

INSPECTION REPORT

BURLEY GATE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burley Gate, Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116788

Headteacher: Mrs C Puttick

Lead inspector: Ian Hocking

Dates of inspection: 18th - 19th April 2005

Inspection number: 268031

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 5 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 105
School address: Burley Gate
Hereford
Herefordshire
Postcode: HR1 3QR
Telephone number: (01432) 820 367
Fax number: (01432) 820 367
Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr Paul Burgis
governors:
Date of previous 18th January 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Burley Gate Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average school that serves a large and diverse rural area near Hereford. About one third of pupils travel to school by local authority-provided transport. Housing in the area is a mixture of privately owned and local authority-managed housing. The school has a diverse social mix of pupils. There are almost an equal number of boys and girls in the 105 pupils on roll, although this is not always consistent in each year group. They are taught in five classes by four full-time teachers and two part-time teachers. There are two mixed-age classes, namely Reception/Year 1 and Year 3/4, while other year groups are organised into three classes of pupils of the same age. There is a flexible arrangement for the admission of children to the Reception/Year 1 class in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents choose whether their children will start full-time or part-time initially and decide when they wish their children to begin full-time education. When they begin school, attainment for most pupils is below, and for a few well below, that expected of pupils of this age. Ten per cent of pupils are entitled to school meals free of charge, which is about the national average. There are 33 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. There are no pupils who speak English as a second language. Three pupils are from a traveller family. During the last academic year, six pupils left and thirteen were admitted; this level of mobility is higher than in most schools. The school is involved in two national initiatives, namely Leading Small Primary Schools and Leading from the Middle. An ECO Green Flag Award has recently been achieved by the school in recognition of its work on environmental conservation.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1272	I Hocking	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education
31718	D Shields	Lay inspector	
8316	J O'Hare	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Religious education Foundation Stage Special educational needs
30362	J Henshaw	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Music Citizenship Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education
1 - 4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Burley Gate C of E Primary is a good and highly inclusive school. Individual pupils, regardless of gender, backgrounds or ability, are valued and their needs well met, enabling all to achieve well. The excellent example set by the headteacher is pivotal to the school's very caring ethos for learning. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are very good.
- Good teaching enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to their learning.
- Pupils' learning and personal development benefit from an enriched curriculum.
- The provision made for children in the Reception/Year 1 class is very good.
- Pupils' attendance is poor mainly because of holidays taken in term time.
- Insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' ability to take the initiative in their learning and to informing pupils about how well they are learning.

The school has made good improvement since it was previously inspected. All the key issues have been dealt with successfully. In addition, there has been significant improvement in teaching, curriculum provision, and leadership and management, all of which contribute to pupils' achievement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. NB: The relatively low numbers of pupils involved require the above figures to be viewed with caution because the effect of one pupil's score on the rest can be dramatic.

Overall, pupils' achievement is good.

The school's results in national tests are well below those of all schools nationally, but results in English are above those of similar schools and in mathematics and science match those of similar schools. These pupils achieved well when account is taken of their previous attainment when they were aged seven and of the fact that almost half of the group have special educational needs.

Standards for the present Year 6 pupils are somewhat better than those of last year's Year 6. Standards in mathematics and science are below average but those in English, information and communication technology (ICT) and history are average. Pupils show above-average ability in physical education (PE) and also exceed the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Achievement is good for all pupils.

Standards for the present Year 2 pupils in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT, history and PE are average. Year 2 pupils exceed the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Overall, achievement is very good because of very good teaching, especially in Year 1.

Standards in the Foundation Stage (namely Reception-aged children) are average. Most children reach the goals they are expected to meet by the end of Reception and many exceed the Early Learning Goals for personal, social and emotional development. Very good teaching results in very good achievement for these young children, especially since many begin school with attainment that is below, and in some cases well below, the level expected.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are developed very well. Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute significantly to learning. Pupils' attendance is poor and needs to be improved.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good. Teachers and support staff work as a very effective team that provides excellent equality of opportunity for all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and higher-attaining pupils are well challenged. Teachers' planning is very thorough and underpins the close match of work to the diverse range of pupils' ability. Insufficient emphasis is given to promoting pupils' independent learning and to developing their knowledge of their own learning.

Pupils benefit from an enriched curriculum, for example, through very good extra-curricular opportunities. Learning is enhanced by good quality accommodation and resources. The school provides very well for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Good and productive links with the majority of parents, with other schools and colleges and very good links with the community also contribute to pupils' achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She presents an excellent spiritual lead in the high quality of collective acts of worship and an outstanding role model through her teaching and in co-ordinating the provision for special educational needs. Governance is good because the governing body has a good appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have an effective role in strategic and financial planning. Statutory requirements are fully met, apart from some minor omissions in written information for parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The overwhelming majority of parents express satisfaction with most of the school's work. In particular, they are pleased that children are helped to settle in and are expected to work hard. Parents feel happy about approaching the school if they have concerns and consider that the school is well led and managed. A few parents provide help in classrooms, which makes a valuable contribution to learning.

Pupils' views are positive, as reflected in their good attitudes and behaviour. The older pupils are able to discuss, in a mature manner, aspects of the school's work.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise pupils' attendance levels; and
- increase pupils' abilities to take the initiative in learning and to become more aware of how well they are learning;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- provide additional information in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

All pupils, regardless of gender, background or ability, achieve well. Those in Reception/Year 1 and Year 2 achieve very well. Standards attained by Year 6 pupils are at least as good as those of similar schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is at least good in all subjects where there was enough evidence to judge, because of good and very good teaching.
- Reception-aged children get off to a flying start to their schooling.
- Standards in physical education are above national expectations by Year 6.
- Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 exceed the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education.

