

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Westlea, Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126279

Headteacher: Mrs Suzanne Seaton

Lead inspector: Derek Watts

Dates of inspection: 24 – 26 May 2005

Inspection number: 268235

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: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 328 |
| School address: | Langstone Way Westlea Down Swindon Wiltshire |
| Postcode: | SN5 7BT |
| Telephone number: | 01793 870469 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Dawn Dolphin |
| Date of previous inspection: | 7 to 11 December 1998. |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Westlea is a larger than average primary school located on the western side of the Borough of Swindon. Pupil numbers have fallen steadily from the high roll of 389 in 2000. Most of the pupils are from a White British background. About ten per cent of the pupils are from other backgrounds including Chinese, Asian and other White. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is above average. The school has provision for pupils with physical difficulties and these pupils are integrated into the main classes rather than taught in a separate unit. The proportion of pupils who join the school other than at the usual starting point is average while the proportion of pupils who leave the school before their expected date is below average. The socio-economic circumstances of the school's intake are broadly average. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is average overall, although it tends to be better in mathematical development. A Healthy Schools Award was gained in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|---|
| 22092 | Derek Watts | Lead inspector | Foundation Stage English as an additional language Science Design and technology Physical education |
| 14032 | Marion Saunders | Lay inspector | |
| 32257 | Richard Chalkley | Team inspector | Mathematics Geography Music |
| 12116 | Christina Morgan | Team inspector | Information and communication technology Art and design History Religious education Modern foreign language |
| 3855 | David Langton | Team inspector | English |
| 15600 | Colin Richardson | Team inspector | Special educational needs |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Westlea Primary is a good school. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards. The school has a very positive ethos where all pupils are valued and included in all activities. The school is particularly successful at providing for pupils with physical difficulties and integrating them into classes. Good leadership and management contribute well to pupils' personal development, their academic development and to the good improvements since the last inspection. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in speaking and listening, mathematics and science in Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science and information and communication and technology (ICT).
- A very positive school ethos leads to very good pupil attitudes and behaviour.
- There are inconsistencies in pupils' presentation of work and in marking.
- The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of additional activities.
- There are some minor weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum.
- The partnership with the community and other schools is very good.

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in December 1998. The recommended five key issues for improvement have been effectively addressed. Provision for ICT has improved considerably and, as a result, standards have been raised from below average to above average throughout the school. The school has made good progress in its provision for more able pupils and, as a result, these pupils are achieving well. The school now has good assessment systems and uses assessment well to guide planning. Behaviour in the playground is now very good. Reception has a new play area with good outdoor equipment. In addition to these improvements, standards in Year 2 have improved from average to above average. Year 6 has maintained the overall above average standards. Pupils' personal development has improved from good to very good. Teaching and learning have improved because there is a higher proportion of good and better teaching and no unsatisfactory teaching. The leadership and management of the school have improved from satisfactory to good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Children in Reception achieve well in all areas of learning because of the good teaching they receive. Standards in Reception are currently above average in all six areas of learning. The school's national test results for Year 2 in 2004 were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. In the current Year 2, standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing, mathematics and science. Pupils are achieving well in these areas owing to good teaching and support.

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

*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.*

The national test results for Year 6 in 2004 were well above average in science, above average in mathematics but only average in English. The reason for the English results being lower is mainly due to a higher than usual proportion of boys in the year group. Boys generally perform less well than the girls both nationally and at Westlea. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in speaking and listening, mathematics and science. Standards are above average in reading and writing. All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving well because of the good teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with physical disabilities, achieve well because of the good provision they receive. Across the school, standards in ICT are above average and pupils' achievement is good. This is because they are taught ICT skills well in the computer suite and use ICT well to support their learning in other subjects. Standards are also above average in music across the school and in art and design by Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and they behave very well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are confident and polite and show independence and responsibility. Relationships between pupils, and between adults and pupils, are very good. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. An excellent lesson was seen in ICT in Year 6. Lessons are well planned and most teachers are lively and enthusiastic. This inspires the pupils and maintains their interest. Teachers' explanations and questioning are effective. Pupils make good gains in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs. Given pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, the presentation of work in some classes is disappointing. The school does not have a consistent approach to handwriting or presentation. There are also inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is enriched by a very good range of additional activities. There are some innovative elements to the curriculum such as theme weeks, visiting artists and the introduction of French in Years 4 to 6. However, there are some minor weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum and so subjects like geography, design and technology, and religious education receive insufficient time. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. The partnership with parents is good. The school has forged very good links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The experienced headteacher provides clear direction for the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other key staff. The role of some subject leaders is less well developed. Teamwork among the staff is good and a very positive ethos has been created for pupils to learn. School evaluation and improvement planning are generally good. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored and developed and have contributed to the good teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. Clear improvement planning contributed to the good improvements since the last inspection. However, the monitoring of the curriculum has been less effective. The governance of the school is good. The governors are supportive and have a clear understanding of the school's performance. They are well led by a committed chair. All statutory duties are fulfilled.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold positive views about the school. They are particularly pleased with the children's attitude to school, staff expectations, induction arrangements and the good teaching. The inspection team can endorse these positive views. Pupils hold very positive views about their school. They appreciate the interesting range of activities provided for them, particularly visits and clubs.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do are:

- Improve the consistency in handwriting, presentation and the marking of pupils' work
- Revise the balance of the curriculum to ensure that subjects such as religious education, geography and design and technology receive sufficient time.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Throughout the school, pupils' achievement is good. Overall, standards are above average in Reception, in Year 2 and in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are very well developed by Year 6.
- In Year 6, standards are well above average in mathematics and science.
- Pupils use ICT well to support their learning in other subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well owing to good teaching and support.
- Achievement in religious education is not as good as in other subjects.

