

INSPECTION REPORT

MALVERN PARISH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Malvern

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116900

Headteacher: Lynn Gill

Lead inspector: Steve Bywater

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th July 2005

Inspection number: 267266

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	219
School address:	Manby Road Malvern Worcestershire
Postcode:	WR14 3BB
Telephone number:	01684 574084
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr C Fear
Date of previous inspection:	17 th March 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the town of Great Malvern. There are 219 pupils on roll, aged between four and eleven years. Most children have had pre-school education and attainment on entry to the school is above average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Almost all pupils live in the immediate area. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and no pupil is at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below that found in most schools. The majority of these pupils have learning difficulties; a number have emotional and behavioural needs, and a small number have physical and other needs. Three pupils have a statement of special educational need. The school currently has three temporary teachers. The headteacher has been in post since September 2004, following a 12-month period when the school was led by many temporary headteachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18463	Mr S Bywater	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music
9146	Mr M Brennand	Lay inspector	
29989	Mrs P Goodsell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
17794	Mr D Hardman	Team inspector	English Geography History Information and communication technology Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Malvern Parish Church of England Primary is an effective and inclusive school. Good teaching ensures that all pupils achieve well and standards are generally well above average by the time pupils are 11 years old. This caring school is led and managed well and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching leads to pupils achieving well.
- The headteacher, who is supported effectively by an effective governing body and key staff, provides very good leadership.
- Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and their behaviour and relationships are generally good.
- The achievement of lower attainers in mathematics is not as good as other pupils'.
- Links with the community and other schools are good and parental links are improving.
- Behaviour in Year 2 is not as good as in other year groups because teachers are not consistently applying the school's behaviour policy.
- The support, care and guidance given to pupils are good.
- Though satisfactory, pupils' knowledge and understanding of Britain as a multi-cultural society is not developed well enough.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The Foundation Stage curriculum has improved very considerably through improved planning which reflects the six areas of learning, more varied classroom activities and more efficient organisation and management. Checking and improving teachers' performance are now seen as integral parts of school improvement, helping to raise standards in teaching and learning. Standards in writing and science for the more capable pupils have improved by the end of Year 6. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has also improved well. However, improving the achievement of lower attaining pupils in mathematics has not been tackled firmly enough.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Throughout the school, **pupils achieve well.** Pupils' attainment when they enter the school is above average overall. Children achieve very well in the reception class and exceed all the goals for learning in all areas of learning well. Pupils also achieve well in Years 1 to 6. As a result of their good achievement in Years 1 and 2, standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics are currently above expectations in Year 2. Pupils also achieve well in science and ICT. By Year 6, standards in English and science are currently well above national expectations and standards in mathematics and ICT are above expectations. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils' attitudes are good and they are keen to work and take part in all aspects of school life. Pupils have good opportunities to develop personally and take on responsibilities. Their behaviour and relationships are also good overall. However, behaviour in Year 2 is often adequate at best, partly due to the inconsistent application of the procedures to manage behaviour. Pupils develop knowledge of other cultures but there is a lack of provision to make pupils aware of cultures other than their own in Britain. Attendance is well above average and most pupils arrive punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good and the school has a good curriculum. The overall quality of assessment is satisfactory.

A high proportion of teaching is good or better. Teaching enables pupils with a wide range of needs to learn effectively. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy and the good management of pupils' behaviour are positive features in most classes. Support staff make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, especially in helping pupils with special educational needs. The school also meets effectively the needs of higher attaining pupils. The quality of pupils' learning is good. They are eager to learn, and clear about what is expected of them. They work well together. In most subjects, teachers use assessment satisfactorily to track pupils' attainment and set challenging work. However, in mathematics, assessment is not used well enough to identify what lower attaining pupils should do next. Teachers do not always identify mathematics targets on individual education plans.

A considerable range of activities both within and beyond the school day enhances and enriches the good quality curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and they achieve well against their individual targets. Arrangements for the personal, social and health education of the pupils are good. There is a good level of care. Links with local schools and the community are good. The headteacher has successfully invested much time into improving relationships with parents. Although many parents express some concerns about the school, arrangements for communicating with parents have improved considerably.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Leadership by the headteacher is very good and by key staff good. The headteacher leads the staff team skilfully and provides an extremely clear sense of direction for the school to improve pupils' achievements. The whole school shares the headteacher's vision and clear commitment to inclusion. The effective governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and holds the school to account.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents speak highly of many aspects of school life, but responses in the parents' questionnaire indicate that they have concerns about the high turnover of staff and the effect this has had on children's learning. Pupils like their school and speak highly of it and particularly their teachers whom they regard as being very supportive and helpful.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve:

- continue to improve the achievement of lower attaining pupils in mathematics;
- be more consistent in dealing with behaviour;
- improve the provision to educate pupils about life in multi-cultural Britain.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, children achieve well. Achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is very good and pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as they progress through the school. By Year 2, standards are generally above average in English and mathematics. By Year 6, standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a very good start in the reception class.
- Pupils achieve well overall in Years 1 to 6 because teaching and learning are good.
- Lower attainers do not achieve as well as other groups in mathematics.
- Effective support enables pupils with special educational needs to achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term. There is a broad range of attainment but overall standards are above the levels normally expected for their age. The very good provision in the reception class enables children to achieve very well and become keen learners. The majority of the children in reception have attained the early learning goals in all areas of learning and the majority are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.4 (18.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (16.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.4 (17.4)	16.2 (16.3)

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

2. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 (table above), the results were well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science indicated that every child achieved at least the expected Level 2, placing the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally, and the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was above average. Improvements over the past four years have been broadly in line with the national trend.
3. Currently, pupils achieve well overall in Years 1 and 2 because teaching and learning are good. As a result of their good achievement, standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics are currently above expectations in Year 2. Pupils also achieve well in science and ICT.
4. The following table shows the results that pupils in Year 6 attained in 2004. When compared with schools nationally, the results were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. When compared with similar schools, the school's performance was above average in English and mathematics and average in science. The four-year trend in the school's improvement in Key Stage 2 is better than the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.2 (28.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.2 (28.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.7 (30.40)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Currently pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, and in Year 6 standards are well above average in English and science, and above average in mathematics and ICT. In English, the school makes good use of assessment information to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage in their learning and to set targets in their good individual education plans. They enable pupils to progress in small, well-defined stages. As a result, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in English because the work they do is well matched to their particular needs and they receive very good support. However, pupils who are lower attaining in mathematics are not always provided with sufficiently focused targets to enable them to improve their work.
6. Throughout the school, there was too little evidence to make a firm judgement about standards and achievement in other subjects. However, across the curriculum some high quality work was seen, for example in art and design and music. There is currently no recorded difference, and in the judgement of the inspection team, no difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have strong relationships and develop responsible attitudes.
- Pupils have a high opinion of their school.
- There is inconsistent application of the procedures to manage behaviour.
- There is a lack of provision to make pupils aware of cultures other than their own.
- There is a high level of attendance.

