

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chippenham

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126182

Headteacher: Mr R M Buckley

Lead inspector: Mrs L Brackstone

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267921

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	260
School address:	The Oaks Chippenham Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN15 1DU
Telephone number:	(01249) 653 041
Fax number:	(01249) 653 041
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Humphries
Date of previous inspection:	15 <sup>th</sup> March 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Paul's is a large nine-class primary school situated on the northern edge of Chippenham. It serves a mixed, stable community covering all socio-economic, religious and cultural backgrounds, including a significant number of Brethren. Approximately 14 per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is average. The vast majority of the pupils are of white British heritage and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. Approximately 21 per cent of pupils have been identified with special educational needs, which is above average. Their difficulties include specific learning problems and moderate learning difficulties. Two pupils have statements for special educational needs and this is below average. The school was recognised with School Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2002. Children start school at the beginning of the academic year in which they will be five. The oldest 10 children join a group of Year 1 pupils in a mixed age class, whilst the younger ones start in a single age Reception class. Overall attainment on entry is below average. However, in the current Reception and Year 1 class, attainment on entry is average, which is an improving trend. This is as a result of demographic changes within the local area where an increasing number of children come from the new Cepen Park housing development. At the time of this inspection, there were two temporary teachers for one term taking the mixed Reception/Year 1 class and the Year 2 class. At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher had been in post for six months, and judgements made related to this short period.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21872	Mrs L Brackstone	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage
9880	Mr A Comer	Lay inspector	
23917	Mr T Clarke	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education
24342	Mrs J Pinney	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music
28200	Mr P Stevens	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education  
1 - 4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 5</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>9 - 13</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>13 - 15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>16 - 29</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**The overall effectiveness of the school is good.** Although standards are below average at the end of Year 6, the pupils achieve well in relation to their very low attainment on entry into school. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the curriculum provided is satisfactory. Under the good leadership of the headteacher, all staff are committed to providing a very caring and inclusive environment, which both pupils and parents value. Behaviour is good and pupils' personal development is encouraged to flourish. The school provides good value for money.

#### **The main strengths and weaknesses of the school are:**

- At the end of Year 2, standards in English are well below average, and below average in science. At the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. However, in relation to prior attainment, achievement is good.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, and music are above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement in these subjects is very good.
- All pupils are very well cared for. Pupils' personal development is cultivated very effectively and results in high quality relationships, positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour.
- The headteacher's vision for the school is ambitious and he has a strong sense of purpose.
- Teaching and learning are good. Assessment procedures are good and are used to inform planning. However, they are not always used sufficiently well to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.
- Subject leadership is good and key co-ordinators use the information they gain from their monitoring of teaching and learning to improve standards.
- Curricular enrichment is very good and the pupils benefit from high quality links with the parents and other local schools.
- The curriculum in the mixed class Reception/Year 1 class has too much emphasis on the National Curriculum programmes of study.

The school was last inspected in March 1999 and has made good progress since then. In English, mathematics and science, there has been a good improvement in achievement when related to prior attainment. Standards in ICT, art and design, and music have also improved, as have procedures for assessment. There have been good improvements in the spiritual and cultural aspects of pupils' personal development, care and links with parents and local schools. Since the last inspection, the role of the subject leader has been developed and the quality of teaching has been maintained at a good level. The leadership of the headteacher has been responsible for the improvements in standards. The headteacher's management has also secured a more cohesive and professional team and the very positive ethos has been strongly maintained. This is reflected in the success of the school with an increasing population. Given the commitment of the staff, the inspection team judge that the school has a good capacity to improve.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

**Standards are satisfactory and achievement is good overall** when related to prior attainment. This includes pupils with special educational needs, the gifted and talented and minority ethnic groups. The changing nature of the catchment area is having a positive impact on attainment on entry. For instance, the current Reception children started school with average standards and are on course to attain the expected levels by the start of Year 1. Pupils in Year 1 started school with average abilities and they are on target to exceed national averages in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 started school with well below the expected levels of attainment and are on target to make average standards by Year 6. Attainment on entry for many of the pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 classes was very poor. A significant proportion of these pupils have special educational needs, which include learning problems and social and emotional problems. In Year 2, standards in listening and mathematics are average. Standards in speaking and science are below average and well below in reading and writing. Whilst standards in speaking and listening are average in Year 6, reading, writing, mathematics and science remain below average, but recent

tests indicate an upward trend in attainment. Standards in ICT, art and design and music are above national expectations. This means that achievement in relation to their very poor attainment on entry is good in both Years 2 and 6. This is supported by the table below, which shows the good achievement of the 2004 Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics in relation to their prior attainment in Year 2. However, standards in religious education in Years 2 and 6 do not meet the expected level of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and this remains a weakness. No judgements were made on standards in design and technology, history, geography and physical education.

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

*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.*

**Pupils' personal development is very good.** It is promoted through the **very good** provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave well in lessons and at playtimes. Attendance is good.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good quality of education**. **Teaching and learning are good** with high expectations of pupils' behaviour, good encouragement of pupils and effective use of teaching assistants and resources. Procedures for monitoring and checking pupils' progress are good and the information gained is used well by staff. However, pupils do not always understand what they need to do to improve. Overall curricular provision is satisfactory. In Years 1 to 6, it covers all subject areas satisfactorily. The curriculum in the Reception class is good, but there is an over-emphasis of the National Curriculum in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class. Curricular enrichment is very good and all pupils benefit from the wealth of activities offered. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and all pupils' personal, social, emotional and health development is promoted well. Very good links have been created with parents and other local schools and the community is used well to support pupils' learning.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Overall leadership and management are good.** The headteacher has worked very hard to transform the image of the school and has successfully raised standards through effective management systems and by using his good quality subject leaders well. Governance is good with all statutory requirements met. All governors are well involved in the life of the school and have a very good knowledge of the strengths of the school.

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

Parents are very happy with all aspects of school life. The pupils like school very much and feel that it has 'a *nice atmosphere*'. They are positive about their teachers.

### IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum to further improve standards.
- Ensure that pupils understand what they need to do to improve.\*
- Ensure that the needs of the Reception children are fully met in the mixed age class.\*

\* The school has already identified these as areas for development.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall standards achieved are satisfactory. In relation to prior attainment on entry into the Reception class, each year group of pupils are achieving well as they move through the school. Inspection findings indicate that standards attained by the end of the current Foundation Stage are average and this is appropriate in relation to their average attainment on entry. Standards are below average overall at the end of Years 2 and 6 but this is good in relation to their very low entry into school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English in Year 2 are well below average. In science in Year 2 and in English, mathematics and science in Year 6, standards are below average but improving. Achievement is good in relation to prior attainment.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, and music are above national expectations and achievement is very good.

#### Commentary

1. At the time of the last inspection, most children started school with below or well below average attainment in all areas of learning. Standards on entry into Reception are now average, which is a reflection of the demographic changes within the local area. Overall achievement in the Foundation Stage is good. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the small numbers of more capable children in both classes exceed the early learning goals. A significant number of children have average abilities and they successfully meet the expected levels. Less capable children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because they are supported well and provided with suitable learning activities.
2. Pupils in the current Year 2 started school with very low levels in all areas of learning. Inspection findings indicate that this group of pupils have attained average standards in listening and mathematics by the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement in relation to their prior attainment and a significant improvement in mathematics since the national tests of 2004 when standards were well below average. Current Year 2 standards in speaking, reading and writing are well below national averages. In the Year 2 standardised tests of 2004, which are tabulated below, the results in these subjects were well below the national average. In comparison to the results of similar schools, standards in reading were below average and well below average in the writing tests. However, in relation to their very low attainment on entry, good achievement has been made. In the teacher assessment test of 2004 standards in science were in the lowest five per cent of results nationally and well below similar schools. However, whilst science standards remain below national averages in Year 2, there is clear evidence of an improving trend and good achievement in relation to prior attainment.