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is broadly average. Most children in Reception are achieving well because of the good teaching and support they receive. Standards are above average in all six areas of learning. A well planned and implemented Foundation Stage curriculum also contributes to children's good achievement.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 16.7 (18.2) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| writing | 15.8 (17.4) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| mathematics | 17.5 (18.0) | 16.2 (16.3) |

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2, the school's results were above the national average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared to those of similar schools, these results were average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. During the last three years, results were above average overall in 2002 and 2004. In 2003, results were well above average overall, with mathematics results being particularly high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The 2003 Year 2 year group was a higher attaining cohort than usual.
3. In the current Year 2, standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. Overall, pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving well because of good teaching.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.9 (28.7) | 26.9 (26.8) |

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| mathematics | 28.4 (28.6) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| science | 30.3 (28.8) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 6, the school's results were in line with the national average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. These results were above average overall. There are a number of reasons why last year's results in English were lower than those in mathematics and science. This particular year group had a higher than usual proportion of boys, 63 per cent. Boys generally perform less well than girls in English nationally and Westlea's results conform to this national picture.
5. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in speaking and listening and above average in reading and writing. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science. Most pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving well. Standards have improved in science in recent years owing to a greater emphasis being placed on investigative work.
6. In ICT, standards are above average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils are achieving well in this subject owing to good teaching. Pupils use ICT well to support their learning in other subjects such as science, design and technology (DT) and history. The school has made very good improvements in its ICT provision since the last inspection. As a result, standards have been raised from below average to above average across the school.
7. Standards in religious education (RE) are in line with those set out in the locally agreed syllabus across the school. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily. The RE curriculum is less well developed than that of most other subjects. The time allocated to RE is not consistent and there are too few opportunities for pupils to record their work.
8. Most pupils with physical disabilities enter the special resourced provision (SRP) whilst in the school's Reception class, with a few also transferring from other schools and their attainment on entry is generally below that expected nationally. However, pupils overall achieve well despite many having absences due to hospital appointments, illnesses and, for some, hospitalisation. Some pupils are achieving very well, particularly in mathematics and English. This is reflected in the improving standards of attainment of most pupils as they progress through the school. By the end of school most attain nationally expected standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school sets very high standards for behaviour, which is reflected in the very good behaviour of pupils.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the full range of school activities and are keen and willing to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Pupils develop a very strong sense of valuing difference in each other and an understanding of their own feelings and self-worth.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the principles of right and wrong.

Commentary

9. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils are polite both to adults and to each other and respond very well to the simple rules which govern behaviour throughout the school. In lessons, behaviour is almost always very good. Pupils know the routines and operate them without fuss. The behaviour policy is based upon respect for others and this is reinforced throughout the life of the school and by the example set by adults in the school. Behaviour at playtimes and lunchtime is generally very good. Whilst there is boisterous behaviour at times,

it is almost always good-natured. Pupils are confident that when the few incidents of bullying occur, they will be dealt with by staff. Since the last inspection there is a revised routine for pupils returning to class after lunchtime and this works well. There have been no exclusions in the history of the school.

10. The attitudes of pupils in the SRP are very good. They enjoy their learning and have very good relationships with school staff in general but particularly with the SRP teacher and teaching assistants. An aim of the SRP is to improve pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. This has been achieved very effectively by staff, who stimulate in the pupils a desire to learn. Pupils respond very well to the caring ethos, they enjoy coming to school and feel secure. Pupils have good relationships with their peers both in the provision and in mainstream where inclusion for the SRP pupils is excellent, almost total and a strength of the school.
11. In almost all lessons observed, pupils were hardworking and keen to do well. They are confident and able to work independently for significant periods of time. In a Year 3 and 4 guided reading session, pupils concentrated well in their assigned groups in activities designed to develop their independent learning skills. Year 6 pupils are proud that they are given the opportunity to take decisions about how they research and present their work. Many pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and sporting competitions. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children enjoy going to school. The school attendance rate is very good, with low levels of unauthorised absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.3 | School data | 0.0 |
| National data | 5.1 | National data | 0.4 |

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

12. The school has a very positive approach to inclusion, which is reflected in the very positive relationships existing throughout the school. Pupils with physical disabilities have a designated pupil 'peer' and are very much part of the whole life of the school. Each year the school receives a number of traveller children and the numbers choosing the school are increasing, reflecting the ease with which they fit into the life of the school. The high number of adults within the school provides positive role models. Staff readily provide a reminder to pupils to say 'please' and 'thank you' in their interactions with pupils and work hard, when pupils enter the school, to instil the basic routines of taking turns and listening to others.
13. The school provides pupils with some very good opportunities to develop their understanding of the lives of others and to be able to reflect upon their own experiences. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have high levels of self-esteem and were able to respond very positively to a class assembly about friendship. Responses were thoughtful and moving and the assembly created a sense of belonging for the whole class. In RE lessons, younger pupils learn about the Jewish faith. In a hymn practice, older pupils sang hymns from a range of different countries including Sweden, Africa, Kosovo, and the Jewish 'Shalom', making a good contribution to their cultural development.
14. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their moral code of understanding right from wrong. In a Year 3 RE class, pupils discuss the value of rules in their lives and what is acceptable and what is not. In a Reception/Year 1 class, pupils are asked to consider whether it is right to keep a spider in a box and the implications of doing so. These very good opportunities throughout the school ensure that by the time pupils reach Year 6, pupils have developed a clear moral code based upon understanding and reason.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is good. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. A satisfactory curriculum is very well enriched by other activities. There is good support, advice and guidance for pupils. The school's partnership with parents is good. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The school has good assessment systems and generally uses assessment well to inform planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers engage and encourage pupils well.
- Pupils are very well managed.
- Teaching assistants and other support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- There are inconsistencies in pupils' presentation of work and in marking.
- Speaking and listening and ICT are promoted well in other subjects.

Commentary

15. Teaching has improved since the last inspection because there is a higher proportion of good or better teaching and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching and learning are good in Reception, in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Since the last inspection teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved from satisfactory to good. The good teaching leads to pupils' overall good achievement. The improvements in Years 1 and 2 have resulted in overall standards rising from average to above average. The school's effective system for the monitoring and development of teaching has contributed significantly to the effective teaching.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 (2%) | 8 (18%) | 26 (58 %) | 10 (22 %) | 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.

16. Teaching and learning are consistently good in the two classes with Reception children. As a result, children make good gains in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children of this age learn. Children are provided with an interesting and stimulating range of activities. These motivate them and maintain their interest. Support staff are very well deployed and make a valuable contribution to children's learning, particularly those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language.
17. In Years 1 and 2 teaching and learning are good overall and range from satisfactory to very good. The very good lessons were seen in mathematics and ICT. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good overall and range from satisfactory to excellent. An excellent lesson was seen in ICT in Year 6 and very good lessons were seen in English, mathematics and science.
18. Lessons are well planned and clear learning objectives are identified. These are effectively shared with the class so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers show a good command of the National Curriculum subjects. Most teachers are lively and enthusiastic and this inspires the pupils and sustains their interest.