Commentary

7. Malvern Parish Primary is a happy school in which pupils are encouraged to build good relationships and are given every opportunity to develop responsible attitudes. From the time they enter the Foundation Stage, the school makes great efforts to instil pupils with a sense of respect for others and it is successful in this. In the early years, children are taught to listen and be polite to one another. Paired and group activities encourage them to share resources and as a result, they develop good relationships. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have acquired a high degree of maturity, demonstrating this through their willingness to take on a wide range of responsibilities.
8. Children have positive views about their school, much of this resulting from the way in which the school promotes good relationships. Across the age groups, pupils like their school and speak highly of it and particularly their teachers whom they regard as being very supportive and helpful.

9. Whilst behaviour is good overall, the inconsistent approach to managing behaviour, particularly in Year 2, means that the behaviour of a minority of pupils adversely affects the progress of others. Most of the problems occur when unacceptable behaviour goes unchecked, creating a circumstance where pupils are unaware of any boundaries. There have been no recent exclusions.
10. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils show their appreciation of beauty when they study mini-beasts under magnifying glasses. They experience the thrills of watching chicks emerge from their eggs and butterflies emerge from their chrysalis. They also reflect well when looking at the artwork of recognised artists. Moral development is promoted successfully through stories, religious education work and raising funds for charities. This supports pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. Social and cultural development is supported well. Through activities in English, art, music and geography, pupils develop a good sense of their own cultural heritage. Although cultural provision is satisfactory, there are some weaknesses specifically relating to the awareness amongst pupils concerning other religions and cultures. Whilst a range of religions is studied in religious education, there are few if any visits to sites of other faith groups or to schools with a greater ethnic mix than that at Malvern.
11. Attendance for the academic year 2004/05 is well above the national figures and is very good. This is a direct reflection of the high opinions which children have of their school, together with the strong support from parents who are keen for their children to attend. There is no unauthorised absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. Teaching and learning are good and the school provides a good curriculum. Assessment is satisfactory. The quality of care, support and guidance is good and there are satisfactory links with parents and good links with other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is good. As a consequence, the quality of learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class receive high quality teaching.
- Teachers ensure that all pupils are involved in all activities.
- Teachers do not always plan effectively for lower attaining pupils in mathematics.
- Teachers use a wide range of resources to motivate pupils.
- Lessons are well organised to ensure pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding systematically.
- Behaviour management in most classes is good but it is inconsistent in Year 2.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	11 (30%)	15 (40%)	10 (27%)	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.

12. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good in all areas of learning. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is thorough and results in the good progress seen in the early stages of developing their reading, writing and number skills. A particular strength is the emphasis put on strategies to develop children's thinking skills, through for example, the extension of their vocabulary, the asking of carefully framed questions and the way in which the children are given opportunities to phrase and develop their answers. This approach is having a positive impact on the children's progress and enabling them to communicate their ideas and opinions as well as gain additional knowledge and understanding. There is a very good balance between work that is directed by the teacher and activities chosen by the pupils themselves, which promotes children's personal, social and emotional development. Resources are well prepared and a good variety of teaching methods and approaches are used throughout the lessons. The classroom assistant supports individual and group activities very effectively and is skilled in asking questions that promote the children's learning. The arrangements to check what children know, understand, and can do are sound. Teachers know the children very well and they plan the next steps children need to take in their learning carefully. However, not enough use is made of ICT to track and record children's progress and check that children participate in all activities on a regular basis.
13. The school ensures that all pupils, whatever their capabilities, are included in all activities, which makes a positive contribution to their learning. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good because teachers and classroom assistants have high expectations and carefully match the work to the needs of individual pupils.
14. Assessment overall is satisfactory. Since the appointment of the current headteacher, the school has been carefully tracking pupils' progress. As a result, teachers have a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing over the year, although teachers are not yet fully confident at using the results of their assessments to plan future work in all subjects. Most of the marking of work is consistently good and related to the objectives of the lesson. This helps pupils to recognise how well they are doing. Assessment in English is used well because teachers maintain effective records of pupils' achievements and plan sequential work as a result of their findings. In mathematics, however, teachers are not using the information gleaned well enough to ensure that pupils who are struggling are supported by having their needs recorded in individual education plans.
15. Throughout the school, teachers often make the most of first-hand experiences to arouse pupils' curiosity and interest by using appropriate artefacts, objects, visits, visitors and photographs and through the use of investigative work. For example, pupils in Year 4 experienced real awe and wonder as they observed on the interactive whiteboard a snail being viewed through a computer microscope. Most teachers have the confidence and skills to use ICT to enrich learning. Teachers also ensure they provide a variety of learning approaches to cater for all types of learning, for example by speaking and listening and by using practical equipment.
16. Much of the work, especially in English and mathematics, includes extension work as well as consolidation activities. The work also allows pupils to practise and apply their knowledge, skills and concepts. This enables pupils to communicate their learning in a variety of ways and for a variety of audiences. Lessons are generally well organised. The structure of lessons in the literacy and numeracy hour and most lessons leads to effective use of time. The learning

intentions are made clear from the start and teachers use this format in other subjects. The structured lessons have a clear introduction, well-planned group activities and some effective endings where pupils' work can be shared and fully discussed. Teachers often refer to previous work at the beginning of each lesson or correct any common errors or misinterpretations. Questioning and discussion with pupils during lessons extend thinking and help them explore new ideas. This was seen to very good effect in a literacy lesson in Year 6 where questioning and suggestions by the teacher led to immediate evaluation and improvement in pupils' work as they studied the book *The Coming of the Surfman*. Effective verbal feedback to pupils is frequently helpful in showing pupils what is required to make progress. Plenary sessions are often used effectively to reinforce the teaching in a lesson and to check on pupils' understanding and progress.

17. Parents value the homework which the school provides and the school pays good attention to it. Scrutiny of the homework indicates that it is set regularly and supports pupils' learning in lessons well.
18. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage pupils well. In most classes, pupils are clear about classroom routines because teachers make their expectations for learning clear, and maintain a brisk pace through setting time constraints for tasks. Pupils respond well in these challenging lessons. Appropriate resources are made available for the pupils' use. However, in some year groups, particularly in Year 2, pupils are not always dealt with consistently. The school has a number of new staff and some are struggling to maintain good order at times, with the results that pupils are getting away with too much.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good and there is good enrichment through activities both within and outside of the school day. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The reception children make a very good start to school.
- Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and achieve well against their individual targets.
- There is good enrichment in the overall curriculum provided for the pupils.
- Arrangements for the personal, social and health education of the pupils are good.

Commentary

21. Teachers and classroom assistants are working well together to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is provided for all the pupils. In particular, good attention is paid to the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the science curriculum throughout the school, resulting in the good and very good standards seen in these subjects. The overall planning of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection. There are guidelines for what is to be taught in all subjects and a clear plan identifies which topics will be covered and when. A significant development in the overall curriculum is the increased setting up of links between different subject areas. The school plans to develop further the relevance and application of these connections. Good arrangements are in place for the teaching of personal, social and health education. This is provided through science lessons, circle times¹ and specific lessons.