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003<sup>1</sup>**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.3 (12.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.0 (13.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.3 (16.2)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

<sup>1</sup> All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age seven is 15.5. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.



3. Pupils in the current Year 6 also started school with very poor standards in all areas of learning. Inspection findings indicate that standards in speaking and listening are average. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are below average but recent test results indicate an upward trend. This represents an improvement since the national tests of 2004, which are tabulated below, when standards were well below national averages and below those attained in similar schools. It also indicates that the pupils in the current Year 6 have achieved well over time in these subjects. Standards in Year 6 have improved since the last inspection.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003<sup>2</sup>**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (25.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.6 (25.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.1 (28.7)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. However, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed to enable them to be used to enhance their learning in other subjects across the curriculum. For example, it is evident from sampling work in history that their writing skills impact negatively on their achievement in this subject. Pupils do not use their numeracy skills sufficiently well in other subjects such as geography.
5. At the time of the last inspection, standards in religious education were below the expected levels. In both Years 2 and 6, standards remain below the recommended levels of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Whilst there is now more evidence of written work in this subject since the last inspection, the pupils' weak reading and writing skills hinder the progress they make. However, in relation to prior attainment, achievement is satisfactory overall.
6. Standards in ICT are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement in this subject is very good and is a result of high quality teaching, very good resources and a whole school focus on improving provision. This indicates very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below the expected levels. Pupils competently use their ICT skills to promote their learning across the curriculum and enhance their achievement in subjects such as art and design and mathematics.
7. Standards in art and design and music exceed national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and this indicates very good achievement. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge which they relay when teaching the pupils. Standards in art have improved since the last inspection. No judgement on music was made at the time of the last inspection so no comparison in this subject can be made.
8. Standards in music exceed national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. No judgement was made at the time of the last inspection so no direct comparison can be made. However, the employment of a specialist musician and the commitment to providing keyboard tuition for all Year 3 pupils is having a very positive impact on standards achieved. No judgments were made in design and technology, history, geography and physical education because these subjects were not the focus of the inspection.
9. There are no differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils who are gifted or talented are identified and achieve well. There is no difference in the achievement of minority ethnic pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. This is because provision for special educational needs is good and individual education plans are informative, detailed and helpful. They contain concise and attainable targets, which relate

<sup>2</sup> All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age 11 is 27. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

directly to the assessed needs of the pupils. Reference to the targets in the education plans, school tracking records and discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and learning support assistants indicate that most pupils are making expected progress towards meeting their individual learning targets. The achievement of a number of pupils exceeds expectations. Provision is very good for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties in English and mathematics through well-focused support programmes. The provision for those pupils who have behavioural and physical difficulties is equally comprehensive and detailed, and they make the same good progress towards targets set for them.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Pupils' personal qualities are developed very well. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good relationships between pupils and adults help pupils to develop a strong sense of belonging to the school community.
- Younger pupils behave very well and have positive attitudes towards their learning.
- The very strong emphasis on pupils' social and moral development is evident in many aspects of their involvement in school life.
- Occasionally, a small number of pupils do not behave as well as they could in class.

### **Commentary**

10. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards school are good overall and have been maintained at this strong level since the last inspection. However, for younger pupils, attitudes and behaviour are very good. When teaching is not as challenging or well matched to the needs of the pupils, a small minority of older pupils do not behave as well as they could and this sometimes disrupts the learning of others in the class. Teachers set clear guidelines for behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs have the same positive attitudes to their work and staff work hard to promote their self-esteem. Pupils move around the school sensibly and have very good relationships with each other and with adults, both at work and at play. They are polite, well mannered and keen to talk about their work and their school. It is evident that there is a strong community spirit throughout the school and pupils are willing to accept responsibility. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the life of the school and in the wide range of activities outside the classroom. Pupils who were interviewed expressed very positive views about their school. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour and there have been no exclusions during the past school year.
11. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual awareness is effectively promoted through the religious education curriculum and assemblies and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The recently introduced personal, social and health education curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on a range of moral and social issues, including knowing right from wrong and becoming good citizens. The range of educational visits and visitors, and the good range of activities outside the classroom, encourage pupils to develop socially and morally, as well as contributing to their achievement and personal development. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. This is promoted through a range of visitors and projects as well as through curriculum activities in religious education, art and design, geography and music. Overall, cultural development has improved since the last inspection.

### **Attendance**

12. Attendance for the current school year is above the national average and is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school has good procedures in place to monitor and promote good attendance and the efforts of parents and carers to ensure the regular attendance of their children is good. Pupils arrive punctually for school and lessons begin on time.

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

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 school provides a good quality of education. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The curriculum provided is satisfactory overall but the Reception children in the mixed age class are given too many activities to do which are based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Curricular enrichment is very good. The school takes very good care of its pupils, who benefit from very strong links with parents and other schools. Links with the community are good.

**Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Assessment is good overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very effective in the single age Reception class.
- All teachers have high expectations of behaviour.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support learning.
- Resources are used effectively to help with the development of knowledge and skills.
- Methods used to assess pupils are good and used well by teachers.
- The pupils are not well enough informed about how they can improve their work.
- At times, the reinforcement of teaching basic skills is missed.

**Commentary**

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	8 (22%)	19 (51%)	9 (24%)	0 (0%)	0 (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. The good quality teaching has been well maintained since the last inspection. Teachers and their pupils enjoy good relationships with each other and this promotes learning well. Praise is effectively used to motivate and encourage the acquisition of skills and pupils respond well to this by applying themselves well. This was evident in a good geography lesson where the high quality relationships and positive encouragement by the teacher enabled the pupils to contribute well to the lesson and allowed it to move at a good pace.
14. Teachers' knowledge is generally good and this ensures that pupils acquire a suitable understanding of the relevant skills. In the single age Reception class, the teacher has a very good knowledge of the needs of these young children and activities are very well planned to meet their needs. However, not all teachers remember to teach basic skills such as

punctuation and, consequently, they do not always develop their knowledge and skills in this particular area as well as they could. This was evident in a lesson in the upper end of the school where, despite good, enthusiastic teaching, there were missed opportunities for editing the incorrect punctuation in their own work.