19. Teachers are particularly effective in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in a range of subjects. Teachers' effective questioning and explanations promote discussions very well. Pupils acquire new vocabulary and are given good opportunities to talk in pairs or groups or to present to the whole class. Many pupils in the school are articulate and confident speakers and by Year 6 standards are well above average. Opportunities for pupils to apply and develop writing skills in subjects such as geography, history and religious education are insufficient.
20. ICT is used well to support teaching and learning in most classes. Teachers use the computer-linked whiteboards well to enhance their presentation skills. A number of lessons were seen where pupils used computers or ICT equipment to support their learning in English, science or design and technology. For example, in a good Year 4 science lesson, pupils used computer-linked sensors to measure the amount of light which passed through different fabrics.
21. Pupils' ability to work collaborative or independently is very good. They work well in pairs to discuss and share ideas and this has a positive effect on the development of speaking and listening skills. Pupils also work well in small groups when planning and carrying out investigations in science.
22. The presentation of pupils' written work is inconsistent across the school. Given pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, the presentation of their work is often disappointing and in some classes it is unsatisfactory. In some classes, work is well organised and obvious care and pride have been taken. Detailed marking by teachers usually reinforces this work. In other classes, work is untidy and lacking in quality and quantity. The school does not have a clear policy or scheme for handwriting or presentation of work and this results in the inconsistencies in expectations and the quality of presentation.
23. Throughout the school, children and pupils are very well managed. Teachers and support staff have set high expectations of behaviour and the vast majority of pupils respond very well to these. Teachers have established very good relationships with their pupils. Most lessons are lively and interesting and humour is used constructively. As a consequence, pupils are engaged and interested and they behave very well. Learning time is rarely lost through dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning contribute to the good achievement.
24. The majority of teaching of pupils with physical disabilities is undertaken by the mainstream teachers. This is overall good with teachers showing an awareness of pupils' individual education plan targets and an understanding of the problems that the SRP pupils have, such as poor fine motor skills, in their setting of tasks. In this the SRP pupils are supported very well by experienced teaching assistants who work well as a team with the teachers and effectively support pupils' inclusion in lessons. The teaching assistants also withdraw some pupils, generally during the group activity part of the lesson, to ensure that they have grasped the learning outcomes for the lesson. The SRP teacher provides consistently very good teaching and support for the pupils, both in classes and in withdrawal groups, and in providing weekly physiotherapy sessions. In one such session the very good planning, preparation, management and enthusiasm of the teacher working with the teaching assistants as a very effective team provided the pupils with a very enjoyable opportunity to improve their balance, weight bearing and fine motor skills. Consequently, pupils' learning is overall very good and they are making very good progress.
25. The school has effective systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science. In the main, assessment information is used well to inform planning and teaching. The quality of marking is inconsistent and in some classes it is unsatisfactory. In the best practice, work is marked regularly and pupils are provided with comments of encouragement and praise for good work. Furthermore, they are given clear

guidance on how their work could be improved. In other examples, marking is irregular and is mainly ticks without constructive comment. In some cases pupils are given lavish praise for ordinary work.

The curriculum

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which is very well enriched. The accommodation and resources to support learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision made for extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There is an imbalance in the time allocation to some subjects and some lessons.
- The match and use of support staff to the curriculum are very good.
- There is very good participation in the arts.
- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good.

Commentary

26. The planning and implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum for children in Reception are good. All six areas of learning are given appropriate attention through interesting themes such as 'mini-beasts'. The well-planned curriculum with a wide range of interesting activities contributes to the children's good achievement.
27. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets National Curriculum statutory requirements and follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education satisfactorily. In addition, there is good provision made for the teaching of French to Years 4 to 6. This is an interesting introduction. However, although all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, there are some minor weaknesses in the balance of the subjects. The previous inspection criticised over-long English lessons and this is still the case in some classes, while some lesson times for practical subjects such as science, art and design and design and technology are often insufficient. Much work is planned through topic approach and this is good practice, but too little time is allocated to religious education, art and design, design and technology, history and geography. In subjects such as religious education, geography and history there is often too little recording of work. These subjects are not used sufficiently for pupils to apply and develop writing skills. The school's overall curriculum plan has yet to be amended to include French. In the main, the curriculum is not sufficiently monitored and reviewed by senior staff to ensure that all subjects receive appropriate attention.
28. Curricular provision for the pupils in the SRP is good. Pupils are almost totally included in the mainstream curriculum. Pupils' physical needs are provided for very well through hydrotherapy and physiotherapy sessions. TAs assess their pupils' progress each lesson. Such assessment data are used very effectively in the checking and setting of IEP targets. Although resources are good, some pupils have to wait long periods of time for LEA-provided ICT aids that will enable the pupils to access learning. This can only have a detrimental effect on their progress.
29. The school has 'Healthy School' status, of which there is good evidence in displays around the school. Personal development is encouraged through the giving of responsibility, for example, looking after younger pupils and answering telephones, and citizenship awareness is promoted through the school council. Sex education and drugs awareness are well covered through the use of the school nurse and visits from the 'Life Style Centre' caravan. This area has still to be developed through the introduction of a new scheme of work.

30. The school offers a very inclusive curriculum, ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all. The inclusion provision for pupils with special educational needs, those with physical disabilities, and potential higher-attaining pupils is very good. Gifted and talented pupils, and the more able, are identified and given further regular provision to extend their learning with other schools and by pupils of all age groups with similar talents working together once a week. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and has resulted in higher attainers achieving well.
31. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils visit these schools, through induction days and for lessons, sometimes with other primary schools, and senior school teachers visit the school to deliver a variety of lessons. Year 5 are rightly proud of their award in a forensic science master class, beating Year 6 pupils from other schools. Parents are very pleased with the arrangements to prepare their children for transfer to senior schools. Teams compete in netball and soccer tournaments and take part in music and arts festivals with other schools.
32. The school's approach to developing the curriculum through innovation and experiment is good. The teaching of French, theme weeks and the use of visiting artists, musicians and theatre groups, all providing teaching "workshops" and provision for cross-curricular activities linked through well-planned topic work, are good. Very good use is made of the latest classroom technology available, enabling teachers to make imaginative presentations through interactive whiteboards.
33. The curriculum is very well enriched through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Each term, every class has a visit or visitor arranged to support their learning, and all areas of learning are well supported. For example, Year 4 visit Hampton Court, and Year 5 recently went to Wales as part of the "Farms for city children" initiative. Residential visits are organised for Years 4 to 6, with Year 6 pupils visiting France. A wide range of clubs, offering physical, artistic and musical activities, is well supported by pupils from all age groups – enjoying chess, soccer and netball, choir and orchestra. "Theme weeks" are held twice each term giving a particular whole-school focus on aspects of the curriculum such as art, music or reading during a book week. These arrangements support pupils' learning very effectively. More than fifty pupils learn a musical instrument. The choir sings publicly, for example at the Brunel shopping centre, and for music festivals. Pupils attend the Swindon Arts Week and Literacy Festival. The school promotes participation in the arts very well. Participation in sport is well promoted. Boys and girls take part in netball and soccer tournaments and matches with other schools, as well as area sports meetings. Coaching is provided from outside sources. Events such as "Grandparents' Day", close links with local churches, and ventures with local businesses support the curriculum well.
34. The school has a good number of well-trained and committed teaching assistants, who contribute positively to pupils' learning. The accommodation has been improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall. New arrangements for administration staff, for the disabled and for play in the Foundation Stage and a new computer suite, have been provided. Outside temporary classrooms have been put to good use for group work, special educational needs, and to establish a physiotherapy room for the disabled. These rooms, especially those used for whole-class teaching, are less spacious than those in the main building. Resources to support learning have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. There has been much spending on ICT in setting up the new suite but also in classrooms with the provision of interactive whiteboards, which enhance teachers' presentation skills. Resources for English, mathematics, science and ICT, and within the Foundation Stage, are good. Resources for other subjects are satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is good. There is good support, advice and guidance for pupils. The involvement of pupils in the life of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel safe and secure in the school and are very confident that there are adults who will help them.
- Induction arrangements for pupils entering school are very good.
- Pupils with special education needs are very well catered for.
- Written procedures do not reflect the good practice in the area of child protection.