¹ The provision of a discussion period called circle time provides a good opportunity for pupils to talk over issues that face them as part of everyday life.

22. There has been a very good improvement in the provision for the children in the reception class since the last inspection. Children have access to a very good range of well-planned and challenging learning activities and this provides a vigorous and positive start to their education. The classroom is well organised and provides a vibrant and interesting environment that encourages children to become involved in the learning opportunities provided. The school has made great strides in the development of the outdoor learning area for the children in the reception class and it has firm plans to further improve this as part of the overall building programme.
23. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and this support enables these pupils to achieve well and make good progress against the targets that are set for them. The assistants are well trained and intervene sensitively to enable the pupils to sustain their attention and concentration and to participate in lessons and other activities. Good arrangements are in place to review the individual education plans on a regular basis and to determine the areas on which to concentrate. However, there are occasions when some teachers pay insufficient attention to setting targets that specifically concentrate on learning in numeracy.
24. The good enrichment of the curriculum through visits and visitors to the school greatly promotes the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and contributes well to their personal development. Staff and parents give generously of their time to organise a range of sporting, musical and other activities out of lesson time and these are enthusiastically attended. This enrichment of the curriculum promotes the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and contributes well to their personal development.
25. The school has made strenuous efforts to improve the accommodation. Extensive building plans are about to be implemented to improve the classrooms for several year groups and to provide better library facilities and extended outdoor provision for the reception class. The school has had a number of temporary headteachers and teachers over the past few years. Governors have tackled the issues of recruitment assiduously and at present there are sufficient staff to teach the curriculum satisfactorily. The situation is rapidly getting better as more permanent staff have been appointed for the next school year and there is an improvement in the range of skills they are bringing to the school. Already, the music curriculum is well supported by the use of a talented specialist music teacher. Resources are generally good and there has been a good improvement in the provision of ICT equipment, including the installation of interactive whiteboards throughout the school. Plans to increase further the number of laptop computers for use in the classrooms are well in hand.

Care, guidance and support

The school has good arrangements for the care, safety and welfare of pupils. Advice and guidance to pupils' based on the monitoring of their personal development are good. The way in which the school seeks and acts upon pupils' views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The arrangements for health and safety and child protection are good.
- There is a high level of pastoral care.
- Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and supported well.

Commentary

26. Arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are good and staff demonstrate an empathetic approach to the children in their charge. Parents of all children and especially parents of children in the Foundation Stage are, rightly, confident that their children are in good hands at school. Standards of pastoral care ensure that pupils experience a secure and supportive

learning environment in which they can achieve well and make good progress. At a formal level child protection procedures are good. The deputy headteacher is the nominated officer and he has undertaken the required training. The school is fortunate that there are few child protection issues but knowledge of the reporting arrangements and the records of those that have occurred are secure. Much work has also been done to ensure that the school complies with all the necessary health and safety requirements. The local education authority has offered good support by providing helpful guidelines on audit procedures. The health and safety policy has also been re-written with clear roles and responsibilities. The school is well served by a pro-active caretaker who carries out a daily visual check to ensure that the site is safe.

27. The close attention to pastoral care is continued throughout pupils' education. Arrangements begin at the start of the school day with a member of staff who greets pupils as they enter the playground. Being a relatively small school, staff know pupils well. As a result, they have a good understanding of what children are capable of and what is required to help them develop. Pupils confirm that there is a good level of care, citing as particular strengths the cheerful atmosphere and the way in which staff listen to them when they have a concern. There are satisfactory systems in place to track pupils' academic progress and identify pupils who may need additional support. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in school. This has a positive impact on standards and achievement. There is early identification of need, especially in literacy, and as a result, effective strategies to improve learning are put in place as soon as possible. The regular monitoring and reviewing of pupils' needs ensure that, with the exception of lower attaining pupils in mathematics, they are being met effectively. Links with outside agencies are satisfactory.
28. The school values the views of pupils and has established satisfactory ways to involve them in its work. However, the school recognises there is room for improvement and intends to re-establish a school council. Pupils know that their views matter and that they can influence school decision-making. They say that this motivates them to show interest in the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established satisfactory links with parents. Links with the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are improving arrangements for communicating with parents; these are now satisfactory.
- There are still negative perceptions which many parents hold about the school.
- There is strong support of the local cluster of schools.
- There are positive and worthwhile links with the community

Commentary

29. Since her arrival in September 2004, the headteacher has invested much time into improving the relationships with parents. Whilst there have been considerable improvements in the way the school relates to parents, the questionnaire completed by parents indicates that concerns remain over the high turnover of staff and the effect this has had on children's learning. The appointment of a new headteacher is a positive first move in addressing this situation and discussions with her and with parents indicate a genuine commitment to resolving the issue. Links with parents are satisfactory and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
30. Parents and carers of children in the reception class have good opportunities on a day-to-day basis to discuss with staff any problems that arise. There are very good arrangements in place to ensure a smooth entry of children into the school. Staff liaise with the pre-school settings attended by the children, and relevant and helpful information is often passed to the school

regarding the children's progress and attainment. Meetings with parents give good information about the topics that the children will be covering and how the basic skills will be taught, together with ways that the parents can help their children at home. Children make visits to the class before they start school and staff make home visits; these features help the children to get to know the adults and some of the routines before they start school on a formal basis.

31. In response to concerns about the level of information that parents receive, a regular weekly newsletter gives ample notice of forthcoming events. Staff are available at the end of the day to meet with parents, in an informal setting, to pass on information and parents are invited to the weekly Celebration assembly. Each term, curriculum sheets provide information on the topics of study for the term. Parents have good opportunities to discuss their children's progress at the twice-yearly consultation evenings. The annual reports to parents have been revised recently to provide clearer information of the level at which their children are working. Early feedback from parents indicates that they very pleased with the new format. Parents are informed at an early stage if their child has special educational needs and are made aware of targets in their child's individual education plan.
32. The school has established a wide range of links with the community, which helps to broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world. There are close ties with three churches, and the vicars of two of these churches are school governors. Each year, the school choir performs with distinction at a local home for old aged pensioners and the local environment is used to good effect to enhance the study of history and geography.
33. The school is a member of a highly supportive local cluster of schools, through which much information is shared. The headteacher was particularly grateful for the help she received in revising the school's health and safety policy. The school benefits considerably from the close links and proximity of a local independent school by being given the use of their swimming pool and sports facilities together with the theatre in which they perform their annual production. Language students also run a French club for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Through the links with local primary and secondary schools, there are good links in support of the teaching of ICT and in return Malvern Parish Primary takes a number of secondary school pupils on work experience.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Leadership by the headteacher is very good and by key staff good. The involvement in and governance of the school by the governing body are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides the school with a very good sense of direction, enabling a strong drive to improve pupils' achievements.
- The headteacher is providing a very good lead in the development of the school staff into a strong team.
- The whole school shares the headteacher's clear commitment to inclusion.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and assists in shaping a clear vision for its work.