15. Throughout the school, lessons are well planned with most teachers clearly identifying a learning objective. In good lessons, these objectives are used to challenge the pupils and encourage them to understand what they are learning. For instance, in a good music lesson in Year 6, clear learning objectives were discussed and used to recap on what had been learnt during the previous session.
16. Teacher expectation and challenge is good because all the children are expected to join in with all the planned activities and are challenged through individual interactions. They learn well through these high teacher expectations and well-planned extension activities. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour and this promotes the good attitudes and behaviour that were seen during the inspection. For example, in a very good science lesson in Year 2, the teacher used effective strategies to ensure that only one pupil spoke at a time.
17. Teachers use a satisfactory range of teaching methods to help their pupils acquire knowledge and skills. For instance, they are encouraged to discuss issues with a friend and this effectively consolidates their learning. Resources are used well to maintain the interest of the pupils and to make good use of learning opportunities. This was particularly evident in the lessons when the interactive whiteboards were used skilfully to promote learning and develop concepts. Good use is made of visits to motivate the pupils in their learning and help them develop skills from first-hand experiences. For example, the Reception/Year 1 class walked around the local area to look at different types of houses and were able to discuss a good amount of detail during their outing. Homework is satisfactorily used to reinforce learning and help pupils apply the knowledge they have gained.
18. The teaching observed of pupils with special educational needs is good and has been well maintained since the last inspection. All teachers are aware of the pupils' targets and make reference in planning to provide suitable activities to promote learning. Pupils are given very good, skilled help and encouragement from the good number of experienced and committed teaching assistants, whose help ensures that all pupils are fully included in all activities. The provision and support given to those pupils who need it is a reflection of the school's caring ethos and commitment to inclusion.
19. Procedures for tracking and checking progress are good throughout the school and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There are clear systems in place in Years 1 to 6 to track learning in English, mathematics and science and day-to-day marking is encouraging to pupils. Teachers collect this information systematically and use it to respond to trends and weaknesses. However, this information is not always effectively used to provide the pupils with guidance on how they can improve. In all other subjects, tracking and checking procedures are satisfactory and developing.

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a satisfactory range of learning experiences for its pupils. Opportunities for pupils to participate in activities outside the school day are very good. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory overall, and learning resources are good.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The provision for special educational needs is good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Planning in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class relies too heavily on the National Curriculum programmes of study.

- The timing of some literacy and numeracy lessons is not balanced.
- The provision for extra-curricular and enrichment activities is very good.
- The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is good.
- Work is not always suitably planned for the needs of all groups of pupils.

### **Commentary**

20. The recommended Foundation Stage is used very well for children in the single Reception class. However, the use of the National Curriculum programmes of study for the children in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class does not always match their needs. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum in Years 1 to 6 and generally meets the needs of the pupils. The allocation of curriculum time in Years 1 to 6 ensures that literacy and numeracy are covered well but the timing of some lessons is not as balanced as it might be. For example, lengthy consecutive morning sessions of English and mathematics do not always meet the learning requirements of younger and less capable pupils. Consequently, their concentration wanes after an hour and learning is limited. The school makes appropriate provision for religious education, which meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
21. All subjects and areas of learning have appropriate policies and schemes of work, which give clear guidance to teachers and support staff. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The regular monitoring of teachers' planning ensures that skills are developed progressively.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Reference to individual education plans, discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and learning support assistants indicates that all pupils are provided for well and, with a few exceptions, most make satisfactory progress towards meeting their learning targets. Class teachers and teaching assistants take care in deciding the targets and programmes of work in pupils' individual education plans and regularly make judgements as to whether they have been reached in order to plan the next steps. Pupils' needs and progress are assessed regularly and any necessary modifications in provision are made. The school is committed to providing good support for all pupils whether their needs are physical, emotional or educational. The work planned for pupils with learning difficulties is closely matched to their needs and the targets set in the individual education plans are clear, precise and apposite. The provision for the more capable pupils is good. The school has a register of the gifted and talented, which extends beyond the core subjects to include artistic and sporting attributes. Provision is good for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties in English and mathematics.
23. Fundamental to its ethos, the school strives to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities. The good quality support from all staff ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal and full access to all activities. However, this is not always the case in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class when activities are too over-directed at times. Personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum is well established and has a significant impact upon the very good social and moral development of the pupils. Overall, the curriculum successfully promotes the school's caring ethos and pupils have good opportunities to discuss their feelings and problems with teachers and others. This helps promote the very good social relationships found across the school.
24. The school organises a very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that appeal to the interests of a significant number of pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in sporting, artistic and musical activities. Field trips, activities with local schools, the teaching of French, and the contribution of many visitors to the school, all enhance the good provision in this area. During the inspection, a Ghanaian drummer added greatly to pupils' cultural knowledge whilst entralling them with his musical ability. Older pupils' social skills are developed well by the annual residential visits – this year to Kingswood on the Isle of Wight.

25. The match of teachers and teaching assistants to meet the needs of the curriculum is good. It is unusual to find so many staff whose specialisms and interests link to the non-core subjects of the curriculum. The contribution of the well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants, particularly when involved with the less capable and pupils with special educational needs, is significant. The good progress that many of these pupils make owes much to their support.
26. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, and the whole school is kept in very good order. External facilities are extensive with a large playing field, good-sized playground and two splendid garden areas. One garden gives access to pupils for quiet reflection whilst the other acts as an outside classroom providing a valuable area for any work on the environment. The new library area and recent extensions have considerably enhanced the provision and the learning environment of the school and plans are well underway for yet more improvements. However, as the school is aware, the cramped conditions in two classrooms for older pupils make teaching difficult with a resultant adverse impact upon learning. The quality and quantity of learning resources overall is good. The library area is provided with a good range of colourful books and this is a good improvement since the last inspection. Classrooms also have a good range of English resources, such as listening centres. The provision of such interesting material and the emphasis placed on reading both at home and in school is having a positive impact upon pupils' achievements. ICT resources are very good with each classroom equipped with an interactive whiteboard and access to fixed and laptop computers. The very good provision for this subject is having a significant impact upon the good standards being achieved.

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

The school ensures that pupils are cared for very well. The support, advice and guidance that pupils receive about their achievements and their personal development are good. The school very successfully involves pupils in its work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good care that the school provides helps pupils to mature considerably.
- Pupils have very trusting relationships with adults.
- Pupils are fully involved in the life of the school and their views are highly valued.

### **Commentary**

27. Policies and procedures for child protection and for promoting the general welfare of pupils are very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There is a strong emphasis on health and safety and security measures have been improved. Governors are now fully involved in this process. Pupils enjoy very trusting relationships with adults. Teachers and support staff know pupils and their families very well and cater for their needs. They provide good role models for the pupils. All of this provision has a significant impact upon pupils' confidence, self-esteem and their achievement, and has improved since the last inspection.
28. The advice, support and guidance that pupils receive at school are good and have improved since the last inspection. Personal, social and health education, including circle time, where pupils sit together for discussion purposes, is now established as a formal part of the curriculum and provides opportunities for pupils to express their views and concerns and to reflect on issues within our society. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' personal development is informal but effective. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic development is good overall. However, the pupils' next steps in learning are not always identified clearly enough for the pupils to fully understand. Induction procedures are good and much appreciated by parents as their children begin their school lives. The school council

provides very effective pupil consultation and ensures that all pupils are directly involved in the life and development of their school. Pupils express very positive views of their school.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's education and respond positively.
- The information they receive about the school and about children's progress is of high quality.
- Parents are consulted regularly and their views are highly valued.
- The school benefits significantly from links with other schools and colleges.