COMMENTARY

1. All pupils achieve well in all subjects. Pupils of all abilities achieve well because of the rich curriculum they experience and the good teaching they receive. Because of consistently very good teaching, pupils in Reception/Year 1 and Year 2 achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well relative to their abilities, because the school is totally committed to inclusion and has organised a very effective programme of support. Similarly, those pupils who are particularly able are presented with additional challenges that ensure they achieve well. Good emphasis is given to the development of numeracy skills, including both mental and written calculations. Speaking and listening skills are developed well, not just in English lessons but also in other subjects. Teachers develop well pupils' first-hand investigative skills in science. Pupils make good gains as they learn about ICT, in the ICT suite, and successfully apply these skills in most other subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.0 (24.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	23.6 (25.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	25.3 (27.6)	28.6 (28.6)

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

2. The above table shows that the school's results in national tests are well below national figures but match the results of similar schools in mathematics and science and are better than those of similar schools in English. However, the table should be interpreted with caution because of the relatively low number of pupils involved, and the dramatic effect that one pupil's score can have on the average. These results, nevertheless, represent good achievement for this group of pupils when compared to their performance when they were in Year 2 and when account is taken of the fact that almost half of this group of pupils had special educational needs. Overall, the school's results in national tests have been below national averages since 2000. Because of the increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs, standards are improving

at a slower rate than is the national trend. Standards in the present Year 6 are below average in mathematics and science. However, this represents an improvement on those of 2004 and reflects the actions taken by the leadership of the school following an analysis of the test questions that proved to be problematic for pupils last year. Standards in English are much improved and, as for ICT and history, meet national expectations.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (15.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.8 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.5 (15.3)	16.2 (16.3)

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

- The above table shows that the school's results in national tests are broadly average in reading when compared to national figures. In writing and mathematics, the standards are below national results. However, because of the relatively small group of pupils, these results, as with those for Year 6 pupils, should be treated cautiously. Furthermore, there was an above-average number of pupils with special educational needs in the 2004 Year 2. The school's assessment data clearly shows that this group of pupils achieved well relative to their starting point. Standards in the present Year 2 are somewhat better than those of 2004 because of additional actions taken to improve writing and mathematics. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT, history and physical education currently meet national expectations. Achievement is very good.
- Attainment for Reception-aged children is average because most children attain the levels expected in each of the Early Learning Goals (ELG) for children in Reception, and most exceed the goal in personal, social and emotional development. This represents very good achievement relative to their attainment, which was below or well below average when they began school, and is a result of very good provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Year 2 pupils and Year 6 pupils reach standards beyond those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. For example, Year 2 pupils show remarkable understanding about miracles and Year 6 pupils are able to distinguish between rules that are guidelines and those that have to be obeyed. Standards in physical education, especially in swimming, games and gymnastics, are above national expectations for pupils in Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work and school are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' attendance is poor and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy learning, whatever their ability, background or disability.
- Pupils' attendance is poor, mainly because too many holidays are taken during term time.
- Children in Reception exceed the Early Learning Goal (ELG) in Personal, Social and

Emotional Development (PSED).

- Pupils grow in self-confidence as they progress up the school.
- In a very few lessons pupils become restless and do not concentrate on their work.

Commentary

6. Pupils say they really like and enjoy school. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to their learning and show great interest and enjoyment in their work. This is a direct result of teachers' and teaching assistants' very good skills and encouraging manner.
7. Relationships between pupils and teachers and amongst pupils themselves are good. In discussions, pupils express the view that bullying incidents are very rare. If they do occasionally happen they tell an adult, who will help them. In discussions, pupils indicate that the school treats them fairly and they can take part in all school activities. They understand the simple rules and know there are consequences to their actions if they do not behave well. Discussions with pupils show that they have a very good understanding of the need for racial harmony. Pupils also gain a very wide-ranging knowledge of the diversity and traditions of other cultures. They are very well prepared for life in a multi-cultural world.
8. Lessons are almost always happy and productive. This is because all pupils enjoy the experience of learning. Most pupils try hard and are attentive and this has a positive impact on how well they achieve in lessons. They co-operate with each other and work well in small groups and pairs. However, pupils less readily show initiative or enterprise in their learning and rely on teachers for guidance.
9. There are instances when pupils become totally absorbed in their work; their behaviour and attitudes are then excellent. This is when tasks and activities are very well matched to pupils' needs and clear parameters are established for expected behaviour. However, very occasionally, pupils show less willingness to apply themselves to their work; they become restless and have difficulty controlling their immature behaviour. This is usually linked to teaching and activities that do not fully engage them or when teachers' behaviour management skills are not secure. However, overall, pupils behave well in lessons, outside at play and when moving around the school building. They are polite, friendly and courteous to visitors.
10. Pupils are encouraged to respond to and value the views of others. Pupils with special educational needs and those with physical or medical needs are very well integrated socially with their classmates. The creative elements within the school's curriculum, for instance, school productions and concerts, make a good contribution to pupils' developing spiritual awareness. Whole-school assemblies also make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The headteacher provides an excellent lead in collective acts of worship that also include opportunities for pupils to reflect on the messages that have been conveyed. Very good emphasis is placed on nurturing pupils' confidence, self-esteem and social development. There are many opportunities that contribute to this, for instance, the residential visits, which pupils speak about with great enthusiasm. As they progress through the school, pupils develop into confident young citizens.
11. Foundation Stage (Reception) children behave very well, and take responsibilities when organising their play activities. This was observed during breaks, when the children busied themselves with activities, entirely independently of adults. They are caring of

each other and are generous in giving praise to others. The vast majority of children are on target to exceed the goal for personal, social and emotional development.

Attendance

12. Attendance is poor. Overall rates for the 2003/04 year were well below those of most schools. This is mainly because so many families take holidays during term time. Although the school has recently recognised this as an issue, there are no rigorous systems in place to address the problem. Most pupils arrive at school on time but there is a small minority that often arrives late. This puts them at a disadvantage because they miss the introduction to their lessons. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

This school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. All pupils achieve well because of good and often very good teaching. Pupils experience a well enriched curriculum and pupils' learning benefits from strong teamwork between staff. Very good provision is made for pupils' care, welfare and safety. Good quality resources and accommodation contribute to the quality of education provided.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good in many lessons, especially in Reception/Year 1. This represents a considerable improvement in teaching and learning since the previous inspection. Pupils are encouraged to work hard because they are given work that is particularly well planned and matched to their needs. Pupils have outstanding equality of opportunity.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is a major strength.
- Teachers' very good planning ensures that work is set at just the right level to meet individual needs.
- Teaching and learning for the mixed Reception/Year 1 class are consistently very good.
- Assessment procedures are good, but information gained is not sufficiently shared with pupils to help them gain knowledge of their progress.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunity to take the initiative in their learning.