Commentary

34. In the last report, inspectors identified weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school. This related to the role of the governors, which was poorly developed since they did not comply with statutory requirements and had not been involved in school self-evaluation or in focusing development planning. Following the report, the role of the governors in the school has been completely restructured. They are now an effective governing body and meet their statutory requirements very well. The governing body is involved closely in improving standards and providing constructive criticism of the work of the school.

35. Since the appointment of the headteacher in September 2004, the school has improved very well. With a very clear vision, she has been successful in forging a strong team of teaching and non-teaching staff who are committed to school improvement and greater partnership with parents. The school has overcome the potential barrier of recent staff changes well and pupils' achievements are not adversely affected. The care of the staff, the high morale of staff and pupils, and the very clear direction for the school given by the headteacher, were all recognised and valued by the parents at the meeting with inspectors. The headteacher and staff meet regularly to discuss common issues and oversee work in the different aspects and subjects of the school. A very good sense of direction is apparent and pupils achieve well when compared to their earlier attainment.
36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinators who ensure the school responds appropriately to pupils' needs, advise colleagues and check on provision. In addition, the governor responsible for this area of development is very well informed on all aspects of the special educational needs provision and is a regular visitor to classes and to meetings with the co-ordinators. The result of all these initiatives is shown in the way that inclusion is a very important element of the work in the school and all pupils, whatever their capability, are fully included in the life of the school.
37. The headteacher's very good leadership ensures that any difficulties are identified and dealt with as they arise. This is shown in the way the headteacher has forged a strong team. By including temporary staff recently appointed to the school, the headteacher has generated an equally strong team spirit where all staff work very well together for the benefit of pupils. Staff in the reception class, for example, work very well as a highly effective team. Sharing the responsibility for the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage has enabled them to see what needed to be done and to decide how changes can be implemented. Training, visiting other Early Years' settings, taking advice from the local education authority and an open-minded approach to tackling the problems identified at the time of the last inspection have combined to enable the teachers and their assistant to develop a shared vision for improvement. They have implemented the new curriculum for the children in the reception class very effectively. A new manager with responsibility for Years 1 and 2 and the reception year has recently been appointed and will take up his post in September.
38. Subject co-ordinators monitor their colleagues' teaching, check lesson plans and scrutinise samples of pupils' work. All teachers have their literacy and numeracy lessons observed regularly. Teachers receive detailed feedback on the quality of their lessons and areas for improvement. The headteacher follows up the areas for improvement and ensures that these are part of the performance management targets for staff. Professional development of all staff is given high priority in order to improve staff knowledge and expertise and to enable them to find out about new initiatives that will benefit the children's learning and so raise standards.
39. The work rate is extremely high and reflects the headteacher's very good leadership and the teachers' willing and conscientious approach. Staff and governors, following the successful completion of the action plan following the last inspection, have produced the school improvement plan. The list of priorities fits the needs of the school very well as it moves forward following a long period of uncertainty when a series of different headteachers were in post. Subject leaders contribute to the plan with their detailed action plans for their curriculum areas. They are taking full responsibility for monitoring the progress being made. Self-evaluation is very accurate.
40. The governing body is very committed to supporting the school and holding it to account. This is demonstrated clearly by the governors' knowledge of the progress pupils make. They have a clear idea of the school's standards in English, mathematics and science, because they are linked to different subjects, regularly watch lessons, and discuss progress in the curriculum committee meetings. The headteacher provides governors with regular, clear reports on the progress of all aspects of school life. In addition, governors have kept a close eye on the extent to which the key issues arising from the last inspection report have been addressed.

Financial management and control are good and the school applies the principles of best value well. The finance committee of the governing body keeps a close eye on the school's finances and are prudent in their allocation of funds. As a result, the school provides good value for money. The high carry-over figure, shown below, arises from funds that the school had to save to pay its share of the building work due to start this term.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	525,136
Total expenditure	513,313
Expenditure per pupil	2,344

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27,618
Balance carried forward to the next	39,441

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Attainment on entry is above average for the children currently in reception and their achievement is very good. A majority of children are on line to exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception class. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when provision for the youngest children was judged to be unsatisfactory. The reception class teachers and their assistant have worked very well as a team to assimilate and implement the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning is now firmly in place that places learning through structured play at the heart of the curriculum whilst challenging children to develop a range of skills and acquire knowledge and understanding at appropriate levels.
42. Children like coming to school and engage with enthusiasm in the very good range of activities provided for them. They quickly learn the routines on entering school, behave very well, and enjoy trying new experiences. Children with special educational needs are identified early and their needs are effectively met so that they make good progress and achieve well.
43. Teaching and learning are very good. A significant strength is the team approach and organisation so that the day runs smoothly. Support staff play an important role, both in supporting and in leading small groups as they work on adult-led activities. All staff are very aware of how these young children learn and know when to stand back and encourage independence and when to offer that extra bit of support. Teachers know the children very well and they plan the next steps they need to take in their learning carefully. However, insufficient use is made of ICT to track and record children's progress and check that children participate in all activities on a regular basis.
44. Leadership and management are very good and the teamwork, high quality environment and rich curriculum are good evidence of the outcomes of this.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop a very good understanding of how to behave and look after themselves in school.
- Relationships are very well developed between the adults and the children and between the children themselves.

Commentary

45. Children settle happily and confidently when they come into school because the adults create a positive atmosphere. This fosters the children's constructive attitudes to taking care of themselves and to learning. Each morning when the children come into the classroom, they select their own activities from the very good range provided. This means that their independence is promoted well. Children pay very good attention to their chosen learning activity and concentrate well to complete the tasks they are set. Their personal and social skills are developing well because they are provided with good opportunities to work and play together and to reflect on the effect of their actions on others. Adults have very high expectations that children will behave well and be thoughtful towards each other and make sure that the children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Overall, the children respond very well to this, although very occasionally they can display less than kind behaviour to one another. Children speak very confidently to adults and to each other and

usually play and work very well together. Many instances of them sharing and taking turns happily were seen and the children often organise themselves in small groups to take advantage of the good learning activities provided. Overall, children achieve very well and most children exceed the levels expected for their age in this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in learning the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing and reach standards that are well above those normally expected.