### **Commentary**

29. The parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, attended the parents' meeting or who were interviewed, have very positive views of what the school provides and achieves. The information that parents receive, through meetings, newsletters, the school website, notice boards and reports, is very good. Pupil reports are now good and they give a range of information about pupils' progress and development, including general target areas for improvement. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are very informative and meet statutory requirements. There is a very supportive parent teacher association and a very committed group of parent governors. The contribution that the school's links with parents make to pupils' learning at home and at school has improved since the last inspection. Parents' concerns and complaints are dealt with very well and they are regularly consulted through questionnaires. Links with parents have improved since the last inspection.
30. The school's links with the local community are good and have also improved since the last inspection. They are having a positive impact on the achievement and personal development of pupils. Pupils are involved in a number of charitable fundraising initiatives and there are regular links with the local church. There are also links with the local business community and the school has plans to extend these still further.
31. The school's links with other schools and colleges is very good. Its membership of the Chippenham Town Cluster of schools is having significant benefits for pupils and teachers through courses, joint in-service training, specialist support for some areas of the curriculum and sporting activity. The links with the two secondary schools and a local special school are particularly strong. The school receives students at the school as part of their training programme and students from the secondary school come to the school for work experience.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher, key staff and governors is good. The overall effectiveness of management is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The dedication of the headteacher to the life of the school inspires his committed staff.
- Subject leaders collect data well and are using the information gained to raise standards.
- Governance is good and has improved since the last inspection.
- Financial management is good.

### **Commentary**

32. Since his appointment to the school, six months before the previous inspection, the headteacher has worked tirelessly to create the best possible provision for the pupils in his care. The success of this transformation is shared with the local education authority, who are equally proud of all that he has achieved, in relation to the unsettled situation when he was appointed. For example, his strong sense of purpose has enabled him to secure substantive improvements to the internal accommodation of the school. This has included a new ICT suite, which has enabled pupils to achieve very well with their skills development in this subject. The headteacher's personal vision clearly influences the work of the school and he has very carefully selected and crafted a devoted team of staff who share his very strong commitment to the pupils in their care. He has also improved the perception of the school within the local community and forged strong links with parents and neighbouring school. Whilst relentless in his vision for the school, he is justifiably proud of the immense changes to the school since the last inspection. At the time, of the last inspection, the headteacher was judged to be very good. At first glance this may appear to be a decline in his leadership but this is not the case. The last inspection clearly considered that his very strong direction had settled the school in six months after a chaotic and distressing history. However, the headteacher has steadily used his educational direction over the past six years to create a very strong ethos, a competent team who work together, and improved standards in ICT, art and design and music.
33. The headteacher is well supported by his deputy and it is clear that there is a close partnership within the senior management. The school is fully committed to including all of its pupils fully in the life of the school. The role of the subject leader was identified as a considerable weakness at the time of the last inspection. In relation to the last report, subject leadership and management have made significant improvements from a non-existent base and are now judged to be good overall. Regular opportunities are provided for staff to monitor standards and support colleagues in their specialist subject areas. For example, very good use has been made of the ICT subject leader and a music teacher who have both demonstrated subject specialist teaching techniques. This has had a very positive impact on the improvement of standards in these subjects. Good use is made of the information subject leaders collect to improve standards in the key areas of English, mathematics and science.
34. The management of the special educational needs provision is good. The well-qualified co-ordinator is experienced and efficient in co-ordinating and overseeing special educational needs provision. In association with other members of staff, she ensures that all pupils in need are provided for and, where necessary, are brought to the attention of the local authority. Early contact is made with all parents as soon as concerns are noted about their children, and there is evidence of parental involvement in all stages of the Code of Practice. Evidence from documentation indicates that there is good, regular liaison with all involved outside agencies.
35. The school development plan is a detailed document to which all staff and governors contribute. Action plans are based on the needs of development within their subject areas. Staff development arrangements and performance management procedures are securely in place and there are systematic links made with whole school issues for development.
36. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has been working very hard to ensure that staff best suited to the needs of the pupils are employed. There has been a fairly high turnover in recent years but this has enhanced the quality of staff and the school has now entered a more stable period. New staff, notably newly qualified teachers, feel very comfortable about the support they have received. During this period of instability, the school has not been involved in partnerships with initial teacher training programmes. However, they have organised for this to be reinstated in the next academic year. Arrangements for the new workforce reforms have been very well thought out with teachers' classroom release time to be used to develop modern foreign language skills with specialist teaching.
37. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fully meet their statutory requirements. They provide very good support through regular visits to school, organising activity days and supporting events. Governors also make themselves



readily available to parents and seek their views regularly. Governors feel confident challenging the senior management team and also meet with members of the school council to gain the pupils' views on subjects, such as the appointment of new staff. A good improvement has been made since the last inspection when it was felt that governors should be more involved in the work of the school.

38. The cheerful and efficient administrative staff carry out routine management matters effectively and provide good support for the headteacher. Day-to-day financial procedures are effective. The headteacher has been very focused on improving the environment of the school and has shrewdly built up healthy reserves to enable new buildings for part of the school and a planned refurbishment for other areas. Although the school has a carry-over figure twice the recommended level, this has been set aside for the new building programme. Governors ensure that the best possible contract is negotiated, which is based on quality and fitness for purpose.
39. The school has recently recognised the changing character of its catchment area with the development of the new housing estate. They are aware that many of their children now start school with well-developed language skills and have secure levels of personal and social development. Staff are keen to see this impact positively on standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in the future. However, the school still provides education for a significant minority of pupils who start school with low self-esteem and weak skills. This presents a challenge to the school but, with the commitment of staff, they have a good capacity for further improvement.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	708,375
Total expenditure	744,630
Expenditure per pupil	2,799

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	117,631
Balance carried forward to the next year	81,376

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

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

The children are accommodated in either a class with Year 1 pupils or a single age Reception class. They initially start school on a part-time basis and then are gradually introduced into full-time education after the first few weeks. During this inspection, there were 38 children in the Foundation Stage, 10 of whom were in the mixed age group class. Children start school with levels of attainment that are as expected. By the time they reach Year 1, the vast majority have reached the final stage of the Foundation Stage curriculum. A small number of more capable children have exceeded it. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good overall. It is of a consistently high standard in the single age Reception class where the Foundation Stage curriculum is carefully followed. However, the mixed Reception/Year 1 class generally follows the National Curriculum programmes of study and consequently planning between the two classes lacks consistency. Children's progress is carefully checked and tracked and the information gained is used sufficiently well in teachers' planning. The staff work well together in each class and the number of adults available to meet the needs of the children is good. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. At the time of the last inspection, the Foundation Stage consisted of one class and provision was judged to be good.

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

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

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

- Personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well in the single age Reception class.
- Children in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class do not always get sufficient opportunities for independent learning.

#### **Commentary**

40. Levels of personal, social and emotional development are variable on entry into school but are average overall. Achievement in this area of learning is very good in the Reception class and satisfactory in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class. The differences in achievement are because of the variations in the provision between these two classes. It is very good in one class and satisfactory in the other one. In the Reception class, it is of consistently very good quality because the teacher is very sensitive to the needs of these young children and clearly has a very good understanding of how they learn. Activities that encourage the confidence and independence of each child are carefully planned. For example, they register themselves as they come into school in the morning and this enables them to feel very much part of their own community. The Reception teacher helps the children to become independent through a very good range of innovative ideas. For example, when it is tidy-up time, the theme music from *'Mission Impossible'* is played and this helps them really understand what is expected of them. The children in the Reception class are interested, excited and extremely motivated in their learning because they are provided with very well matched activities. However, the children in the mixed year class are not always given sufficient opportunities for independent management. At times, too much is done for them through the over-emphasis on teacher-directed sessions and when working on individual tasks, such as cutting out and making things. This means that they are not achieving as well as they could if they were given more opportunities to select materials for themselves. By the time the children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, most of the children have met the expected levels, but many of the youngsters in the single Reception class have exceeded them.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision is very strong in the single Reception class.
- The children in the mixed age class are not always provided with activities that are interesting and encourage independent thinking.

