

INSPECTION REPORT

THE PARK INFANT SCHOOL

Stonehouse

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115581

Headteacher: Mrs Sue Burrows

Lead inspector: Mrs Christine Huard

Dates of inspection: 15 – 17 November 2004

Inspection number: 268085

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	175
School address:	Elm Road Stonehouse Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL10 2NP
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Joan Vick
Date of previous inspection:	25 January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Park Infant School is situated in Stonehouse near Gloucester. It caters for pupils between the ages of four and seven and nearly all attend from the local area. Children are from a wide range of social backgrounds and many live in local authority or housing association flats near the school. There are 175 pupils on roll and more boys than girls, especially in Year 1. Children join the Reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. Nearly all the children have had some sort of pre-school experience and most have attended the Early Years Centre attached to the school and are well prepared for school. When they join the school, attainment is across a wide range but is generally below average. The population is very stable and in the last year only four pupils left and two joined the school other than at the normal times. The school has no pupils from ethnic minority groups. Thirteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. About 12 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs which is about average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Extra support is provided for pupils who have difficulties with learning, communication and behaviour. A range of community facilities is provided on site in conjunction with the Early Years Centre and the school is also involved in family learning through the SHARE project. Breakfast and after-school clubs are provided on site. The school gained the Investor In People award in 2003 and a School Achievement Award in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design
9958	Mr Tim Page	Lay Inspector	
25074	Mrs Joyce Cox	Team Inspector	Science History Geography Religious education Special educational needs
3385	Mr David Langton	Team Inspector	English Music Physical education.
21245	Mr William Lowe	Team Inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Information and communication technology (ICT)

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Park provides a very good education for its pupils. Standards are above average in nearly all areas of the curriculum, including English and mathematics, and well above average in science. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. As a consequence, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in relation to their capabilities. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding, and the overall leadership and management of the school are very good. There is a rigorous and tireless quest for further improvement. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher and the highly positive ethos of the school.
- The standards, which are well above average in science and above average in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography, music and physical education.
- Teaching, which is very good overall and enables pupils to learn highly effectively and achieve very well.
- The very good provision for pupils in the Reception classes.
- The very good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- The excellent attitudes, very good personal development and excellent relationships between the pupils.
- The exciting and innovative curriculum which is enriched by a wide variety of visits and visitors as well as a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- In some classes, information and communication technology (ICT) is not used enough to support subjects across the curriculum.

The school was last inspected in June 1999. It was found to be a very good school and few key issues for development were identified at that time. These mainly concerned the condition of temporary buildings which have now been replaced. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of art and design is now good and ICT is used effectively, although work is in hand to develop more links across the whole curriculum. The school, staff and governors have a very good understanding of the principles of best value.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	B	B	B	B
writing	B	A	B	B
mathematics	B	B	B	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Achievement is very good overall. The attainment of pupils when they first enter the school is below average. Children in the Reception classes achieve very well and many will meet and a few exceed the early learning goals¹ by the time they move into Year 1, but a significant minority will not meet the goals in communication, language and literacy.

¹ The early learning goals refer to the six areas of learning covered by children in the Reception class.

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well. Standards are generally above expectations. In the national tests at the end of Year 2, standards have been maintained at an above average level in reading, writing and mathematics for a number of years. Standards are also above those seen in similar schools. Inspection findings are that pupils' attainment is above expectations in reading, writing, mathematics, and speaking and listening. Standards are well above those expected in science. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection and are well in line with expectations. Pupils' work in religious education meets the standards required by the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in most other subjects exceed expectations. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are gifted or talented, achieve very well. This is because they are given suitable work which matches their needs and capabilities.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Their attitudes towards work are excellent; they love coming to school and have a real zest for learning. The school's highly positive and inclusive ethos for learning, which is created by all adults, helps pupils to thrive in their learning and develop high self-esteem and confidence. Pupils concentrate and persevere in lessons. They behave very well and have excellent relationships with each other and adults. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and they have a very good awareness of the cultural diversity of the society in which they are growing up.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is very good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good, with all teaching being at least good and over 70 per cent being very good or better. Children in the Reception classes receive a very good start to their education. Many are well prepared for school, having attended the Early Years Centre on site prior to starting at school. Teaching is very good and is focused on initially developing the skills children need in order to be more involved in their own learning. In Years 1 and 2, all teaching is good or better. Pupils' excellent attitudes to their work assist their learning. Lessons are very well structured. Teachers question pupils skilfully to ensure that they understand and gain from what they are being taught and encourage them to discuss problems amongst themselves. This develops pupils' independent learning skills very well. Support staff are very well deployed by teachers and are highly effective in assisting pupils' learning. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

The school offers a very broad curriculum, and a wide range of visits and visitors enriches pupils' learning. The very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances this further. The accommodation is excellent and is used very well. There is very good provision for the care and welfare of the pupils. The school works very closely and highly effectively with parents and the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She has high expectations of what the school can achieve and a very good understanding of the areas where improvement is necessary. Actions taken to bring about improvement have a positive effect on the school, and there is comprehensive coverage of all subjects within an exciting and innovative curriculum. The headteacher is particularly well supported by her deputy and by the senior management team. Subject leaders manage their subjects very well and have a good understanding of their roles. They monitor effectively and have developed appropriate and realistic action plans for development. The governors challenge the school effectively and fulfil their statutory duties. There are good self-evaluation processes in place. Spending is suitably focused on actions taken to raise standards further.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the work of school and they are very happy with its ethos, aims and values. The pupils, equally, enjoy their school. Their views are canvassed and taken into account.

They say they are expected to work hard and behave well. In general, they enjoy their lessons and think they have very good relationships with their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing this very good school should do to improve is:

- Ensure that the school's development plan for ICT is fully implemented.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Pupils make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve very well overall. This is maintained in Years 1 and 2, and by the time pupils leave school most pupils will attain standards that are above the national expectation. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 are above average in mathematics, reading, writing, speaking and listening and well above average in science.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Standards are above those expected in most other subjects.