Commentary

46. Children are given very good opportunities to express themselves through talking. Teachers develop and enhance the children's vocabulary and their knowledge and understanding with dedicated question and answer and discussion sessions. There is a good range of role-play opportunities for the children to use. Adults often make good quality interventions to promote the children's understanding and vocabulary in play scenarios, thus encouraging and developing confidence in speaking and listening. Teachers engender a sense of excitement in and enjoyment of being able to read and this has a very positive impact on the children's desire to read things for themselves. The children's early reading skills are developed very well because they are given good opportunities to respond to events in stories, share books and receive very clear teaching of the sounds that letters make. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children read simple books well, are confident in making predictions about what will happen in a story and are able to retell stories they have heard. There is an effective home-school reading partnership, which has a positive impact on the achievement of the children in learning to read. Writing skills are taught systematically and carefully so that the children learn to form letters correctly as well as learning to write and spell a basic vocabulary of key words. Teachers provide a very good range of writing opportunities and the children write with confidence and enjoyment. They are rapidly increasing their ability to build words for themselves. Occasionally there is an over-use of copy writing which limits the development of independent writing by the least capable children. Overall, children achieve very well and most children exceed the levels expected for their age in this area of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in learning the basic skills of counting, recognising and ordering numbers and standards in mathematical development are well above those expected nationally

Commentary

47. A good emphasis on the correct use of language enables children to acquire new words to use in number activities and helps to ensure that they make very good progress in gaining mathematical understanding. The children's natural enthusiasm for counting and using numbers and developing mathematical patterns is very well promoted by the interesting and relevant practical activities that are planned and provided. The most capable children can work out which numbers are missing from a hundred square and write the numerals correctly to fill in the gaps. When a group of children played skittles they needed to work out the total of 16 and 16 and independently devised a method to do this, arriving at the correct answer. Very good opportunities are provided for children to think about numbers and to work things out in

their heads as when they have to establish the mystery number through the asking of 'sensible' questions. In whole-class sessions, very effective support is given by the teaching assistant to enable all the children to understand the way to work out the problems set. Overall, children achieve very well and most children exceed the levels expected for their age in this area of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because the teachers plan interesting and enjoyable learning activities that link the strands of learning and enable the children to reach standards well above those expected nationally.
- Children are making very good progress in learning to use ICT applications.

Commentary

48. Teachers' planning and the extensive range of learning activities ensure that there are very good opportunities for children to experience each of the strands within this area of learning. Children frequently use the computer, interactive whiteboard, and programmable toy confidently and competently to support their learning. Their interest and knowledge of the natural world are very well promoted by the growing of plants and rearing and care of butterflies. The children learn about the faith and customs of the Christian year. They discover facts about the way their grandparents lived and gain a developing sense of history and their own place in society. They have good opportunities to use water and sand to develop different scenarios and explore the ways materials behave in different forms. Interesting topics such as the present one on journeys enable the children to experience a very good range of learning opportunities. They construct maps, draw plans of their journeys and gain an understanding of how a journey is planned and what is needed to complete it successfully. Overall, children achieve very well and most children exceed the levels expected for their age in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop both fine and large movement skills through a range of well-planned activities.
- Climbing apparatus outside is limited although the outdoor area is about to be remodelled.

Commentary

49. Overall, children reach the expected goals for their age in their physical development and most exceed them. Their fine motor skills are especially well developed. When using pencils, scissors and brushes, they show care and precision. Extensive opportunities are provided to develop fine manipulative control by completing jigsaws and using construction kits, joining and manipulating pieces, and the children display confidence and enjoyment when working in these areas. The outdoor area provides them with facilities for using wheeled toys that they drive, steer and scoot enthusiastically showing a good sense of space and control. There is a good range of small apparatus in use such as bats and balls, hoops and hockey sticks. The children enjoy hopping, skipping, running and jumping, and develop a good level of skill and quality of movement. Good use is made of the school hall for indoor games and dance lessons but there is no climbing equipment outdoors and this limits the opportunities for the children to

explore, climb and clamber independently. Overall, children achieve very well and most children exceed the levels expected for their age in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are well prepared and provide a very good range of activities, enabling the children to explore and use their imagination.

Commentary

50. Children reach standards that are well above those expected for their age. Adults provide many opportunities for children to experience situations in which they can use their imagination. In particular, very good use is made of the role-play areas – at present, a station ticket office and a ship. Outdoors at the station, children are invited to consult the timetables, buy their tickets, wait on the platform and finally take a train journey. On board ship, the mariners plan the expedition, marking it on a map, fishing for dinner takes place through the portholes and the onboard rations are shared out so that they last for the whole voyage. The adults develop and extend the children's language and social skills very well through talk and activities related to the overall theme of journeys. Very good use is made of the class puppet Roger to enact his rescue following the receipt of a message in a bottle explaining he has fallen overboard! Good opportunities to use a range of media, and sand and water are always available; however, painting, collage and modelling materials are not provided regularly enough to promote individual creativity. Children greatly enjoy painting and they know a good range of colours, painting scenes with care and precision. They join in singing with enthusiasm, knowing a good range of songs to which they can add the actions and they have regular opportunities to play musical instruments. The teachers provide a range of creative activities in the outdoor area and the children enjoy the sense of freedom of being outdoors and exploring things for themselves. Overall, children achieve very well and most children exceed the levels expected for their age in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are often good.
- There have been significant improvements in pupils' writing and presentation since the last inspection.
- Teachers use assessments well to plan a very good range of language activities.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with small groups and individuals, particularly those with special educational needs.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Teachers plan well to promote pupils' language skills in other subjects.

Commentary

51. By Year 2, pupils' attainment is above the level expected for their age. By Year 6, it is well above the level expected nationally. This matches closely the results in national tests in 2004 in Years 2 and 6. The unvalidated results for 2005 are well above expectations in Year 2 but writing standards are a little lower than expected in Year 6. The test results do not do justice to the quality of writing seen during the inspection. Pupils' achievements have improved well since the last inspection.