### **Commentary**

41. Most children start school with acceptable levels of speech and are able to communicate at a suitable level. Many of the children enjoy books but few are reading on entry into school. A small minority of children have poorly developed speech and they are supported well by teaching staff who help them gain confidence. Overall standards, when they come to school, are as expected. The best achievement is made in the Reception class where children are encouraged to learn about all aspects of literacy through a very interesting range of activities and very good quality teaching. For instance, during an excellent session, the children gasped with glee when they were asked to help *'Incy Wincy Spider'* find her *'webs'*. They hunted outside with real enthusiasm and were extremely joyful when each one was found. The children's learning was further promoted by the discovery of words on each web and these were related to the rhymes of *'Incy Wincy'*, which was illustrated on the interactive whiteboard. Groups were then encouraged to write stories about this character. The more capable and average children exceeded the expected level for this age by using pencils very competently as they worked out the spellings of each word using a good mixture of their knowledge of sounds and key words. The most capable and average children read books with interest and enjoyment. By the end of the Reception year, the vast majority of children will have met the expected levels and the more capable will be exceeding them.
42. The level of achievement is satisfactory in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class. However, at times, the teaching and learning does not always meet the needs of the children because lessons are too teacher-directed. This is because they reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum more than the recommended Foundation Stage curriculum and results in the children sitting for too long.

### **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lots of practical activities enhance learning in the Reception class.
- The work planned in the mixed age class does not always meet the needs of all the children.

### **COMMENTARY**

43. Children start school with levels in mathematical knowledge that are as expected for their age. Achievement is good in the Reception class and satisfactory in the mixed age class. It is satisfactory overall, as is the teaching in this area of learning. Standards are as expected overall. By the end of the Foundation Stage, all children in the Reception class, except for a small number with special educational needs, will have attained the expected level. However, only the more capable children in the older mixed class will have attained the expected level. In the Reception class, the teacher plans a very good range of practical and exciting activities that captivate the children's interest and really motivate them in their learning. This was evident when the children were required to make a spider biscuit. They were encouraged to count the number of liquorice legs needed and carefully placed two jelly sweets for eyes.

44. Scrutiny of past work over the last few months indicates that it is clear that the children in this class recognise two-dimensional shapes and understand what symmetry means. They have a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary such as '*highest, lowest, heaviest, lightest, and tall and tallest*'. Number formation is developing well and very good use is made of ICT to support their mathematical learning.
45. Whilst the older Reception children in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class have access to ICT to support their mathematical learning in shape recognition and data handling, there is a tendency for some of them to be set pages of addition and subtraction problems to solve. Mathematical vocabulary is not always reinforced well and low-level work, such as colouring in, does not help children develop their knowledge and skills.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children are taught ICT skills well and achievement is good.
- Good use is made of the local area to develop the children's knowledge base.

### **Commentary**

46. Children achieve well in this area of learning in the Reception year group and satisfactorily in the mixed age class. Teaching is satisfactory in the mixed class and of very good quality in the Reception class. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children have met the expected level in this area of learning. Standards in ICT are better than expected. This is because the quality of teaching is good, notably the ICT skills, which are taught consistently well.
47. Children achieve very well in the Reception class because the teacher ensures that a very good range of activities are available for them to develop their skills. They are encouraged to freely explore a range of materials and confidently ask each other questions about things. For example, they were very interested in insects, particularly spiders, and were keen to find different ones to look at. Achievement in the mixed age class is satisfactory. Work completed during the current academic year indicates that too much attention has been given to the National Curriculum programmes of study. In this class, less capable Reception children have found this much too difficult to deal with and this has impacted negatively on their overall achievement. However, during the inspection, the mixed Reception/Year 1 class were observed making good use of the local community when they went on a walk. The children clearly enjoyed this practical approach and confidently recognised different types of houses.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The Reception class uses its outdoor area well.
- In the Reception/Year 1 class, there are too many activities led by adults and this inhibits learning.

### **Commentary**

48. The children start school with physical development skills that are as expected for this age group. Overall, the children achieve satisfactorily and reach expected levels at the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning in physical development is satisfactory overall. In the Reception class, it is good and the average-sized outdoor area is used well to promote

learning. For example, the children were observed playing with a good variety of wheeled toys. Nearly all children could move around the area with care and were fully aware of each other. The children handle safely a range of tools, including pencils, paintbrushes and crayons. However, in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class, there was a tendency for the teacher to be too directed and this inhibited independent development.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In the Reception class, there is a good balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for children to use their own initiative.
- In the Reception class, there are very good opportunities and activities to foster children's interests and develop their imagination and language skills.
- At times, teaching in the Reception/Year 1 class is too teacher-directed.

### **Commentary**

49. The children start school with expected levels of attainment in creative development. Children in the single age Reception class achieve very well because of the very good teaching and learning. The classroom is an extremely attractive environment where resources are clearly labelled and easily accessible. For instance, the role-play area had been turned into a seaside scene, complete with a red and green flag for safe swimming. Work on display covered a wide range of media such as paint, collage and wax crayons. The children enjoy singing action songs and rhymes and like listening to music. They were observed listening to Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony when their imaginations were very well stimulated when the music got louder to reflect a thunderstorm. The teacher then skilfully asked them to consider how *'Incy Wincy'* might feel. This promoted their creative skills very well.
50. Achievement in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class is satisfactory. They are provided with an appropriate range of activities. However, the children's progress is limited because at times the teaching is much too directed. This was evident when the children were shown how to make a pot from clay rather than allowing them to investigate and plan for themselves.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Standards are well below average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6.
- The good tracking and assessment procedures are being used effectively to raise standards but they do not inform the pupils on how they could improve.
- Pupils enjoy English and have good attitudes to their learning.
- There is no planned programme for improving speaking and listening skills.
- The attractive school library is well placed at the entrance of the school to emphasise the importance of books and develop a reading culture among the pupils.

### **Commentary**

51. The current attainment at the end of Year 2 is well below average, which is lower than at the time of the last inspection. However, in relation to their very low prior attainment, achievement is satisfactory. Staff changes and recent additional adult support and learning programmes

have been instigated to improve their skills and rates of progress have recently been accelerated.

52. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is below average. This group of pupils started school with very poor levels of attainment and their achievement is good. Test results show that since the time of the last inspection, although standards in relation to national averages remain the same, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels in English has risen significantly by 34 per cent and this is clear evidence of progress.
53. Throughout the rest of the school, there is an improving picture in English and standards are beginning to rise as initiatives for improvement begin to take effect. For example, for pupils in Year 1, attainment is good and in Year 5, it is in line with national expectations. This is because the headteacher has been rectifying weaknesses in provision over the past few years. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
54. At the end of Year 2, standards in listening are average. Standards in speaking are below average. At the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are average and pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs, is good. However, a significant minority of pupils have limited vocabulary. Where teaching is good, pupils are encouraged to extend their self-expression through good, open-ended questions. They are given frequent opportunities to develop their vocabulary through role-play, discussion and talking to partners. However, currently, the provision of opportunities for speaking and listening is inconsistent but the school has identified this as an area for development.
55. In Year 2, the school has successfully implemented programmes for the improvement of reading and standards are improving. However, overall standards in reading are well below average, but achievement in relation to prior attainment is satisfactory. Whilst many pupils read fluently for their age, the limited vocabulary of the significant minority results in pupils reading without understanding. The introduction of a structured programme, which identifies key sounds, is beginning to have a positive impact on attainment and for pupils in Year 1, reading standards are in line with expectations. In Year 6, reading standards are below average. Pupils' achievement is good against their very low prior attainment, but their lack of vocabulary continues to impede progress. For example, in one guided reading session, pupils were receiving very good support from the well-briefed teaching assistant but the pace of the session was slowed because of the necessity to regularly explain the meaning of words in the text. As at the time of the last inspection, knowledge and enjoyment of literature are well promoted, so pupils are developing an enthusiasm for books. This was delightfully evident in Year 6, where the class shared the reading of a story extract and discussed it with obvious pleasure. At the end of the lesson, one pupil asked excitedly, '*where can I buy that book?*' The school library has been re-sited and restocked since the last inspection and is well placed at the entrance of the school to emphasise the importance of books and develop a reading culture among the pupils.
56. At the end of Year 2, standards in writing are well below average. For the more capable pupils, who are in a mixed age class, their progress is good. For the remaining pupils in Year 2, work shows that, although there has been a marked improvement recently at the start of this term, the progress of the majority of pupils was unsatisfactory, including those with special educational needs. Work was poorly presented, and unacceptable mistakes were ignored. The school was aware of this situation and there has been significant improvement recently. These pupils are now making good progress. However, this has not yet had time to impact on standards and achievement overall remains well below average. Most pupils write simple sentences but their use of capital letters and full stops is inconsistent. Familiar words are not always spelt correctly. More capable pupils attain standards that are in line with expectations.
57. At the end of Year 6, standards in writing are rising and are higher than last year, although they remain below average. Pupils' achievement is good against their previous attainment. Most pupils use a neat, joined script and change their style of writing appropriately for a range

of purposes, as when they use formal language to write a letter of complaint. However, the development of basic skills is not consistently reinforced throughout the school. As a result, for a significant number of pupils, the skills of sentence construction, spelling and punctuation are weak. The school is currently participating in a national initiative to increase standards through story writing but has yet to evaluate the success of this initiative in raising attainment.

58. The quality of teaching is good overall and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Good relationships have been established, teachers act as good role models and an ethos of mutual respect prevails. The teachers manage the pupils well and clearly value their contributions. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work and behave well. The interactive whiteboards in each class are used most effectively to engage pupils' interest and enhance their learning. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils, due to good support from well-briefed teaching assistants, which enables them to take a full part in lessons. Lessons are also well organised, and teachers provide good resources, set a brisk pace and provide challenging work for individual needs. Whilst marking is sometimes good, generally, pupils are rarely required to improve their basic skills by correcting their work and clear pointers for improvement are not always given. There are good procedures in place for assessing pupils and tracking their progress and these are used effectively to plan work suited to their individual needs. Although pupils have been given group targets for improvement, few individual pupils are readily aware of these, or of what they need to do in order to achieve higher standards for themselves.
59. The school has been aware that there have been weaknesses in the leadership and management of the subject and the headteacher is currently overseeing English prior to the arrival of a subject leader at the start of the next academic year. One of the strengths of the school is that it has a good awareness of areas for development and, where initiatives are implemented, they are satisfactorily monitored to ensure they are consistently applied.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

60. Standards are rising in science and mathematics because across the school there has been a successful focus on the use of subject-specific vocabulary in these two subjects. However, pupils' weak reading and writing skills constrain the progress they make in history, geography and religious education.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have made some improvement since last year.
- The effective use of ICT is having a positive impact on raising standards.
- Work is not always well matched to the different abilities of pupils within classes and teacher expectations are not high enough.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to investigate, solve problems and use their skills in other subjects.
- Leadership and management are good.

## **Commentary**

61. Standards of work seen on the inspection show that attainment in Year 6 is below average, but attainment at the end of Year 2 is average. Inspection findings indicate that three quarters of Year 2 pupils are working within the expected level for their age group, although fewer pupils than expected exceed these expectations. A significant factor in the improvement of standards in this younger age group is the very competent use of ICT resources to support pupils' learning. In the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils, standards were well below

national averages. Whilst current standards are still below average, the most recent national tests indicate that there has been a slight increase in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standards. There is a clear improvement in attainment since the last inspection. The school is also justifiably proud of its cluster of gifted mathematicians who achieve well.

62. On entry to the school, the mathematical awareness and development of pupils in Year 6 was very low. In relation to prior attainment, achievement is good, including that of those with special educational needs. During the inspection, no evidence was observed of any variance between the attainment of pupils of different gender or ethnic grouping.
63. At the end of Year 2, pupils add accurately tens and units, divide two digits by one digit numbers and have a sound understanding of the reduction of simple fractions and the principles of symmetry. More capable Year 6 pupils multiply and divide decimals, and solve problems by data interpretation. Many others show awareness of positive and negative numbers and are able to calculate the area and perimeter of different shapes. However, there is very little evidence that pupils can solve problems or use their mathematical knowledge in life situations.
64. Teachers and teaching assistants give pupils with special educational needs good support and encouragement, and as a result, they are fully involved and achieve appropriately. Work presented to them, often in withdrawn grouping, is based clearly on what they have achieved previously, and this good matching to their abilities often results in very good attitudes and good learning. The detailed direction of the teaching assistants, along with their own good subject knowledge and teaching skills, is a considerable addition to the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
65. The quality of teaching is good. The teaching of numeracy skills is thorough and accurate. Lessons are well planned, continue at a good pace and challenge appropriately most pupils. Good use is made generally of resources, but in particular, the very skilful use of interactive whiteboards and specific learning programs considerably enhances the effectiveness of the good teaching and learning. Teachers strive to expand pupils' limited vocabulary and questions are used well to extend understanding and encourage pupils to consider different strategies for solving problems. However, although opportunities for applying numeracy skills are planned for, in reality, the pupils do not practise these skills enough through investigations and independent problem-solving activities. This limits the development and extension of mathematical competence, particularly amongst the more capable pupils.
66. The quality of teaching noted in the analysis of pupils' workbooks shows that there are differences from the quality of teaching observed during the inspection. At times, in the books, teacher expectations are not high enough to promote greater achievement and marking gives little or no guidance on how pupils might improve their learning and achievement. Some teachers do not give enough attention to the different capabilities and learning styles of individual pupils so that, often, the same tasks are given to pupils of all abilities. This has a negative impact, particularly upon the learning of the less capable pupils.
67. Mathematics is lead and managed well and this is a good improvement since the last inspection. The subject leader's teaching provides a good role model for his colleagues. Teachers' planning and pupils' progress are monitored and recorded and closely linked to issues that emanate from the analysis of pupils' work and performance in national tests. Gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are being rectified, and this has a positive impact on the standards reached. Assessment procedures are comprehensive and there is evidence that the information gained is filtered down to the day-to-day teaching. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. However, individual and group learning targets are not well established and, consequently, pupils do not always understand what they have to do to improve.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**



68. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Few opportunities are provided to investigate, solve problems and apply numeracy skills in everyday contexts. There are some examples of the use of numeracy when measuring in design and technology and creating time lines in history. However, in a school notable for its good quality displays, there is a lack of presentations celebrating pupils' achievements and investigations in numeracy across all subjects.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national averages at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The curriculum stimulates pupils' interest in learning science.
- A good bank of resources supports development of scientific understanding.
- Teaching is good overall but planning is inconsistent in meeting pupils' needs and in promoting independent thinking.
- The information gained from monitoring the subject's development and from assessment of pupils' progress is used well to identify weaknesses and improve standards.
- Leadership and management are good.