COMMENTARY

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	12 (39%)	14 (45%)	3 (10%)	1 (3%)	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. Leadership of the school has committed significant funding to providing a high number of teaching assistants. This commitment is rewarded by the quality of education experienced by pupils.
14. Very good teamwork between teachers and support staff is a major factor in ensuring that the diverse needs of all pupils are very well met and that all pupils, regardless of ability or background, achieve well. Teaching in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class is consistently very good, mainly because the teacher's imaginative approach and enthusiasm inspires the pupils to want to learn; consequently, these pupils achieve very well.
15. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and almost always successfully engage pupils' interest. Teachers' explanations and questions are pitched at the right level to meet individual needs. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers provide appropriately modified but consistently challenging programmes to meet pupils' needs. They plan imaginative methods and activities to ensure that pupils meet the targets set for their improvements. The combination of in-class support and withdrawal for intensive small group teaching results in pupils' good achievements. The thorough assessments used by all staff provide wide information that is used to plan the next step of pupils' learning. Pupils who show high ability are given additional challenge, as seen often in literacy, numeracy and science lessons, enabling them to achieve well. One excellent lesson was seen in Year 5, where pupils carried out an investigation of the time taken for sugar to dissolve. The pupils were totally engrossed in their work because it was highly interesting and the lesson moved along at a lively pace so that not a moment was wasted. The very high quality of teaching, by the headteacher, provides an excellent example for her colleagues. In general, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to take the initiative in their learning, for example, to investigate in mathematics or research information in other subjects.
16. Teachers almost invariably require pupils to show good standards of behaviour. As a result, in the vast majority of lessons, good use is made of lesson time because interruptions are minimal. In turn, this enables pupils to work uninterrupted for sustained periods of time and promotes pupils' perseverance and productivity in their learning. Pupils in all classes, and especially in Year 6, show good application, as reflected in the neat presentation of their written work. Pupils comment that they have to work hard and that "teachers will always explain if we don't understand". Parents strongly endorse these positive views of the teaching. Pupils receive much encouragement from staff and have very good relationships with them. These are notable features that underpin the good and very good learning that takes place and account for pupils' good and very good achievement.
17. Teaching for the Reception-aged children helps them develop good levels of independence in their work. The teacher and her colleagues provide stimulating activities, which effectively engage the children's imaginations and make learning relevant and fun. Consequently, the children love coming to school and work well throughout the busy day.

18. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in just one lesson. This was not typical of other lessons in this class and resulted from some difficulties in managing pupils' behaviour. Throughout the school, the feature common to most of the lessons where the quality of learning was less than good was that teaching was unimaginative and/or lacked pace. Therefore, it did not inspire the pupils to the same extent as other lessons. Despite this relative weakness, the other reported strengths in teaching were still present.
19. The procedures for assessing and recording individual pupils' attainment and the progress that they make are good. There is an effective whole-school system of assessment and recording of pupils' levels of attainment that enables teachers to plan work that is very well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and positively, occasionally, especially in Year 6, including written comments that inform pupils on how to improve their work. However, the information gained from assessment is not always sufficiently shared with pupils to help them develop a clear knowledge of their progress. The daily checking of the progress of the children in the Foundation Stage is very thorough and effective and is an important factor in the very good progress that they make.

The curriculum

The school offers a good range of valuable learning activities and a wealth of very good extra-curricular opportunities. These successfully combine to motivate and support the varied needs of all pupils, stimulate their interests and enrich their learning. Good accommodation and resources are used very well, particularly within the outdoor environment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils, whatever their needs, abilities and interests, are given excellent opportunities to access the curriculum and to achieve their potential.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is skilfully integrated to enable very successful learning within a mixed-age class.
- Opportunities for enriched learning, through an extensive extra-curricular programme, have enabled all pupils to pursue interests and talents and raised standards of achievement.
- The well-developed outside environment has enhanced learning across the curriculum and has contributed particularly well to raising standards in physical education.

Commentary

20. Every child is settled into the school with care and flexibility and this ensures that children in the Foundation Stage integrate comfortably with pupils in Year 1. The Foundation Stage curriculum and learning in Year 1 are skilfully woven together and organised to take account of all the children's needs and abilities. For example, if a child needs more support and a longer period of the Foundation Stage curriculum, this is readily accommodated within the structure of the class without disturbing the continuity of learning or the child's friendships. The intake of children into the Foundation Stage varies considerably each year but the school constantly reviews organisation to support the different age groups and achieve the very best for each child. As a result, the youngest children are confident and enjoy school.

21. The school's leadership ensures that the school is outstandingly inclusive. This is strongly endorsed by parental opinion and is clearly reflected in the very good support for pupils who have special educational needs. Each pupil's needs are carefully assessed and the special needs co-ordinator, together with class teachers, plans the best possible support. Well-qualified teaching assistants work flexibly to focus pupils' learning and, where necessary, specialist equipment is provided. Consequently, there are no barriers to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils therefore achieve well and are able to access the curriculum very well.
22. There is a very high percentage of pupils who are involved in clubs that are varied, open to all and appeal to the pupils in different ways. For example, the school production involves all pupils, the choir involves pupils from Years 3 to 6 and the Christmas production involves younger pupils. Pupils from travelling families and those who have talents and abilities in different subjects are also given opportunities to develop interests within the very wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include sports activities, competitions and tournaments and a very successful adventurous residential trip for pupils in Years 5 and 6, all of which have had a marked impact on standards in physical education. Other activities also include opportunities for young engineers, dancers, musicians and cyclists and for pupils who are interested in poetry and reading. Throughout the year, classes are taken to places of interest and visitors invited to school to bring lessons alive. Consequently, pupils are given the chance to learn in different ways and to make meaningful links between subjects. This has had a positive impact on overall achievement across subjects. This very good enrichment of the curriculum is emphatically endorsed by parents, who appreciate the range of opportunities available to their children.
23. The school is proud that its strong commitment to citizenship has resulted in the award of the 'Eco Green Flag'. As a result, pupils continue to take their recycling duties seriously and show an interest in protecting and developing the environment. The school has worked hard to enhance the outside area and makes very good use of a pleasant outdoor classroom, a pond, a musical area and a new piece of adventure equipment. Extensive grounds provide very good facilities for physical education and contribute to improved standards. Internally, a lift affords access for all and the limited accommodation is used imaginatively. Governors have thoughtfully prioritised areas in the accommodation for further development.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to be involved in and to influence the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are excellent arrangements to support pupils with medical needs or physical disabilities.
- Academic guidance is not always sufficiently targeted so that pupils clearly know what they must do to improve their learning.
- Pupils like school and are content with the care they receive.
- Arrangements to help pupils of all ages settle into the school are very good.

