year 4 or 5 to independent preparatory schools. The school has children from the local traveller community, resulting in pupils who sometimes leave the school and education for short periods of time. The school serves a very rural area of Herefordshire, with many pupils coming from the local farming community. Some pupils travel a great distance to school, with some being transported by school buses while others are brought by car. Although the percentage of pupils taking free school meals is well below the national average, this does not reflect the overall socio-economic backgrounds of the children. Overall it is average, with children coming from the whole range of economic backgrounds. Almost all pupils are from White British cultural background.

The majority of children transfer from the reception class into Year 1, and their attainment on entry to Year 1 is average overall, although approximately a quarter come into school with some delay in their development. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the whole school is twenty one per cent, and above the national average. This profile of the school has changed significantly since the last inspection. The school was awarded a school's achievement award in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21265	Mrs F D Gander	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, science, art, design and technology, information and communication technology, special educational needs
9511	Ms A Longfield	Lay inspector	
25778	Mr A Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, music, citizenship
23273	Mr R Freeman	Team inspector	English, history, physical education, religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school.** All pupils, and especially those who come into school at a low starting point, achieve well. Pupils are provided with a wealth of curriculum experiences outside the classroom that help them to achieve well in most subjects. Their attitudes, behaviour, and keenness to attend school are key strengths. The headteacher has been instrumental in making very good improvements to the overall quality of the provision, and in moving the school forward to become self-evaluating. The management ensures that the school provides well for pupils of differing abilities and backgrounds. Even though the costs are slightly above average the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils achieve well and make good progress in most subjects.
- A high percentage of the teaching is very good.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher has focused on significantly improving the quality of the educational provision and creating an enjoyable learning environment.
- There is very good provision and resources in information and communication technology (ICT) for teaching and learning.
- The school successfully provides a happy, secure, and caring environment where pupils form sincere relationships.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is very good, leading to very good attitudes to learning, behaviour and personal development.
- There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their writing skills in other subjects.

**Very good improvements have been made to the overall quality of education.** At the time of the last inspection in 1999, the school had many weaknesses in important areas. Since then, all the key issues have been resolved. Additional focus has been on: increasing the number of staff to provide smaller class groups; becoming a more inclusive school; improving the provision of the Foundation Stage; using assessment to monitor and evaluate the standards achieved; identifying and challenging the higher attaining pupils, and also identifying and meeting the needs of the increasing number of pupils coming into the school with special educational needs.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	B	B	D
mathematics	C	B	C	E
science	C	A	A	B

*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, the standards achieved by pupils are satisfactory.** Children achieve well during their time in the reception class; many reach the goals set for children of their age. During the last four years, each year's intake has included approximately 25 per cent of pupils who have some degree of learning difficulty, mainly in literacy. In each year group the majority are boys and are identified as needing additional support and modified curriculum planning. This group of pupils accounts for the lowered standards at the end of Key Stage 1. These pupils do however, make good progress and most reach the lower band (2C) of the nationally accepted level by the end of Year 2.

In the current Year 6 standards in English for the majority of pupils are above those expected for pupils of a similar age and are in line for mathematics. However, because the school has developed a vast range of different teaching and learning styles, the work in pupils' books does not reflect the good knowledge and understanding they have gained in many subjects. This affects their overall ability to produce written work for end of key stage tests when they are required to write more than a few lines. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and to one another, and their behaviour is very good. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is very good.** Attendance is only satisfactory because of the amount of family holidays taken in term time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall educational provision of the school is good.** It provides a well-balanced and relevant curriculum, which is very well enhanced by extra curricular activities and learning outside the classroom. Teaching and learning are good and there are many examples of very good teaching. Assessment procedures are very good and are being used well to track progress. The care and support provided by all staff is very good, but advice and guidance given to pupils on how to improve could be better. The accommodation is satisfactory. Resources are good overall. Links with the community are good, and are satisfactory with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the headteacher, and the governance of the school, are very good.** This has resulted in a school in where all staff share the responsibilities of management and carry these out effectively. The remodelled structure of the governing body and their dedication to the school has enabled the senior managers to develop and improve the school. Management of resources, including funding, is very prudent.

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

**The school enjoys very good support from and links with links with parents.** The majority are pleased with the school, and a great many are very involved in the work of the school. Pupils are pleased with the school, and report that they enjoy the range of different experiences that the school provides.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is to:

- Provide more opportunities for all pupils to develop and practise their writing skills in other subjects.
- Raise the attendance rate.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The overall standards pupils achieve are **satisfactory**. They are good in English and science. Pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the reception class.
- The performance of Year 2 pupils in the 2004 assessments was not as good as those of similar schools, but this reflects the ability range of the class.
- The number of pupils in each class with special educational needs, and the change in the population of the school has an adverse effect on the overall performance of the school.
- The lack of opportunities for pupils to record their learning through writing affects their overall ability to write at length in tests.

#### Commentary

1. When children start school in reception, their level of skills, knowledge and understanding varies from year to year. The present class began school with skills, knowledge and understanding that was broadly typical for their age. However, they represent a broad spread of ability with few children, identified with special educational needs or whose skills are below those expected for children of a similar age. Children achieve well in reception. The majority, except those with special educational needs, reach at least the expected levels in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative and physical development. Over two thirds of the present class are well on course to achieve or exceed the expected levels in these areas of learning. In their personal, social and emotional development children achieve very well. At this point in the year, a third of the children are working at the levels expected of them for the end of reception and are set to reach levels that exceed those expected for their age.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.6 (16.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.4 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The trend in the school's results in the national tests for Year 2 pupils for the last two years has declined. Last year it was below the national average in English and mathematics compared to all schools. It was well below the national average for similar schools. The school's analysis, and confirmed on the inspection, shows that last year's Year 2 group contained 6 pupils who were identified as having special educational needs. This group of pupils, of which four were boys, were identified as the lowest achieving children at the end of reception assessment profile. The school has effectively supported these pupils, so that the majority achieved the nationally expected level but only at the lower end of the level (2C). This was good progress in terms of individual achievement, but because of the small numbers in the year group it affects the overall performance of the school. This situation also accounts for the large gap between the performance of boys and the girls in the same group. This was compounded further by the fact that the highest attaining pupils in the class were all girls.



3. The change in the population of the school over the last few years, and certainly since the last inspection is affecting the overall performance of this school when it is compared with similar schools. The school has become a more inclusive school and now takes pupils with a wider range of attainment. Hence the attainment on entry is now average, rather than above average as it was at the time of the last inspection. Evaluation by the school shows a significant increase in the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in each year group, and in most classes it is about twenty five percent. In addition to this, the school has become popular with parents who feel that their children are not achieving or settling well in other schools. As a result the school takes in a number of pupils each year who have not started in the school, and who may have been underachieving. These admissions are possible because the school also has pupils who, each year, leave the school before Year 6 to attend fee paying 'prep' schools. The higher than average percentage of special educational needs and the movement of pupils in and out of the school has a detrimental effect on the overall performance of the school when comparing it to other schools. The loss of a number of higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 lowers the average standards achieved by Year 6 to average rather than above average. However, pupils who remain at the school achieve well and reach creditable standards and Year 6 pupils achieve well from their individual starting points.