### Commentary

69. In the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2004, pupils attained very low standards in comparison with pupils nationally. In comparison to similar schools, standards were well below average. The percentage attaining the higher level was well below the national average, but in line with similar schools. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2004, pupils attained well below the average standards of pupils nationally but above those of pupils in schools with a similar intake. The percentage attaining the higher level was well below the national average, and below the average in similar schools. Pupils had made below average progress since they were tested in Year 2. This was because the school withdrew the support for those pupils who required help with reading the tests.
70. The inspection found that pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 attain below average standards. The most recent national tests for Year 6 indicate a good number have achieved the expected level, with a very good proportion reaching the higher level, and this is a positive upward trend. It also represents good achievement since they entered school and includes those pupils who have special educational needs. It also represents a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection when standards were well below average. Pupils in Year 2 recognise that forces consist of pulling or pushing. They know that a freezer changes liquid water to frozen ice, and that warm hands change chocolate to a liquid. More capable pupils talk about the connection between speed of vibration and the pitch of sounds. Standards are improving in Year 6. Pupils know some of the main organs of the human body and of a plant. They explain how a food chain works. Pupils understand the purpose of filtering and how the water cycle works to give us rain. They have a sound knowledge of the use of Newtons to measure forces. More capable pupils know how the human body works and what photosynthesis is. They know that metal is used for conducting electricity and that equal forces of gravity and upthrust act upon a floating boat. A scrutiny of work shows that pupils in the current Years 3 to 5 operate at an above average level in lessons. Test situations demand a great deal of independent reasoning which pupils lack at present.
71. The quality of teaching is good and has been well maintained since the last inspection. Teachers use interesting methods and a wide variety of good resources to provide lessons, which successfully stimulate pupils to learn. One example was where the teacher asked pupils to suggest different ways to play a '*guiro*' in order to discover different sounds. Then she asked pupils to guess the name of hidden instruments by listening to the sounds they made.

Such lessons ensure that pupils with special needs are able to fully participate. Assessment is good overall. Teachers make good use of the information gained from testing and marking but do not inform the pupils sufficiently well on how they might improve. Teachers have adequate expectations of pupils, but they do not always plan so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn at a suitable level. Consequently, at times, the more capable are not stretched and the least capable struggle to understand what they are trying to learn.

72. The subject leader provides good leadership and management. Her strong sense of direction and purpose supports good teamwork in establishing important changes. The most recent has been to place a heavier emphasis on investigation in order to promote independent learning. However, there has been little direct monitoring of teaching. This has resulted in lack of attention to the fact that experiments and recording are too highly directed. Consequently, pupils have little chance to develop independent thinking and communicating, which are skills particularly needed in test situations.
73. The curriculum covers the expected programme of learning, but there is some unnecessary repetition of work with no development of depth. Pupils develop spiritually through wonder at the invisible power of magnetism, for example. Pupils benefit from visits to exciting places such as a learning centre in Bristol where they found out about light. In addition, the school holds special events where pupils have a wide variety of experiences. Pupils make satisfactory use of literacy, mathematics and computers to record their learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now above average.
- Achievement is very good.
- Standards in word processing and multi media presentations are good.
- The teaching of ICT skills is good, as is its use across all subjects.
- The school website is an exciting innovation.
- The leadership of ICT is good.

## **COMMENTARY**

74. Information and communication technology has been a major priority in the school development plan since the previous inspection. Considerable investment, both in the purchase of resources and in the training of staff, has been very effective in raising standards and improving the use of ICT across all subjects. Present standards are above average throughout the school. All pupils are achieving very well, including those with special educational needs, and make good progress in relation to their prior learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Evidence from lesson observations, a portfolio of work used to demonstrate standards and information from many displays indicates good attainment in a range of activities such as graphics, word processing, control and modelling, and use of the Internet.
75. The school has adapted aspects of the nationally approved scheme of work so that the subject is well integrated into the curriculum as a whole. Discussions with pupils, teachers, direct observations and scrutiny of planning confirm that computers and other hardware are used regularly in all classrooms and in the ICT suite. Pupils clearly enjoy using the equipment and many extend their knowledge of ICT at home.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There are significant strengths in the way teachers use their ICT skills to support pupils' learning in other subjects. The use of ICT in displays and presentations around the school is of a very high standard.

77. In the lessons seen, teaching was characterised by good levels of knowledge and understanding because of the successful training of all staff by the headteacher, who is a certified instructor. As a result, pupils gain from confident instruction and particularly from teachers' very effective use of the digital projectors and interactive whiteboards when modelling tasks and reinforcing techniques. Skilled learning support assistants give pupils of all capabilities good support. During the inspection, they were observed giving informed, patient assistance to those pupils having difficulties and by so doing ensuring that all pupils had full access to the activities.
78. The subject leader is providing good leadership by supporting staff using his considerable expertise and by encouraging teachers to plan for the use of ICT to enhance the provision in all subjects. Consequently, teachers are very successful at using ICT equipment to support the learning of all pupils, making a significant contribution to their good achievement. For example, Year 1 pupils log on to a teaching program to write sentences using the 'er' sound in a literacy lesson. Year 2 pupils use downloaded images to create their own maps in a geography lesson and in a music lesson used a program to write their own creations based on Saint Saen's Carnival of Animals. Older pupils use the digital camera very effectively in displays, word process newspaper-style reports on school events, design slippers in design and technology, and create spreadsheets with changing variables. The school is justifiably proud of its medal winners in a national competition.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

79. Information and communication technology is used well in other subjects as provision is firmly based upon its use as a resource for learning in general rather than just as a subject in its own right. The very good links between ICT and English set a model for the use of ICT in other subjects. Evidence gained from the portfolio of work, lesson observations and discussions with pupils indicates that ICT is used well across the curriculum. There are many examples of pupils' word processing stories, poems, notes and lists. Learning in mathematics is promoted well by the use of interactive whiteboards in starter activities, the use of spreadsheets and the creation of graphs in data handling sessions. A good range of programs extends pupils' learning in science, in the humanities and in the creative and practical subjects. Pupils' learning benefits from information gathered via the Internet and CD-ROMs. The school website is also used well as an information point and this promotes learning well.

## **HUMANITIES**

History and geography were not the main focus of this inspection. Therefore, it is not possible to give overall judgements about provision in these subjects across the school.

### **History and Geography**

80. A scrutiny of pupils' work in history and geography was carried out and pupils in Year 6 were interviewed. Observations of two geography lessons at the lower end of the school took place but no history lessons were observed. The evidence suggests that pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to prior attainment. Work on contrasting features of different localities in geography and studies of artefacts in history have increased understanding. Pupils make good use of computers to research and to record, for example, about rivers. They also make use of mathematics to learn about co-ordinates of maps. Teachers provide a wide variety of extra-curricular experiences to stimulate pupils' interest. Consequently, pupils make good use of their literacy skills and sometimes produce detailed and well-illustrated booklets. However, pupils do not develop independent learning and find it hard to reason about what they experience. For example, Year 6 pupils do not have opinions about the location of supermarkets and have little idea of the effects of weather on people's lives. Knowledge and understanding in history is very limited. Temporary co-ordinators are maintaining well the leadership and management of the subjects and pupils with special educational needs are well supported.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources support teaching well.
- Pupils write about what they are currently learning with understanding, but find past learning difficult to recall.
- Pupils' knowledge about other religions is weak.
- Assessment procedures are not successful in identifying how the pupils need to improve.