Commentary

24. Pupils say they really enjoy school and feel safe there. They talk enthusiastically about all the school has to offer and are confident that there is an adult they can talk to if they are unhappy. Pupils feel their views are listened to, and where possible acted upon, for instance, through the recent committee set up to develop the school grounds. Pupils also confirm that they can offer their views during Circle Time and as members of the Eco committee. However, there is no formal means, such as a School Council, by which the school can regularly seek and act upon the views of all pupils.
25. Pastoral care and guidance are very good. Systems to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good and permeate all aspects of school life. They are clearly understood and implemented by those who work or help in school. Arrangements to support pupils with physical or medical needs are excellent. Well-documented care plans are drawn up with the full involvement of parents and made known to relevant personnel. Pupils with special educational needs have very good, trusting relationships with all staff. They receive very good care from teachers and support staff, who value each one individually. As a result, pupils thrive and grow in confidence. Procedures to deal with accidents or illness that occur during the school day are very well managed.
26. There are very well planned arrangements for supporting children who join the school part-way through the school year. Parents strongly commend the very good arrangements to help the youngest children who are starting formal education for the first time. This is because of the very good liaison both with pre-school providers and parents.
27. Teachers monitor pupils' personal development informally, through discussion and by taking time to get to know the pupils in their care. Pupils' work and effort are valued and celebrated and pupils appreciate this. Relationships with pupils are good and pupils confirm that when teachers notice, or are told, that pupils are having difficulties they take action quickly to put matters right. Pupils are confident they can ask their teachers for help in lessons. During the inspection, very good examples of one-to-one support were seen in many lessons. However, pupils are not often encouraged to evaluate their own work. Assessment information is not used sufficiently well to set and share academic targets with pupils to help them understand how they can improve their learning. These represent missed opportunities for pupils to develop a clearer knowledge of their progress.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents. Links and liaison with the community are very good; those with schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The community is used very well to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development.
- Parents make a very good contribution to school life.
- Day-to-day written information is very good.

Commentary

28. Both at the pre-inspection meeting and through the questionnaire responses, parents expressed many positive comments about the school and what it has to offer their children. In particular, the parents of pupils with special educational needs and physical

or medical needs are very happy both with the care their children receive and with communication with the school.

29. Although there is no formal system for seeking the views of all parents on a regular basis, the school's leadership responds positively to issues and concerns raised by them - for instance, when trying to resolve the congestion in the car park. There is a thriving Parents and Friends Association, which raises significant sums of money that support the school financially, and, in turn, pupils' learning. Several parents regularly help with classroom activities and this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement in these lessons. In addition, the vast majority of parents support the work their children have to do at home. However, many parents take family holidays during term time and this interrupts their children's learning.
30. Day-to-day information is very well presented; it is regular and contains practical and helpful information for parents. However, there are minor omissions in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents. Pupils' end-of-year progress reports are unique to each child; this is a notable strength. However, they do not always provide sufficient information about pupils' strengths and areas for development.
31. Given the isolated rural location of the school, very good use is made of the local and wider community to enrich pupils' experiences. Members of the local community visit to talk to pupils, for instance, about local history; this has a positive impact on pupils' standards of achievement. Pupils take part in a very wide range of events at local churches or in nearby Hereford. They go on educational visits as well as on a residential visit, which the older pupils speak about with great enthusiasm.
32. Links with local pre-school providers are very strong and help to ensure the youngest children settle into formal education quickly. Through the meetings with the local cluster of schools, staff share good practice and pupils are able to enjoy a range of sporting competitions. Pupils are well prepared for their transfer at the end of Year 6 to the next stage of education because of the good links with the secondary schools in the area. The school also regularly supports trainee teachers and students' work placements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, provides very good leadership and very good management of the school. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads by example and provides an excellent role model for others.
- Very good strategic planning, closely linked to very effective financial management, ensures that the school is highly inclusive in its practice.
- There are very good systems in place for the school to check on and to improve its performance.
- Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good.
- The governing body is fully involved in, and has a good appreciation of, the school's work.

Commentary

33. The headteacher is supportive, caring and perceptive and shows an outstanding commitment to individual pupils. She has a very clear-sighted sense of purpose and works closely with the deputy headteacher and staff, forming an effective team. She very successfully balances a significant class teaching role with that of leading the school. She presents an outstanding role model for all staff, for example, in the excellent spiritual lead she provides in collective acts of worship and through her own high quality of teaching. Individual members of staff are valued and empowered to fulfil their responsibilities - for example, subject co-ordinators are now much more effective than was reported at the previous inspection.
34. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. All support staff and teachers work very effectively to meet pupils' needs. The co-ordination between them all has led to a commitment to high standards of provision and care of pupils, in keeping with the school's aims.
35. The headteacher and governors are fully committed to providing an inclusive school, where the diverse range of needs of individual pupils is met. In practice, the school is outstandingly successful in realising this goal. Very good financial planning, closely linked to strategic planning, ensures that resources are effectively targeted to the pupils' needs. All pupils, including those with medical, behavioural and/or learning difficulties, are given very good quality support, both through specialised resources and by the very good deployment of teaching assistants. The comprehensive school improvement plan clearly sets out targets, deadlines, resources and success criteria for driving the school forward. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when weaknesses were identified in the school improvement plan. Staff and governors are fully involved in school improvement plan production but parents and pupils are not systematically involved; this is an area for improvement. The school bursar provides very efficient day-to-day financial management and maintains effective oversight of the school's budget. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	353,655	Balance from previous year	32,530
Total expenditure	334,327	Balance carried forward to the next year	51,858
Expenditure per pupil	2,907		

36. In the above table, the balance carried forward at the end of the financial year 2003/04 is above the recommended level of five per cent of total income. However, most of this surplus has subsequently been spent, for example, on additional staffing, resources and accommodation.
37. The school is very self-evaluative. There are very good systems in place for identifying areas for development, taking action and then checking on the effect of these actions. For example, the school identified aspects of mathematics that required improvement and introduced a greater focus on mental arithmetic and written calculations; these actions are beginning to raise standards. Professional development is managed carefully and enables teachers to keep their knowledge and expertise up to date. Teachers new to the school are also supported very well.
38. Governance of the school is good. The governing body is conscientious, very experienced and highly committed to the school. Governors are fully involved in

strategic and financial planning and carry out their work effectively, gaining a good understanding of the school's strengths and potential for development. They act as a critical friend to the school, challenging where appropriate and supporting the school both formally and informally. Apart from a minor omission in the information provided for parents, all statutory requirements are met.