4. This situation is reflected in the Year 6 results in the 2004 national tests where the performance of the school was not as high as it was in the year 2003 when the results in English and mathematics were average. Following this, the school analysed and evaluated the individual performance of pupils and has placed a focus on improving standards in aspects of mathematics and on writing in English. Analysis of the results shows that the school had added good value when compared to the same pupils' performance in their Year 2 tests. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 pupils are achieving much better than last year and standards are now above average in English and average in mathematics.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (28.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.8 (28.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.7 (30.5)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Pupils, by the end of Year 6 achieve particularly well in science, and standards are consistently higher than the average for all schools, and for similar schools. This is because pupils are taught very well and there is a high emphasis on investigation work. The emphasis placed by the school on improving the standards in writing is a correct one. Evidence from examining pupils' work books shows that they have insufficient experiences of writing down what they have learnt, how they arrived at their conclusions, or describing their ideas. Although they learn well and are very knowledgeable, they are at a disadvantage when asked to write extensively and independently in a test situation. The one area where this does not have a detrimental effect is in science tests where there is less emphasis on writing extended pieces of prose.

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

Pupils' attitudes to their work and their behaviour are **very good**. Overall pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Punctuality is good, but attendance is only **satisfactory**.

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

- Attendance is just satisfactory, but has declined since the last inspection.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are very good and are a strength of the school.

- Relationships are very good, warm and trusting, and pupils feel secure in school.
- Pupils' personal development is high profile and is central to the ethos of the school.

## Commentary

6. There has been a decline in the attendance rate since the last inspection. At that time absence was 2.6 per cent. It has now increased to 5.9 per cent which is just above the national average. This is largely due to the number of parents who take their children away on family holidays during term time. The management and the governors have tackled the problem by making many requests to parents, but these have largely been ignored, and in some circumstances parents have disagreed with the request.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

7. Pupils enjoy coming to school very much. Punctuality is generally good, with the majority of pupils arriving in good time for the start of the school day. They are polite and friendly, and their attitudes to learning are very good. They are keen to learn, find lessons interesting and challenging and enjoy the wide variety of experiences that the school provides. All pupils are excited by their work which engages them almost all the time. Pupils throughout the school appreciate the award system and know that their efforts are appreciated and valued. The pupils' very good attitudes make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement. Behaviour is very good in lessons, as pupils move about the school and at playtimes. Staff have high expectations of conduct and behaviour, and pupils respond very well. The school has a consistent approach to behaviour which is appreciated by the pupils. There have been no exclusions for a number of years. This reflects positively on the ethos of the school.

8. The school creates an environment where pupils form very good relationships with other pupils and there is a high level of mutual trust and respect between pupils and staff. Pupils get on very well together. They collaborate very well with each other, and show that they are used to working in pairs or small groups harmoniously. They are very friendly, polite and welcoming, greeting visitors with a smile and a 'hello'. They hold doors open for each other, and are quick to say sorry when the need arises. The school does not allow bullying and this is instilled into the pupils. They are emphatic that there is no bullying. Any incidents that do arise are dealt with promptly and with sensitivity. At playtimes pupils play happily and well together, with older pupils showing care and respect for the younger ones.

9. Pupils bring into school a good range of well-established personal and social skills acquired through their home life. Pupils willingly take responsibility for aspects of school life whether helping in the classroom or office, and this fosters their confidence and self-esteem. They are provided with opportunities to take on increasing responsibilities. For example, as members of the school council, who report the outcomes of their meetings to the headteacher. These are also shared with governors. They have a very good understanding of what is right and what is wrong, and this is reinforced by the daily assemblies which are based on the concept of 'Value Education', with a set theme for each half term. High profile is given to moral awareness, and this has helped to establish very strong, warm relationships throughout school. Pupils' cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. Pupils learn about their own cultural heritage and that of people in other countries. Visitors from a school in Tanzania planted a tree in the Millenniums Garden and the pupils enjoyed their participation in the Brazilian Samba workshop during world music week. Pupils raise funds for charity, at the time of the inspection they were organising fund raising events for Comic Relief. The choir sings for the local senior residents at

Christmas and take part in the local Gala. The pupils make many visits to places of educational interest, which widens their knowledge and understanding of the past and present.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall educational provision of the school is **good**. Teaching is good overall with many examples of very good teaching across the school. Assessment procedures are very good and are used well in tracking progress. The care and support is very good, but advice and guidance given to pupils on how to improve could be better. The accommodation is compact and therefore satisfactory. Resources are good. There are very good links with parents. Links with the community are good, and with other schools are satisfactory.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. The overall assessment of pupils is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan and use a wide range of different teaching methods so that pupils are helped to learn.
- Teachers make very good use of ICT for teaching and learning, and it is used effectively by all teachers to record and track progress.
- All staff encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning, and there are consistently high expectations for very good behaviour.
- The marking of work, and the sharing of targets with pupils, could be better.

### Commentary

10. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and on the week of the inspection there was a high percentage of very good lessons, especially in literacy and ICT. In these subjects, teachers have developed a very good level of subject expertise and this is used to set high expectations for pupils. In almost all lessons, teachers use a very wide range of different methods and techniques, such as questioning, paired work, group work, and research. Short well-timed activities provide excitement and pace to the lesson. Pupils work quickly and do not have the opportunity to become bored or disinterested. They are given plenty of opportunities to report back to the rest of the class, thus enabling them to build their confidence and improve their communication skills. This has a significant impact on their achievements in speaking and listening. Lesson planning is very detailed and a great deal of thought is given to the different ways in which pupils learn. This allows teachers to give good support and different work to pupils with the greatest learning difficulties, as well as expecting more from the higher attaining pupils.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	12	11	5	0	0	0

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

11. The management has invested highly in ICT. All classrooms have an interactive computer whiteboard and all teachers have a laptop. These are used very effectively in almost all lessons. For example, the lesson objectives appear on the interactive board at the beginning of lessons, and some teachers have perfected the skill of returning to them throughout the lesson. A very good range of appropriate programs is used for each lesson, and teachers are very skilled in obtaining a balance between using it for teaching and allowing pupils to use it for learning. Pupils use of ICT for learning is being further developed by the recent purchase of class laptops. Because teachers have a personal laptop computer, the workload of lesson planning has been reduced. There is a common

format to all planning and it is easily accessed by all teachers through ICT. Likewise the school has developed its own recording of assessment and tracking of progress system. Again, this is easily accessed from any laptop, and teachers can therefore regularly update the records and track pupils' progress.

12. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, all pupils show interest in their work, display very good attitudes and are eager to learn. This keeps pupils focussed on what they should be learning and achieving. All lessons finish with a review of the objectives and most teachers undertake a short assessment of learning through the use of relevant questions. This has a good effect on the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils, as they understand what is required of them and how successful they have been.

13. School development has recently focussed on the marking of pupils' work. This has been discussed at whole school meetings and there are some very good examples evident. These consist of very clear comments for improvement which even the youngest pupils can understand. However, the quality of the marking varies between teachers and sometimes between subjects, and in these situations pupils do not know what they need to do to improve. The teachers set clear targets for improvement for each pupil which are reflected in each annual report. However, many pupils are unaware of these targets, and they are not referred to enough in day to day teaching and learning.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides pupils with a **good** curriculum that meets statutory requirements. A very good range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' experiences well. Staffing is very good, learning resources are good and the school's accommodation is satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Creative use of the school's accommodation, additional staffing, and the relocation of the library make best use of the limited space available.
- The curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils and is linked effectively to systems for tracking pupils' progress in all subjects.
- The school provides a very good programme of enrichment activities that contribute well to learning.
- Speaking and listening are well established but pupils have too few planned opportunities to make use of writing skills to demonstrate their capability in subjects across the curriculum.

## **Commentary**

14. The school has worked hard to develop its curriculum since the last inspection, with some success. New classroom space has been created, an extra classroom teacher is now employed and outside facilities have been improved with the addition of an environmental area funded by parents. These improvements bring two significant benefits. They reduce class sizes so that classrooms are less cramped than previously and they help teachers to plan more effectively because they now teach pupils from just one age group rather than the two year age group previously.

15. Previous curriculum weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been remedied and planning now is good. The Foundation Stage curriculum has also been a focus for development following a review of the appropriateness of the provision. Despite the restrictive classroom space for the reception children the curriculum planning shows a good balance between the formal learning situation and the structure play activities. Planning for pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 draws well on national and local guidelines. The use of key learning objectives for each unit of work to assess pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects provides a good framework for assessing progress and ensures that learning builds progressively on what pupils already know. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to discuss their ideas in all subjects, which contribute well to their speaking and listening skills. However, writing at length is much less well established. Although there are some

opportunities, there are inconsistencies in provision. Achievement in some subjects such as geography is limited for some pupils because they have too few opportunities to explain their ideas at the length or the depth required in order for them to attain higher levels of attainment.

16 Teachers cater well for the needs of all pupils. The school holds a register of gifted and talented pupils. Pupils have been identified in all subjects and the school endeavours to see that their needs are supplemented well by special events at local secondary schools, for example in mathematics, design and technology and science. The procedures for the identification of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) have developed well as the numbers in the school have increased. The pupils are identified from the reception onwards and the progress they are making is closely monitored. Curriculum planning takes into account the needs of these pupils, and tasks are set at different levels. This is in addition to small intensive group work which is linked to their particular needs or targets on their individual education plans (IEPs).

17. Teachers make good use of the National Trust land surrounding the school. They use it effectively to enhance many subjects, such as science and art. It is used well to support younger children's understanding of the world, and to help them observe at first hand the changes taking place around them. An extensive programme of educational visits and visitors contribute well to learning. For instance, visits to "The Courtyard" in Hereford to work with a poet on Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" helped Year 6 pupils gain insights into "performance poetry" and drama. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in seasonal sports including participation in local tournaments. Residential visits to places such as the Forest of Dean are central to the school's good provision for PSHE. Health, drug, sex and relationships education are supported appropriately in subjects across the curriculum, but the residential visits support particularly well pupils' growing independence and personal development.

18. There have been substantial changes in teaching staff in recent years but judicious recruitment has established a very good team of teachers and support staff. Management responsibilities are spread well throughout the school and make good use of teachers' expertise. The school has remedied shortages in equipment for music, design and technology and physical education reported at the last inspection. Of particular note is the improvement to the school library. This has been relocated and extended into a number of areas around the school. Access is now good. New fiction and reference books have been purchased. There is now a good selection for both. They support learning effectively and contribute well to pupils' reading standards.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. The school provides pupils with good personal and academic advice, and makes sure it involves them in its work and development.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very high level of care, particularly in regard to health and safety.
- Through the excellent relationships between pupils and staff the school creates an environment in which pupils grow into mature and responsible individuals, and where their views are taken into account well.
- The arrangements for the induction of pupils into the school are very good.

## **Commentary**

19. There is a very good, healthy and safe environment and the arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are very effective. From the time children commence their education in the nursery, they are looked after well and this approach continues through every stage of their school life. The school ensures that health and safety procedures are up-to-date. They are backed up by a dedicated staff who provide a secure and caring environment where pupils feel happy and secure. Fire drills are carried out to ensure safe and efficient evacuation of the building. In this regard,

Brockhampton is served well by its health and safety governor whose full-time job encompasses responsibility for health and safety. The child protection procedures are fully in place. The head teacher is the designated person and ensures that all the staff know the procedures. The school has worked closely with the local council to try to improve the dangerous road access to the school by the fencing of a narrow pavement outside the school gate.

20. Arrangements for the induction of children into the school are very good, and underpin the partnership the school establishes with parents. Following the completion of an application form, the reception teacher makes a home visit. To ensure good practice she is accompanied on these visits by the teaching assistant. Following this visit and at the start of the reception year they have a gradual introduction to the school with the oldest children attending full-time first and the youngest being the last group to attend full time. This is spread over a half term, and also helps teachers to settle the children in and make initial assessments.

21. One of the strengths of the school is the creation of an environment in which pupils can grow into mature and responsible individuals. All staff play a major role in this by promoting excellent relationships. Pupils believe that teachers provide good help and expect them to work hard, and get to know them very well. They are very happy to approach and discuss any concerns with staff. The pupils feel that through the School Council their views are considered and valued. This intuitive knowledge is backed up by good assessment procedures and as a consequence staff are able to advise pupils appropriately. They are successfully encouraged to take a full part in school life.

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

The school has **very good** links with parents. There are good links with the community and satisfactory links with other schools.

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

- The school works extremely well with parents and encourages them to be fully involved in their children's learning.
- The quality of information provided to parents is very good and ensures they are well informed about their children's progress.
- There are good links with the community.

