

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HIGHNAM C of E PRIMARY**

HIGHNAM

LEA area: Gloucester

Unique reference number: 115662

Headteacher: Mrs. Carol Parsons

Lead inspector: Marie Gibbon

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 267016

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 –11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	180
School address:	Wetherleigh Drive Highnam Gloucester Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL2 8LW
Telephone number:	01452 525872
Fax number:	01452 507176
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Sheila Humble
Date of previous inspection:	9.11.1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Highnam Primary School is similar in size to most schools. There are nine fewer pupils than when the school was last inspected. The school has eight pupils on the school's register of special educational needs which is much lower than most schools. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, which is also much lower than most schools. Two per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. Seven per cent of the school's population are from ethnic minority backgrounds. There are no pupils who do not have English as a first language. This is lower than in most schools. During the last school year ten pupils entered the school other than at the time of the first admission and ten left at the time which was not the normal time of transfer. This rate of mobility is similar to most schools but in some years the rate of mobility is higher and this has an impact on the characteristics of some groups of pupils. Overall, pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment. The school serves mainly the village of Highnam where socio economic factors are higher than in most areas. However around one quarter of the pupils come from a wider area where socio- economic factors are more variable. The school was awarded the status of a Beacon school in 2000 and in the same year the Heroes of Gloucester award. The school also received an Achievement award from the Department of Education and Science in 2002 and Beacon school status was renewed in 2003. It achieved the Investors in People Award in 2000, which was renewed in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23434	Marie gibbon	Lead inspector	English, religious education (RE), history, art and design and English as an additional language.
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector	
16760	Dorothy Latham	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, mathematics, geography, music and personal and social and health development (PSHE).
11769	Jim Bishop	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology (ICT), design technology (DT), physical education (PE) and special educational needs (SEN).

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### This is a very good school.

Overall achievement is good, with very good achievement in mathematics across the school. This is because of very good teaching overall, with some excellent teaching in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve very well because they receive very good support and guidance. Standards in the national tests have been high or very high in both Year 6 and Year 2 for the past four years and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher grades has improved in 2004. Areas of strength include the very good leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff, which ensures that raising standards and pupils' achievement are at the heart of the school's work. Assessment is used well to support pupils' learning and teachers' planning. An effective programme for pupils' personal and social development and very good relationships in the school give good support for pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. Parents think highly of the school's provision for their children. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils in the school achieve their potential in most aspects of the curriculum.
- High standards have been sustained in the national tests.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall and lead to good achievement.
- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff maintain an effective focus on raising standards and on ensuring pupils' good achievement.
- The school's curricular provision is very well enriched by a wide range of activities and opportunities.
- Relationships within the school are very good because there is very good value and respect given to all individuals.
- Good assessment procedures are used well to provide a detailed overview of pupils' achievement in English, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Assessment in mathematics is very effective.
- Good provision for pupils' personal and social development and the strong ethos of the school help pupils to have very good attitudes to school and behave and apply themselves to their work very well.

The school has made a good improvement since it was inspected in 1998. There were no key issues for improvement. The minor issues identified have been well addressed. Standards have improved in mathematics across the school and the quality of teaching and learning has improved, particularly in Years 3 to 6. While overall achievement remains good, achievement in mathematics and the achievement of pupils with SEN are now very good. In most other respects the high standards identified by the school's previous inspection have been maintained.

### 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	A*	B
Mathematics	A*	A	A*	A
Science	A	A	A	C

Key: A\* High (Top 5% of schools); A Well above average; B Above average; C Average; D Below average. Similar schools are those whose pupils achieved similarly at the end of Year 2.

**Achievement is good across the school.** Pupils achieve very well in mathematics as do pupils with SEN. Children in Reception are on course to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year in all the required areas of learning. In Year 2 achievement is good in all areas. Standards are well above average in reading, writing, and mathematics. They are above average in science, ICT, music and art and average in history. In Year 6 standards are very high in

mathematics, well above average in English and science and above average in ICT, art and music. They are average in history. Pupils achieve very well in mathematics and sustain high standards in English.

**Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils are happy to come to school and are interested and positive about their work. They are well involved in their learning and behave very well in lessons and around the school. Their attendance rate is well above the average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is very good.** Teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high and as a result, pupils work hard and are interested in achieving as well as they can. Teachers plan varied activities and use their own good knowledge to stimulate pupils' interest and their effective involvement in their work. Assessment information is used very well in mathematics and well in English, science and ICT to track pupils' progress throughout the year. Teachers make good use of this information to plan work which is well matched to pupils' needs. The curriculum is very well enhanced by a wide range of clubs and activities, visits and visitors. Pupils are well looked after and their views and opinions about the school are valued. The school provides a good range of information for parents and involves them effectively in its work.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are very good.** The headteacher provides a strong sense of direction for improving and sustaining the high standards pupils achieve and the further development of the school. She is very well supported by other senior staff and subject leaders. All staff make very good contributions to the management of the school and there is a strong team spirit in the school. The school places a very clear emphasis in all its work on equality of opportunity and value and respect for all individuals. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their financial management is prudent and rigorous and applies the principles of best value well. The governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents are very positive about the education their children receive. While the inspection found that the school provided a good range of information for parents and consulted them well concerning their views, a small but significant minority of parents would like to be better informed about their children's progress and to have their views sought more frequently. Pupils value their school highly and feel that the school is a very friendly place. They appreciate the very good range of additional activities.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no significant areas for improvement.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall achievement is good. Standards are very high in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and well above average in Year 2 across the school because in this subject pupils achieve very well. Standards are well above average in English in both Years 2 and 6 and in science in Year 6 because teaching is consistently good in Years 2 to 6.

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

- Pupils in this school achieve their potential in most aspects of the curriculum.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science were high in the national tests in 2004 and have improved since the national tests in 2003.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all the required areas of learning.
- Pupils who have SEN achieve very well against their individual targets because their support and guidance are very good.

#### **Commentary**

1. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good. Entry assessments show that children attain above average standards in all areas of learning. Children make good progress and achieve well in Reception, due to good teaching. They are on course to exceed the designated Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the end of the year.

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

Standards in:	School results:	National results
Reading	18.6 (17.2)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	17.3 (16.3)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.3 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 30 pupils in this year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In the end of the Year 2 national tests in 2004, standards were very high in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics, when compared with all schools. They were well above average in all three areas, when compared with similar schools. These results indicate an improvement on the national tests in 2003, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher grades. Differences in test results are due in part to differences between groups of pupils but also due to the school's effective focus on the higher level skills.

3. The findings of the inspection are that standards in Year 2 are well above average in mathematics, reading and writing. Standards in speaking and listening, science, ICT, art and music are above average. In history standards are average. These were the only subjects where sufficient evidence was gathered to make valid judgements. Where the evidence allows comparisons to be made, standards are similar in reading and writing, ICT and art. Standards have improved in mathematics but they are lower in history. The differences between inspection judgements and the national tests are due to the varying characteristics of a different group of pupils.

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

Standards in:	School results:	National results:
English	30.6 (28.2)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	31.0 (28.8)	27.0 (26.8)

Science	31.2 (30.6)	28.6 (28.6)
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There were 27 pupils in this group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In the national tests in 2004, standards were very high in English and mathematics and well above average in science when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, based on pupils who achieved similar test results in Year 2, standards were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. Standards have been consistently high in mathematics and science over the last four years, as they have in English, apart from in 2003, when standards were above average. There are no significant differences in the attainment of groups of pupils or of boys and girls.

5. The findings of the inspection are that standards in Year 6 are very high in mathematics. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were well above average. Standards are well above average in English and science. They are above average in ICT, art and music and average in history. Similar standards were seen in the school's previous inspection in English, science, art, ICT. Standards are lower in history. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements in other subjects or to make further comparisons with the previous inspection.