39. This very effective leadership and management underpins the good quality of education and care provided, resulting in the good achievement of all pupils. When considered alongside average unit costs, this represents good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

40. The Foundation Stage comprises seven Reception-aged children who share the class with 17 Year 1 pupils. The teacher, together with a teaching assistant and three special educational needs support assistants, plans a very exciting and imaginative curriculum, where children achieve very well in all areas of learning. Teaching is consistently challenging, and there are excellent relationships within the classroom, so that the children are provided with very good opportunities to make choices and to explore the environment. At this time of the year, children receive greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy, which is entirely appropriate for their stage of development and in preparation for Year 1 in September.
41. Overall, the attainment of children when they enter the Reception class is below, and for a few well below, the expected levels, especially in language and communication skills. Children achieve very well because staff work very hard and plan very well for the varying abilities of all children, including those with special educational needs. In consequence, by the time they enter Year 1, most children reach the expected levels in all areas of learning, except in personal, social and emotional development, where they exceed the expected levels.
42. Review and revision of the curriculum for children under five featured as a key issue for improvement at the last inspection. Since then, the school has tackled this issue very well by revising planning and creating an outdoor classroom, which very effectively enhances teaching and learning. Through this provision, the staff provide exciting opportunities where the children can develop creativity.
43. All staff maintain a very thorough assessment of children's progress on a daily basis. They gather information to share with each other, which they use to plan the next step of children's learning. These very good procedures contribute greatly to the children's very good achievements. In addition, the staff provide very effective support for children with special educational needs, enabling the children to learn and to thrive successfully.
44. The class teacher has the responsibility for leading and managing the Foundation Stage. She has developed very good teamwork and, in response to the school's excellent commitment to inclusion, she has created a very effective first stage of children's learning. There is a very happy atmosphere, which contributes significantly to children's learning. Consequently, they enjoy coming to school and work very well throughout the day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well through the very good teaching they receive.
- The teacher and assistants ensure that all children feel secure, valued and included.

Commentary

45. Children achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development. Teaching and learning are very good because the staff set very good role models and expect the children to behave very well. As a result, the children are expected to exceed the Early Learning Goal by the end of the Reception year. The staff ensure that all children feel secure, included and valued; they all matter individually. Children behave very well and take responsibility when organising their play activities. This was observed during breaks, when the children busied themselves with activities, entirely independently of adults. They are caring of each other and are generous in giving praise to others. When one of the children with special educational needs successfully matched numbers to objects, they spontaneously applauded her. This encouraged her and others to try even harder. Children learn how to be good citizens through plentiful discussions and activities, which provide them with many opportunities to learn what is required to live in a community. They learn that respect, co-operation, honesty, care and sharing are some of the qualities required to be a good citizen.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn very well because the teacher and her assistants are particularly skilled in developing children's language skills.
- There is very strong emphasis on the development of language skills in all activities.

Commentary

46. Children achieve very well and reach the expected Early Learning Goal in communication, language and literacy through the highly skilled teaching they receive in Reception. The staff provide very good opportunities for talk and for modelling sentences. In the reading session about an octopus, the Reception children avidly followed the story, joining in with familiar words and making comments about the characters' feelings. In group work, they undertook role-play to act out the story, with the help of the teaching assistant. To consolidate the learning of new words and to improve the construction of sentences, the teaching assistant invited the children to practise their play, which was to be presented to the rest of the class. This strategy enabled the children to make further learning gains. They happily undertook various roles, such as director, to introduce the characters so that the 'audience' could follow the story. The teacher joined in with the happy ending, inviting the children with special educational needs to 'pour themselves a cup of tea'. To ensure inclusion, she invited others to help and to share in the celebrations. Children learn to write letters, words and sentences, according to their abilities. The more able children write sentences, such as 'I help mummy clean the house'. Words are well spaced and letters are of an even size. These children are already at National Curriculum Level 1 in English. A particular strength of provision for language is the enthusiastic approach to the teaching of reading, which lays a very strong foundation for future learning; as a result, these children love books.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning of mathematical skills are very good and consequently children achieve very well.
- Children acquire new knowledge and understanding of mathematics through practical activities.

Commentary

47. The very good teaching in the Reception class results in children achieving very well. As a result, they reach the expected standards, particularly in number. The teacher and the assistants plan and resource a very good range of practical activities to give the children hands-on experience, which leads them to understand shape, size, weight and capacity. The staff stress the importance of correct vocabulary and ensure that the children know and use it in their activities. The strong emphasis on problem solving enables the children to use mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems. A very good example was when the children calculated that they needed eight containers of sand to fill the bucket. In the 'shop', the children used real coins to buy items. When one of the children paid 2p for one item, the teaching assistant encouraged her to buy something more expensive, in order to take the child's learning further. This led the girl to calculate that she needed 30p to add to 70p in order to buy a book, which cost £1.00. All activities are imaginatively planned and thoroughly enjoyed by the children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good, resulting in children's very good achievement.
- There is a lively environment to stimulate children's curiosity.

Commentary

48. The teacher, teaching assistant and the support assistants plan exciting topics to capture the children's curiosity and interest. The lively teaching results in children achieving very well and attaining the Early Learning Goal in this area. There are numerous examples where children learn about their heritage, including visiting the local church and by learning that there are special books, such as the Bible. They locate their town on a map of Britain and learn to use computers efficiently to record words or to access a paint program. The children marvel at old photographs showing where and how people used to live. In one lesson, the teaching assistants dressed up in Victorian costumes. This enabled the children to learn at first-hand how people dressed at that time. They learn about the world in and around the school, making good use of the school grounds and further afield, to widen their horizons. The newly-created outdoor classroom is used very well to enable the children to initiate activities and to lay the foundation for early science investigations.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Through very good teaching and learning, children achieve very well.
- The outdoor accommodation is well resourced to provide maximum learning.

Commentary

49. The teacher and the assistants provide the children with numerous opportunities, which maximise learning in this area. As a result, the children achieve very well and reach the Early Learning Goal by the time they enter Year 1. They confidently use a wide range of resources and equipment, which improves movement and control. In the hall, the children learn health and safety rules, such as the need to warm up before undertaking exercise. They understand that vigorous exercise increases their heart rate and that relaxing slows it down. The children use scissors and other tools with increasing dexterity. Outdoors, they confidently use the available space without bumping into one another. Throughout these activities, the teacher and the assistants provide very good commentary and ask questions skilfully to extend learning across all areas.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with very good opportunities to develop creativity.
- Children achieve very well because of very effective teaching and learning.