#### **Commentary**

22. A very good partnership with parents has been created. They are very supportive of the school and appreciate the quality of education provided for their children. Parents expressed their full support for the school in the questionnaires and at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection. A number of parents help in school on a regular basis. The school takes seriously and deals effectively with any concerns from parents. There is a very active Parents and Teachers Association that raises funds for the school and has recently funded the building of the Outside Classroom. They keep parents informed about school life through their magazine which includes examples of children's work and a number of adverts from local firms.

23. There is an informative prospectus and annual report to parents, both of which are written in a friendly tone and meet statutory requirements. Pupils' annual reports are good, although they do not make clear any areas for improvement. The consultation meetings in the autumn and spring terms and the 'open classroom' sessions held twice a year provide parents with good opportunities to discuss their children's progress. The governors are present at these evenings to answer any questions. Each term the parents have the opportunity to bring to the governors' attention any problems through written comments, replies to which are sent to parents at the end of term. Parents are happy with the arrangements for discussing any concerns with staff, whom they find approachable.

24. The good links with the community include the range of visits and visitors who enhance the pupils learning. For example, pupils learn about other places and cultures from overseas visitors. Pupils take part in the Leavers' Gala and carol concert. The choir sings for the local senior citizens and at the local special school. There are satisfactory links with the other schools in the area, taking part in the inter school matches. The 'gifted and talented' pupils attend specialist days at the local secondary school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the headteacher and the governance of the school are **very good**. Leadership provided by the other staff and the overall management of the school are both good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good leadership of the headteacher has ensured that the school has improved very well.
- The governors' very close involvement with, and support of, the school has helped the senior management to achieve the goals it had set.
- The school's finances are very well managed so that the pupils have high quality experiences.

### **Commentary**

25. The last inspection identified that despite the school's good performance a great many areas of the provision needed improving. The then recently appointed headteacher implemented a systematic approach to achieve the tasks set in the last report. Under his very good leadership, progress towards each issue was monitored and evaluated, and they were linked to overall standards, the quality of education, and health and safety. The management has continued to improve the school beyond these issues, and at the same time meet the needs of a greater number of pupils with special learning needs, and also a change in the senior staff. Many of the staff over the intervening years have left for management jobs in other schools. Despite this, management teams have been successfully created who share a clear vision for future improvements and development in the school. There is a very strong belief that the school should be a place of learning and creativity, which is fun and is enjoyed by all who learn and work in it. Amidst this, there has been the drive to make the school more effective place to learn, resulting in a rearrangement of the teaching space, smaller class sizes, a more structured organisation to the classes, and a large investment in ICT. The analysis of the standards that the school reaches has been evaluated. The management can confidently track pupils' progress in relation to the results of groups and individuals. There is also a belief that, in order for a school to be effective, staff have to have access to high-quality in-service training, observe models of good practice, and have time to develop and share their ideas with colleagues. This has been implemented, and has resulted in teachers who lead their responsibilities well. The school has developed its Foundation Stage provision so that it meets the needs of young children and is preparing them well for the next stage of learning.

26. Since the last inspection the governors have improved their committee structure. They are very dedicated, and are active in the management and monitoring of the school. Many are parents and are involved in helping in classrooms, and are linked to specific year groups and teachers. They have had opportunities for training, been given responsibility, are very supportive, and present themselves as critical friend to the school staff. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They actively lead many of the improvements, such as campaigning for the road outside the school to be made safer, and by encouraging parents not to take holidays in term time. Recently the greatest worry for them has been the funding for the workload reforms. The governors took a very professional approach to the responsibility and formed a working group. They listened to the wishes of the headteacher that any alteration to the timetable should result in high quality learning for all pupils. Within their deliberations remained their desire to continue funding and maintaining small class sizes. The outcome of their work has resulted in a further improvement to the quality of the curriculum in an area that the governors feel would help to develop music.

27. Due to the small size of the school, and the amount of space in the classrooms, it has been necessary to increase the number of classes and thus the number of staff. This means that the school spends a higher percentage than average on staffing. In addition, the belief in allowing teachers time to monitor, evaluate, plan and oversee their subject responsibilities has been an additional funding commitment. All this has been achieved by the prudent financial management of the headteacher. Funds have been used very effectively to provide high quality ICT equipment. The school has very little surplus funding, and keeps a small contingency fund. Although the current school development plan does not show projected costings, detailed budgets are put together and expenditure against these budgets is continuously monitored by the school administrator and headteacher. Governors keep a full overview of the financial systems and, with the guidance of the headteacher, ensure that the budget drives the school development plan effectively.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	407468	Balance from previous year	24829
Total expenditure	424972	Balance carried forward to the next	7325
Expenditure per pupil	2428		



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

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

28. Children start school in the reception class, firstly on a part-time basis, which increases to full time for all children by the first half-term holiday break. From this time they are an established class. Most children have experienced some form of pre-school education, but because they come from a wide area, they have different experiences. Due to this the school needs and has very good induction arrangements. Prior to children attending the school, the teacher and the teaching assistant make home visits, and parents receive detailed information. This helps children settle quickly into school, and allows parents to feel comfortable with the expected routines.

29. Children are assessed during their reception year and the information on their progress is recorded throughout each week. This information shows clearly that most children's attainment at the end of the reception year and on entry to Year 1 is average in most areas of learning, but above average in language and social development. However, during the last four years the profile of the pupils coming into the school has changed. Almost a quarter of children in each year's intake has had some degree of special educational need, and required additional help and monitoring. In addition, some parents move their children from other schools in the area. Therefore children join the reception class throughout the year, and sometimes having had an unsettled start to their education. Each year a few do not reach the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) by the time they leave the reception class. The current group of children is making good progress and by the end of the reception year, most will attain the ELGs, although a few will not attain them in all areas of learning. Most children have good linguistic skills, although a few are supported by the speech and language service. A small number of children in the class are also awaiting educational assessment by the Local Education Authority to ascertain if additional support was needed. Some parents were very critical of the school about the amount of time this was taking. However, evidence shows that the school acts according to the criteria laid down by the LEA, and makes every effort to support these children from within its own resources.

30. All children are taught within one class by one teacher and an experienced assistant. They provide a fun introduction to the children's educational life. The organisation of the learning experiences has been reviewed since the last inspection and good improvements have been made. They build on the familiar, such as stories and rhymes, and gradually become more structured as the year progresses. Teaching is good overall. The teamwork and cheerful enthusiasm of the staff create a happy environment where the children thrive. As result, the children love to learn, explore their environment, make good progress and achieve well, particularly in knowledge and understanding of the world. The outdoor play area is a strong feature of the provision, as it contains a secure wooded area for children to explore. The children enjoy coming to school and this is having a beneficial effect on their eagerness to participate and on the standards they achieve.

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

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

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

- There is very good achievement by children because of high expectations, and secure routines focussing on confidence and independence.
- Teachers use every opportunity to extend children's development, and children have excellent attitudes to learning.