52. Pupils are expected to be attentive to teachers and each other, and teachers plan a very good range of language activities, such as taking part in plays and giving ideas in discussions. Pupils' speaking and listening improve well throughout the school because teachers develop skills through questioning pupils about their work and pupils being encouraged to discuss their work with each other. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils discussed how to improve the quality of their writing by using a previously completed plan to describe the mini-beast in their science project. Pupils came up with interesting and descriptive sentences in their accounts. For example, one wrote, "An old spider waits for its prey to become trapped in its web" and another posed the question, "It is brown and has 100 legs. What is it?" They were effectively challenged to use their own ideas to write a report in their own style. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils' written work shows style and imagination. For example, the start of a story by one pupil captures the reader with the very first sentence, "Rain lashed at the window and thunder howled like an angry wolf".
53. Pupils enjoy reading sessions. Many pupils are supported very effectively in their reading at home, as part of their homework. In Year 6, pupils are very confident readers. Those pupils heard reading aloud read very expressively and fluently. Pupils' achievement is good because teachers regularly check their progress and make sure that pupils are challenged very successfully in line with their differing abilities. There are plenty of good quality books to read, including graded fiction books to match pupils' differing capabilities and attractive reference books. Teaching assistants support different groups during these sessions very effectively. Pupils achieve well in writing and spelling. Pupils know how to use 'word' books and dictionaries. Older pupils confidently use dictionaries to find the meaning of words using alphabetical order. As they move through the school, pupils use an increasing range of punctuation and varied vocabulary to make their writing lively. For example, in an English lesson in Year 6 the teacher used a very effective strategy to ensure pupils understood the use of subordinate clauses. The teacher challenged the class to make up silly sentences, and one such as, "Shouting and yelling, the peanuts devoured the human race" caused amusement as well as showing the success of the strategy. Pupils are taught to join letters before Year 2 and, as a result, by Year 6, their handwriting is joined, fluent and legible. All pupils take care with the presentation of their written work. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
54. Teachers use the assessments of pupils' work effectively to plan lessons that are both interesting and challenging. Literacy lessons are taught well, and learning, especially in Year 6, is often very good. Teachers are confident in their planning, basing their lessons on the National Literacy Strategy, but modifying what is taught carefully to meet the considerable range of attainment in each class. The number of pupils with special educational needs varies in each class but most teachers have a calm authoritative approach and maintain a good learning atmosphere. They use questions, rewards and praise skilfully to manage pupils, to maintain their concentration and interest. Relationships are good and secure and as a result pupils get on well with each other and all adults. Teaching assistants give effective support to small groups and individuals in all classrooms.
55. Leadership and management are good. Teachers work closely together and, as a result, pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The quality of teaching and learning is regularly checked by the co-ordinator and the headteacher and the key issues from the last inspection, to raise standards, and improve teaching and the presentation of written work by Year 6, have been dealt with very successfully. As a result, progress since the last inspection has been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Teachers plan effectively to promote pupils' language skills in other subjects and pupils use their writing skills well in subjects such as science, history and geography. Pupils are given very good opportunities to extend their speaking and listening skills when discussing their ideas for the improvements to the outside environment. Pupils' independent research skills are encouraged and they regularly use reference books or find information on the Internet. Older

pupils clearly understand how to use computers to create a cover sheet for their work. They use graphics and images to add to the good quality presentation of their work. The work samples showed plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to word process their draft writing, then edit and improve it.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- The progress of pupils in Year 3 has been affected by staff absences.
- Teaching is good
- Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons, and lessons are interesting.
- Work for lower attaining pupils is not matched well enough to meet their needs.

Commentary

57. The results in the national tests in 2004 were well above the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. When compared with similar schools, the results were above average. In both Year 2 and Year 6, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected and higher levels was high in 2004 and continues to be so now. Standards overall are currently above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Fewer pupils in Year 6 are achieving the expected Level 4 which suggests that some lower attaining pupils are underachieving. The school is confident that these lower results reflect the ability of the cohort rather than a lowering of expectations but it does recognise that more could be done to support lower attaining pupils and has plans to do so. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls. Overall, pupils achieve well and this represents good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in most year groups make good progress in all aspects of mathematics and their skills in using and applying mathematics are developing particularly well. The only exceptions are in Year 3 where progress over the year has been satisfactory because pupils have been severely affected by staff changes, and, very recently, in Year 2 for the same reason. This still represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially since the school is currently staffed with three temporary teachers.
58. Pupils enjoy and participate enthusiastically in lessons. Their behaviour is good; they listen attentively to the teacher during the introduction to lessons and work well together. For example, in Year 1, pupils shared resources and helped each other to measure the capacity of water in different sizes of container. This collaborative work enhances their social development. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils thoroughly enjoy the mental mathematics sessions. They apply themselves attentively to tasks and are confident in explaining their work to the teacher. Higher attaining pupils enjoy the challenge of difficult problems, have the confidence to try various possible solutions and are able to explain complex calculations. This was seen to very good effect in an excellent lesson in Year 6 where pupils investigated how many combinations there could be to seat a given number of people around a table. It was fascinating to watch them ponder and work this out. Some even came up with a working formula.
59. Overall, teaching is good and ranged from satisfactory to excellent. When planning, teachers include a variety of mathematics activities with clear aims for each lesson, together with the vocabulary that is to be used. The best planning takes into account what the pupils have learnt recently. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They plan interesting activities and use a variety of questions to check pupils' understanding and encourage mathematical thinking. Teachers organise lessons in a structured way according to the National Numeracy Framework. A short session of mental mathematics is sometimes used very well to practise and sharpen the pupils' skills. This motivates pupils for the class work that follows. Most

teachers give a brisk, clear introduction to the rest of the lesson. Pupils work on individual, pair or group tasks. In most classes, ICT is used well in this part of the lesson as a mathematics activity. Good use of classroom assistants and volunteers allows all pupils, especially those with special needs, to make good progress. Most lessons finish with a short plenary session in which pupils share their work with one another and the teacher checks their progress and understanding. In the session at the end of the lesson, teachers give good feedback to the pupils about their achievements and set out the next steps for individuals or groups of pupils. Most pupils have some mathematics homework during the week, which reinforces pupils' learning.

60. Leadership is good. The co-ordinator has had good opportunities to monitor teaching in the school and has scrutinised work and planning. The detailed analysis of the results of national tests and assessments is helping the school to review its current practice. For example, the school is now reviewing the way that pupils are grouped for mathematics in order to support lower attaining pupils more effectively whilst ensuring that the more capable are extended in their work. The school has a variety of assessments in place. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is thorough and accurate. The school has clear records of pupils' progress and this guides teachers in identifying which pupils will benefit from additional classes to boost their learning. Teachers usually give helpful feedback to the pupils when they are directly teaching them. In most classes, marking is usually very good and refers to the learning objectives achieved and helps pupils understand what they should do next to make further progress. Management is satisfactory because of a failure in most classes to identify when pupils have a specific learning difficulty in mathematics. For example, it is rare to see a numeracy or mathematics target on a pupils' individual education plan.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Numeracy is developed satisfactorily through other subjects but is not yet clearly identified in all subject plans. However, pupils effectively use their mathematical skills to support their learning, for example through data handling in ICT, careful measuring in design and technology and the using and applying of their skills in producing and collecting information through graphs and tables in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science have improved and, by Year 6, pupils attain standards that are well above those found nationally.
- Achievement in science is good because teachers use a questioning and experimental approach to teaching and learning.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- The assessment of progress and tracking of pupils are not precise enough.

Commentary

62. Since the last inspection, improvement in the overall provision for science has been very good. Standards have risen and are continuing to improve. Pupils enter the school with above average attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world although there is a wide range of ability within the different cohorts. By Year 2, standards above those expected nationally and by Year 6, they are well above the national averages. These judgements match the results of the national tests and assessments from 2004 and the unvalidated results from 2005. This year well over half of the eleven year olds have reached the higher Level 5. Achievement in science is good because teaching and learning are good throughout the school and the subject is well led and managed.