Commentary

50. Children are provided with a very good range of stimulating activities which enable them to develop their imaginative response. Consequently, they reach the Early Learning Goal. Through drama and role-play, the children experience at first-hand what it is like to be an octopus or how people lived in the past. The children create seaside music, using a variety of instruments and sounds. They respond to music imaginatively, telling the teacher what an excerpt reminds them of. They use a variety of resources, such as the computer, to draw and paint pictures of daffodils. All the activities are carefully planned to make learning exciting and fun for the children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good subject leadership and management have raised standards.
- Pupils are given varied opportunities outside of lessons to raise their interest and develop skills in all areas of the subject.
- Teachers plan lessons very well, enabling all groups of pupils to achieve well.
- Teaching assistants give very good support so that all pupils are fully included in lessons.

- Resources are used very well to focus interest and vary pupils' learning.

Commentary

51. Subject leadership and management are very good. The subject leader has carefully monitored and prioritised areas for improvement, which has resulted in specific spelling and handwriting lessons, increased opportunities for speaking and listening and very well planned reading lessons. Consequently, pupils' work is now well presented and they demonstrate a good interest in reading and activities such as drama. Writing remains a relatively weaker area of the subject but a clear focus on fluency has helped pupils to think carefully about the content of their work because they need to worry less about spelling and handwriting. Pupils have consequently improved their attainment in all areas of English and all groups have achieved well. The current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are in line to achieve the national average by the end of the year. There has been a good improvement in the role of the subject leader, who has been pivotal to the improvements in attainment and achievement. The school welcomes pupils who have special educational needs and, because of its excellent promotion of equal opportunities, these pupils also achieve well.
52. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. There is some very good teaching in Year 1, in Years 3/4 and in Year 6. In all year groups, the lessons are planned very well. Teachers take into account the wide ability range, provide opportunities for speaking and listening and include meaningful links to other subjects. For example, a very good Year 3/4 lesson included varied activities, which were timed well and linked to specific group targets for improvement. In this lesson, pupils held purposeful discussions, used drama to help them understand literary characters and were both challenged and supported within their groups. This resulted in very good achievement because the lesson plan also took account of what the pupils already knew and understood. Relationships overall are good and pupils are encouraged to do well through supportive marking and some target setting; consequently, pupils generally work very hard.
53. The school provides interesting extra-curricular activities related to English. For example, a popular weekly bookshop gives pupils the opportunity to own books and read for enjoyment. Literacy-related drama and art or poetry readings are highlights of the annual book fair, when pupils design hats for their favourite characters. These activities have resulted in improved interest and opportunities to support learning. The school productions have also improved pupils' confidence and competence in speaking and listening and in public performance.
54. Very well prepared teaching assistants support pupils very well both within classes and in additional group lessons. They help them to learn basic skills at an appropriate pace and to concentrate in class lessons. Teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and continuously check pupils' understanding and learning. They play a significant role in raising the attainment and achievement of pupils.
55. Resources are good and are used very well to raise pupils' interest levels and focus their attention. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when resources were judged to be only adequate. For example, pupils in Year 2 listened intently as a puppet 'explained' about his life in Switzerland. The pleasant new library area is well stocked and used well. Where there are interactive whiteboards or specific equipment for pupils with special educational needs, these are also used well to vary learning. However, although time is allocated to English within the ICT suite, pupils do

not always use computers within the classroom for research or as a resource and therefore pupils do not use ICT enough in this subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. The school continuously develops ways to include language and literacy across the curriculum by planning for aspects such as speaking and listening within other subjects. In history, for example, Year 2 pupils wrote questions they might ask Guy Fawkes. In geography they labelled maps and in design and technology they wrote instructions. Drama is used very effectively in other subjects, such as in history in Year 3/4 when pupils questioned some 'evacuees'. Pupils spoke very confidently, reflecting their ease with this kind of learning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regardless of ability and backgrounds, the achievement of most pupils is good; for those in Year 1 and Year 2 it is very good.
- Teaching and learning are at least good and often very good.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and work hard in lessons.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to explore mathematics.

Commentary

57. Standards of work seen in the present Year 6 class are below national expectations because an above-average number of pupils have special educational needs. As a result of decisive action taken to improve pupils' computation skills, standards seen in the present Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally. This represents very good achievement from their starting point when this group of pupils began in Reception, and reflects very good teaching.
58. All pupils, regardless of background, including those with special educational needs and those who are particularly able in mathematics, achieve well and pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well. Pupils' mental skills have improved recently as a result of to the school's increased focus on this aspect of mathematics. Most Year 6 pupils have levels of competence in computation in line with those expected nationally; however, there remain a significant number of pupils, in most classes, who find difficulty in retaining number facts and in the mental manipulation of number.
59. Teaching and learning are good overall. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is very good and results in very good learning. Strengths common to all lessons include very good quality lesson planning, very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, and the tasks given to pupils being judiciously matched to their needs so that all are suitably challenged. Good systems of assessing work and the staff's good knowledge of individual needs underpin the well-pitched demands made of pupils. Teachers motivate and encourage by praising good effort. Pupils work hard, listen attentively, behave well and show respect for others - for example, on those occasions when explaining their thinking to the class. In the best lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge are the key factors that inspire pupils.

For example, Year 2 pupils were captivated when the teacher played the role of a gardener planting seeds. This real-life context stimulated pupils to investigate the ways in which sunflower seeds and beans could be combined to total the number 24. Higher attainers were set a similar challenge with the number 36. This very good teaching resulted in pupils being very successful in systematically recording pairs of numbers that totalled 24 or 36. However, such opportunities for exploration are relatively rare and need to be increased.