Commentary

1. Most children entering the school do so from the Early Years Centre on site. Although they are very well prepared for school and eager to learn, their attainment when they start is generally below average. The provision for the children in the reception classes is very good. This enables them to achieve very well and to make very good progress overall in all of the six areas of learning². Most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for young children at the end of the Reception year in all of the areas except for communication, language and literacy.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (16.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (16.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (17.1)	16.2 (16.2)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make very good progress and by the time they leave school, standards are generally above those seen nationally and pupils achieve very well. Standards have improved since the last inspection and the school's trend in improvement is above that seen nationally. In the year following the last inspection, standards were average and the following year fell to below average in reading and mathematics. A review was made of the school's practice and measures introduced to improve standards through the introduction of a recognised programme to help develop pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills. As a result, standards have risen and have been maintained at an above average level since 2002. Although there was a slight fall in the writing result last summer this was because one class had suffered some considerable disruption as a result of staff changes. Inspection evidence shows that pupils attain well above average standards in science, and above average standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics. Standards in ICT are in line with those expected, although the pupils have made very good progress since their ICT suite became operational in October. They now have very good access to high

² The six areas of learning are: communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

quality equipment as well as very good teaching and standards are rapidly improving. In the other subjects inspected, standards were found to be above those expected.

3. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good and pupils reach standards broadly in line with those expected because they are very well supported by teachers and learning support workers. Targets in individual education plans are realistic but challenging, and are reviewed regularly.
4. There is a strong focus on raising standards and the school is continually looking for ways in which to improve its provision. It has recently been involved with the 'Forest Schools' initiative and the creation of an outdoor classroom. This innovative approach has a highly positive impact on pupils' achievement as pupils are greatly motivated and are excited by their learning. This has had a particular impact on the achievement in boys, which has greatly improved. The school has met its targets and undertaken a good analysis on the performance of different groups of pupils in all core subjects. The information from this has helped to ensure that actions taken are appropriate and effective. Standards are above those expected in most other subjects because pupils' competency in the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics enables them to achieve well in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are excellent. Their behaviour is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, and their punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and work very hard.
- There are high expectations of behaviour which are agreed and understood by pupils.
- Relationships are excellent and pupils' personal development is carefully nurtured.
- Cultural development is greatly enhanced by a rich curriculum.

Commentary

5. Pupils demonstrate a strong desire for learning that is stimulated by very good teaching and interesting lessons, and a rich curriculum that is enhanced well by visits and visitors. Pupils are curious and focused and determined to work hard and do their best. Their written work is undertaken with care. Displays of their artwork show the high standards which they achieve and the inspiration that they draw from new discoveries such as Aboriginal art and tile mosaics. Pupils participate enthusiastically in clubs and enjoy being involved in the community.
6. Pupils' behaviour is very good because they are rarely bored or off task. The school sets high expectations and is consistent in the management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils agree to follow the school's rules, which are displayed in all classrooms. Relationships with adults and peers are excellent and this supports a community that is free of oppressive behaviour or discrimination against minorities. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
7. Pupils with special educational needs behave very well and have excellent attitudes towards their work because the school has such a very positive and supportive ethos, which successfully raises pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
8. Pupils' personal development is very good because pupils feel secure, have high self-esteem, receive careful guidance, and are encouraged to become independent. They are happy to take on responsibilities such as preparing the hall for assemblies, and acting as milk and register monitors and friendship partners. Pupils display maturity and awareness when talking to adults, and are clearly proud of their school.

9. Pupils' very good spiritual development is embodied in their self-belief and awareness and consideration for others. They treat learning as an adventure, and carry on their learning outside the classroom. They show interest in the wildlife in the playground and involve adult helpers with their questions. Moral development is very good. Pupils can distinguish right from wrong and understand and respect other people's feelings. They understand that some children are less fortunate than themselves and are taking part in a Christmas shoe box appeal for children in Eastern Europe. Social development is very good and this leads to a school community which is at ease with itself. Very good cultural development is stimulated by pupils taking part in traditional events such as the Cheltenham Dance and Stroud Country Dance festivals, and by being introduced to the customs and festivals of other faiths and communities. This is enlivened by visitors such as two Muslim students from the local secondary school, and helps to prepare pupils well for growing up in a culturally diverse society.

Attendance

10. Attendance is satisfactory, being close to the national average. The school promotes good attendance effectively and regularly through written communications with parents but experiences some term-time holiday absences, and problems from a very small minority of pupils who have difficult family circumstances. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.4
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good overall and enable pupils to achieve very well. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress are good. The curriculum is very good and is well planned. Opportunities for learning beyond the school day are excellent. Pupils are cared for very well and the school has a very good partnership with parents other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good overall, are excellent at times, and never less than good. Assessment is good overall and information is used well to plan future work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good strategies to maintain high quality teaching across the school.
- Teachers' ability to encourage, engage and interest pupils and to ensure high standards of pupils' behaviour is excellent.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Teaching assistants provide very good, well-focused support in the classroom.
- Assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science are very good.

Commentary

11. The high quality of teaching is the most important strength of the school. The percentage of excellent and very good lessons seen is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Very good teaching is maintained because the school has very good systems and strategies in place for monitoring teaching and providing constructive feedback to teachers. It develops teachers' skills through training for identified needs such as developing speaking and listening skills and improving the attainment of boys. This ensures the continuity of high standards. Common strategies for pupil management such as raising a hand for silence, speaking very quietly with pupils, and sharing common strategies for praise, motivation and reward (such as the imaginative 'firework' and the 'silent cheer') ensure that, from the time they join the school, pupils' behaviour is never an issue and pupils' attitudes are very good. Pupils like their teachers; they want to learn, and work hard to please them. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (14%)	18 (60%)	8(26%)	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.

12. Teachers know their pupils very well, and use imaginative methods to stimulate interest. Puppets are used very effectively across the school. For example, 'Little Fox' was used in Year 2 to stimulate pupils to write stories based on 'I don't want to go to bed', while the 'Bin Twins' – Min and Nin – were used to stimulate Year 1 pupils in their vocabulary work. Other effective strategies include 'word detectives', 'Fred' words, the 'outdoor' classroom, and developing a creative curriculum with experiences, such as the Year 2 walk up Doverow Hill. This was an imaginative geography lesson, identifying physical features, but also a literacy experience, writing a sequential account of the walk.
13. Teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They work hard to ensure that the tasks they set provide challenge at various levels for pupils of different abilities. This helps to maintain pupils' concentration and boosts their learning and achievement. Teachers skilfully and successfully take into account the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and plan their lessons accordingly. They deploy their learning support workers and parent helpers very effectively to support pupils both with their work and with their response and behaviour. For instance, in whole-class activities, pupils are sensitively drawn into the discussion and encouraged to make a contribution. Year 2 pupils make a valuable contribution to their own individual plans, assessing how well they have done towards reaching their targets.
14. Learning support workers are trained, experienced, effectively deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs. They work very well with teachers and partake of the same training. They and other adults, such as volunteer parent governors, work very well with small groups of pupils. They take care to record pupils' progress, enabling teachers to plan more effectively for their next lesson. Teachers make good use of the new ICT suite, as well as the computers in their classrooms. Staff who attend courses feed back to colleagues, sharing information effectively, and this enables all staff to be better teachers.
15. Teachers take every opportunity to develop pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills. They are skilful questioners, using good open-ended questions to promote replies in full sentences, and challenging pupils to think and check their learning. Teachers' levels of challenge and their expectations are generally very good, but some extension tasks set in some Year 1 lessons do not always challenge higher-attaining pupils sufficiently. Frequent writing