6. This year group has sustained the high standards in mathematics throughout the school and the high standards they reached in Year 2. There has been significant mobility in the year group with more than a quarter of the pupils who took the test in Year 2 leaving the school and another quarter of the pupils joining the school after Year 2. The school's records show that fewer pupils in the current group of pupils in Year 6 achieved the higher levels in English when they were in Year 2, than the school's original cohort. The narrowing of the gap between reading and writing has been a priority for the school and a good range of strategies has been introduced to support writing skills. However many are too new to have had an impact on the standards of pupils' work. As a result of effective teaching and the school's high expectations, pupils continue to achieve well and to sustain high standards in both reading and writing. Writing skills are consolidated well in history, geography and a good range of evaluative language is being developed in art and design technology. The use of ICT in other subjects is developing well.

7. All pupils in the school achieve well. In mathematics pupils achieve very well, as do pupils who have SEN. Parents had similar views and pupils felt they were expected to work hard at all times. Pupils with SEN often reach similar standards to their peers because of the very good support and guidance they receive. The school caters well for more able pupils, as is evident in the high proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. It also identifies gifted and talented pupils and ensures their needs are met. These pupils are given good opportunities to extend their skills and to work with other similarly talented pupils in the local area.

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

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are **very good**. The school provides **very well** for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality to school are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school works very hard to ensure that pupils come to school and that they arrive on time.
- Pupils are extremely interested in all the activities provided for them.
- Their behaviour is very good in class and around the school.
- Pupils form very warm and supportive relationships with one another.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

### **Commentary**

8. The level of attendance is much higher than the national median and is therefore very good. Pupils are very eager to come to school and punctuality is very good. Registration periods in the morning are efficient and ensure that there is a speedy and effective start to the school day. There were no exclusions during the last academic year.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.0	School data:	0.0
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.

9. Pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes to their work ensure that there is a positive atmosphere throughout the school. In lessons, pupils are consistently well behaved and are interested in their work; they pay attention and are motivated to work hard and to do their best. They listen very well, they co-operate with each other, showing respect and thoughtfulness and work very well together in groups or in pairs. They also work very well independently. On the playground, pupils play well together and are very well behaved. Older pupils play with and look after younger children. At lunch times there is a relaxed, social atmosphere as pupils sit and eat their lunch in their classrooms.

10. Pupils who have special educational needs show considerable interest in their work. As a result of well-planned activities, teaching and support, most pupils are able to sustain their attention and concentration. They achieve this both during and out of lessons. The attitude to learning of most of these pupils is very good, and they form constructive relationships with fellow pupils, teachers and other adults.

11. Through their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, a small, but significant number of parents expressed concern over bullying. However, in their responses to the pupils' questionnaire and when spoken to during the inspection, pupils were happy that few incidents took place and that any issues were dealt with quickly and effectively, by any member of staff. As a result pupils are free from all forms of harassment. Relationships throughout the school are very good, pupils respect one another and the atmosphere in the school is harmonious.

12. There are good opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility. They are elected to become members of the school council and from Year 1 onwards pupils take on jobs around the school such as milk monitors and classroom monitors. These opportunities help to raise their confidence and self esteem.

13. Pupils' spiritual development is good and is supported well through assemblies, which provide good opportunities for reflection and in which pupils show a high level of respect. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when provision was satisfactory. Moral and social development is very good and pupils are fully aware of the impact of their actions on others and the responsibilities of living in a community. Pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils regularly learn about other faiths and cultures in their studies and pictures and artefacts from around the world are displayed around the school. As a result pupils have a good level of understanding of what it is like to grow up in a multicultural society.

#### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The most significant strength is pupils' very good achievement in mathematics and pupils good achievement in the other core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. This ensures that high standards are sustained in the national tests. Good and very good achievement is well promoted by very good teaching across the school in Years 2 to 6. Teaching and learning in Reception are consistently good enabling pupils to

be well prepared for the next stage of school. There is very good provision for pupils with SEN enabling these pupils to achieve very well. Teaching is well supported by a good range of assessment systems. Good use is made of information from assessment to guide and inform teachers' planning and the effective monitoring of pupils' progress. The curriculum is very well enhanced by a wide range of additional activities, visits and visitors. The very good leadership of the headteacher and key staff is important to the strong ethos of the school, with improvements in pupils' achievement and the raising of standards at the heart of the school's work.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. It is very good in Years 2 to 6 and satisfactory in Year 1. Excellent teaching was seen in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Teaching and learning are good in Reception. Assessment procedures are good and the school makes good use of assessment information.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships in all classrooms create a very positive atmosphere for learning.
- Teachers' expectations are high for all pupils' attitudes and behaviour and their academic learning.
- Excellent teaching in mathematics enables pupil in Years 3 to 6 to develop higher level skills very effectively.
- Very good use is made of teaching assistants to provide high quality support.
- Pupils with SEN are taught very well and this helps these pupils to achieve very well.
- Relative weaknesses in the use of time in a small number of lessons slow the pace of pupils' learning.
- Good assessment procedures are used well to set pupils' individual targets and to inform teachers' planning.
- Assessment procedures are very good in mathematics and the information is used very effectively to attain high standards.
- There is some variability in the quality of teachers' comments in pupils' books to help pupils improve their work.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 ( 8%)	6 ( 16%)	23 ( 62 %)	5 ( 13.5 %)	0 ( %)	0 ( %)	0 ( %)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

13. In the school's previous inspection teaching was judged to be good, with a higher proportion of very good and excellent teaching in Years 1 and 2. Teaching has improved since 1998 and is now very good overall. In this inspection, teaching in Years 3 to 6 ranged from satisfactory to excellent, with a third of lessons being excellent or very good. Almost half the lessons seen in Year 2 were very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. As a result of this high quality teaching, pupils in the school achieve consistently well and in mathematics they achieve very well. Parents and pupils feel that teaching in the school is good.

14. Teaching in the Reception class is consistently good. Planning is clear and detailed, and assessment and its use for planning are also good. In play, activities and lessons, promotion of speaking and listening is very good. Teamwork is good, and assistants are deployed well. Children learn well from the good teaching and make good progress.

15. Strengths of the teaching are indicated in the very positive attitudes pupils show towards their work. These are the result of very good relationships in classrooms and the high expectations teachers have for pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Teachers plan and organise their lesson carefully and well, to meet the needs of all pupils in their classes. In almost all lessons seen teachers at the beginning of lessons explain the main learning points of the lesson and what they intend pupils to achieve. This helps lessons to begin purposefully and with pupils well engaged. In very effective teaching, learning objectives are analysed and discussed at the end of the lesson, with pupils contributing their own evaluation of what they have learned. These strategies are particularly effective in the teaching of mathematics where pupils are very consistently challenged and their learning extended to help them achieve their full potential. The excellent teaching in this subject is characterised by the stimulation and engagement of pupils' intellectual curiosity and their enjoyment of the subject. Teachers provide very challenging activities, using clear well staged explanations and guidance to help a high proportion of pupils understand and use higher level skills. These qualities are well illustrated in an excellent Year 5/6 lesson. The teachers' very good command of the subject was used effectively to support the main objectives of the lesson. These were to find areas and perimeters of rectangles using appropriate formulae. Planning for the lesson was very good and included well detailed extension exercises and very effective use of ICT to begin and model during the lesson. The teacher built pupils' knowledge and understanding in careful steps sustaining a very good pace, which ensured that pupils were responsive and interested throughout the lesson. As a result pupils were developing their thinking and reasoning skills and their creativity in mathematics very effectively.

16. Throughout the school there are very effective and productive partnerships between teachers and learning support workers. Learning support workers make very good use of their specialist skills to work with individual pupils and groups of pupils. This helps to ensure that lower attaining pupils and pupils with SEN make good and often very good gains in their learning. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils with SEN progress very well because the school identifies them at an early stage and provides well matched support, where necessary making use of outside agencies. The withdrawal of pupils from their normal classes for specialist teaching continues to work well, as in the previous inspection. This is because of the very good cooperation and planning between SEN teachers, learning support workers and class teachers. They consistently ensure that pupils do not miss important parts of their class lessons and that they follow very carefully prepared and tailored individual plans. The consistently positive attitudes of all staff towards pupils with SEN and their needs, very effectively promotes both the pupils' self-esteem and their ability to succeed at work.