Commentary

35. Relationships between adults and pupils in the school are very good and reflect the caring and supportive ethos of the school. The high number of adults needed to support the pupils with physical disabilities has a positive effect upon all pupils. There is a consistent approach to behaviour management and pupils have a high level of trust in the adults around them who know them well. There is a formalised approach to monitoring pupils' personal development through personal, social and health education (PSHE), and the school records any parental contact with class teachers each week to identify any areas of concern. There are good links with the receiving high schools and pupils are well prepared for their move to the next stage of education. The school council is relatively new and is just beginning to find its role. The school has undertaken a pupil survey to find out which issues are important to pupils. This survey was analysed by both class and gender.
36. Parents are very supportive of the arrangements when their child starts school. Three sessions are provided for the parents with children due to start school, including an evening session to give working parents the opportunity to participate. These sessions also include advice on the teaching of reading and numeracy. Many pupils have attended the on-site playgroup and have benefited from opportunities to become familiar with the school. The school's focus on inclusion also allows for pupils joining school during the school year to be quickly integrated into the full life of the school.
37. Support and guidance for pupils in the SRP are very good. The school is committed to the principle of inclusion and the inclusion arrangements are very effective in promoting the pupils' social development and academic learning. All pupils have a very good and trusting relationship with the SRP staff. Pupils appreciate working alongside mainstream peers knowing that they have the support of SRP staff if required.
38. Whilst the processes are in place for ensuring that child protection issues are dealt with appropriately, these are not fully reflected in the written procedures. Regular risk assessments are undertaken regarding the health and safety of the site and all statutory requirements are met. The governing body plays an active role in the risk assessment process. There are very good facilities for the first aid needs of pupils and very good attention to the particular health and safety needs of those pupils with a physical disability.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good information to parents about the school and pupils' standards and progress.
- The very strong links with other schools and organisations have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- The school is very open and welcoming to the local community and makes very good use of the available community resources.

Commentary

39. The school provides very good curriculum information to parents at the start of each term, enabling parents to provide good support to their children at home. This complements the literacy and numeracy workshops that are available to parents as part of the induction process. Homework is set regularly. Parents have an opportunity to visit the school each term and discuss their children's progress with teachers. The length of the consultation meetings has recently been increased in response to parents' requests. In the summer term there is an open evening when pupils can show parents the work they have been doing in class. Annual reports on pupils' progress are very comprehensive and well written, providing a clear picture of what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve. Parents are actively involved in the life of the school. Whilst only a few parents are able to help in the classrooms, a significant number of parents regularly help with school outings and walking pupils to the swimming pool.
40. Partnership with parents of children with physical disabilities is good, although as the SRP covers a very wide catchment area some parents find it difficult to meet staff on a regular basis. However, parents' attendance at pupils' annual reviews is very good.
41. The school has strong links with the two receiving high schools and all pupils, including the pupils with special education needs, are well prepared for the transition to secondary education. Pupils participate in various activities at the secondary schools, for example a forensic science competition and specific courses for gifted and talented pupils. Very close links with Robert le King School provides an opportunity to share staff training and resources and to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The school has very positive links with the on-site playgroup and has developed a good relationship with the local day nursery. Both groups of pre-school children have visits from the school staff and the opportunity to visit the school and attend events such as assembly.
42. The school is justifiably proud of its significant role in the community. The grounds are available for use after the school day and in the school holidays and local football teams and a tennis club use the facilities. The school hall is let on a regular basis, and on Sundays the school becomes the local church and Sunday school. Pupils from the school take part in a wide range of local initiatives: carol singing at a local large supermarket, the choir competition at the Brunel shopping centre, Swindon Literacy Festival and Swindon Arts Week. These activities contribute significantly to pupils' personal development and their understanding of their local community. A very successful annual event is the 'Grandparents day' for the grandparents of pupils in the school. Another important annual event is bonfire night, which has become well known across a wide area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher leads the school well and the leadership by other key staff is also good. The governors carry out their role effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides clear educational direction.
- Key staff provide effective leadership.
- Inclusion is promoted very well.
- The monitoring and development of teaching are good.
- The monitoring and review of the curriculum are less effective.