opportunities are provided across the curriculum. For example, pupils record results in science using their own words, rather than using printed worksheets, which helps to raise standards of writing overall. The teachers' ability to encourage and engage the attention of pupils, and to ensure high standards of behaviour, is excellent.

16. Assessment procedures are good. Examples of good assessment occur throughout the school. There is a good common approach between subjects and classes. The tracking of pupils' progress is undertaken regularly and information is easy to extract in order to discern clear patterns as pupils move through the school. Exercise books are monitored regularly, marking is thorough and most teachers make valuable comments which help pupils to understand what they have to do to improve. Reading, writing and mathematics are assessed formally every half term, while spelling is assessed every week, and science is assessed after each topic. Good use is made of assessment in all subjects to guide future planning and teaching. Teachers, pupils and parents discuss and share pupils' targets.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is very good overall and ensures that pupils receive a very broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. Within this provision is an excellent range of enrichment activities. The accommodation and resources that the school provides are also excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision is made for children in the Foundation Stage.
- The curriculum is very broad and highly innovative across the school.
- There is excellent provision for curriculum enrichment activities.
- The accommodation and resources are excellent.
- The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is very good.
- All pupils have full access to the school's curricular provision.
- The school is aware of the need to develop the use of ICT further across all subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

17. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good. It is very well planned, and staff take care to ensure that learning is continuous between the Early Years Centre and the Reception year. Staff have fully implemented the required curriculum and very good adaptations have been made. As a result, the curriculum provided is highly relevant to children, and has a positive effect on their progress and attainment.
18. Very good curricular planning across the school ensures that a very broad range of activities and experiences is offered, covering all the National Curriculum subjects. Religious education meets statutory requirements. There are appropriate arrangements for teaching about sex and relationships and pupils learn about the misuse of drugs at a level appropriate to their age. The school is part of the highly successful 'Commenius' project which has involved visits by staff to Scandinavia to investigate the 'outdoor classroom' and the 'forest' school. Ideas gained on these visits have been the basis of a major revision of the creative and outdoor curriculum at the school, which has inspired and motivated the pupils and has had a positive impact on the achievement of pupils, especially the boys. As part of its excellent range of curriculum enrichment activities, the school arranges visits by artists, puppeteers, wood and metal sculptors, musicians and theatre groups.
19. A main strength of the curriculum, in addition to the very high level of achievement that it enables pupils to attain, is the considerable emphasis laid on personal aspects of pupils' development. This is achieved not only through the programme of citizenship and personal, social and health education, but permeates all areas of the school's work. As part of their personal development, for example, pupils are encouraged to think beyond their own needs by participating in charitable events such as Operation Christmas Child, visits to the elderly in the community and a recycling project.

20. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils follow exactly the same work as others in their age group, and are fully included in all activities such as swimming, visits and using the computer suite.
21. The school has developed its grounds to an excellent standard, adding to its enrichment programme. These provide not only a number of very stimulating play areas but also a very good teaching resource. There has been a significant improvement in the indoor accommodation since the last inspection. This is now very good, very well maintained and used to maximum effect; for example, the wide corridors have been turned into attractive reading areas cleverly combined with computer stations. The newly-installed computer suite is already having a major impact on the school's ICT provision.
22. The school ensures that all pupils have complete access to the full range of curriculum provision. However, the use of ICT across the curriculum is not as well developed as it could be. The school has recognised this and has already identified it within its improvement plan. Pupils receive a very good level of support from all members of the adult community including parent volunteers. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is very good.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for the welfare, care, health and safety of pupils. Advice, support and guidance are very good. Pupils are given good opportunities for involvement in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal and academic achievements are monitored very well.
- The school values pupils' views and acts upon their ideas.
- There are very good induction procedures for all pupils joining the school.

Commentary

23. All staff are very concerned with the all-round development of pupils as individuals, rather than just with academic attainment. On entering the school it soon becomes very clear that there is an ethos of mutual trust and concern that enables the pupils not only to learn in an atmosphere of secure understanding but also to develop confidence, self-esteem and an awareness of the needs of others. All members of the school community show care and concern for each other. Support staff, midday supervisors and outside agencies work alongside teachers so that all adults make a significant contribution in raising pupils' self-esteem and encouraging independence. The school has rigorous health and safety procedures backed by a comprehensive policy, regular inspection and caring staff. Child protection procedures are secure; the designated teacher has had recent training and links with the appropriate agencies are well established. The school knows its pupils well and, with the help of external agencies, provides effective support for vulnerable families.
24. There are excellent relationships between pupils and adults who work in the school. Pupils confirm that it is easy to talk with adults, and say that they know how they are progressing. They are aware of targets which, in Year 2, are recorded in their 'ERIC' (Everyone Reads in Class) reading records. Support is consistent and all groups of pupils achieve very well.
25. The achievements of pupils are carefully tracked as they move through the school. This includes personal and social development as well as academic development. It leads to early intervention to overcome potential problems, and ensures that all pupils are treated as individuals and have equal opportunities in school. Pupils with special educational needs are

very well supported and involved in school because they receive very good assistance from teachers and highly effective learning support workers. Pupils who need specific help such as speech therapy receive regular support in school that is shared with all staff, so practice of exercises can be included on a daily basis.

26. Although there is no school council, pupils' views can be expressed in class councils and during circle time, as well as in informal conversations with teachers and other adults. Pupils' ideas are listened to, and, for example, have been incorporated into playground facilities and designs.
27. Induction arrangements are very good. All parents are seen individually prior to their children moving from the Early Years Centre. Children meet their class teacher, are shown round the school, and are given an inter-active information sheet to complete. An effective support service is provided by the school learning support worker, who holds a drop-in surgery for parents.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is very good. Links with other schools are very good. Links with the community are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents and pupils hold very positive views of the school.
- Very good information is provided about the curriculum and pupils' progress.
- The school has close links with other local schools and colleges.
- There are wide-ranging and productive community links.