17. In a small number of lessons time is not always used effectively and pupils spend too long on activities or introductory sessions and pupils' interest and the impetus of the lesson are weakened as a result. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and write supportive and encouraging comments. In the best marking, well represented in Year 2, there are very useful and well detailed comments to help pupils improve their work. However this good practice is not consistent throughout the school.

18. There are very good assessment procedures in mathematics and good procedures in English, science, ICT, RE and music. Procedures in these subjects ensure that teachers are able to monitor pupils' development in all key aspects and areas. A useful range of standardised tests at the end of the academic year is used to set individual targets for each pupil in mathematics and English. Pupils know their targets and they are reviewed on a regular basis and this helps to reinforce pupils' understanding of their own learning and to create a good level of challenge. In mathematics there is a termly review of predicted targets for pupils. This ensures a consistent understanding of the rate at which pupils are achieving and supports well the early identification of any issues or difficulties. There is particularly good organisation and use of target setting in Year 2 literacy, where targets are closely linked to National Curriculum levels. They are given a prominent position in pupils' books, regularly reviewed and expressed in terms that pupils can easily understand. In other subjects assessment is satisfactory and some useful pupil evaluation is developing in art and design and design technology.

## The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum provided is good and meets statutory requirements. There is very good provision for enriching the pupils' learning. The school has good, attractive and well-resourced accommodation.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good range of opportunities in all subjects of the national curriculum and appropriate time across the school year.
- The curriculum ensures very good equality of access and opportunity for all of its pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN are provided for very well.
- Support programmes contribute effectively to pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum benefits from the expertise of teachers and learning support staff.
- The pupils' learning is enhanced very well through the range of educational visits and visitors, and the wide range of after-school activities it provides.

### Commentary

19. The school's curricular provision provides a good range of learning experiences. It is kept under regular review and it takes account of new developments. In recent years the school has introduced to younger pupils a thinking skills programme which is being progressively developed throughout the school. This has enabled some pupils to think more effectively about aspects of the subject they are studying. Year 2 pupils, for example, in science gained a greater understanding and appreciation about dinosaurs and what might have prevented their extinction. It also enabled them to predict what else might possibly have happened. The school improvement plan appropriately recognises the need to develop further productive links between subjects and to enhance its provision of opportunities for pupils' creative development. Some good links already exist. For example, projects connecting art, history and religious education, when pupils visit and sketch Gloucester Cathedral. It also has plans in place for a whole school Art Week.

20. The school has ensured appropriate time allocations are provided for the teaching of each subject. It has also paid careful attention to the overall planning of the curriculum so that every pupil can receive an effectively balanced and broad provision. The planning, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum are carried out by the headteacher and by subject leaders. Plans and subject schemes of work now contain more elements to promote the pupils' spiritual development. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The provision for pupils with SEN is very good. They are given work that is pitched at appropriate levels for their development and they receive very good support from teachers and Learning Support Assistants. The school's curriculum also includes good provision for its pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils are fully and successfully included in all aspects of school life and no significant differences were observed in the provision for different groups of pupils. The school makes effective use of support programmes in literacy and mathematics and booster classes before the national tests. The school's evidence indicates that these programmes have a significant and positive impact on the standards pupils achieve in the national tests.

21. In lessons, directed activities and play, the quality of learning opportunities in the Reception class is good. Planning is imaginative, providing good stimulus for motivation and play in the children. The balance of free and directed activities is good. The programme is broad and balanced, and is appropriately based on the nationally designated areas of learning. The outdoor area is well designed and equipped, and is exploited well. However, due to its small area there is no opportunity for freedom in using wheeled toys, which has to be specifically timetabled for an adjacent area.

22. The curriculum is very well supported by the variety of visitors to the school and the arrangements for relevant and stimulating educational visits provided for the pupils. For example, visitors to the school have included the Akoma artists and drummers, a string quartet and Kenyan

teachers and students. For its size, the school has a very good range of after-school activities which further complement the provision for the pupils. These include after school sports clubs such as football, netball and rugby and opportunities to take part in drama activities and the school orchestra. Weekly lunchtime clubs include ones for pupils interested in computers, recorder playing, French and choir. Conversations with pupils showed that they value and enjoy their clubs and activities. The school provides a wide range of visits to support its pupils' learning. These include local activities such as geographical mapping skills learned in the school's immediate environment. More distant visits include visits to the cathedral and an annual activity week in Devon for the older pupils. Whole school events such as Book Weeks and the arrival of the Life Education Bus all complement and enrich the good and stimulating curricular opportunities available to the pupils.

23. The school building is still relatively new and offers good facilities for the delivery of the school's curriculum, and its design promotes the development of the school's sense of community and caring ethos. Classrooms are of an appropriate size to enable pupils to have sufficient space for a range of methods for learning, and the school has plenty of additional space for the teaching of subjects such as music and physical education. However, the small library area does not provide well for pupils' research and investigation skills. Resources generally are well suited to the demands of the curriculum, and the provision for ICT is very good.

24. The school has recruited teachers and learning support staff with a highly appropriate range of subject expertise and experience. Subjects such as ICT and science and art have benefited considerably as a direct result of this. The school's provision for SEN and ICT has also been improved by employing learning support workers with specialist subject knowledge and skills.

## Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. Pupils' personal development is monitored **well**. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- Good levels of care for all pupils ensure that they feel well supported.
- Support for pupils with SEN is very good.
- Good induction arrangements help children settle quickly when they enter the school
- The school's good support systems monitor pupils' personal development well as they progress through the school.
- The school monitors pupils' academic development effectively, providing good support and guidance.
- The school actively seeks and acts upon pupils' views.

## Commentary

25. The school has good health and safety procedures in place. Governors and staff undertake an annual health and safety check and regular risk assessments are carried out. Issues are reported to the Governing Body, which takes a keen interest in monitoring these developments and ensures they are quickly addressed. Regular checks are made to the grounds, buildings and equipment so that they are safe for the pupils. Child protection procedures are secure; recently all staff received training and so are aware of what they need to do should they have any concerns. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for the care of children who are unwell are effective.

26. Good, informal procedures to monitor pupils' personal progress as they proceed through the school enable all adults to form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. They know the pupils well and quickly know if something is wrong. Pupils spoken to are very happy that there is always someone they can turn to for help and advice. The headteacher also knows the children and they know her, this adds to the good informal monitoring of pupils' personal development.

27. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic development as they move through the school. Each pupil has an individual file, which contains results of end of year tests and other monitoring records. Teachers maintain class record books, which provide an ongoing record of pupils' stages of development at regular intervals. Individual targets are set for each pupil in English and mathematics and these are regularly reviewed and shared with pupils. The school has identified as an appropriate area for development the further involvement of pupils in identifying their own targets.

28. Induction procedures to the Reception class and to other classes in the school are good. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure the welfare, health and safety of children. Pupils in Reception are matched to older pupils in Year 6 and partnerships build confidence well and are of mutual benefit. If pupils start at the school in older year groups, they are assigned a 'buddy' to help them understand school procedures so they can fit in quickly and take an active part in school life.

29. Support and guidance for pupils with SEN are very good and help them to achieve very well. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and have a very good understanding of their needs. Their individual targets are clearly expressed and effectively taken into account in teachers' lesson planning and in the very good support provided by the learning support assistants. The SEN teacher provides good support in small groups, which help to promote pupils' skills and confidence very effectively.

30. Pupils' views are fully taken into account through the school council. Pupils are positive about their role as councillors and are confident that their opinions are valued and can cite examples of their impact on the life of the school.