## **Commentary**

31. The children make very good progress in this area. The majority start school with good social skills, although each year a few of them find it difficult to share, take turns and listen to instructions. There is a great emphasis placed on these three areas of social development. At the beginning of the year, a high emphasis is placed on encouraging children to understand the class routines, and the expectations of behaviour in and around the school. For example, the importance of listening when going out onto the National Trust land and for understanding the need for safety awareness. Staff expect the children to work co-operatively with one another, and they soon adjust to the teacher's high expectations for independent or paired work. As their first year in school progresses the children are prepared for the more formal work in the mornings. They enjoy the challenge of 'real work', and concentrate for good lengths of time, especially in literacy sessions. At other times, the children explore the activities the teachers have prepared, and under supervision from the staff and volunteers, follow their own investigations.

32. The children are confident and friendly, and have warm relationships with the adults. They show how far they have advanced by the enthusiasm with which they help in clearing up, and being part of the infant assemblies, where their behaviour is impeccable. The assessment system, based on regular observation of the children, helps teachers to track the children's maturity. The children who have entered the class later in the academic year, and sometimes with difficult behaviour have made great strides. Children's attitudes to learning are excellent.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff use opportunities in all areas of learning to develop the children's language and literacy skills, and assess these well.
- Good teaching enables the children to achieve well.

## **Commentary**

33. Many children are communicating well when they come into the school, although a small percentage in this year's group who have speech and language difficulties. These children are appropriately supported by the Speech and Language Service. Staff concentrate on further developing the language and communication skills in every activity and overall by the end of the reception year standards are above average. Children's listening skills are well developed by a range of lively stories delivered in an engaging way. Similarly, the staff are open to listening to children's ideas as often as they want to give them. Through the use of literacy strategy activities the children are taught the arrangement of sounds, what the letters look like, and how they are written. As the year progresses they become more accurate with their letter formation. They record strings of letters, and the higher attaining children write short sentences to describe their work and ideas. The teachers encourage children to hold pencils correctly and form their letters accurately, so that they can transfer to cursive writing quickly. In the guided reading sessions children build up skills that can be transferred to writing, and understand how words fit together to make sentences.

34. There are many strengths in the teaching of language and literacy, and overall it is good. The teacher plans work to meet the needs of all the children very precisely and it is based on the ongoing assessment, which is carefully recorded on a daily basis. They are very supportive of children who have SEN, and challenge the higher attaining children. For instance, the pupils who are not reaching the expect levels quickly enough are given extra support in a small group on set activities, and away from the rest of the class. This means that they have individual attention in an environment where they can concentrate.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching enables children to achieve well.
- Teachers use all available opportunities to reinforce mathematical ideas.

### **Commentary**

35. Recent analysis of the assessment of the children by the school has shown that this is an area in which the children do not come into the reception class with a good level of mathematical understanding. Many children have below average skills and their language and social skills are much higher. While in the reception class, the children make very good progress in mathematical development, and by the end of their time there most are at the expected level for their age. Teachers plan effectively, achieving a very good balance between focused teaching sessions and the activities set out around the classroom and outside; to which all children have access. For example, the use of captivating resources, such as making a gingerbread house from different shapes, captures and holds their interest. Children confidently describe shapes in terms of overall name, length of the different sides, and the number of points it has. The introduction of a formal approach suits the children well as they mature. The majority are ready for the increased challenge, and all concentrate well for long periods of time. The sessions are broken up into short activities and this helps pupils to stay interested and excited about their learning. A particular strength is the inclusion of mathematical concepts in other areas of learning, such as in activities connected with developing their understanding of the world. These opportunities do not always appear in the planning but staff instinctively capitalise on any opportunity that arises. This contributes to the overall progress that children make.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- An exciting and creative learning environment is provided.
- Teaching is good and the children are achieving very well.

36. The staff use the accommodation and resources creatively to produce a particularly stimulating environment for children. Their work is well displayed for all to see. The planning is thorough and gives a good balance to elements of history, geography, science, technology and religious education. Children have opportunities to take part in visits and are included in the events in the school where visitors make contributions to whole school learning. There are many opportunities for children to explore the world around them by the use of the area around the school. Children have access to a natural and interesting wooded area as well as an outdoor classroom and wild area. Constant use is made of the adjacent Bromyard Downs, where each week children walk, observe changes and investigate. For example, on such an expedition during the inspection week, children were given opportunities to discover the changes that had taken place in the landscape; linking well to their knowledge of changes in spring. They made simple innocent presumptions that a small cottage in distance was 'Snow White's cottage, and that there was someone in as smoke was coming out of the chimney. The teaching in this session was very good, with both members of staff using opportunities as they arise to extend children's understanding and learning. For example, birds' feathers, foot prints, and moles hills are all observed and discussed.

37. Teaching is based on what the children already have experienced and this enables them to extend their knowledge and understanding. Skilful teaching enables all children to begin to understand how time passes chronologically and the effect this has on what they can do.

Explanations are very clear, friendly and informal, and draw well on the children's own experiences with humour. The opening discussions engage their curiosity and prompt them to investigate for themselves. The children's standards at the start of the reception vary, but overall they are average. By the end of reception, most children reach the early learning goals, and a few exceed them. The new tracking system is increasingly able to give staff guidance on what steps individual children need next and their rate of progress.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outside play area is used well and is supplemented by use of the surrounding area.

### **Commentary**

38. The children have opportunities to use the outdoor play area, which is successfully supplemented by the interesting grounds, and the use of Bromyard Downs. The children enjoy playing outside, and walking and running on the Downs. Because the school has access to this rural setting it was decided that not to provide children with large play equipment, but teachers make good use of the school hall and the outside area for more formal teaching of physical activities. The teacher's planning is good and shows that attention is given to the development of physical skills, such as catching or controlling balls. This was criticised in the last report. Children are also given sufficient opportunities to improve control of their fingers in order to manipulate a wide range of tools and writing equipment. Overall standards are in line with those expected and children achieve satisfactorily.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

39. Children make satisfactory progress developing their creative skills. Their work is displayed clearly in the classroom and in the corridor and shows the value placed on their work by the school. They learn to draw and paint using a range of materials. Most children's drawings of people are well formed, but a few children have below average levels of body awareness and observation. There are plenty of resources and equipment for children to select and play with independently, and they enjoy a good range of practical activities. This helps them to explore imaginatively.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils have very good speaking and listening skills.
- The teaching of English throughout the school is good and pupils achieve well.
- There is an effective assessment process which identifies each pupil's needs.
- The very good co-ordination of the subject has ensured that improvements have been made.
- There are not enough opportunities for the pupils to develop and practice their writing in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

40. Present standards in speaking and listening are very good throughout the school with many pupils, of all ages, able to explain what they are doing clearly and put forward their views and opinions. This is due to the emphasis placed on communication, and the expectations of teachers. From the earliest age, pupils are expected to stand in front of their peers and clearly and succinctly describe their work and achievements. Opportunities are created for older pupils to present arguments for and against ideas. For example in Year 6, the pupils were presented with the opportunity to discuss the arguments for and against tourism in the Himalayas and were encouraged to learn how to present balanced arguments.