63. The curriculum is well organised and taught systematically throughout the school. Teachers have clear guidelines for what they are to teach and this ensures that pupils cover all areas of the National Curriculum well. A significant strength of the teaching and learning is the way in which the pupils are often encouraged to pose questions about scientific topics for themselves. They then have opportunities to design their own experiments to test their predictions and ideas. There is a good emphasis on gaining and understanding scientific language and methodology, and practical activities are used effectively to stimulate and promote learning. Overall, the teaching is thorough and this means that pupils achieve well and acquire a good basic knowledge and understanding of science. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils generally respond well, especially as they mature. Pupils are attentive to what teachers have to say and listen well to each other's points of view. The work is often planned for either small groups or pairs of pupils, helping to develop their sense of co-operation and collaboration. Work is marked well and comments are made to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good use is made of mathematical skills to record findings and display data and further use is made of ICT skills to promote teaching and learning in science. Good examples were seen in the Year 5 class, where pupils were tackling the problem of finding the most effective sound insulator and used a data-logger connected to the interactive whiteboard to measure and display results very clearly, and in Year 4, where the computer microscope was used to observe a snail.
64. Leadership and management of science are good. The subject leader is making a significant impact on the way in which science is taught throughout the school. She regularly checks the planning and teaching of the curriculum and the findings are developed into an action plan that feeds directly into the school improvement plan. Assessment is currently satisfactory but the school has identified the need to extend the assessment systems to check more rigorously the levels of attainment of individual pupils and track their progress more precisely.
65. Pupils greatly enjoy their lessons and talk with confidence, for example about how they can make their tests fair or improve them for the next time. All pupils have good opportunities to carry out practical activities to support their learning and generally record their findings carefully and neatly. The school seeks to link work done in science to the everyday lives of pupils; for example, the Healthy Schools Award work promotes balanced diets and eating habits. Pupils have good opportunities to experience the wonder of scientific discovery and to consider questions such as the ethics of taking living creatures from their usual habitats to carry out experiments in the classroom. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance the science curriculum and these are much enjoyed by all of the pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ICT suite is used well by many subjects.
- There are insufficient computers in classrooms to develop and extend pupils' skills.
- Teachers' planning ensures that all pupils develop their skills systematically.

Commentary

66. Pupils' attainment by Year 2 is in line with the level expected for their age. By Year 6, it is above the level expected nationally. Their achievements are good throughout the school. Standards have improved since the last inspection. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Teaching and learning are good and many pupils use computers confidently. This has a significant impact on pupils' achievements, attainment and attitudes in lessons. For example, pupils in a Year 1 lesson improved their knowledge of how to program a floor robot to follow a set route on the floor. Pupils understood the need to enter accurate

distances from one location to another to make sure the robot stopped at the right place. Pupils recorded the instructions they entered during the lesson and the grand finish saw all the short visits entered in one long sequence. There was great excitement when the robot followed a complicated path to each location. This type of work was developed well in the Year 2 class when the teacher used an interactive whiteboard effectively to demonstrate how to enter instructions to make the robot move in certain directions and then turn, to make the shape of a square on the screen. Pupils took great pride in their work and were excited when they entered their own instructions and the robot created different shapes on the screen. Pupils often work in pairs on the computers, and co-operate and share ideas very well. For example, when writing stories, they make valid suggestions to each other on the use of interesting language and discuss which pictures to use to illustrate the story.

67. Pupils in Year 2 explain how they save their work and how to print the finished product. In Year 5, pupils use computers in the computer suite to complete science assignments, and they explain how they use sensing equipment to show how much light is recorded in different places in the classroom. This type of work enhances the provision in science and ICT. Although pupils use the classroom-based computers that are linked to the whiteboards, there are insufficient computers in classrooms to extend and develop pupils' skills further. The co-ordinator is well aware of the shortfall and has a very good plan to improve resources in the near future. Pupils' attitudes are very good and pupils talk enthusiastically about using the ICT suite. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils used a program to sort temperatures taken at different times during the day into a graph showing when it was the hottest. They were very keen to show staff their completed work and to explain how they achieved success.
68. Leadership and management are good and there has been efficient monitoring of standards and the quality of teaching. There is clear subject guidance that teachers follow and a well-developed improvement plan to improve resources further. The co-ordinator has ensured that teachers have undergone training in the use of the interactive whiteboards and these are used well by staff in many lessons, showing pupils what a valuable tool ICT is when used effectively. Pupils use these whiteboards and the bank of 12 laptops available in school to enhance their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 used the laptops to produce a questionnaire for pupils and parents asking for ideas on how to improve the outside environment. The result of these initiatives means that, by Year 6, pupils' achievements are good in ICT.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The school is making good progress in developing the use of ICT across the curriculum. Discussions with pupils across the school show they understand how computers can help them in many aspects of their school life, for example creating graphs in mathematics, using the Internet for research in history and geography and recording the results of experiments in science. For example, pupils in Year 6 use the Internet for research into their historical studies of Greece. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 show the good use of computers to enhance their mathematical studies when entering data into a program to make a graph of their favourite fruits. They use art programs and proudly explained how to use shapes and colours to make their 'Crazy Castle' pictures. Older pupils are confident in using ICT and explain how to enlarge an imported picture and to move it around the screen to improve the visual effect of their work. For example, pupils in Year 6 explained how they used a program to write their own autobiography and they inserted 'hyperlinks' so that they could jump from one page to another.

HUMANITIES

70. Work was sampled from **geography** and **history** and only one lesson was seen in geography. As a result, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. A scrutiny of pupils' work in **geography** shows that the curriculum is relevant, well organised and meets National Curriculum requirements. For example, in Year 2, pupils study an island environment and they compare the environment on the Isle of Struay with their own local area. There are some useful links with other subjects; for example, pupils

in Year 5 apply their numeracy and ICT skills when they collect data about noise levels in different parts of the school environment and record the information on computers to create graphs. The school makes good use of websites to collect up-to-date information. For example, pupils in Year 5 found out about European countries and Year 6 complete questionnaires for pupils and parents to find their views on improvements in the school outdoor environment. There is an appropriate emphasis on map work; for instance, pupils in Year 4 use the features shown on a map to decide a good place to live, such as, near a water supply, fertile land for food growth and in a place not likely to flood.