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

The school's links with parents, the community and with other schools are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are generally happy with the work of the school.
- Parents are given good information about what is happening in school, and how to help their children at home.
- Annual written reports clearly inform parents how their children are progressing.
- Strong links with the local community benefit pupils.
- Links with other schools help pupils when they transfer at the end of Year 6.
- The school has forged very good links with schools in the local area as part of its designation as a Beacon school.

### **Commentary**

31. The majority of parents have positive views of the school. However, a small but significant number of parents do have some concerns over the way in which the school approaches and consults them and the information they receive about their children's progress. The inspection found that the school works hard to deal with parents' concerns and to keep parents informed about what is happening in school. Following the improvement in ICT resources the school offered an ICT course for parents who did not feel confident in ICT. Responses indicated that those who took part in the course found it useful and interesting. The school has also introduced a questionnaire through which parents' views are obtained and the results analysed.

32. The information provided for parents by the school is good. It keeps parents informed about what is happening in school and curriculum information informs them how they can help their children at home. The majority of parents responds by supporting their children with their

homework and ensuring that it is done and returned to the school. The Parent Teacher Committee (PTC) supports the work of the school well by arranging social activities as well as fund raising events. They raise significant funds for the school.

33. There are good opportunities for parents to meet staff informally at the end of the school day as well as formal consultation evenings to discuss their children's progress. There are good links with parents of pupils who have SEN. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and about reviews of their individual targets and plans. Written annual reports for parents are good; they give detailed information about what pupils know, understand and can do. They indicate clear targets for pupils' future development in English, mathematics and science. Parents and pupils have the opportunity to respond to the reports. However, reports do not give indications of how well pupils are progressing in relation to national expectations.

34. The school has good links with the local community; a number of visitors come into school, including the community policeman and members of the fire brigade who visit to teach the children about personal safety. Good links with the Parish church include the vicar coming in and talking to the children in class as well as taking assembly every fortnight. Children regularly visit the church for special events and to study the church as part of their work in RE.

35. Good links with the local secondary school include visits prior to transfer as well as opportunities for attending some specialist courses. These links ensure that pupils can visit before transferring at the end of Year 6, thus helping them to settle in more easily. The school has very good links with other schools in the local area and the Newent Small Schools Cluster, to enable staff to get together, to visit the school, to disseminate good practice and to take part in training activities. There are effective curriculum links with Newent Community School, which provide good enrichment experiences for pupils in Years 5 and 6 in their work in art. Parents and children visit the Reception class before children start. There is an open door policy and parents have good opportunities to speak to staff about day-to-day needs as well as to discuss their children's progress over time at the regular consultation occasions, and meetings held for them.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The leadership of the other key staff is very good; other leadership roles are fulfilled well. The management of the school is very good. The school's governance is good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good leadership of the headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school's development, where all individuals are encouraged to do their best and to achieve their potential.
- The very good leadership and management of key staff support the headteacher well and together they form a strong leadership team.
- There is a strong team spirit in the school and all staff make a good contribution to the management of all areas of the school.
- Governors are well involved in the work of the school and are committed to providing a high standard of education for pupils.
- Financial management is rigorous and aspects of seeking value for money are well established.

### **Commentary**

36. The consistently high standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 reflect the aspirations of the headteacher for all aspects of the school's work. At the heart of these aspirations is the continuing improvement of the school's provision and the standards pupils achieve. Good communication with

parents and close monitoring of teaching and learning enable her to have a comprehensive overview of how well pupils are achieving. The headteacher is very well supported by two senior staff who share her values and have a strong commitment to the school community. These judgements reflect those of the school's previous inspection and show that the school has effectively sustained very good provision. Subject leaders are effective in their roles. There are well established and effective procedures to monitor teaching and learning and provision in each subject and where subject leaders are well established they provide very good leadership. In some subjects such as English in Years 3 to 6, RE, history and music, subject leaders are newly appointed and are developing their understanding of their roles well. The Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage coordinator supports the Reception staff well. There is very good team work, particularly between the three unit leaders and their partner teachers and this ensures the smooth and efficient management of school routines. All staff provide very good role models for pupils. Pupils respect and admire the staff and want to do their best for them. This is an important factor in pupils' good achievement.

37. The very good management of the school is characterised by effective self evaluation. Strengths are recognised and priorities for improvement which have included narrowing the gap between reading and writing standards and improving target setting and pupils' understanding of assessment, are clearly acknowledged. School improvement planning is well organised and has standards that pupils achieve as the main focus. Staff and governors are appropriately involved in its formulation and the headteacher provides termly reviews of the school's progress towards achieving its priorities. The well detailed analyses of assessment information provide a good basis for pupils' good achievement. This includes the very effective analyses of performance data and procedures for assessing the progress of pupils who have SEN.

38. Performance management reflects the school's commitment to staff development. Support staff are included in ongoing professional development and make a very useful and valued contribution to the work of the school. New staff are carefully selected to fit into the school's needs and ethos. They are given very good support and are quickly integrated into the life of the school. The school's finances are managed prudently and effectively, ensuring that the principles of best value are applied.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	597,879	Balance from the previous year	79,973
Total expenditure	525,048	Balance carried forward to the next	72,831
Expenditure per pupil	2,919		

39. Governors of the school are committed to supporting the school and are well involved with its work. There is a well planned rota for curriculum visits which coincides with the school's subject review cycle. This supports well the effective monitoring of curriculum areas and provides a coherent view of curriculum development across the school. Since the previous inspection there have been improvements in the organisation of the work of the governing body. Governors are appropriately involved in the school strategic planning and have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are aware of the need to plan carefully for the possibility of fewer pupils in the school and are committed to retaining the same quality of provision as the school currently provides. This has been planned for in the balance carried forward from year to year. This balance also reflects additional funding for the school's Beacon school status, which enters the school's accounts at a different time from the usual financial year.

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

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

Provision for children in the Reception class is **good**.

At the time of the inspection there were 24 children in the Reception class, all attending full time. All children entered Reception in September, following their fourth birthdays, but entries and full time attendance were staggered according to age. When children enter Reception, most of them are attaining standards in all the areas of learning that are above those expected for age nationally.

Children in the Reception class are currently on track to exceed the officially designated Early Learning Goals for five year olds by the end of the academic year, in all areas of learning. Most children make good progress and achieve well in the Reception class, due to good teaching, including good curriculum planning and good provision of activities. Although children both enter Reception and are expected to leave it with standards above those expected nationally for age, standards are rising within the broad band of good attainment, showing the good progress that is taking place. Assessment is thorough and comprehensive, and assessment information is utilised to enhance further the planning for groups and individuals. There are no children with special educational needs in Reception at present, but pupils of all abilities, including the higher attaining and the lower attaining children, are well catered for in this class.

Teaching is consistently good in all the designated areas, bringing about good levels of children's learning. The main strengths of teaching are the stimulating use of first-hand experience to engage active learning, imaginative ways of building ideas and understanding, and a variety of creative ideas for developing art and design technology. These are accompanied by very good language use promoting speech and extending children's vocabulary. Tasks and activities are well matched to children's needs through careful, ongoing assessment. The balance between children's own choices of activities and those that are adult-led is good.

There is good teamwork between the Reception teacher and her assistant, which contributes to children's learning and their well-being. Leadership and management of the Reception year are good, with shared discussion about planning and assessment between the team leader and the Reception staff. The previous report shows that both standards of attainment and teaching were good at the time of the last inspection, so that these qualities have been maintained. However, since that time, a new outdoor area with new equipment has been built, and is now used daily. In addition, a new role-play area indoors has also been created for stimulating indoor play on a regular basis. These enhancements contribute to good improvement in curricular provision.