41. Teaching is at all times good and is predominantly very good. This is because the teachers have high expectations for their pupils and present them with exciting activities. The many very good lessons take account of the different needs of the pupils, allowing all to be challenged and to make progress. The support provided by teaching assistants is good across the whole school. This contributes well towards the quality of the pupils' learning. At the beginning of Year 1 standards of the majority of pupils' work in writing and reading are at the nationally expected level. In this class in a very good lesson, most pupils wrote the middle section of the story of Cinderella. The whole classroom, including the role play area, focussed on this subject. Writing was linked with a visit to a castle, and very good sketches about this visit featured in an effective display. The majority of this year's Year 2 pupils are already reaching standards at a level expected or above for children of a similar age. This represents good achievement. The pupils produce exciting pieces of written work, which followed the class reading and discussions about descriptive words. In this lesson, the pupils rose to the challenge of writing amazing sentences with vivid descriptions and accurate punctuation.

42. In Years 3, 4 and 5 again teaching focuses on raising the quality of the pupils' work by teaching the skills needed. Year 4 pupils have written some very impressive poetry describing animals, of which some have recently been published in a book of children's poems. The pupils continue to achieve well until they reach Year 6. In Year 6, many pupils' standards, especially in speaking and listening and in reading, are in line or above those expected for pupils of a similar age. Their writing skills continue to improve and they demonstrate that they are able to use the outcomes of discussion in writing. For example, for and against having a swimming pool in Bromyard. The higher attaining pupils write very convincingly while the lower attaining pupils, with support, write down their views. Pupils with SEN also make good progress, as many reach the nationally expected level, but at the lower end. This, when compared with the level the same pupils achieved at the end of Year 2 shows that they make good progress. This is recognised in the school's valued added profile.

43. The good and effective assessment process that the school is now using makes the teachers aware of where they need to focus their teaching. As a result of this, the school has highlighted the need to work more on the quality of written work. This work is in progress and the results are already evident. At the time of the last inspection the need for such an assessment

system was highlighted, and the school has achieved this target well. This assessment record is supported with detailed portfolios of assessed work and records of each pupil's achievement. The pupils all have targets for improvement and are working towards these.

44. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator sees all the planning and monitors the whole school's progress using the assessment software. She has made a positive impact on the quality of the teaching and learning. At the time of the last inspection the school was criticised for having a poor library. The school now has a fiction library at the rear of the hall and a non fiction library in the entrance lobby as well as small libraries in every classroom. All the books are modern and up to date and are a good support to the teaching of English.

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

45. There are many examples of the way that the pupils very good speaking and listening skills help in the teaching of the other subjects of the curriculum. There were some good examples of pupils' writing being used within other subjects. The work by pupils in Year 1 describing their visit to a castle enhances writing while at the same time developing an understanding of history. However there are not enough opportunities for the pupils to enhance and practice their writing skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily.
- Performance data is used well to guide developments in teaching, the curriculum and assessment.
- Teachers use ICT well to promote learning.
- Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Systems to track pupils' progress are good but not enough use is made of learning targets to guide planning.

### **Commentary**

46. In 2004 results in the Year 2 tests were below the national average and in Year 6 results were average compared to all schools. Both results were well below those expected from pupils in similar schools or when compared to the overall performance of pupils with similar prior attainment. Individual pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain the standards expected of them, but overall test results are affected by the increasing numbers of lower attaining pupils with special educational needs that the school has admitted in recent years. Current Year 2 and Year 6 classes are on track to attain average standards overall and pupils are achieving satisfactorily.

47. The teaching staff has changed substantially in recent years. The quality of teaching overall now is good. Analysis of test performance has led to a more consistent approach to teaching written methods of calculation and problem solving. This is paying off. Pupils have secure mental and written calculating skills for their age. Teachers use well a range of high quality interactive computer programs to promote learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson a lively discussion around the interactive whiteboard demonstrated clearly how multiplication can be represented as a collection of equal sized groups. Following the discussion pupils worked on written examples. By the end of the lesson higher attaining pupils had a good grasp of multiplication tables and could rephrase them as divisions. However, more work is needed for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to understand fully the connection between multiplication and grouping sets of objects in rectangular arrays.

48. Examination of completed work shows that learning proceeds at a brisk pace in the longer term. By the time pupils reach Year 6 most calculate accurately with whole numbers and decimals

and understand the links between decimals and the metric system of measurement. Teaching is brisk and pupils have plenty of time for written work. Following a lively discussion on the area and perimeter of a rectangle some went on to work confidently with compound shapes made up of rectangles. However, a small number of pupils did not fully understand the task they were given. As a result they made less progress than they might have done.

49. Teachers plan well for pupils of different abilities. Higher attaining pupils are generally challenged well although in a lesson on symmetry questions focused too much on helping pupils to complete the drawings rather than probing and developing their understanding of the angle and line properties on which work was based. Support staff know well the special needs of the lower attaining pupils with whom they work. They support pupils well, enabling them to take a full and active part in lessons and to achieve equally well as others in the class. Relationships between all adults and pupils are very good and as a result there is a very positive learning atmosphere. Pupils behave well and want to learn and consequently lessons get on purposefully.

50. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Teachers are making increasingly effective use of ICT in teaching. Planning to the needs of the National Numeracy Strategy is now good and systems for tracking pupils' progress have improved. Teachers assess work regularly and maintain good records of pupils' progress. Assessment information is used well to improve teaching, but not enough use is made of short term learning targets to enable pupils to know how to improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

51. Pupils use their numeracy skills satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects. For example, pupils draw graphs to analyse the results of science experiments or to display the results of surveys in geography and they use simple algebraic ideas when learning how to use spreadsheets in ICT. These opportunities help pupils to understand how mathematics may be used for practical purposes.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well overall and very well by the end of Year 6.
- The teaching and learning are very good.
- Not enough emphasis is placed on pupils recording their learning and understanding.

### **Commentary**

52. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their scientific skills, understanding and knowledge, and to achieve very well. The results of the tests at the end of Year 6 show improvement since the last inspection. The standards at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well above the average of other schools, and also when compared with similar schools. Pupils achieve particularly well in attaining the higher level in the end of year tests. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 in last year's end of key stage teacher assessment were in line with the average when compared with all schools. However, the number of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above average. The lower performance overall was due to a number of pupils with special educational needs in the group who did not reach the expected level. There has been good improvement since the last inspection because the standards have risen and the school achieves much better levels than similar schools.