71. **History** has a high profile in the school, with some good displays and interesting work from all year groups. Pupils build up a good store of knowledge about people, events and changes in the past. Both pupils and teachers make good use of the Internet to find information. They learn to interpret different sources of evidence and know that historians can glean information from artefacts. Pupils use their literacy skills well in history work; for example, pupils in Year 6 wrote some interesting reports on life in Greek times. They recorded the different ways that the Greek language influenced our own, for example that 'bios' means life and is used in the word biography. Pupils in Year 4 used the Internet well to complete research into the life of Henry VIII and found out that he enjoyed playing tennis. Pupils in Year 2 clearly enjoyed their research into the Great Fire of London and commented that the fire spread quickly because "The houses were too close together". Displays of work in both geography and history celebrate pupils' achievements and provide an interesting environment throughout the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Only two lessons were seen in art and design and in music, and one lesson each in design and technology and in physical education. As a result, it is not possible to make an overall judgment on provision in these subjects because of the limited range of work seen.
73. In **art and design**, pupils in all year groups have good opportunities to work with a comprehensive range of art materials. Pupils' artwork is informed by frequent studies of famous artists, enabling them to learn some of the techniques used and to incorporate these effectively in their own work. This is successful, and many pupils produce work of high quality. From the work seen in sketchbooks and around school, teachers build up skills, knowledge and understanding in a consistent way.
74. The very good variety of artwork includes, for example, collage, printmaking and digital photography. Pupils in Year 2 make fine observational drawings of the inside of fruit and use pencil, pastels and watercolours to produce an attractive effect. ICT is also used very effectively to produce artwork, for example when capturing the expanded images similar to those created by David Hockney. Pupils develop a deeper understanding of art through 'Theme Weeks'. For example, in a recent theme of the British Isles, pupils in Year 1 created clay models of a Welsh Dragon, pupils in Year 3 made a larger scale collage of a dragon, and pupils in Year 4 created repeating patterns of dragons using polystyrene prints. There are good cross-curricular links as pupils depict movement in art and link the work of Roy Liechtenstein and Miro, and consider how this links with physical education. Pupils also develop a suitable understanding of art from other cultures, as when they design Hindu patterns or when they study the different headgear of different ethnic groups.
75. The quality of display is good, giving real value and esteem to pupils' artwork whilst also creating a pleasant working environment. From the quality and finish of work on display, pupils persevere for long periods of time to achieve their completed work.
76. In **design and technology**, pupils in all year groups design and make artefacts using a good range of materials and techniques. Pupils cover an impressive amount of work and all aspects of the design process are in place. A positive feature is the way that teachers make links across subjects. For example, pupils design fairground rides incorporating simple circuits. They use the digital camera to record their fruit salad making and tasting exploits. There are many examples of pupils' planning and of completed sheets outlining materials required, the

order of work and detailed drawings of design intentions. Opportunities to work in groups make a good contribution to their personal and social development.

77. The subject plan is closely aligned to national guidance, giving pupils consistency and progression in their learning as they move through the school. Teachers ensure good opportunities for pupils to apply the skills taught in numeracy and literacy to the design process.
78. In **music**, the pre-planned programme of work ensures that all pupils cover the National Curriculum and their work links very well with the topics they are studying. The teacher builds step by step upon what pupils already know, understand and are able to do. The work of the subject leader is much appreciated by parents, pupils and other teachers in school. Pupils are, justifiably, proud of themselves and of their school's reputation for very high quality singing.
79. The school has developed a very strong tradition of teaching singing successfully, and the specialist teacher has a rare talent to do so. All pupils benefit from this very effective expertise, particularly the talented pupils who are chosen to be part of a small singing group and many more who take part in the school choir. These pupils regularly experience the pride and enjoyment of performing widely and successfully within and beyond the school for several different audiences. They sing in at least two parts, and the higher attaining pupils sing technically very challenging songs in up to four parts. Pupils' performance is very entertaining, accomplished and impressive. The highest attaining pupils include both girls and boys. This provision has a significant impact upon their self-esteem and, consequently, their behaviour. All pupils are given the opportunity to be involved in music as an extra-curricular activity, and some reach high standards for pupils of their age. A significant proportion of pupils learn to play orchestral instruments and receive teaching from the local education authority music service.
80. The specialist teacher is responsible for all class teaching and introduces pupils to a rich diet of songs, musical styles and musical ideas as part of lessons. However, there is insufficient evidence to judge overall teaching and learning, although planning shows that full attention is given to all the aspects of the national requirements for music. Timetabling of music is currently something of a problem. Pupils have a one-hour music lesson every two weeks. In the lesson seen in Year 2, the lesson was too long and pupils became restless, despite a very well-chosen set of activities. Some pupils lost concentration and their behaviour was barely adequate at times. This was in stark contrast to a very good shorter session with the 'small singing group'. On this occasion, pupils showed intense concentration and responded with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They were very keen to work with the teacher and to perform with other pupils to improve the quality of their performances.
81. Pupils listen to and experience an extensive range of music, including the music of other times and cultures. For example, pupils have enjoyed rhythmic movements of a Bhangra dancer, and in Year 6 they build upon the visits of an African performer and sing African songs. Pupils also have many opportunities to respond to music by appraising their own performance and the performance of others. Pupils have ample opportunities to learn to compose their own music. Music makes a full contribution to extending pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
82. In **physical education**, the school provides the full range of activities, including gymnastics, games, athletics, swimming and dance, at different times of the year. Good use is made of the hall, although it is small and an awkward shape, the playgrounds and the field of a neighbouring school. Planning shows that appropriate health and safety issues are considered, such as the need to warm up and cool down. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in more adventurous activities during the residential visits planned for them. The vast majority of the pupils leave the school able to swim the recommended 25 metres and many exceed this expectation. The expertise of staff is used well to promote areas of the curriculum such as dance. For example, pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically practise and learn a number of maypole dances and one commented in his writing, "First we practised skipping and then tried with the

Maypole – it was fun”. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were rehearsing for their end-of-term production and a good sequence of movement and actions to *Amarillo* was developed, with pupils animatedly debating modifications and improvements. The school identifies and supports pupils with particular talents in sports such as tennis; for example, a pupil was playing in a junior tournament during the inspection.

83. Teachers, parents and friends of the school give generously of their time to provide a good programme of sports and games outside of lessons and the take-up for these clubs is good. The school also makes good use of expertise from the wider community to enhance the curriculum, enabling pupils to participate in a greater range of sports and games both competitively and in a spirit of friendship. Good examples include the coaching received from Kidderminster Harriers and the teaching of golf skills by a local professional. All these activities make a significant contribution to pupils’ learning and to their personal development. A developing feature of the curriculum is for extending the links with other local schools and organisations through the Sports Partnership initiative.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

84. This aspect of the school’s work was a sampled area and it is not possible to make a judgement about standards or provision. The school values its pupils as individuals and places a positive emphasis on their care, security and welfare. This is reflected in the constructive attitudes shown by the majority of pupils and the way in which they display a mature attitude towards each other. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and become involved in the good range of activities provided for them. They take on responsibilities willingly and carry them through sensibly. Through planned lessons, visits and visitors to the school, a comprehensive programme of health education is carried out dealing with issues such as sex and relationships education and drug awareness. The ethos of the school promotes thoughtfulness for all creatures and an awareness of how individuals can contribute to the well-being of society as a whole. The school works well to promote the confidence and self-esteem of all pupils through assemblies, lessons and circle times. Pupils are given opportunities to think about themselves and their likes and dislikes. They are encouraged to develop and express opinions, especially in lessons. However, at the moment there is no forum such as a school council for the discussion of wider issues concerning school life. Opportunities are taken to raise the awareness of pupils about sections of the community that may not be as fortunate as them. The school regularly supports various charities. In addition, pupils gain knowledge and understanding of the way society works through a wide range of visits and visitors to the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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