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

- Relationships between adults and children in the Reception class are good, and children feel safe, confident and happy
- Imaginative teaching, accompanied by very good language use, leads to good learning and good achievement

- The broad curriculum allows plenty of opportunity for children to choose activities for themselves and to initiate their own ideas through play
- Assessment is thorough and careful, and is used to influence planning for individuals and groups
- Activities are often designed to link two or more areas, enhancing learning
- Despite having a new, dedicated outdoor area with good outdoor equipment, free use of wheeled toys is not possible due to the size of the fenced off area, and an adjacent garden space is only available occasionally

### Commentary

40. Children feel safe, confident and happy in the Reception class. Relationships between adults and children are good, raising children's self-esteem. Children achieve well in their **personal, social and emotional development** through interaction and play. While most children enjoy playing alongside each other and interacting occasionally, a substantial minority are already engaging in good cooperative levels of playing together. The role-play area is a good stimulus for this development, and themed focuses are changed regularly. Often children are free to engage in this kind of play, but on planned occasions, the play is further stimulated and extended by a skilled assistant interacting with the players. Children behave well for their age, and already show the independence they are encouraged to develop; they are generally on track to exceed the expected goals by the age of five. Children show respect for each other's needs and this is promoted well through sharing and turn taking.

41. Children in Reception show good achievement in developing their **communication, language and literacy** skills, building well on their already good attainment in speaking and listening. This stems from the good teaching and learning that is taking place. Most children are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals well by the time they are five. The strong focus on development in language and phonics has considerable impact. Children are interested in books, enjoy stories, and many can recognise and read simple words and phrases. All children know and recognise some letters and their basic sounds, while many know most of the letters of the alphabet already. Most children can write their own names, and some can already spell out simple three letter words for themselves. All the children have recently written letters of apology to the Three Bears from Goldilocks, and have had fun addressing their envelopes and making the stamps, then posting their letters in the class letterbox.

42. Most children in Reception are on track to exceed the standards expected for age in their **mathematical development**, by the end of the year, and a substantial minority are already reaching these standards in some aspects of numeracy. Progress is good; children show interest and are pleased with their learning, bringing good achievement. Teaching is well grounded in a practical way, using a variety of real, everyday objects as well as mathematical apparatus. Understanding of number order and number values is very sound, and children are interested in exploring other mathematical experiences such as those of shapes, and amounts and volume. In an activity to promote a basic idea of time, children looked at, talked about, and sorted night-time and day-time pictures with their teacher, followed by making their own 'night and day' pictures.

43. In the Reception class children enjoy their experiences in the area of learning about **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They like to talk about themselves and their families, and were interested in pictures of themselves as babies, toddlers, and four-year olds. Sequencing these in chronological order helped them to develop an idea of growth over time, and of the difference between 'then' and 'now'. In making finger puppets, they used an exciting range of textiles, and were enthusiastic about describing the characters of their puppets. They have learned about leaf fall in the autumn, and how hedgehogs use them for a blanket for their winter sleep, enhancing this learning by making their own hedgehog models in clay, finally used in an attractive autumn display in the classroom. Children also have access to computers on a regular basis, and

learn how to use the mouse, and to play simple games on the screen. They achieve well, making good progress, and the majority is on track to exceed the designated goals by the end of the year.

44. In **physical development**, children in Reception achieve well, and good progress is made. Most are on track to achieve above average standards against the set goals by the end of the year. Outdoor activities often involve running and jumping, while in dance and other physical education lessons, they also develop control and coordination in moving in various ways, and in stopping and starting as well. They begin to show a good sense of awareness of themselves and others. Manual dexterity is generally good, and children have plenty of opportunities for this to develop, using pencils, crayons, paintbrushes, scissors, and with construction toys large and small, as well as jigsaws. Cutting and sticking abilities are good for age, and used to good purpose in collage and model making.

45. Children enjoy the good range of experiences offered in **creative development**. This includes drawing and painting, collage, printing, using malleable materials like clay and play dough, role-play and dressing up, singing familiar songs and moving and listening to music. There is plenty of free choice for children, but there is also guidance appropriately given by teachers and assistants to aid progress in learning more and in developing skills. Printing techniques have been taught, using different shaped objects to produce patterns of shapes, linking with mathematics, while collage skills have been used in making 'night and day' pictures and the finger puppets. An exciting Bonfire Night display enlivens the classroom, with children's firework pictures using all sorts of sparkly sequins and bright pieces to show up their designs on black paper, while shiny models of rockets with trailing tails of tulle hang above as mobiles. Children make good progress in their creative development in Reception, and their achievement is good. Most children are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the age of five.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Standards in reading and writing are well above average across the school.
- Standards in speaking and listening are above average in both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall and enables all pupils to achieve consistently well.
- Very good relationships create an atmosphere of trust and confidence and help pupils to be well involved in their work.
- Assessment procedures are good and information from assessment is used effectively to support pupils' good achievement.
- The subject is well managed.
- In some classes teachers' comments in pupils' work do not consistently include comments to help pupils' improve.

#### **Commentary**

46. Overall, standards in English are well above average by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement, including more able pupils, is good. Pupils with SEN often achieve very well because they receive very effective and well targeted support. As a result they often reach the same standards as their peers, ensuring that a very high proportion of pupils reach average standards or above by the end of the year. In the school's previous inspection similar high standards were observed.

47. Standards in speaking and listening are above average across the school. Most pupils in the school listen well to both their teachers and each other. A very small number of younger pupils are less effective listeners and find it difficult to pay appropriate attention. Pupils enter the school with a good range of vocabulary and this is well fostered through careful teaching of new and specialist words. Most pupils are confident in answering questions and contributing to class discussions and when given the opportunity pupils enjoy presenting their ideas and taking a role in front of the class. In the lessons seen a small number of higher attaining pupils were extending their explanations and responses in good detail and providing thoughtful and perceptive comments. While the school provides an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate and present their ideas to wider audiences there is a more limited emphasis on the progressive development of pupils' skills.

48. Pupils quickly develop a good foundation for their reading skills and pupils in Year 2 make competent use of their knowledge of phonics to help them read unfamiliar words. Even at this early stage of the year, these pupils are moving confidently through the school's reading scheme. Pupils are able to give simple recounts of their books and identify favourite books and authors. They enjoy reading aloud together as was seen in a Year 2 lesson where pupils took part in reading a playscript version of Jack and the Beanstalk. In Year 6 most pupils are already competent readers attaining at least average standards. They develop an increasing understanding of higher order skills such as reading for inferred and implied meanings. Pupils talk confidently about their reading explaining why they like some authors and their favourite books. A small number of higher attaining pupils are reading a wide and challenging range of books but the majority of pupils are reading comfortably within their range. The school has a good number of good quality fiction books in each class. While these cater well for younger pupils and for older pupils of average ability, the range of more challenging books for older more able pupils is more limited. By Year 6 pupils are developing a good range of information retrieval skills using the internet and reference material in class. The development of library skills is more variable and this is due in part to the limitations of library space and in part to a limited emphasis in the progressive development of these skills.

49. Standards in writing are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6. This reflects the very high proportion of pupils who are already reaching average standards and the good proportion of pupils developing higher level skills. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Pupils are carefully taught about the structure and key elements of different kinds of writing. Throughout the school pupils use a good range of vocabulary in their writing because new and unfamiliar words and their use are given a high profile. Presentation is good throughout the school because teachers have clear and consistent expectations of how pupils should organise their work. Most pupils in Year 2 are aware of the structure of simple sentences and are developing confidence in their use. More able pupils are able to sequence and express ideas clearly and some pupils are developing variety and touches of individual expression. Lower attaining pupils generally communicate meaning in their writing.

50. In Year 6, analyses of pupils' work in this year and the previous year, show that pupils write for a good range of purposes, including newspaper articles, book reviews, promotional pamphlets, autobiographies, extended narratives and writing about their reading. Most pupils consistently organise their work into paragraphs. In the best writing pupils are confident and competent in structuring their writing for different purposes. They use a good range of punctuation accurately and a mature range of vocabulary. There is a good level of detail in the best pieces of work and confident organisation and selection of ideas. This was seen to good effect in the recount report pupils wrote about their visit to the Black Country Museum. Lower attaining pupils have a more variable level of accuracy in spelling and use of punctuation.