60. Some good use is made of ICT, for example, in helping younger pupils' learning of number bonds. In addition, Year 6 pupils use spreadsheets when calculating the area and perimeter of rectangles.
61. Pupils' good attitudes to mathematics reflect the positive climate that exists in classrooms and contribute greatly to their learning. Pupils' good behaviour results from very good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils work enthusiastically, co-operating fully with staff, and take pride in their work, as is particularly evident in the work of Year 6 pupils.
62. Subject leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator's very skilful teaching provides a very good role model for colleagues. She has an informed view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses because the school has very good systems for monitoring and analysing pupils' performance. Very good improvement has been made since the previous inspection, for example, in monitoring teaching and pupils' work in order to identify areas for improvement; for example, the analysis of the 2004 National test results showed weaknesses in mental skills and written calculations. The actions taken have raised standards in Year 2 and are beginning to have a positive impact in Year 6.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics in other subjects. Pupils' numeracy skills are applied well in science - for example, Year 5 pupils measured the time taken for sugar to dissolve. Similarly, the precision of Year 2 pupils' vehicles, produced in design and technology lessons, reflects accurate measuring.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been good improvements in provision since the previous inspection.
- Standards are average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6.
- The teaching and learning are good and because of this, the pupils achieve well.
- There are now increased opportunities for pupils to undertake investigative science.
- The leadership and management of science are good.

Commentary

64. Overall, there have been good improvements in provision since the last inspection. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory; it is now good. In addition, clearer assessment procedures have been introduced to enable the school to ascertain levels in the National Curriculum.
65. Standards in Year 2 are average, but in investigative science, standards are above average. The pupils posed 'how' and 'why' questions before deciding how answers might be found when investigating growing plants. They proposed tests for the experiment, very successfully turning ideas such as whether green plants need light to grow, into a form that could be tested. In the current Year 6, standards are below average, but show an improvement on the previous year. On the basis of their scientific knowledge of electricity, the pupils offer explanations as to why the brightness of a bulb can be affected by the length of the wire. The more able pupils showed that they could vary the brightness of the bulbs in a circuit by changing the number of cells.
66. Pupils achieve well in science, because teaching and learning are good. During the inspection, very good teaching was observed in Year 2 and excellent teaching was seen in Year 5. In both these lessons, there were excellent opportunities for the pupils to engage in experimentation and investigation. The teachers gave a scientific 'feel' to lessons, using a wide variety of vocabulary associated with the topic. The highly effective quality of discussions led the pupils to set up experiments and to investigate in a scientific manner. In both lessons, there was a spiritual dimension to pupils' learning. In Year 2, when investigating what they needed to know to focus their enquiry, a group suggested finding out 'how plants grow so beautiful'.
67. There are now greater opportunities for pupils to investigate and to engage in enquiry-based learning, which lies at the heart of effective science teaching. The younger pupils have successfully acquired investigative skills and this is the main factor in improving standards. The good links with other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy and ICT, effectively strengthen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject.
68. Leadership and management are good overall. The subject co-ordinator monitors planning and collects samples of work to assess progress. The Local Education Authority advisory teacher has been involved in the effective professional development of all staff. There is now a clearer understanding among staff of the importance of investigations in science and of the value of enabling the pupils to set up their own experiments. This factor is helping to raise standards throughout the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well.
- Subject leadership and management are good and have been pivotal to good improvement.
- Good resources provide pupils with ready access to computers but the lack of a large screen in the ICT suite limits teaching and learning.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to learning.

Commentary

69. There has been good improvement in the provision for, and use of, ICT throughout the school since the previous inspection, when older pupils' progress was judged unsatisfactory. Most pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are now attaining nationally expected standards. This represents good achievement for all pupils and is the result of good quality teaching and learning. Standards have risen since the opening of the ICT suite. Year 6 pupils are adept in their use of spreadsheets and databases and in producing attractive texts with well-chosen fonts - for example, in their multi-media presentations linked to 'Crucial Crew' work.
70. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make effective use of the ICT suite. Lessons are very well prepared and teachers know exactly what they want to cover and what pupils are expected to learn. The management and organisation of pupils are good. However, there is no facility for teachers to use projected computer images to give demonstrations to the class. This restricts the teaching methodologies and sometimes results in rather prescriptive teaching. Teaching assistants work in very effective partnership with teachers to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute to the good progress made in lessons. In a good quality lesson for Year 3/4 pupils, the teacher was able to successfully guide pupils through the process of programming the screen robot to make shapes.
71. Good subject leadership and management have resulted in good improvement since the previous inspection, especially in the development of the ICT suite and staff expertise. The subject leader provides clear direction, through a detailed action plan for raising standards. He provides a good role model for others, for example, in his skilful use of the interactive whiteboard in his classroom.
72. The ICT suite is adequately equipped with computers and provides comfortable accommodation conducive to learning. In addition, each classroom has a networked computer and interactive whiteboards have recently been installed in two classrooms. The use of these whiteboards is being extended as more software is being acquired.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning in a number of subjects, including art and design, history, geography and religious education, but insufficient use is made of ICT in English. Particularly good use is made of ICT to develop pupils' mathematical and scientific skills, for example, in the use of spreadsheets and data handling.

HUMANITIES

Religious education and history were inspected in full and are reported on below. Geography was not inspected.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 2 and 6, standards are above those set in the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Teaching is good and supports the good achievement of pupils.
- Teachers place very strong emphasis on discussions.

- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

74. The previous inspection judged standards to be in line with those expected of seven- and eleven-year-old pupils. Since then, the school has made good improvements, as a result of a stronger emphasis on learning from religion, improved assessment procedures and planning, and by updating the curriculum in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In both Years 2 and 6, pupils show remarkable depths of thought on issues appertaining to deeper aspects of life. In consequence, the subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
75. Teaching and learning of religious education are good, resulting in pupils' good achievement. Teachers very effectively focus on learning about religious and human experiences. For younger pupils, the principal foci are Christianity and Judaism. Older pupils learn about other religions, such as Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. Throughout the school, the very effective emphasis on learning from religions provides the pupils with a mature, respectful and sensitive understanding about religious commitment and how religions guide people's lives. In Year 2, the teacher used drama very effectively to deepen pupils' understanding of difficult ideas, such as the miracles performed by Jesus. When asked to explain a miracle, one of the pupils suggested that it was "something Jesus did that was surprising".
76. Teachers place very strong emphasis on discussions and drama in religious education. These strategies contribute very well to pupils' understanding of feelings and emotions that are part of a religious belief. In addition, the high quality of assemblies, which link to learning in lessons, very effectively enables the pupils to reflect on issues, such as 'how it feels when people doubt or trust you'. The close links the school makes with pupils' personal development result in their mature understanding of rules and codes of conduct as guides for living in a community. The teacher in Year 6 skilfully led the pupils so that they were able to distinguish between rules that are guidelines and those which must be obeyed. Through this, the pupils learned about a moral code required for living in a community of school, home and beyond.
77. Leadership and management of religious education by the headteacher are very good. She shows a clear vision and commitment to improving the provision. As a result, teaching and pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher leads by example in the inspiring quality of her assemblies.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management of the subject have resulted in pupils' good understanding of historical enquiry and effective interpretation skills.
- Pupils' families and the community contribute well to pupils' understanding of local history.
- Enthusiastic teaching and varied learning have developed pupils' interests in history.