53. These standards have been achieved because improvements have been made to the quality of teaching and learning, especially to teachers' knowledge of the subject and the emphasis placed on investigation. Teachers are confident when promoting observational and investigational skills, and place an emphasis on knowing the key words associated with science. Teachers place

particular importance on encouraging pupils to draw conclusions from their activities. ICT is used very well for teaching and learning, and pupils enjoy this aspect of science, as well as the practical work. This contributes well to their very good progress in the subject. The behaviour of pupils is very good in all lessons and means that pupils can be trusted to work in small groups on their investigations. Assessment of pupils' work is good and with the introduction of the laptops for all teachers and the tracking system teachers have a clear picture of each pupil's progress and the standards being achieved.

54. Improvements have been made to the curriculum so that all areas of science are given appropriate coverage, and pupils have increased opportunities for investigative work to plan, predict, observe, and consider what has happened during their investigations. Teachers build on this knowledge and understanding when planning and teaching other subjects, such as in design and technology. This is providing pupils with opportunities to transfer and reinforce their learning. Teachers use a great many different teaching methods, including discussion, paired and group work, and ICT. This ensures that pupils develop good levels of personal development skills and are able to speak about and discuss confidently their scientific understanding and learning. However, they do not have enough opportunities to write down in their workbooks what they have learnt or found out. In some classes there is a mismatch between the depth of the work in the pupils' books and what they demonstrate they know in discussion. Pupils' work books are therefore not helpful to pupils when they want to recapitulate on work, or to demonstrate as evidence of learning, or to support pupils' literacy skills generally.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ICT is used very well for teaching and learning throughout the school and pupils achieve well.
- Good leadership and management of the subject have ensured good all-round improvements since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

55. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT, and the constant use of the resources in all lessons are very good. The impact of this means that the standards reached are inline with those expected for pupils of similar ages, but the use of the new resources has not been in place long enough to ensure that higher standards are achieved. The very good teaching by knowledgeable, computer-literate staff, who all have their own interactive white boards and laptop computers helps pupils learn effectively. By the end of Year 6, pupils access programs they need very well. They use spreadsheets competently; store their information and use email addresses to communicate with each other and with home. The school has recently purchased laptop computers for pupils and on the inspection the pupils showed that in the short time they has been using them, they could use their learning to research the qualities of two websites, and transfer their preferred attributes to their own PowerPoint presentations. Strong features of all the lessons observed were the good relationships between teachers and pupils, and the very positive attitudes of the pupils with one another resulting in very good attitudes to sharing the computers.

56. Even though ICT was a strength of the school last time, it has continued to be a focus point of school development. As a result of the headteacher's vision, and the governors backing and support the school is fast becoming an 'electronic' establishment, with pupils using it throughout each lesson for learning, and teachers using it to plan, teach, assess and record. The developments have been extremely well led and managed by the headteacher, and the subject co-ordinator has worked closely with all staff to ensure they are confident users. Although the school does not have the space for an ICT suite, it has continued to upgrade and purchase up to date resources for all classrooms.



## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. There are good links between ICT and other subjects, and it is used purposefully and effectively to support learning, although it is not always evident in pupils' subject books. It is used for research and pupils have opportunities through the class use of interactive whiteboards to manage choices, demonstrate their understanding of the concepts being taught and develop skills in a wider context, such as to help in the drafting and re-drafting of writing. Teachers' planning for other subjects always identifies opportunities for its use.

## HUMANITIES

Three lessons were observed in this area of learning. Two lessons were seen in religious education, one in geography and none in history, and therefore too few to make reliable judgements about provision and teaching in history and geography.

### Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good.
- There is a well balanced curriculum giving pupils an appreciation of the rich diversity of religious and cultural experiences within the world.
- The teaching of Christianity has its appropriate place.

#### Commentary

58. Evidence available during the inspection was limited; only two lessons were seen one in each key stage. However after seeing these lessons and after viewing the work that pupils have completed, it is clear that the standard of work and understanding achieved by the pupils is good.

59. The school's planning is based on the locally agreed syllabus. A wide range of topics **is** studied covering the world's main religions and effectively focusing on learning about religious and human experiences. In addition each year group studies an aspect of the Christian religion and the pupils follow the main Christian festivals and celebrations. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils were gaining a greater understanding of the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and in Year 3 the pupils were looking at Jesus' miracles.

60. The teaching in both the lessons seen was good. The Year 2 lesson was very well supported by an able teaching assistant. Discussion about Palm Sunday related the story to the pupils' own experiences. These articulate pupils were able to say how they would have welcomed an important visitor to their town. These pupils made palm trees out of rolls of newspaper ready to use as props for a dramatic representation of Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. In the good Year 3 lesson, the story of Jairus' daughter being brought back to life was also dramatised. This class watched a video of the story and were able to talk about the miracle with clarity. This lesson was also well supported by teaching assistants who helped in the group dramatisations. During each school year pupils in Years 3,4 and 5 visit faith centres of religions other than Christian and this helps pupils into greater understanding of different faiths.

61. The work within the classrooms is well supported by the school assemblies with a strong spiritual element. The school assemblies follow topics and during the inspection the focus was tolerance. Examples of tolerant and intolerant behaviour were described and the pupils clearly empathised with racial tolerance. Each assembly closed with a prayer and time for reflection. A reminder of the current theme is displayed in every classroom and teachers referred to the need for tolerance regularly. This work was effective.

62. The coordinator for religious education is absent from school at present, in her absence the head teacher is managing the subject. The subject is well managed and well resourced

## **History**

63. Due to constraints of the timetable, no lesson was observed so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in history. Pupils' work in books and on display around the school was scrutinised. Discussions with the school's co-ordinator illustrated how the subject was managed.

64. History does have its appropriate place within the school's curriculum. The school has a scheme of work that is followed by all the classes that ensures that all the pupils develop an understanding of different historical periods and their impact on current times. The whole of Years 3 to 6 are at present studying the Ancient Egyptians and every classroom has pupils' work displayed. In Year 4, this study was integrated with the class's written work to very good effect as the pupils explained in detail the steps to be taken to mummify a body. In Year 1 pupils' work on castles was also the basis for writing and sketches. The teaching of history is supported by visits outside school. These include Warwick and Goodrich Castles, Hartlebury Museum, Bromyard as a centre for local studies and the Forest of Dean Heritage Centre. During the year, actors attend the school in the roles of historical characters to help enrich the pupils' historical understanding.