Commentary

28. Parents expressed very positive opinions at the pre-inspection meeting and through their questionnaires. Ninety-nine per cent of parents think that their children are making good progress and this is confirmed both by the inspection and by the levels of attainment being achieved by pupils by the time they move up to junior school. A very small minority disagrees that pupils are well behaved or that children are not being bullied, but no evidence was found to validate these views.
29. The school has very good procedures to keep parents of pupils with special educational needs well informed about their children's attainment and achievement. Parents contribute to the regular reviews and are invited to discuss the targets in pupils' individual education plans. There is very good liaison between the Early Years Centre staff and the school's special educational needs co-ordinator, ensuring a very smooth and happy entry for the reception children.
30. Information about pupils' attainment and progress is very good. Annual reports contain a useful summary of curriculum coverage and a report on individual pupils' progress. Parents are effectively involved in their children's education through a series of termly meetings. Clear and frequent written communications are effective in keeping parents informed about the life of the school. Parents are invited to special assemblies. Over 60 parents and friends regularly help in school and there is excellent support for the Friends' Association which raises substantial funds for the school. Whilst the school's open-door policy leads to a productive dialogue with parents, regular formal canvassing of parents' views is not in place.

31. Links with other schools and colleges are effectively managed and are beneficial for pupils. There is seamless transfer between the Early Years Centre and the school, and also between the school and the local pre-school from which a few children come. Very close links with the

junior school and a local pre-preparatory school include curriculum liaison and joint in-service training. Year 6 pupils come into school, act as 'maths buddies' and help with clubs. Work experience places are provided for childcare and teaching students from local colleges.

32. Community links are extensive. Pupils visit the elderly, sing carols at the civic service and perform at the Stroud Dance Festival. They also submit contributions to the local paper, 'Neighbourhood News', and use the local area as a learning resource. Parents benefit from counselling and family learning support, and from the provision of breakfast and after-school clubs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The governance of the school is very good. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding and the management of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent leadership provided by the headteacher.
- There is good strategic planning which reflects the school's aims.
- There is a very good team spirit and all staff are committed to raising achievement.
- The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Governance is very good. The governors monitor the performance of the school particularly effectively.
- The school's finances are managed very well.

Commentary

33. At the previous inspection, the leadership of the school was judged to be very good, and its management highly effective. The leadership and management of the school are still very good and, under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the school maintains its very good local reputation. The governance of the school has improved since the last inspection. The governors take an active role, are well aware of their responsibilities, and challenge the school appropriately and very effectively.
34. The headteacher, who has been in post a number of years, has an inspirational vision for the future direction of the school. Her vision builds on the strong aims and values of the school and the maintenance of high standards. All the staff are committed to an approach that involves the teaching of a broad curriculum which enables pupils to leave the school as well-rounded individuals. The school's policy for racial equality is monitored effectively by the school and governors. The school is not complacent in its approach and constantly challenges itself to do better. Careful monitoring is carried out to ensure all pupils are achieving their full potential. The school aims for the highest possible results. The school carries out regular and extensive self-evaluation and monitoring. This includes regular high quality observations of teaching and learning in all areas by the headteacher, senior management team and subject leaders. This identifies appropriate strengths and areas requiring improvement and has a positive impact on standards, as the consistently good results, compared with those of similar schools, show.

35. Subject leaders carry out their responsibilities well. They are conscientious and have a very good understanding of what their roles entail. Monitoring of planning, pupils' work and classroom practice is carried out regularly. Good use is made of subject leaders' skills and, where these require updating or improving, training is provided to enable them to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible. As a result, they provide good quality advice to colleagues. The school welcomes input from other sources and involves various educational groups and visitors to help improve its provision further. It seizes every opportunity to apply for additional funding in order to help the pupils' learning.
36. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator has achieved a good deal since taking up her duties in April 2004. She has already organised and updated all the required documentation efficiently. She has arranged to complete joint lesson observations with the educational psychologist in December 2004. In the meantime, the special educational needs governor has considerable expertise and is highly effective and efficient in monitoring the special needs provision.
37. There are good induction procedures for newly qualified teachers and all new teachers to ensure they settle quickly and soon learn how things work. They are supported well in their professional development to enable them to achieve their potential.
38. The governors are highly effective and fulfil their statutory duties. The impact of the governors on the school has improved considerably. Governors demonstrate a good understanding of the many strengths of the school, including its ethos. Governors talk about the importance of the partnership between the school and its immediate community of parents, advisers and friends. They feel that one of the reasons for the school's success is its consistency of approach. They believe that the proof of this is clear in the way the school's ethos is translated into practice in class, in the playground and throughout the school. They help to shape the overall direction of the school effectively, for example through contributing to and reviewing the improvement plan. In addition, some visit the school regularly in order to monitor the quality of the education provided and report back to the governing body. All governors are very supportive and have a good understanding of their role as 'critical friends'.
39. The school's approach to strategic planning is strong. There is a detailed improvement plan, which emphasises the commitment to raising standards still further in all aspects of school life. Particularly good use is made of available information to evaluate the quality of the school's work. This includes results from national and other tests and regular classroom assessment, as well as the monitoring of teaching and analyses of pupils' work and of the outcomes of annual surveys of parents' views.
40. The school improvement plan is linked closely to the school's finances. This ensures that evaluations are made on the extent to which all pupils benefit from targeted spending in the curriculum. The finances are managed in an exemplary manner by the school's administrative officer. She is very experienced and exercises highly effective day-to-day budgetary control. The financial planning is very well organised. Although a large surplus was identified at the end of 2002/3 these funds had already been allocated to supplement major new equipment purchases for the school. The headteacher and members of the governing body use the four principles of compare, challenge, consult and compete very well to ensure that the school provides best value in its educational provision. All elements of the school's spending are evaluated to ensure that the most economic, effective and efficient education and support are provided for the pupils in its charge. All spending decisions are considered carefully, the school continues to perform well and, consequently, still provides very good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004.

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	491,869
Total expenditure	536,150
Expenditure per pupil	3,063

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	88,580
Balance carried forward to the next	30,151

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for pupils in the Reception classes is **very good** overall.