Commentary

43. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and development areas and they are kept well informed by the headteacher about the school's performance. This enables them to make a valuable contribution to improvement planning and monitoring. The governors are supportive, appropriately challenging and involved in the life of the school. A committed Chair leads the governors well. All statutory requirements are met.
44. The headteacher is experienced and provides good leadership and direction for the school. She clearly has the confidence of pupils, staff, parents and governors. The headteacher and staff have successfully created a very positive school ethos where all pupils are valued and included. The school is particularly effective in integrating pupils with physical difficulties into the learning activities and into the life of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well provided for. The school has also taken effective action in order to provide for higher-attaining pupils as this was an area needing improvement after the last inspection.
45. The management of the school is good. The day-to-day management is effective and this helps to ensure that the school runs smoothly. The administration staff provide good support for the headteacher, pupils and staff. Procedures for self-evaluation and monitoring performance data are good. The senior staff monitor and review the school's performance on a regular basis. School improvement planning is good. The monitoring and development of teaching are good and this contributes to the good teaching and learning throughout the school.
46. Leadership and management of the SRP are very good. The co-ordinator for the provision has a very good overview of the provision since taking up post the previous September. Very effective teams have been formed with the teaching assistants in the provision, and relationships with mainstream teachers and teaching assistants are very positive. Vision for the further development of the provision is very sound and includes observing support in classes and feeding back to class teachers at the regular meetings held between the teachers and the co-ordinator. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.
47. The leadership of the curriculum has been innovative and creative with the introduction of theme weeks, visiting artists and French for Years 4 to 6. However, the monitoring and review of the whole curriculum has been less effective. As result, some lessons in English are over-long and subjects such as geography, design and technology and religious education receive insufficient time.
48. Financial planning and management are good and well linked to the priorities in the development plan. Governors are appropriately involved in budget preparation and monitoring. The principles of best value are applied well. With good pupil achievement, good teaching and learning and effective leadership and management, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 964,671 |
| Total expenditure | 940,630 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,822 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 24,041 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 48,082 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in Reception is good. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year and is broadly average in the current Reception Year. The school has very effective induction arrangements and these help to ensure that children settle into Reception quickly. The quality of teaching in Reception is good and children make good progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding. The nursery nurses and teaching assistant are effective and work well with the teachers. They make a good contribution to children's learning, particularly those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and all areas of learning are given appropriate attention through half termly themes. During the inspection, the overall theme was 'mini-beasts'. Children are provided with a wide range of activities that are imaginative and stimulating. Accommodation and resources are good and used well to maximise learning. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by the two teachers who teach the Reception children. They share their expertise well in planning and implementing the curriculum. Planning and children's performance are effectively monitored and reviewed. Since the last inspection the planning of the curriculum has improved and a new outdoor play area with a good range of equipment has been developed. The school has maintained the good children's achievement and good teaching reported last time.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of good teaching.
- Adults are very good role models for children.
- A stimulating and vibrant learning environment has been created.

Commentary

49. All children are excited about learning and are motivated because of the good teaching they receive and the interesting and imaginative activities provided. Both classrooms with Reception children are bright and vibrant with interesting displays and artefacts to stimulate children's interest. The teachers and support staff are good role models for children and have established clear expectations and good relationships with them. Children are friendly and supportive and relate well to others. They participate in activities with enthusiasm, share and take turns. Many children are confident and self-assured. Teachers manage the children very well and this results in very good behaviour. Most children achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Children achieve well in all areas of language and literacy.

Commentary

50. Teachers and support staff take numerous opportunities to develop children's language skills. Speaking and listening and the development of children's vocabulary pervade a range of activities. For example, in one good dance lesson, children spoke confidently about how animals move. There is a good range of bright and colourful books available for children particularly ones related to the current theme. Children show great interest in the books on mini-beasts. Children took a great interest in a large book showing the life cycles of a butterfly. They used words such as 'eggs', 'pupa' and 'chrysalis' in describing the cycle. Children are given good opportunities to acquire writing skills. Most children are beginning to form common letters correctly. They leave a clear space between the words they write. Lower attainers are still at an early stage of letter formation. Higher-attaining children are beginning to write complete sentences through stories. For example, one wrote about the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, "Jack said the cow and the fama gave sum magic beans". Children achieve well in all areas of language and literacy and by the end of Reception, standards are above average.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well.
- Mathematical activities are imaginative and stimulating.
- Number work is effectively developed within the main theme.

Commentary

51. An interesting range of activities is provided to promote children's numeracy skills. Most children could count 16 spots on a butterfly. Lower-attaining children count the spots on a ladybird. Children also identify patterns in nature such as the stripes on a bee, spots on ladybird and the spiral patterns of a snail's shell. Most children recognise and name common two dimensional shapes. In one lesson, a higher-attaining child identified and described some of the number patterns on a large 100 square. Most children achieve well in mathematical development and standards are above average by the end of Reception.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and so children achieve well.
- ICT supports children's learning well.
- Activities are wide-ranging and stimulating.

Commentary

52. Teachers provide interesting activities to develop children's wider understanding of the world. The stimulating displays and teachers' skilful explanations and questioning promote children's learning well. The tank of tadpoles and the 'painted lady' butterfly pupa in the classes help to 'spark' the children's interest about living things. Most children show a clear understanding of life cycles through their study of a butterfly and a frog. They describe the stages of a butterfly from eggs to adult butterfly. Higher-attaining children know that cocoon, pupa and chrysalis are the same. Children used a computer 'paint' program to create an imaginary butterfly with a spotted symmetrical pattern. They displayed competent skills in using the mouse. Children

sow mung beans and observe the shooting roots. They discover that the bean needs water to grow. Children also use a range of construction kits to make different vehicles. Children's achievement is good in this area of learning and standards are above average by the end of Reception.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well.
- Opportunities for climbing and riding vehicles are less prominent.

Commentary

53. Children achieve well in this area of learning. In a good dance lesson in the hall, children moved to music as they acted out the life cycle of a butterfly. The teacher's instructions were clear and children were given good opportunities to describe how a caterpillar, bee or butterfly might move and then practise these movements. Children also moved together in pairs as they tried to move like a spider with eight legs. Most children moved with co-ordination, control and with creativity. In the outdoor play area children have good opportunities to use a range of equipment but during the inspection opportunities to ride vehicles and to climb were in less evidence. By the end of Reception standards are above average.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Children are provided with a wide range of activities and achieve well.

Commentary

54. Children are provided with a broad range of activities to develop their creative skills including dance, role play, painting and collage. Teachers and support staff use a good blend of direct teaching and allowing the children to explore and be creative. During the inspection, children played in the 'Garden Centre' role play area. They purchased seeds and flowers. Staff provide helpful prompts and participate well with the children. Children explore with paints and create large paintings of butterflies. They use bright colours to good effect. Another group of children used bright colours of pink or yellow to produce striking spider web patterns on black sugar paper. Standards are above average in creative development by the end of Reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average across the school and well above average in speaking and listening at the end of Year 6.

- Pupils' very good attitudes contribute positively to their learning and good achievement.
- Standards of presentation and handwriting across the school are unsatisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Provision for writing is inconsistent.
- ICT is used well to support the subject.