### Commentary

81. Although achievement is satisfactory overall from entry into school, pupils' attainment is below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. A work scrutiny showed that pupils in Year 2 produce their own accounts of King David and of a number of events and stories in the Christian Bible. Pupils in Year 6 write knowledgeably about the Islamic faith and about the importance of pilgrimages to members of various faiths. However, when a representative number were interviewed, their attainment was limited. Most pupils have some knowledge of key religious beliefs, ideas and teachings in the Christian faith. They know about important objects, such as places, symbols and people in the Christian faith. However, their knowledge of other religions is weak. Pupils have very little interest in asking questions or discussing religious ideas.
82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers challenge pupils to think, but under-use writing as a way to consolidate learning. One example where writing was well used was in Year 6, where pupils rewrote Psalm 23 showing very good understanding of its meaning. Teachers employ a satisfactory range of methods to develop understanding, including discussions and pictorial displays. However, the current assessment system is not effective in bringing teachers' attention to the gaps in pupils' long-term learning and this hinders the progress they make.
83. The subject is being temporarily led and managed satisfactorily. There is currently a focus on improving the quality and quantity of pupils' writing. The previous subject leader attended to the issue of resourcing arising from the last inspection. This has helped teachers to bring their lessons alive. There are still beneficial links with the local Christian church. Pupils use the Internet as a resource, and gain knowledge from a CD-ROM of a virtual visit to a Christian church.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC AND PRACTICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology and physical education were not the main focus of this inspection. Therefore, it is not possible to give overall judgements about provision in these subjects across the school.

### Design and technology

84. In design and technology, samples of pupils' work show they are gaining experience of a wide range of techniques. The key elements of the subject, including investigation of ideas, learning a range of skills and designing and making, are covered satisfactorily. Pupils are developing the expected skills through designing and making a variety of projects, including food technology. For example, Year 2 pupils design and make a fruit salad for a party. They investigate alternatives, plan their salads and evaluate the results. Year 6 pupils create ideas for different shelters, including a covered waiting area for parents. They consider the location, purpose, dimensions and materials before producing their designs. Good use is made of ICT, as when pupils in Years 5 and 6 access websites to research different footwear as part of their project on making slippers. In conversation, pupils expressed their enjoyment of the subject and confirmed their use of a wide range of tools and materials. They enthusiastically described a visit to a local Pizza restaurant, which clearly enhanced their learning in food technology as they devised (and tasted!) a variety of pizzas.
85. Management and leadership of the subject are satisfactory. The subject does not have the same high profile as art and design within the school, but teachers' planning and pupils' work are regularly monitored. As with art and design, assessment procedures are being developed.

### **Physical education**

86. No lessons were observed in physical education during the inspection. However, from photographic and documentary evidence, it is clear that physical education has a high priority within the school. A wide range of activities is offered in addition to the normal curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to represent the school in matches and tournaments and in an annual swimming gala. Apart from school teams enjoying success against local opposition, a number of individual pupils have achieved very well outside school in activities as varied as kickboxing and cricket.

### **ART AND DESIGN**

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

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

- Standards are above national expectations in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils achieve very well against their prior attainment.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes towards the subject.

#### **Commentary**

87. Standards in art and design have improved since the last inspection. They are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is very good against the low levels of attainment on entry to the school. This is because the curriculum is well planned and teachers provide an interesting and varied range of activities. Pupils are given good opportunities to explore and develop their ideas in two and three-dimensions.
88. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic in their work, as was evident when a group of Year 6 pupils pronounced art and design to be their favourite subject. Pupils make good progress as they learn systematically to use their observational skills and explore colour and texture through various different media and techniques, including computer programs. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate good skills in their clay work. The younger pupils make thumb and coil pots and older pupils make models of animals, using tools effectively to create effect. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop these skills further when they use a malleable material in their design and construction of a Viking Longboat. As they go through the school, pupils continue to practise different techniques in a variety of media. Pupils have a good knowledge of a range of artists and the techniques they used. By Year 6, pupils use well the skills they have

acquired to produce artwork of high quality, as when they use a grid method of sketching to make sure that paintings in the style of Salvador Dali are a good likeness.

89. Pupils receive good teaching and this enhances their learning well. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and transmit their own enthusiasm for the subject to the pupils. They plan well so pupils receive lively lessons and are well motivated to work hard. There is direct teaching of techniques to improve standards. The use of sketchbooks provides good opportunity for pupils to practise and refine their artistic skills. Pupils' attitudes are good because they understand that their work is valued. It is well presented and contributes to the high quality displays around the school.
90. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Subject planning and pupils' work are monitored to ensure full coverage of the programme of study. An action plan clearly identifies areas for improvement, for instance, in assessment, which is in the process of being developed. Pupils speak enthusiastically of the arts fortnight held during the school year. They also enjoy the opportunity of participating in inter-house art competitions. These events, and the provision of the after-school art club, successfully raise the profile of art and design within the school and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in music exceed expectations in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils achieve very well against their prior attainment.
- Very good opportunity is provided for all pupils to learn to play a tuned musical instrument.
- The expertise of music specialists is used well to enhance pupils' learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.

### **Commentary**

91. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' achievement is very good against their prior attainment. They attain standards that exceed the levels expected in the main aspects of the subject. No comparison can be made with standards at the last inspection, because no judgement was made at the time.
92. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have appropriate opportunities to perform simple rhymes and songs. Their singing is tuneful. Year 1 pupils are developing their understanding of the difference between pulse and rhythm. They can hold a steady beat with percussion instruments, while singing the melody in unison with the rest of the class. In Year 6, pupils confidently maintain their own part while singing a four-part round and sing the melody or harmony of a song equally well. Pupils have a good awareness of different types, styles and moods of music from both their own and others' heritages.
93. The teaching of music is very good. Planning is thorough and ensures that all pupils take part in a regular programme of musical opportunities. ICT is used well to extend understanding, as when Year 2 pupils use a program to support their compositions. Learning is significantly enhanced because the teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject. Visiting specialists further extend learning through instrumental tuition in the guitar, violin and recorder. A particular strength of the provision for music is the opportunity for every pupil in Year 3 to learn to play the keyboard, so by the end of this year, all pupils can read standard musical notation. Because teachers transmit their own enthusiasm for music to the pupils, their attitudes are very positive. They enjoy making music, behave very well and maintain good concentration; they are actively involved and retain a fair amount of what they are taught.

94. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is new to the school but has already used his knowledge and expertise well to maintain the high profile of music in the school. Procedures for assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject and for tracking their progress are satisfactory and developing.

**PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)**

95. There is emphasis throughout the school on children and pupils' personal development. Adults provide really good role models and successfully promote very good relationships. The '*house system*' and the very effective school council underpin the school's efforts to encourage pupils to be responsible, confident and active members of the community. The school is also working towards accreditation as a '*healthy school*'. Whilst personal, social and health education is now well embedded in the curriculum, monitoring of pupils' personal development is still informal and has not improved since the last inspection.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
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>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).*