65. History is well managed by an enthusiastic coordinator. She ensures that the subject is well planned and delivered but is not able to work with any teacher within the classroom. Resources are good.

## **Geography**

66. One lesson was observed, subject documentation and a small amount of completed work was inspected, and discussions were held with the geography coordinator and a group of pupils.

67. Standards of work are in line with national expectations for pupils, age seven and eleven, in the limited range of work seen and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 know that life in Kenya is different from that in Herefordshire because, for instance, the climate is different, allowing farmers to grow tropical fruit and coffee. In a well-organised lesson pupils in Year 1 used photographs, toy cars and pictorial town maps to learn about road safety in the area immediately surrounding the school and in a typical town. They made good progress and achieved well because the lesson was interesting and used real situations with which the class were familiar. The teacher and classroom assistant shared the teaching effectively, questioning pupils closely to encourage them to share and explain their ideas. Recent work on mountain environments in Year 5 and Year 6 is developing well. Pupils use the new laptop computers well to present their work in attractive multimedia presentations. Pupils' knowledge of geographical facts such as the location of major mountain chains around the world and how mountainous terrain affects farming practices is appropriate for their age. Pupils make good use of ICT and mathematics to conduct surveys and to display results, for example when investigating whether Hereford High Street should be closed to traffic. However, pupils have too few opportunities to write in sufficient depth to explore, for instance, the underlying environmental and economic issues concerning the pedestrianisation of the High Street. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been developed well and a good, new system to track pupils' progress has been introduced. Subject management is good.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Seven lessons were observed in this area of learning. Three lessons were observed in art and design and in physical education, two in music and none in design and technology. There were too few to make reliable overall judgements about provision and teaching in design and technology and music. Evidence from other sources, including pupils' work and discussions with them, was also gathered.

### Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Quality of teaching and learning are good.
- Art makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and multicultural development.

#### Commentary

68. Achievement in art and design is satisfactory. It is used to create an attractive learning environment, with displays around the school reflecting the range of imaginative and artistic activities the pupils engage in. The displays show that pupils use a range of media and techniques, such as the use of fabrics, different kinds of paper, paints, pastels and pencil to represent their ideas and add interest to their work. Teaching and learning are good. There is very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants and lessons are planned to meet the different artistic abilities of pupils as well as to inspire them. Behaviour is very good because of the use of stimulating resources, constant praise for effort, high expectations by all staff and the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Pupils quickly become engaged in lessons and thoroughly enjoy the work.

69. Pupils are surrounded by examples of art that show many different styles and cultures. They are encouraged not just to take part in art lessons, but to become 'artists'. For example, the school has held an art auction in which all pupils submitted a piece of work. These were all framed and displayed in the hall for all parents to visit prior to the successful fund raising auction. In addition there is a very successful art club run after school which is always over subscribed, and all pupils have good opportunities to learn from visiting artists and visits to art galleries. These, in addition to three residential experiences that all pupils have each year enrich their experiences and their cultural and multicultural development very well.

70. During the inspection there were no opportunities to observe **design and technology** (D&T) being taught. However, evidence in the school and discussion with staff shows that the school has improved the organisation of the subject and the curriculum considerably since the last inspection. It is now led by a teacher with responsibility for it as a subject, advising staff, and monitoring planning. Resources have been developed and organised so that they support the curriculum unit of work.

71. In **music**, both lessons were good. They were organised well around a number of practical activities using a range of percussion instruments. Pupils achieved well and standards of work were in line with expectations for their age. Pupils in Year 1, explored how to make long and short sounds. A succession of increasingly difficult tasks engaged their interest well. Good class management and direction from the teacher developed well pupils' ability to play notes of different length, to follow a conductor and began to develop their understanding of how music is written down. The Year 4 lesson was a good combination of listening, composing, performing and evaluating work as pupils developed percussion accompaniments to the poem "Our Town". Listening first to extracts from "Driving in my Car" by the group Madness and a passage from Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" raised well pupils' awareness of how composers create different musical moods. Good prompts from the teacher helped pupils develop their ideas as they worked

on their group compositions. Performances, although in need of further polishing, were satisfactory overall, some clearly conveying the various moods expressed in different parts of the poem. The school has satisfactorily rectified weaknesses in planning, assessment and the range of learning resources identified in the last inspection report. These are all now satisfactory. Take up of specialist violin and brass tuition is good and pupils have further opportunities to sing in the choir and to learn to play the recorder.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is an effective scheme of work that covers a full range of physical experiences.
- The school is well resourced with the best use being made of limited space.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricula physical activities.
- The subject is very well managed.

### **Commentary**

72. At the time of the last inspection it was clear that the provision for physical education was not good enough. The school has addressed the need for a scheme of work that gives the pupils a wide range of physical opportunities and they have modified their teaching to focus on the skills needed for the pupils to effectively undertake games. While the school hall is still small the facilities for games outside have been improved and the resources are now good. The school also has access to a well used field that is leased by the governors.

73. Teaching was good in the two lessons seen. In the third lesson a challenging dance interpretation of weather moods failed to motivate the pupils sufficiently during the first lesson after the dinner break. In the Year 6 lesson the pupils were concentrating on the skills needed to receive and pass a netball. These pupils concentrated hard and acted on the coaching points from the teacher. In the Year 5 lesson the pupils developed their gymnastic skills in the small school hall. Good use was made of the limited space as the pupils learned to build up a series of movements that exercised their bodies. In all lessons the pupils were managed safely, warmed up at the start of the lesson and cooled down at the end. They understood the need to maintain physical fitness and knew what the effect of lack of exercise would have on their hearts and circulation.

74. These improvements have been well led the good co-ordinator who manages the subject well. She monitors each class's planning and keeps a comprehensive file that records all the school's activities. She has used outside support to help with the teaching and has led staff training herself to guide teachers. She is clear about the subject's strengths and weaknesses and has set challenging targets for further developing the subject.

75. Extra-curricular activities enhance the provision of physical education. There are clubs after school and at dinnertime for pupils to enjoy football, rounders, dance and music, athletics and rugby. Football is supported by a visiting, expert instructor. The school enjoys dance; pupils have recently performed in a production of the Wizard of Oz and The Phoenix, and each year the Year 6 pupils present a performance that includes a strong dance element.

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

76. No lessons were observed in this area of the school's work. However, the school regards this aspect as of the utmost importance, and with this in mind, it makes it a focus of each year group's residential experience every year. Pupils' attitudes, achievements and independence are valued highly. The good quality of teaching, very good curricular enrichment, and the school's emphasis on being a community contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the elements of community and society work. Pupils learn many aspects of a healthy lifestyle, a topic that is

effectively covered in the curriculum. Assembly time has a half term focus, such as sharing or tolerance and helps to nurture with the emotional well being of pupils.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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