Commentary

55. In the current Year 2 standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. In Year 6 standards are above average in reading and writing and well above average in speaking and listening. Most pupils including higher attainers and those with special educational needs achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. Provision for higher-attaining pupils was identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The school has made good improvements in this area and higher attainers are now achieving well.
56. Standards in speaking and listening have improved and are now above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. The school has recently had a special focus on this aspect, targeting new vocabulary, and teachers regularly provide short opportunities for pupils to discuss work with their partners, and promote speech through well-considered, open-ended questions, role play and when discussing work at the end of lessons. Pupils' very good attitudes to learning make them good listeners to teachers and to one another. Assemblies and the school council provide further opportunities for developing speaking skills. Most pupils spoken to by inspectors were confident, engaging and articulate.
57. Standards in reading are above average across the school. Younger pupils benefit well from timetabled sessions for phonics, and Year 2 pupils heard to read were well able to break words down into syllables, recognising the term, before sounding out the whole word such as...*encrusted*, *encyclopaedia*. They were confident and expressive. Guided reading has been a special focus with training given to teachers. Each class has a guided group reading session every day and this is helping to raise standards, especially in comprehension skills. Home/school reading diaries are a useful record of what has been read but more use could be made of these. The school has good stocks of colour coded, graded material to support reading. Reading clubs, a Reading Circle and book fairs increase reading awareness and standards. Older pupils support younger ones by hearing them read.
58. In writing, pupils show good command of vocabulary and choose words carefully for effect – a Year 3 pupil describing windows in a city “with the blinding reflection of the sun”, and a Year 6 pupil using metaphoric imagery in a poem to write “the sun was a ball of fire”. Curriculum time allocated to a “writers’ workshop” is helping to raise standards but such innovation is inconsistent. Many, but not all, classes make good use of spelling journals on a daily basis. This is good practice. The previous inspection identified spelling as the weakest aspect of pupils’ writing. Effective action has been taken to raise standards in spelling. Pupils’ handwriting, however, and the general presentation of their work is disappointing, inconsistent, and in many classes unsatisfactory. Given the very good attitudes seen towards their learning it is surprising that such little pride is shown in the presentation of their work. Some Year 6 pupils even scribble over exercise book covers. Pupils learn to join letters at various stages in their learning, but are often allowed to revert to printing and few examples were seen of really good handwriting. Few teachers timetable a session for handwriting. There is no formal scheme for handwriting in place across the school. Subjects such as religious education and history are used insufficiently to record written work, or for writing empathically.
59. Teaching and learning are good overall across the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge, question pupils well, manage their pupils well with positive behaviour management skills, and make good use of support teachers and classroom assistants, mainly to support lower-attaining pupils. Learning objectives are clear and these are shared with the pupils so they know what they are expected to learn. Teachers’ expectations of conduct and

task are high, including for higher-attaining pupils, but too few teachers expect or demand work well presented or with pride of presentation from their pupils. Teachers show good awareness of inclusion in their planning and provide well for pupils of differing attainment levels. Some lessons are too long – a weakness identified by the previous inspection and not yet fully addressed. In the two very good lessons seen teachers made excellent use of the latest classroom technology and an imaginative and often dramatic presentation to ensure that all were totally focused on their tasks. During the inspection, classroom computers were well used to support groups of learning. Older pupils make good use of additional time allocated to developing word processing skills. In the marking of pupils' work, teachers do not always inform pupils how they can improve their work.

60. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The newly appointed leader for Years 3 to 6 is well supported by the headteacher and the leader for Years 1 and 2 has introduced new initiatives to take the subject forward; the school's capacity for further improvement is good. English features prominently in the school improvement plan for further development. Resources for the subject have been improved, and the use of ICT as a teaching aid has been effective. There are effective procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment, and good use is made of tracking systems to identify and support under-achieving pupils. The subject strongly supports pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. There is good provision and awareness for developing speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. Pupils discuss their work in all subjects and in response to effective, open-ended questioning. Planned provision for writing across the curriculum is insufficient, however, and there is not enough recorded work or writing in subjects such as religious education, history, geography and science, to help develop pupils' writing skills.

Modern foreign language

62. **French** is taught formally for thirty minutes each week in Years 4, 5 and 6 and reinforced at opportune moments throughout the day, for example, when calling the register or when praising pupils for good work. There is a degree of successful specialist teaching but currently better use could be made of the expertise on the staff, including that of a skilled teaching assistant. When staff are confident and can model the language well, the quality of teaching is good.
63. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines and lessons provide a good balance between the development of specific vocabulary and opportunities for pupils to practise it in a meaningful context. This is backed up by learning about France as a country and a residential French visit for Year 6 pupils.
64. The teaching of French has only recently been established. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provides good support for colleagues. Through her monitoring of the provision, she is aware of the need to develop more consistency in teaching and to ensure that skills are built on as pupils move through the school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and learning.
- There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' numeracy skills.
- The subject is well monitored.

- Opportunities for practical investigations are limited.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.

Commentary

65. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average and pupils are achieving well. In previous years, national test results were well above average because of the large number of higher-attaining pupils in those classes. In the current Year 6, standards are well above average. These pupils have achieved well based on their prior attainment in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well so that they achieve as well as others in their class.
66. Teaching and learning are good, overall, with examples of very good teaching seen. These very good lessons are characterised by:
- detailed planning with clear learning objectives which are made explicit to the pupils;
 - teaching which captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm;
 - effective questioning to check pupils' understanding and extend their learning;
 - teaching assistants contributing very well to the good support given to different groups of pupils;
 - higher attaining pupils who are appropriately challenged.
67. In some lessons the teachers spend too much time talking to the pupils so that pupils begin to lose concentration and do not have sufficient time to complete their tasks. All classrooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards, which all teachers use very well to explain, describe and demonstrate new concepts to pupils.
68. Teachers ensure that all areas of mathematics are taught throughout the school and place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills in number. They start each lesson with lively oral and mental activities which not only develop pupils' skills in calculation but ensure that they are well focused for the main part of each lesson. Younger pupils are able to count and recognise numbers to 100 and have a secure knowledge of basic number facts to 20. Older pupils build upon this secure foundation, so that they can quickly and accurately convert fractions into decimals and percentages. Pupils behave very well in all lessons and are confident and enthusiastic. One pupil was heard saying, "I really enjoyed that!" Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks reveals limited opportunities for them to carry out investigations in order to develop their knowledge and understanding and use their good skills in practical ways. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Whilst some teachers write very useful remarks which challenge pupils' knowledge and understanding, others limit their comments to short phrases of praise which do not challenge them or help them to understand how they can do better.
69. Leadership and management are good. The subject leaders are knowledgeable and experienced. They observe lessons and provide valuable feedback to teachers about the ways in which they can improve their lessons. They have established effective assessment procedures and pupils' work is regularly evaluated and used to set group targets. Information obtained from test results is used well to identify strengths and areas for improvement across the school as seen in the current focus upon the improvement in pupils' use of information and communication technology to support and extend their learning and the emphasis now placed on challenging the higher-attaining pupils. Resources are good and are well maintained. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Pupils use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects, such as when recording data in science. For example, they record measurements and produce line graphs of shadow investigations and the increase in pulse rate during exercise. Younger pupils use a robot to develop their skills in estimating and measuring and older pupils use computers to produce graphs and charts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well across the school and standards are well above average by Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good with very good examples.
- In some lessons work is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' attainment.
- Speaking and listening skills are promoted well through science.
- Pupils' presentation of work is inconsistent.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