Children enter the Reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Nearly all the children have attended the Early Years Centre at the school, although a few come from other local pre-schools. The attainment of children on entry to the school is generally below average although there is a wide range within this. The children in the Reception classes learn highly effectively and achieve very well, because a wide range of exciting and interesting activities are provided for them. This reflects the position at the last inspection. The teaching is very good and shows a good understanding of the needs of children of this age, and the support provided by the trained assistants is of high quality. The curriculum is exciting and innovative and matches the six areas of learning for this age very well. Pupils with special educational needs receive well-targeted support, carefully matched to their own capabilities. There is very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. Teaching time is well organised and there is very good monitoring of pupils' progress and good record-keeping which is building up into a comprehensive record of achievement. The accommodation for the pupils is good and has a good outside area where pupils can pursue curriculum activities as well as ride on a range of wheeled vehicles and use play equipment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and are self-confident because of the good organisation and well-established classroom routines.
- Very good relationships are evident, which make the children feel secure and cared for.

Commentary

41. When pupils enter the school most have sound personal and social skills. They make very good progress because they are taught very well. Most will meet and some are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. The staff build well on pre-school experiences. The children respond well to daily routines with which they are fully at home. They know exactly what to do on entering school, and are very familiar with the routines for taking the register and getting ready for play, milk and lunch times. They relate well to one another and show concern and care where appropriate. There is a good variety of activities that ensures children are purposefully employed and move confidently from task to task. Children work very well together in small groups and with members of staff. Adults work constructively with the children, helping them to take turns and encouraging sharing. Adults provide good role models and children respond positively to the care shown towards them. Children make very good progress and work independently, unsupervised, maintaining their concentration very well. When working as a class group, children are expected to take turns, put up their hands when answering questions, and listen carefully to each other. Behaviour is very good and children are kind and courteous to each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's practice of having two 'literacy days' each week has a positive impact on children's learning.
- Teachers plan and organise activities well so that the children can practise and develop a full range of skills.
- Adults' skilled interaction with the children ensures that they learn to reason and use language with increasing expertise to tell, explain and describe.

Commentary

42. Teaching is very good in this area and motivates and inspires the children, so that they learn very effectively. The school has two days each week linked to children's language development. All tasks are linked to this and to the topic and letter for the week. The benefit of this approach was very evident during the inspection when the letter for the week was 't', and the children all brought their own teddies to school. During the day, children listened to teddy stories, made toast for teddy, counted teddies in the bed and practised making teddy shopping lists. They practised the letter 't' in their activity books creating beautiful collage teddy bear pictures alongside. The activities provided children with a rich reinforcement of the learning intentions which they regarded as fun.
43. Children are becoming more confident speakers and listeners. Some can recognise most letters and they are learning their letter sounds well. Few can already read, although a minority sounds out simple words confidently. They are learning correct letter formation and have many opportunities to practise. Many children are likely to meet the learning goals required for this area, but a significant minority will not, by the time they reach Year 1. Teaching is very good and children achieve well because they are given a wide range of activities to develop their speaking, listening and early reading and writing skills. Whole-group sessions ensure that pupils learn to listen carefully. They answer questions, and are encouraged to do so in full sentences, although some still struggle with this. When they work in small groups, adults take every opportunity to encourage the children to talk, ask questions for themselves and generally increase their vocabulary. For example, when making teddies' toast, the children were asked what they used to eat the toast and where the toast went. This all provided useful reinforcement of words beginning with 't' as well as reinforcing children's knowledge.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- On 'numeracy days' a wide range of activities is provided which motivates and interests the children.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.

Commentary

44. Children achieve very well and by the end of the school year, most are likely to meet the expected levels in their mathematical development. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. As in literacy, there are two 'numeracy days' each week when children enjoy

mathematical activities linked to the class topic. Children learn effectively because the teaching is very good and learning is made lively and interesting. They sing the song 'ten in the bed' while individual children show their teddies falling out of bed. They play counting games using teddies and create repeating patterns for teddies' quilt using teddy stamps. Most of the children can count to ten and some count beyond that. The teachers encourage children to scribe the number in the air so that they get used to the shape of the digits. Children are achieving well because teachers prepare thoroughly and provide a good range of stimulating activities. They give clear explanations and encourage independence and mature behaviour. They interact well with children, as do other adults in the classroom. A brisk pace is maintained and supplementary, more challenging, activities are provided to extend each group.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher provides a wide range of activities in order to develop pupils' knowledge of the world around them.
- Children's computer skills are developed well.
- Pupils are taught to observe carefully in order to learn about their environment.

Commentary

45. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good and children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of this year. This reflects the position at the last inspection. Activities linked to topics, such as the current one on teddy bears, develop children's understanding and enable them to achieve well. In addition, the teachers provide a range of other activities which stimulate the senses and interest the children. A 'discovery cave' which incorporated reflective objects, revolving 'light balls' and multi-sensory equipment fascinated the children, encouraged them to experiment with new vocabulary and created a real sense of awe and wonder.
46. Timetabled sessions in the new computer suite benefit the children greatly. Most children are developing good computer skills. They remember how to log on and most achieve this independently. Most manipulate and control the mouse effectively to click and drag objects across the screen. There is very good interaction between adults and children, with lots of encouragement and praise which motivate and encourage the children to do well. The school makes appropriate provision for the teaching of religious education in the Foundation Stage.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Commentary

47. Children achieve well in this area of learning and by the end of the Reception year the vast majority will meet the expectations of the early learning goals. Standards are in line with those expected and have been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching

and learning is good because sessions are well planned and teachers use clear explanations, which the children understand. The activities provided are interesting and this encourages children to be imaginative; for instance, they stretch and shake out in a good warm up, and are gaining a good awareness of space as they move around the room in a range of ways – travelling on different parts of the body and changing direction. They watch the performance of others patiently and use this as a model to improve their own movements. Children have mature attitudes for their age and show good levels of independence when putting on their socks and fastening their shoes. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their fine co-ordination skills through using scissors, pencils and painting tools. Outside they climb apparatus confidently and control a wide range of wheeled toys competently.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

48. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching as no lessons were observed in this area. However, from planning and the work on display it is evident that children's creative development is planned for appropriately and pupils have ample opportunities for painting and experimenting with a range of modelling materials. In addition, the role-play area provides opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and act out situations. Pupils enjoy making music and sing tunefully in class, maintaining a good sense of rhythm.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average, and all pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Assessment procedures are very good, and are used very well.
- Pupils listen very well, and their excellent attitudes towards learning contribute very positively to their attainment.
- There is insufficient evidence of pupils' writing in displays around the school at this time.