51. One of the school's priorities for improvement is to reduce the differences between standards in reading and standards in writing. A good range of strategies is being introduced to develop the range and quality of pupils' writing. However these strategies are too new to have had, as yet, a significant effect on standards pupils attain. The school makes good use of regular assessments of

writing which enable teachers to see how pupils are progressing and to set targets for improvement. Teachers also identify pupils who are underachieving and ensure they receive well matched programmes to support their learning.

52. Teaching in English is good overall. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have a secure understanding of the national literacy strategy and implement it effectively. Throughout the school, teachers use their good knowledge of pupils to plan carefully for all abilities in the class. Very good relationships establish an atmosphere of trust and confidence in the classroom, in which pupils are willing to do their best. Ability grouping in Years 3 to 6 helps teachers to focus closely on pupils' needs and to provide effective support and guidance. In the best teaching, there is a good variety of activities which interest and engage pupils, a sharp use of time to maintain very good concentration and a good level of challenge and an effective use of the interactive whiteboard. These qualities were illustrated in a very good lesson in a Year 3/4 group where pupils were preparing a role play on Jack and the Beanstalk as part of developing their understanding of how playscripts are written. The teacher used the white board confidently to prepare a 'tool kit' to remind pupils of the most important aspects of play script writing. All teachers mark pupils work supportively with a good level of encouragement. In the best marking there are frequent and often detailed comments on how pupils can improve their work. However this is not consistent in the work of all classes.

53. The management of English is good. The subject leader in Years 1 and 2 has a very good insight into pupils' needs and the needs of the subject. The subject leader in Years 3 to 6 is new to the role and recently appointed. She is developing her understanding of the role well. There are good systems in place to enable subject leaders to have a good overview of provision across the school through the regular monitoring of teaching and pupils' work. Assessment in English is good and provides an overview of all areas of the subject. Teachers use this information well to plan further work and to set targets for pupils' development, mainly in writing. Results of national tests are carefully analysed to establish priorities, set realistic targets and to identify areas for further development. Resources in English are good. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through discussion and enjoyment of shared texts and preparatory discussions of ideas for writing.

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

54. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop the range of their vocabulary across the curriculum because teachers identify new vocabulary and specialist terms carefully. Opportunities to write in other subjects are developed well. In subjects such as history and religious education pupils give accounts of what they have learned and in some pieces of work explore their feelings and personal responses. In art and design and design technology pupils are developing their skills of written evaluation with appropriate understanding and vocabulary.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By Year 6, standards of attainment are very high.
- The achievement of pupils is very good
- Teaching and learning are, overall, excellent
- Assessment is very good and informs planning
- The continuing progress of pupils, both within classes and across the school is smooth and is carefully structured
- There is excellent promotion of pupils' thinking and reasoning abilities

- Integration of the subject with information and communication technology is very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6
- The leadership and management of the subject is very good

## Commentary

55. Standards of attainment in Year 6 are very high. In the last inspection, standards at the top of the school were also reported as being well above national averages for age. The school has sustained high and very high standards across time in this subject. Pupils of all ability groups, including those with special educational needs do extremely well for their capabilities and their previous learning, and there are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls. All are very effectively challenged by their work and respond enthusiastically. The achievement of pupils over time is very good.

56. In Year 2 standards are well above average because even at this early stage of the year most pupils are reaching above average standards. Standards attained in the national end of year tests in 2004 were well above average. Pupils of all ability groups, including those with special educational needs, do very well for their capabilities and their previous learning, and there are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls. The achievement of pupils over time is very good.

57. The quality of teaching and learning overall is excellent. Teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to excellent, with most lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 being excellent. Teaching in Year 2 is very good. Pupils' work indicated clear understanding, accurate and generally neatly presented work, and thorough practice of skills. In the excellent teaching seen teachers matched tasks and lesson activities very effectively to pupils' learning needs because they made very good use of information from assessment. This enabled pupils to develop confidence and success, and supported the smooth continuity of progress seen in every class. These mathematics lessons are exciting and stimulating because teachers give very close attention to encouraging pupils to think and reason, to find individual ways of working out processes for themselves, and to be able to explain these to others. In an excellent Year 5/6 upper set mathematics lesson, the teacher explained the calculation of the area and perimeter of a rectangle. In the follow-up exercise on computers, all pupils produced correct answers. Using a spreadsheet format, pupils generated their own formulae for quick computer calculations, checking them for accuracy. In the plenary, five different formulae for rectangles were reported, discussed and evaluated. One pupil even produced a formula for use with a hexagon. This lesson was excellent because through very good relationships and the teacher's own interest in the subject, pupils responded to questioning and activities with speed, accuracy and enthusiasm. The lesson integrated ICT well very well and called upon the reasoning abilities and originality of pupils, and their evaluative skills.

58. All the strands of the subject are strong, but while numeracy is the area most strongly promoted, and shape, space and measures work is next, the investigative side receives a little less emphasis. The school itself has already identified investigative work and problem solving as an area for even further development in the subject action plan. Information and communication technology is used very well in the subject for data handling, and is especially so in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are currently making use of spreadsheet formats.

59. Leadership and management are very good in mathematics, and the subject leader has excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject. He monitors teaching, samples work, surveys planning and moderates periodic assessments. Information from assessment is very well used to track pupils' progress and to generate termly targets for pupils. Using both informal ongoing assessment, and more formal periodic assessment together with the tracking of individual and group progress, teachers match pupils' tasks very well to their learning needs.

60. The school has maintained the high standards seen in the last inspection, but with higher levels of teaching, better planning and assessment, very good integration of information and communication technology, and better use of homework, the subject has made good improvement since the last report.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum. In history, for instance in comparing dates on a time line, and in design technology, when measuring is often necessary for making things, and it is used considerably in information and communication technology. It is employed in science, for example when timing heartbeats, or in geography when measuring distances or evaluating weather.

## **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **good**.

- The standards reached by pupils in Year 6 are well above average with consistently high standards in national test results.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment.
- Very good teaching was observed in Years 3 to 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Pupils enjoy science and behave very well in their lessons.
- Procedures for tracking individual pupils' progress are not fully developed.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards in science in Year 2 are above average. This judgement is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN, receive good teaching, which enables them to make good progress.

63. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above average. This is similar to the judgements made at the time of the school's last inspection. This is the result of the very good teaching seen in the Year 5/6 classes where the high expectations of the teachers have a significant impact on pupils' learning. As a result pupils achieve well. This includes pupils who have SEN and also the more able pupils.

64. Pupils are taught an appropriate range of concepts and skills as they move through the school. In Year 2 pupils know some of the properties of materials and have some knowledge about health and fitness. In Year 6, pupils investigate how well different materials muffle sound and use an interfacier to produce sound graphs on an interactive whiteboard. Most pupils are developing a good scientific vocabulary to explain their observations as they undertake investigations. As a result, by Year 6, many pupils are able to provide clear explanations and record their findings accurately when writing up experiments.

65. Strengths in the provision across the school include the way in which topics are introduced through an investigative approach whenever possible and the interesting way in which experiments are closely linked to everyday situations, that are relevant to the pupils' experiences. The effective use of ICT to support teaching and learning is a growing strength. A shortcoming, especially for the less able pupils, is the frequent use of printed worksheets, which limits the opportunity for pupils to develop their own recording skills.

66. Teaching is good in Year 2 and is very good in Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Lessons are consistently well prepared, organised and interesting.

Much of the work is challenging, and builds well on pupils' previous learning. Scientific principles and methods are taught very effectively and teachers prepare their pupils well for the national tests. Pupils enjoy their lessons in science and apply themselves productively to the challenges set for them by their teachers. They behave very well and their scientific curiosity is stimulated. The subject's provision for pupils who have SEN is very good. This is largely due to the quality of the links and preparations made between class teachers and the SEN staff.

67. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The coordinator's leadership has been an important factor in the school achieving consistently high standards in national tests in recent years. Procedures for the coordinator to monitor teaching and learning and for sampling the quality of pupils' work are well established and effective in contributing to the raising of standards. The coordinator also has a very clear curriculum overview of the topics to be taught across the school. In addition, good links have been made with other subjects. For example, the Year 5/6 unit of work about sound has well developed connections with design and technology and music. The pupils design and construct their own instruments ready to be played. An attractive display entitled "Making Music" contained evidence of guitars, bells made from copper pipes and a xylophone constructed from empty beer bottles. The school has very good teaching resources and has started to make increasingly good use of ICT. The coordinator monitors performance data in order to advise teachers how teaching can be improved. He has also established a good range of assessment procedures, which provide a good level of information about standards pupils achieve at the end of each unit of work. However, assessment is not consistently well focussed on the tracking of individual pupil's progress and the use of predictions of pupils' progress to establish clear goals for development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision for ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards across the school are above average.
- Teachers use the new interactive whiteboards and the ICT Suite confidently and well.
- Pupils enjoy their work and they are fully committed to their learning.
- Teaching assistants are used well and their expertise makes important contributions to the quality of learning.
- The subject coordinator has significantly improved the quality of the school's provision since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

68. Pupils across the school attain above average standards in all aspects of the subject. Although this judgement is similar to the findings of the previous inspection, the school has actually made considerable progress since that time. This is partly because the previous inspection's judgement included the observation of only one lesson, whereas this inspection observed lessons across the school.

69. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 6 created a multi media presentation as part of their study of Ancient Greece and linked it with the recent Olympic Games. This demonstrated their knowledge and skills in using texts, graphics and how they could make their presentation visually appealing. This and other examples observed during the inspection revealed that most pupils were achieving well. Standards in Year 2 are also above average and achievement is also good. Pupils are developing good keyboard skills such as using Microsoft Word to create a poster to convey information. Pupils carry out surveys and present their findings in the form of simple

graphs. Pupils with SEN achieve very well, because they are given very good support and enjoy the opportunity to experiment and explore different programmes.

70. The quality of teaching and learning is good in both key stages with some very good features, in Key Stage 2. In the most effective lessons, the teachers and learning support workers made very good use of the recently installed interactive whiteboards to demonstrate skills and to involve all pupils productively in the learning process. Good teaching of keyboard skills was observed in a Year 3 / 4 lesson. The teacher gave explicit instructions and then accurately demonstrated how to switch between software applications and how to transfer text from the Internet to design a publication. The ICT teaching assistant has high levels of expertise in the subject and works very well with groups and classes in both key stages to develop their knowledge and skills. Across the school, high expectations of pupils and the growing confidence of the well-trained teachers, ensure that work for the pupils is suitably challenging. Teachers insist upon high standards of behaviour and the pupils not only respond well, but also really enjoy their lessons. They apply themselves to tasks set and work hard.

71. The subject is very well managed and led by an enthusiastic coordinator. He has ensured that there are clear levels of planning for the subject, and that this planning includes progression in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding from year to year. Good assessment procedures ensure that pupils' work is assessed and monitored effectively. There are two particularly successful aspects of the subject's management. The first is the quality of staff training and support provided by the coordinator. There has been a significant improvement both in the range of equipment and in the confidence of the teaching staff in its use. The second is the range and quality of the subject's equipment and resources. The ICT suite has been open for approximately two years and provides very good facilities for developing whole class and group teaching. Overall, the subject is fast becoming one of the strengths of the school's provision.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

72. The use of information technology in other subjects is good. Teachers increasingly use ICT to support and enhance both teaching and learning. Examples of this developing practice were noted during mathematics and science lessons. In a Year 5/6 lesson about the area and perimeter of rectangles, the pupils were able to experience modelling and the practical application of spreadsheet data usage. In a Year 2 science lesson, block graphs were created on an interactive whiteboard to illustrate the pupils' findings regarding the number of legs they had counted on various creatures.

## **HUMANITIES**

No history or geography lessons were seen during the inspection but pupils' work from the previous and current years were analysed. Two lessons in Years 3 to 6 were observed in RE and pupils' written work scrutinised. There was insufficient evidence to make reliable judgements on the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects.

### **Geography**

73. Work samples for this year and last year's work were seen to establish indications of current standards and samples of work in the subject leader's file was scrutinised. Standards of attainment indicated in both age groups are average.

In Year 2, pupils study the Island of Struay, and contrast this with their own locality, and also learn about different types of environment, such as the seaside, mountains, countryside and towns and cities. They do map work on a map of Lulworth Cove, and make attractive, though simple, tourist leaflets. The recent work of older pupils includes evidence of studies of the River Severn, and of life in Kenya today.

74. The geography curriculum is satisfactory in terms of coverage of the required elements, and the scheme of work is appropriate. Assessment is satisfactory, with moderation of teachers' assessments carried out every eighteen months by the subject leader who has drawn up an appropriate action plan from her observations.

### **History**

75. Analyses of pupils' work for this year and for the previous year and discussions with subject leaders indicate that standards are broadly average in both Year 2 and Year 6.

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop appropriately their understanding of how objects and people change over time and are able to make simple observations about a range of old and new objects. Pupils in Year 2 learn about famous people in the past such as Grace Darling and Isambard Kingdom Brunel. In Year 6 in their study of the Victorians pupils have been able to study a good range of artefacts through their visit to the Black Country Museum and take part in a Victorian school day experience. They build on their knowledge of chronology effectively by using detailed time lines for events and people in the past and for their own lives. In a good links with art, they make well detailed observational drawings of household objects in the past.

76. Work in pupils' books is well organised and a good range of topic areas are covered which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment is generally satisfactory and linked to the thorough review of the subject, which takes place every eighteen months. The focus on the progressive development of pupils' skills is limited in assessment procedures. Teachers make appropriate use of National Curriculum level descriptors in their assessment of pupils' work for the annual reports to parents. The subject leader has recently been appointed and is developing her understanding of the role well.

### **Religious education**

There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in the subject.

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

- Pupils' knowledge of Christianity.
- Assessment procedures are now good.
- The specialist skills of the subject leader are well used.
- There are good opportunities for pupils' spiritual development.
- Written work does not consistently provide a good level of challenge.

77. Two lessons were observed during the inspection. One in a Year 5/6 class and another in a Year 3/4 class. Indications are that the attainment of pupils in the lessons seen, meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils achieve satisfactorily. A stronger element in pupils' attainment is their knowledge of Christianity and the school benefits from its close links with the parish church. In the school's previous inspection similar standards were observed. Areas for improvement identified in that inspection included, raising standards and improving arrangements for assessment. Arrangements for assessment in the subject are now good and make use of the good guidance provided by the Agreed Syllabus. There is a useful and well planned scheme of work and good use is made of the specialist skills of the newly appointed subject leader to teach in Years 3 to 6.

78. Good features in the lessons seen were the teachers' confident use and good knowledge of her subject. She established a firm basis for older pupils to explore how a Christian pilgrim might feel on visiting the Holy Land. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were helped to make effective links with their own experiences to consider how they could obey God's command to be responsible for the world around them. Through careful questioning, the teacher developed and consolidated pupils' knowledge of stories and events in the life of Jesus. While tasks and activities were appropriate to

the themes of the lessons the amount of work required of pupils individually did not provide a good level of challenge for all pupils.