71. Standards are above average in the current Year 2 and well above average in the current Year 6. Most pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving well because of the good teaching and the effective support they receive. The school has maintained the above average standards in Year 2 reported at the last inspection. Standards in Year 6 have been raised from above average to well above average. Good teaching and an increased emphasis on practical investigative work account for the good achievement and high standards.
72. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some very good examples. Teachers show a secure command of science and how to teach it. Lessons are well planned with clear learning intentions identified. Pupils are given good opportunities to discuss their science work. Teachers promote scientific vocabulary well and pupils use this in discussion and explanations. Many pupils are articulate and confident speakers and show good knowledge and understanding. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to plan and carry out investigations. As a result, they acquire and apply a range of scientific skills such as predicting, fair testing and drawing conclusions. Teachers and pupils use ICT well to support teaching and learning in science. For example, in a good Year 4 lesson, pupils used computer linked light sensors to measure the amount of light which passed through different materials. They measured this in units of light, and recorded and interpreted their results competently.
73. Lesson observations and the study of pupils' work show that tasks are not always well matched to pupils' different levels of attainment. Pupils often tackle the same tasks. While pupils with special educational needs receive effective support from teaching assistants, more challenging tasks for higher attainers are sometimes lacking. In Year 2, for example, there is an overuse of worksheets. This restricts pupils' ability to plan and organise their own work. Furthermore, science is not being used for pupils to apply and develop writing skills.
74. The presentation of pupils' written and illustrative work is inconsistent. In some classes it is neat and well organised and care has been taken. In others it lacks care or pride and is often untidy. Expectations of how pupils are expected to present their work are inconsistent. The quality of marking is also inconsistent. In some classes marking is thorough, providing

encouragement and praise for good work and providing comments on how performance might

be improved. In other classes marking is brief with just ticks or stamps and so pupils do not receive constructive comments to help them improve.

75. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a clear vision for science education. The planning of the curriculum is good and based on Wiltshire Local Education Authority scheme of work. A local adviser has been used well to support the development of science. The co-ordinator has observed and supported teaching and learning. National Curriculum test results and other assessments are effectively analysed. As a consequence, the co-ordinator has a clear overview of standards and provision across the school. Overall, good improvements have been made since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
- The teaching and learning are good.
- ICT is used well to support other curriculum areas.
- All components of the ICT curriculum are covered well.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

76. At the time of the last inspection, standards in ICT were below average in Year 2 and in Year 6 and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Resources for the subject were also unsatisfactory. Since then, under the direction of the current leader, there has been a continuous programme of improvement and current provision is now good. Standards by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6 are above average. Most pupils including higher attainers and those with special educational needs are achieving well.
77. There has been a significant improvement over the last five years in resources. A new computer suite with continuously updated hardware and software has ensured that staff can teach basic skills effectively. This runs smoothly because of a good level of technical support. A programme of continuous training for all staff has led to a high level of staff confidence and expertise. Staff are also confident in the use of the recently installed interactive whiteboards. The classroom computers are networked so that skills learned in the ICT suite are reinforced and applied across the curriculum.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is good with an example of excellent teaching seen in Year 6. Staff have good subject knowledge and are particularly expert at teaching basic skills within the context of other curriculum areas. Lessons have clear learning objectives, proceed at a brisk pace and contain challenging activities which stretch higher-attaining pupils. Pupils respond well, and are enthusiastic and capable users of a wide range of hardware and software.

Example of outstanding practice

Using ICT to control model vehicles.

The teaching of control in the ICT curriculum is often the area least well addressed. In this Year 6 class, however, it had a real purpose as pupils had made sophisticated cars with construction kits in their design and technology lesson and were eagerly awaiting the opportunity to use the control software to test their capabilities. The class teacher had very good subject knowledge and was well prepared to troubleshoot any software difficulties but the pupils confidently solved all problems themselves in an atmosphere of controlled enthusiasm. Additional challenges were built into the lesson but nothing confounded these pupils, who worked swiftly, logically and collaboratively, drawing on a range of skills from across the curriculum. Mathematical skills were employed when they recorded their findings and pupils were encouraged to find patterns in their data. For example, if certain inputs resulted in the car turning through 270 degrees, then it was quickly discovered what would make it spin through 360 degrees. An exemplary lesson with outstanding links between design and technology and ICT.

79. Teachers regularly build opportunities for ICT into their lesson planning across the curriculum. Evidence of this was seen in lessons throughout the inspection. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson, pupils used computer-linked light sensors to measure the amount of light which passes through different materials. In Year 6, pupils use a computer program to help compose music in the style of Holst's 'The Planets'. In English lessons pupils use word processing to draft and edit their work.
80. There is good coverage of all aspects of the ICT curriculum and the provision strikes an effective balance between the teaching of basic skills and their application as a tool for learning in other subject areas.
81. The leadership of the subject is effective and this has contributed to the very good improvements since the last inspection. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. The curriculum is well planned. She has a clear overview of standards and provision across the school owing to effective monitoring and review. What is now good practice is constantly refined and staff knowledge and skills are regularly updated.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. ICT is firmly established as a tool for learning in all subject areas. Lessons in the computer suite usually have a strong cross-curricular focus and skills are rarely taught in isolation. As a result, pupils are confident users of ICT in a range of different situations. Classroom computers are an integral part of learning and are used regularly as a research tool.

HUMANITIES

83. Religious education was inspected in full. Geography and history were sampled.
84. No lessons were observed in **history** during the inspection but planning indicates broad coverage of the required curriculum. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that in all year groups there are too few opportunities for pupils to record their work. There were very few examples of extended pieces of writing, although history topics are occasionally used as a focus for work in English lessons. Good use is made of the resources of the local area as a stimulus for historical enquiry. There are regular visits to the Swindon Railway Museum and the Roman Museum at Cirencester. The D-Day Museum is visited by Year 6 on their French residential trip. Themed days focusing on the Greeks, Romans or Egyptians also enliven the basic provision. The recently appointed co-ordinator has already undertaken an audit of provision, backed up by lesson observations. She is aware of the need for additional resources to support research skills and is currently reviewing the scheme of work. There are inconsistencies in the time allocation for history across the school as it is incorporated into a topic approach.

85. No lessons were seen in **geography** but records, timetables and pupils' work indicate that insufficient time is allocated to the subject. In Year 2 there was very little work recorded in books for the current academic year. In Year 6, pupils study the climates of the world, mountain environments and continents of the world. Some of the work is well presented. Throughout the school, teachers' marking and pupils' presentation of work are inconsistent. Pupils with special educational needs make the same satisfactory progress as others because they study the same work and are very well supported by teaching assistants. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning documents in order to ensure full curriculum coverage but does not have opportunities to observe lessons. She is currently developing opportunities to link geography to other subjects. Good examples of this were seen in Year 6 where pupils based their artwork and musical compositions around their study of Africa. There are sufficient resources for the topics studied.