Commentary

49. The high standards identified at the previous inspection have been maintained. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving very well, having joined the school with below average attainment. In the latest national tests, standards in reading and writing were above average, and the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was well above average. In the previous year, writing was well above average. This year, reading has improved slightly, and writing is above average. This is due to fewer pupils attaining the higher level. In comparison with similar schools, standards are above average. Standards seen during the inspection indicate that it is likely that pupils will attain at least above average standards in both reading and writing at the end of Year 2. Boys' attainment is well above the national median for boys in reading and in writing. Against the national trend, boys do better than girls. This is due to the school successfully targeting boys' interests and adapting the curriculum towards their needs.
50. Standards in speaking and listening are above average by the end of Year 2. Teachers create many opportunities to develop pupils' oral skills, and the strategy of encouraging 'talking

partners' across the curriculum is helping to raise standards. The pupils' excellent attitudes towards each other ensure that all are very good listeners. Pupils are articulate and confident, and well able to express personal views. Good opportunities are taken to develop speaking skills in assemblies, and in plenary sessions at the end of lessons.

51. Standards in reading have risen consistently for the last four years. The school's teaching of phonics through a structured programme has helped significantly with the development of reading and spelling skills. Pupils clearly enjoy reading and use a variety of strategies to help themselves. The use of 'reading buddies', the fact that teachers choose books for pupils to ensure they are sufficiently challenging, and the effective use of home/school reading diaries all contribute significantly to the raising of standards.
52. Standards in writing are above average at the end of Year 2. One Year 2 class had written an autumn poem together with very careful choice of vocabulary and very good understanding of rhyme and rhythm. In their sequencing of events when describing a walk up Doverow Hill, Year 2 pupils use appropriate vocabulary such as 'first...then...next...and finally'. They show a good grasp of basic punctuation and are competent users of direct speech. Year 1 pupils have a very good understanding of the use of capital letters and full stops. The presentation of pupils' work is generally good. Handwriting is neat and generally of uniform size. Most pupils take pride in their work. Pupils make good use of the writing checklists in the front of their exercise books. Standards of spelling are above average due to the school's very positive approach to the teaching of spelling through a recognised scheme.
53. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The National Literacy Strategy is used well by teachers in their planning, and care is taken to plan for pupils of different levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs learn equally well within the classroom. All teachers make good use of open-ended questions, challenging pupils to reply in full sentences. In an excellent lesson, the teacher motivated pupils through the imaginative use of a hand puppet, made frequent use of speaking partners throughout the lesson, and continually challenged pupils to work even harder. Teachers' abilities to engage and encourage pupils, and to ensure very high standards of conduct, are excellent. Good use was made of ICT in a Year 2 lesson to help a small group of lower-attaining pupils improve their vocabulary, replacing 'went' words with, 'scampered', 'crept' and 'skipped'. Assessment in class, and regular termly testing, are used well to improve planning and identify areas in need of development, such as speaking and listening and the attainment of boys. Marking is generally helpful, and targets are set, enabling pupils to have a good understanding of what they should do to improve.
54. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and teachers' lessons and has a close overview of the subject. There is very good provision for the subject in classrooms where teachers create areas for reading and writing, and many displays inform pupils of new learning, with lists of new vocabulary, phonemes, and general grammar. However, there is insufficient evidence of pupils' writing being celebrated in displays around the school. The subject is well supported by an improved and well-resourced library area, and by readings, drama and role-play in assemblies. At the 'bookworm' club, pupils were observed happily putting recipes they had just read into practical use!

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Teachers show very good awareness of the need to develop pupils' literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils write extended pieces in religious education and science, recording results in their own words, rather than completing worksheets. Other good examples of literacy were seen in history, with Year 2 pupils writing about the Great Fire of London; in geography, where an outdoor walk resulted in pupils writing a carefully sequenced account of the day; and in design and technology, where pupils listed their needs, described what they were doing and evaluated their work on completion.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- Support for pupils in the classroom is very good.
- Assessment is very good.
- Subject management is very good.
- Provision for the use of ICT within the subject needs further development.

Commentary

56. Results of this year's National Curriculum tests show attainment at the end of Year 2 to be above the national average and above that of pupils in similar schools. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to achieve standards that are above those expected nationally. In relation to their prior attainment, they are achieving very well.
57. Pupils of all levels of ability are making very good progress because of the very good teaching that they experience and their very positive attitudes towards the subject. They clearly enjoy what they are doing and are very well behaved and respond very well to their teachers. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. In their lessons, teachers use a range of different methods to maintain the interest of their pupils; for example, the use of a puppet, teddy bears and, in one class, two purses raised interest levels and focused their attention. Teachers ensure that their pupils are subjected to a good, but realistic, level of challenge in all their work within the subject. Teachers use praise well and show concern for the development of self-esteem and general confidence in their pupils. The resources used and the work set during lessons are well matched to the planned objectives. Teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in lessons; for example, they do not just rely on those with their hands up to answer questions. Pupils with special educational needs are given a very good level of individual and small group support during lessons.
58. The very high standard of subject management has ensured that assessment procedures are used to very good effect in ensuring that pupils receive the help they need to succeed. Assessment is also used very well to set individual targets and as a basis for the composition of small groups such as the 'Number Crunchers' in Year 1. Pupils in Year 2 who are experiencing difficulties are given the opportunity to work in groups where the pace of lessons can be more closely adjusted to their individual needs. No gifted and talented pupils have been identified within the subject but the school is very well aware of the individual capabilities of its pupils.
59. Development opportunities are always under review and the school constantly seeks to improve its provision within the subject. This is particularly true of the use of ICT, an area that the school has recognised and is reviewing. Help has been sought with this from various areas of expertise; for example, a successful application for a grant has enabled the school to access expert help in implementing the use of ICT within mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. The school has focused much attention on developing numeracy skills across the curriculum, with a good degree of success. There are numerous examples of mathematics being used very effectively in other subjects. Despite the need to develop the use of ICT within the subject, pupils have produced some very good examples of computer-generated graphs based on

information gathered during a survey of local traffic. In a link to geography, the pupils produced graphs showing how they travel to school. There is good evidence that opportunities are purposefully planned, rather than incidental.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good focus on developing and extending pupils' investigative skills.
- Very good use is made of pupils' literacy skills to record their science work.
- Teachers are very skilled at ensuring pupils understand specific scientific vocabulary.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT in science lessons.