79. Analyses of pupils' work indicate that there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect and to develop their spiritual responses. Sessions of collective worship support pupils' learning in RE well. Pupils write their own prayers, create a 'wish' tree and consider what makes certain places special. Pupils of all ages hear a good range of stories from the Bible and older pupils cover elements of the Jewish faith appropriately. Pupils study some celebrations and festivals from other faiths such as Shabbat in Judaism and Eid in Islam. While in some years there is a good amount of written work, in some classes there is insufficient and some pieces of work such as word searches and work sheets represent a limited level of challenge for pupils. Visits to local places of Christian worship link well with work such as that about Baptism and pupils know what to look for in a Christian place of worship. The school has identified as an area for improvement, the development of links with other faiths

80. The newly appointed coordinator is developing her understanding of the role effectively. Assessment in the subject is closely linked with learning objectives for a unit of work and to attainment levels specified in the Agreed Syllabus. The subject meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.

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

During the inspection two lessons were observed in art and music; one lesson was observed in design technology and PE. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on teaching and learning in these subjects. Where possible inspectors looked at pupils' work, teachers' planning and talked to teachers and pupils.

### **Art**

81. Two lessons were seen in art, both were in Years 5 and 6. In addition pupils' work on display and the work of current pupils in the school contained in the subject leader's file was scrutinised. This evidence indicates that standards are above average in both Years 2 and 6. There are good links being developed with pupils' work in other subjects which enhances their learning and provides their art work with a real focus. The good progress pupils make with their skills is well illustrated by the whole school portrait gallery where all pupils in the school paint their own portrait. The school benefits from close links with Newent Community School which has art specialist status. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been able to develop their skills and broaden their perspectives as a result of a recent project where they used batik techniques to create plant images. In a very good lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were preparing their evaluations of their experiences in Newent College. Through very skilful questioning the teacher guided pupils to review what they had learnt and to consider what they felt had worked well and what they could have done to improve their work. By the end of the lesson there was a feeling of real celebration of the experience.

82. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a good awareness of colour and shape in their work on nature in art. They make underwater pictures using wax resist techniques and paint seaside pictures using carefully controlled colour and shape. They develop their awareness of three dimensional structures and shapes when they make sea sculptures using shells and driftwood. Good basic skills of observational drawings are well illustrated in detailed drawings of shells.

83. By Year 6 pupils are building on these drawing skills well and producing carefully detailed drawings of Victorian artefacts using a good range of marks to produce shape and shading. They use a range of media in their paintings and sketches in the style of Lowry. Good links with their work in history are made in pupils' painting of 'swag of roses' designs found in canal boat art.

84. The subject leader for art brings very good specialist knowledge to her role. Through very thorough monitoring she encourages the good development of basic skills and seeks to develop enriching links with other areas of the curriculum. An Art Week is being planned for later in the year and is part of the school's priority to develop greater creativity into the curriculum.

### **Design and technology**

85. One lesson was observed in Year 2, in which teaching and learning were very good and attainment was above average. Very good elements in the lesson included very clear explanations and instructions which enabled pupils to undertake their tasks confidently; very good relationships which enabled pupils to work productively together and individually and very good match of tasks to pupils' abilities. These qualities enabled pupils to make very good progress with designing a puppet based on a character from a traditional tale.

86. Pupils' work displayed around the school and portfolios containing recent photographic evidence were scrutinised. Examples of pupils' work were also studied. These indicated that Year 2 pupils had generated ideas and had planned what to do next as they designed and created puppets. They also revealed that they had been able to work with tools, equipment and materials as they designed and constructed moving wheelbarrows, as part of a topic on plants. There was further evidence of pupils in Year 1 explaining what they were making and the utensils they were using as they made fruit salads. A large corridor display contained examples of musical instruments constructed by pupils in Years 5 and 6. It showed how pupils had investigated, modified their designs and evaluated their eventual models.

87. The coordinator provides good leadership and management of the subject. She has developed a well organised and interesting curriculum, which includes possible links with other subjects such as science and history. The subject's policy has been reviewed recently and whole school monitoring of pupils' work carried out thoroughly. The coordinator's plans for the future already recognise that there is a need for improved storage of large items of equipment. Under the leadership of the coordinator, the school recently succeeded in reaching the national finals of a construction kit competition. The previous inspection gave no clear judgement regarding the standards in the subject. Indications are that pupils, at this early stage of the year, are already reaching average standards.

### **Music**

88. Only two lessons were seen during this inspection, one in Year 2 and one in a Year 5 and 6 class. In addition, the subject leader was interviewed and her file was scrutinised. Indications are that provision in music is at least good, and standards are above average. In both lessons, pupils were using body percussion in rounds and parts to make rhythmic accompaniments. In Year 2, they were making their rhythmic sequences in two parts to fit in with short magic spell phrases. In the older class, they were accompanying a lengthy song about cotton milling in Victorian times to fit in with their history lessons; they performed sophisticated rhythms to simulate the sounds of machinery, in four parts. Teaching and learning in both lessons were good, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieved well. Singing in assembly indicated that pupils across the school are able to sing tunefully with a good awareness of melody and time. Older pupils were confident in sustaining a descant part in the singing of 'Seek Ye First the Kingdom of the Lord'.

89. There is a good range of musical talent among the staff of the school, and the subject leader herself is a musician, with good subject knowledge. Assessment is good, and the subject leader monitors and moderates assessments made by teachers on a periodic basis. Music is coordinated with other subjects well, including history and English, as well as with design technology, for instance, where an exciting range of instruments made by pupils in Years 5 and 6 forms an interesting display. There are three recorder groups in the school, taught by members of staff, a choir, a wind band, and an orchestra. A visiting music specialist who is assisted by the subject leader takes the latter. More than half of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 receive instrumental tuition from

visiting specialist teachers, enabling a strong uptake for the orchestra. Resources are good, and include both ethnic instruments and listening music from other times and places around the world. Enrichment, in the form of visiting performers, and taking part in both school and local musical events, is good.

### **Physical Education**

90. One dance lesson was seen during the inspection in Year 2. In the lesson observed the quality of teaching and learning was consistently good, and the pupils made good progress. The teacher's effective modelling of a range of possible movements gave pupils confidence and a good basis to develop their own ideas. Pupils were given good opportunities to evaluate and improve their performances. Very good management of the group helped pupils to thoroughly enjoy their lesson. A very effective selection of musical extracts stimulated pupils' obvious enjoyment of the lesson and ensured good behaviour and attention throughout the lesson.

91. Evidence from school record books shows very good attainment in swimming by the end of Year 6. Photographic evidence of the annual residential visit to an activities' centre also shows the older pupils participating in challenging outdoor pursuits.

92. The school currently has a temporary coordinator until a replacement is appointed. The subject's policy has been reviewed recently. However it does not contain sufficient guidance regarding the knowledge and understanding pupils need to learn about fitness and health. However, the lesson seen included appropriate opportunities for the pupils to both warm-up and cool down at the start and finish of their lessons. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and the school's provision benefits from large wall mounted gymnastics apparatus in the hall and generous areas of grassed and hard play surfaces for outdoor games.

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

93. During the inspection one lesson was seen, in Years 3 and 4. In addition, conversations were held with the subject leader and documentation for the subject was scrutinised. Good attention was paid to raising and maintaining pupils' self-esteem during the lesson seen. From documentation and other information received, provision in the subject is good. Planning indicates that teaching enhances the understanding and development of pupils in thinking about themselves and also how to get on with others, as well as learning about aspects of citizenship.

94. Relevant policies and a suitable scheme of work are in place, and together with science the subject includes sex and relationships education, education about drugs, and aspects of healthy living. The subject leader surveys planning and moderates assessment every eighteen months. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a range of activities promoting active citizenship, and those in Year 6 attend a Junior Citizenship Day each year. They also select charities to support and run their own fund-raising activities for these. There is an active School Council held weekly, which discusses issues of the moment raised by pupils, and several of the sensible suggestions put forward from the Council have been adopted by the school. Pupils feel a greater sense of ownership of their school through this mechanism. The subject is enriched by visits of experts to talk about specific topics within the programme, such as police officers, the fire service, and the school nurse.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (Ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
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>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
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	3
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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