Commentary

78. The subject is managed and led well because there is an appropriate emphasis on the questioning skills needed to learn about history. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection when the subject leader's role was insufficiently developed. Teachers have received support, training and ideas from an advanced skills teacher and, as a result, they are enthusiastic about the subject. Consequently, from a young age, pupils are taught to enquire and use evidence to understand and interpret the period they are studying. Pupils' understanding is assessed well and lessons are planned very well to include a variety of interesting activities and resources. This has resulted in good achievement. Pupils therefore reach standards of attainment which meet national expectations by Years 2 and 6.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, as shown, for example, in a Year 3/4 lesson. In this lesson, ICT was used effectively as a stimulus for discussion by providing evidence from pictures and enabled pupils to research the life of evacuees in World War Two. Pupils were 'transported' to the 1940s by the recorded sound of an air raid siren and, as a result, expressed the physical effects of fear and anxiety felt by people of the time.
80. In a very good lesson in Year 1, pupils enjoyed watching a video about seaside holidays in the past and discussed old photographs. These pupils successfully placed pictures in the correct chronological order and confidently explained the differences between them, using the evidence and knowledge from previous lessons and the resources in the class. In consequence, they learned and achieved very well. Pupils who have special educational needs were included very well and achieved very successfully through the support of teaching assistants in enacting historical role-play.
81. The planned use of drama plays an important part in helping pupils to understand life in the past. For example, in one lesson, 'hot-seating' and questioning 'people from the past' enabled pupils to articulate their understanding and to empathise with people of the times.
82. The school community has shown good support for history by lending resources, by making historical costumes and by individuals visiting classes to talk about their own experiences. Displays are interesting and invite pupils to look carefully, and to handle or read the evidence. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and talk about their learning. The school organises history-based visits to places such as York and invites visitors such as the 'Time Traveller's Museum' to further pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils think carefully and behave well because they enjoy their lessons.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was inspected in full and is reported on below. Art and design and music were sampled.

83. In an effective **art and design** lesson in the Year 3/4 class, the pupils successfully developed their preliminary sketches to a larger scale. There are examples of sensitively executed watercolour paintings; and textile wall hangings completed with the visiting artist-in-residence. Pupils' art is attractively displayed and successfully enhances the learning environment.
84. **Music** plays an important part in the school life and is particularly inclusive. All pupils from Years 3 to 6 are involved in the choir and all pupils are involved in school productions, which are very well received. Pupils also take part in the local music festival. They have enjoyed visits from musicians, such as those from the Hereford

Cathedral School, and have attended open-air orchestral concerts. Pupils are able to learn to play instruments, such as the flute and guitar, through the Local Education Authority peripatetic music service. They have also made their own musical instruments to incorporate in the open-air music playscape. In the one lesson seen in Year 6, good teaching resulted in pupils attaining standards in line with expectations.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils attain above-average standards.
- Good teaching, and the very good provision made for pupils with special needs, enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Subject leadership is very good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy their lessons.
- Pupils are given a wide variety of experiences which make a very good contribution both to their physical education and personal development.

Commentary

85. Standards in Year 6 are above those expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are particularly able, achieve well. By the end of Year 6, all the pupils meet the minimum national requirements for swimming, with most of them exceeding the expected 25 metres by a significant margin. Year 6 pupils also show above the nationally expected levels of ability in gymnastics and games, for example, in bowling, catching and hitting a ball. Year 2 pupils reach the nationally expected standards - for example, almost all are sufficiently skilful in using their feet to control a large ball and they collaborate well when passing a ball to a partner.
86. The quality of teaching and learning is good and occasionally very good, enabling all pupils to achieve well. Teaching is effective because lessons are very carefully planned and linked to the school's recently introduced programme of work. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' ability to behave sensibly and they plan interesting tasks that both motivate and challenge individual pupils. Teachers give clear instructions and intervene at opportune moments to allow pupils to demonstrate skills. For example, in a very good Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the pupils noticeably improved their landing skills as a result of the teacher's coaching points. Pupils have positive attitudes to physical education. They co-operate fully with each other and members of staff because they respect them and are eager to learn. Pupils behave in a sensible and mature way, for example, when making safe use of games equipment, such as bats. They are keen to develop new skills and are willing to practise and refine them in order to improve.
87. The school provides very good opportunities, through physical education, for pupils' social and moral development, by means, for example, of the observance of rules and by co-operating and competing with others. The school team is particularly successful in netball. Pupils experience a well-enriched curriculum, taking part in football, netball, rounders, cross-country and dance, along with very beneficial residential adventurous activities for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' learning also benefits from visiting coaches for hockey, tennis and cricket. Pupils' cultural awareness is also developed effectively, for example, through experiencing workshops on Salsa dancing and by a visiting group

performing a Chinese dragon dance. All of these experiences enhance pupils' personal and physical development.

88. Subject leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator presents an enthusiastic role model for others. She has continued to develop her own expertise by attendance at courses and by sharing the knowledge acquired with her colleagues. She has a very clear view of how the subject can be developed and has clear plans to do so.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

89. Citizenship is an integral part of the school's ethos of inclusivity and merit certificates are awarded for citizenship. Pupils are very aware of the part they play in the school and the wider community. The pupils worked very well together to achieve their Eco Green Flag and recycling and commitment to the environment are a prominent feature of the school. The school sports day is organised so that mixed-age teams care and support each other, and playground partners develop a duty of care to others. Older pupils have specific school-wide responsibilities and younger pupils act as monitors within their own classrooms. The introduction of 'values education' also supports the notion of citizenship as pupils learn to work co-operatively and harmoniously together in preparation for later life. Pupils also learn about safety and, through the work of the emergency services and cycling proficiency, about preventing accidents. Strong links with the community have had a positive effect on learning and, in a fairly isolated school, on pupils' understanding of what it means to be a good citizen.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3

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

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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