Commentary

61. Standards attained by the current Year 2 pupils are above average and achievement is very good. No significant difference is noted between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their ability because of the high quality support they receive in lessons. In the 2004 teacher assessments, all pupils attained the expected level with over half of the pupils attaining the higher level. This represents very good achievement. Standards have risen since the last inspection.
62. The quality of teaching is very good and, as a result, pupils' achievement and learning are very good. Teachers in all classes teach science with a high proportion of practical and investigative activities, which have a clear focus in teachers' very detailed planning. As a result, pupils are developing a very good understanding of living things, materials, forces and light and sound. They are successfully learning to predict what might happen when they investigate and to explain why things happen in their results. Teachers plan exciting activities, such as investigating sources of light in a dark place, which capture pupils' interest so that they are keen and very enthusiastic about science. In discussions, Year 2 pupils recalled, with obvious enjoyment, bringing their bikes to school when learning about forces.
63. Teachers and learning support workers provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. They are skilled at keeping pupils with special needs interested and motivated by asking and clarifying questions to make them think. As a result, these pupils achieve very well in their science work. Teachers work very hard to make sure the correct scientific vocabulary is used in lessons and that pupils understand what the words mean and put them into context. This accelerates pupils' learning. Pupils record their science work neatly and carefully in their own words, thus having very good opportunities to practise their literacy skills.
64. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. She has developed a very clear and effective action plan, which is clearly focused on raising pupils' attainment and achievement even further. Monitoring of teaching and learning is in place and teachers receive valuable feedback on their lessons.
65. There is scope for pupils to use their ICT skills more in science lessons. The excellent outdoor facilities are used very effectively. There has been a very good improvement in science since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ICT suite is having a positive impact on the development of the subject.
- Teaching is very good overall.
- The pupils demonstrate a high level of interest.
- There is a good level of overall management and a determination to improve provision.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is an area that the school recognises as in need of further development.

Commentary

66. The new ICT suite is having a considerable impact on the teaching and learning of pupils and they are now attaining standards that are in line with those expected nationally. In relation to their previous experience they are all achieving at a good level. As a result of the very good teaching, pupils of all levels of ability are making very good progress in lessons. However, there is a recognised need for them to be able to experience the use of ICT in other subjects in a more planned and purposeful way.
67. Pupils are given the opportunity to work independently and are very confident in their approach to the subject. They work well with their partners and take it in turns to control the computers. Many are able to turn computers on and find their way through the different control sequences to enable them to access programs. In Year 1, pupils are developing an understanding of computers as a means to an end, one that allows them to make choices, for example, the use of the mouse to access the different parts of a program and to select, drag, and drop images within it. Higher-attaining pupils operate programs and are aware that many devices respond to commands and signals. They choose the correct operations to produce different outcomes. Teachers try to ensure that their pupils develop a clear understanding of the difference between images (simulations) produced on a computer and those in real life. Photographs are used well to develop this theme. There was, for example, a good link to art and design when the teacher discussed perspective with the pupils. There is good evidence to show that the pupils have access to experiences using control technology.
68. Teaching is very good overall, with some excellent teaching. It is never less than good. As a consequence, pupils' learning is very good. Teachers generate enthusiasm and have a good level of subject knowledge. This has a very positive effect upon the attitudes of pupils towards the subject. Pupils are very enthusiastic, and a strong feature of their approach to the subject is the very good behaviour they demonstrate in the ICT suite. They remain focused on the task in hand and this is helped by the very good support they receive from both their teachers and the learning support workers. For example, the computer club is very well supervised by a learning support worker and all pupils have the opportunity to participate.
69. There has been a good improvement in provision since the last inspection. The school has worked hard to develop the confidence of teachers in the use of ICT and this has been considerably enhanced by the introduction of the new ICT suite. The scheme of work has been improved considerably and is now 'user friendly', providing a clear set of guidelines that ensure pupils experience continuity in what they do. The emphasis being placed on the development of ICT across all areas of the school is very appropriate and is beginning to show worthwhile results. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who has the determination to implement further improvements where necessary. The school has recently purchased several interactive whiteboards and these are to be installed in the near future.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The school has recognised the need to develop the use of ICT more fully within other subjects of the curriculum. However, some good examples of its use were noted in mathematics - in

creating graphs – and in geography and literacy, where pupils have word processed and embellished their work, changing fonts and colour.

HUMANITIES

71. No lessons were seen in history or geography and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching or overall provision in these subjects. However, pupils' work was analysed to determine pupils' attainment. Standards in **history** are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good. Year 1 pupils enjoy visiting a local museum to study old toys. Year 2 pupils compare conditions in hospitals today with those in Florence Nightingale's time. Pupils record their history and geography work in their own words and there are very few worksheets used. This accelerates pupils' overall attainment and achievement in literacy.
72. Pupils attain above the national expectations in **geography** and their achievement is very good. Very good use is made of the excellent outdoor facilities and the local environment to further pupils' geographical skills. Pupils are very interested in learning about the physical features of their immediate locality and Year 2 pupils explained clearly the differences between their own town and the fictitious Island of Strauy in the Katie Morag books. Coverage of the curriculum in each subject is very good, although insufficient use is made of pupils' ICT skills in both subjects.

Religious education

The provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of religious education makes a very good contribution to multicultural education.
- Attractive displays in classrooms and around the school enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

73. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' multicultural education. This is particularly evident in the interesting and colourful displays, books and artefacts, which inform and celebrate diversity in religious beliefs and cultures. Standards overall are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good.
74. Teaching and learning are very good. Year 2 pupils achieve very well when learning what it means to be a Muslim. They confidently and enthusiastically recall many facts about Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr which they have learnt with the help of two Muslim students from a nearby sixth form college. Year 1 pupils learn about the special clothing worn by priests, rabbis and the Pope. All pupils enjoy Christian celebrations such as Harvest and Easter.
75. Teachers are very skilled at enabling young pupils to think carefully about 'rules for living'. For instance, Year 2 pupils are encouraged to think about how their behaviour can affect others. They maturely and confidently discuss various scenarios such as 'How would you feel if someone tripped you up in the playground?'
76. There are very good links between religious education and music. Pupils are encouraged to perform in family assemblies and year group plays using the knowledge and skills learnt during their music lessons and hymn practices. Parents, governors and pupils report that these events are very popular.
77. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. She leads by example with her own outstanding classroom practice. A very useful portfolio of work has been compiled to

provide a valuable resource for staff. The co-ordinator monitors planning, teaching and learning very effectively. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. During the inspection it was not possible to see any teaching of design and technology and only one lesson was observed in art and design. As a result, no judgements are possible about teaching or overall provision in these subjects.
79. Although no lessons were observed, it is clear that standards in **art and design** are above those expected at the end of Year 2. Work is planned to introduce pupils to the required skills and understanding and to support work in other subjects such as history, science and religious education. Pupils in all year groups have produced a variety of work to a good standard in an appropriate range of media. In addition, there has been an appropriate amount of work on art appreciation and in critical studies of a range of art and design. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the work of some famous artists and have learned something of art from different cultures. Work is generally planned to cover the necessary concepts, and there are works of art on display to stimulate pupils. Pupils' own work is displayed to a good standard, and the entrance hall of the main building is enlivened with the 'Golden Tapestry', which is part of a project across the Commonwealth, created by pupils. This is of a very good standard and creates a bright and welcoming atmosphere.
80. From the evidence provided, it is clear that pupils are developing their abilities to plan and make things to a good level of overall competence in **design and technology**. For example, pupils in Year 1 have been developing their ability to plan their designs by identifying the materials to be used and how the finished article should look. Pupils of all ages are taught well how to use tools, for example the use of scissors, small saws and rulers. This has resulted in the production of some good examples of moving vehicles by Year 2 pupils and a playground designed and built by those in Year 1.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of singing are well above average.
- Teaching and learning are very good, and teacher expertise is used very well to teach whole year groups.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes to the subject contribute very positively to their quality of learning.
- Performances for wider audiences are of a high standard.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

81. The previous inspection made no judgement on standards in music, but the very good progress identified in pupils' singing continues, and pupils achieve very well across the school. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average.
82. Music contributes positively to the ethos of the school and to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. It is very much a part of the school's culture. The subject leader and other teachers have good subject expertise and are confident with their teaching. This has a positive impact on the attainment of pupils. Teaching observed was very good, as was the Year 1 practice for the Christmas production of 'Ralph the Reindeer'. Pupils were asked to

evaluate their own performance and correctly identified that they were singing too fast. Teachers use effective strategies to improve performance. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Good use of praise delights and encourages pupils to try even harder. Teachers work very effectively when teaching a whole year group together. They

make lessons interesting for pupils, who eagerly await the next stage of development. They totally engage the pupils' interest and attention. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good, and sometimes excellent, and contribute very positively to their overall learning.

83. A music club of 30 pupils supports learning very well, and is very popular. Pupils love singing. They visit the elderly at Christmas and sing on other special occasions for a wider audience at annual or termly productions. They share songs at Thanksgiving and use instruments to make sound pictures. During the inspection, pupils were observed being taught to improve skills in breathing, articulation and voice stretching. The school has a good range of music resources, including instruments from other cultures. During the playing of Handel's 'Fireworks' music, teachers and pupils mimed the movements for playing the various instruments, and performed as 'conductors'. Year 2 pupils clap out rhythms accurately when learning new songs. They pick out strong and weak beats using a number system. Pupils across the school enjoy their music. The school's weekly hymn practice, rehearsing for the end-of-term production, included a very good two-part song sung in the round, with very good awareness of pace and tempo, very clear diction and total harmony. This was a difficult song requiring a wide range of notes to be sung.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in swimming and country dancing are well above average.
- Teaching and learning are never less than good.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and sometimes excellent.
- Extra-curricular activities to support the subject are very good.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

84. Standards in physical education are above those expected at the end of Year 2. They are well above average in swimming, with half of all seven year olds able to swim at least five metres unaided by the end of the year, and attaining higher national awards. Standards in dance, especially country dancing, are high. This is due to very good teaching, very good leadership of the subject, and the excellent attitudes which pupils bring to their lessons. Extra-curricular activities, including a fitness club, soccer and dance clubs, are well above the level of provision usually found for pupils of this age. These are well attended and support pupils' learning very well. No judgement was made on standards at the last inspection, but pupils continue to make very good progress and are achieving very well across the school. There has been good improvement overall.
85. All elements of the curriculum are taught and are planned carefully, although only dance and gymnastics were seen during the inspection. Teachers' planning across year groups is very effective and emphasises the teaching of physical skills. All teachers use warm-up exercises effectively. Teachers show good subject knowledge, very good safety awareness, and manage their pupils extremely well, encouraging and engaging them at all times. Occasionally, they make insufficient use of using pupils to demonstrate good practice and do not ask pupils how

improvements in performance might be made. Year 1 pupils progressively composed a dance as part of a class topic of 'Light and Dark', linking detailed movements to indicate fear and brightness. They responded very well to the atmosphere of the music played, showing good awareness of how their body parts can be made to move.

86. In one lesson, the teaching of a new country dance to 50 children in Year 2 was excellent, with pupils following an increasingly complicated series of movements most successfully. The teacher had only to raise a hand or say "Excuse me?" in order to gain the silent attention of the whole group. There was a special moment in this lesson, as the teacher continued to challenge the pupils further, developing the dance with new movements and singing, when they thought the dance was finished - only to find, to their delight - that there was still another movement to come! Pupils are very adept at finding suitable, safe space, unasked, on entry to the hall. They move apparatus around with care, showing a mature sense of responsibility beyond their years. The pupils' very good attitudes contribute very positively to their learning. They learn very well through enjoyment. Behaviour is exemplary.
87. Boys and girls from both Years 1 and 2 support clubs well. Pupils from the adjacent junior school help the football club effectively by demonstrating and encouraging skills such as passing, tackling and dribbling to their younger neighbours. The subject leader monitors the subject effectively and has a very good overview. Good use of a commercial scheme of work increases teachers' confidence. The school is the only infant school to take part in the local Stroud Country Dancing Festival, which it does very successfully.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. No judgement can be made on the overall quality of teaching and provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship because only one lesson was observed. However, the school has a very good programme in place for developing pupils' awareness of citizenship and health education and opportunities are regularly built into many subjects to promote pupils' personal development and to give them opportunities to discuss a range of issues that affect them. There are very good policies in place and the school tracks the personal development of pupils closely as they move through the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
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	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	1
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
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).