Religious education

Overall provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, moral and social development.
- There is insufficient written work in the subject across the school.

Commentary

86. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and in Year 6. Most pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. The RE curriculum is less well developed than that in most other subjects.
87. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear vision of how religious education should be taught throughout the school. Links have already been established with the programme for assemblies and together they present a formidable but coherent message of respect for the world's religions within a strongly Christian context. Religion is seen as a significant guide and framework for behaviour and the subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and moral education. There are regular assemblies celebrating a range of festivals including Diwali and the Chinese New Year and frequent visits to places of worship. Visitors to the school develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Islam and Christianity and this knowledge is used to develop pupils' understanding of morality and ethical behaviour.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and the co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues. Good relationships between adults and pupils underpin learning and give pupils confidence in expressing their own ideas. The study of pupils' work indicates a very limited amount of written work across the school. There is a strong emphasis on discussion and role play and pupils express their ideas eloquently in lessons. For example, in Year 5, pupils learning about the prophet Muhammad as a messenger of God were asked to imagine how they would feel in a similar situation. Replies included 'It would be a great responsibility', 'I would feel privileged', 'I would feel it was too great a burden'. However, opportunities were missed for pupils to put their ideas down on paper. In Years 1 and 2, religious education is taught as part of topic work and does not stand as a sufficiently distinct subject with its own body of knowledge and skills.
89. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The leader is enthusiastic but monitoring and evaluation procedures are under-developed. The allocation of curriculum time

to religious education is not consistent across the school and this has an adverse effect on the overall quality of provision.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

90. Art and design and music were inspected in full. Design and technology and physical education were sampled.
91. No lessons were seen in **design and technology** during the inspection but planning and the study of pupils' work show that pupils do not have sufficient curriculum time for the subject. As a result, pupils' opportunities to work with a range of materials and tools on various projects are reduced. Pupils in Year 3 design and make picture frames. In Year 4, they design and make purses. They produce labelled sketches of their ideas and select felt materials of bright colours. They produce a step by step set of instructions and use appropriate measuring and cutting techniques. Effective stitching is used to join the fabric. They evaluate the finished product saying what is good and how it might be improved. Pupils in Year 5 design and make Greek masks. The impressive products are finished in gold spray paint. This work is well linked to the history but is more akin to art and design than design and technology. In an outstanding Year 6 lesson, pupils had made vehicles using construction kits and were controlling these using ICT equipment.
92. Only two **physical education** lessons were seen. In a good lesson with Year 3 and Year 4, pupils had good opportunities to practise games skills of catching, throwing and striking. Pupils were used well to demonstrate skills as a model to others. The pupils were also given the opportunity to appraise the performance of the demonstrators. They did this in a supportive and constructive way. Most pupils applied physical effort and made good gains in consolidating their skills. They then applied these skills to a short team game at the end. Participation in sport is well promoted. Boys and girls take part in netball and soccer tournaments and matches with other schools, as well as area sports meetings. Coaching is provided in football and gymnastics from outside specialists.

Art and design

Provision in art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Year 6.
- There is good specialist teaching from the co-ordinator and visiting artists.
- There are variations in the time allocation for art across the school.

Commentary

93. Standards in art and design are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils are achieving well overall. Standards in art and design were not reported on at the last inspection.
94. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers provide clear instruction and demonstrations. Pupils follow these well and have good opportunities to work with different materials and techniques. Pupils show good skills in designing, cutting and sewing. The contribution to the art and design curriculum of visiting artists and the good level of support provided by the co-ordinator have been significant factors in giving art a high profile within the school. A recently revised scheme of work, which includes ideas for activities, opportunities for links between subjects and suggested resources, is proving useful in developing staff confidence. Regular team teaching and demonstration lessons by the co-ordinator have contributed to the above average standards.

95. Art and design is timetabled in all classes on a regular basis throughout the year. However, some sessions are too short for the effective delivery of the curriculum and there are inconsistencies across the school in the coverage of particular strands of the curriculum.
96. There are good displays of pupils' work around the school and they make a valuable contribution to the attractive learning environment. In particular, the three-dimensional work done by the older pupils with a visiting artist is of a high standard. For example, pupils had created armatures in the style of Degas from wire and mod-roc. The scheme of work provides an effective balance between the development of pupils' skills and links to other subject areas. For example, a textile project in Year 5 links batik work to pupils' study of Africa.
97. The subjects is well led and managed. The leader has vision and provides good support for colleagues. In doing this she has a clear overview of standards and provision in the school. However, monitoring the time devoted to art and design has been less effective.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well.
- The school provides a good range of extra activities.
- The co-ordinator is effective in helping teachers to improve their skills.

Commentary

98. Pupils achieve well so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 they attain standards that are above average. The school has maintained the above average standards reported at the last inspection. A commercial scheme of work is used as the basis of planning, which ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum requirements for pupils of all levels of ability and need.
99. Pupils enjoy music and all are encouraged to participate in musical productions and festivals. For example, the school choir was observed rehearsing for a concert in which they will join with other schools from within the local area. All pupils sing well in tune and demonstrate good understanding of rhythm as they clap, tap and use percussion instruments to accompany songs and the melodies they compose. The school organises a wide range of extra-curricular tuition for pupils to learn to play musical instruments such as clarinet, flute, brass, violin and guitar. Since the previous inspection the school has introduced new opportunities for pupils to develop their music skills which include keyboard and percussion tuition.
100. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and build on previous skills, so that all pupils achieve well. The best teaching occurs when the teacher intercedes in order to rehearse and develop skills. For example, in a lesson seen in Year 3, after the pupils had performed their compositions to the rest of the class the teacher asked good questions about their work which challenged them and helped them to improve. In another example seen during the choir rehearsal, the teacher stopped the singing and demonstrated good breathing and posture and exercises in order to help pupils pitch a difficult note. There has been good improvement in the use of information and communication technology as seen in a good lesson in Year 6 where pupils were learning to use a computer program to compose and modify their own compositions. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and behave very well in lessons.
101. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and highly skilled. She is a very good role model for staff and provides them with good help and support. The co-ordinator monitors teaching by reviewing teachers'

planning, but observation of lessons is not carried out on a formal basis. Systems and procedures for assessment of pupils' learning are well established and the data used to

identify areas of strength and weakness. The co-ordinator enhances the curriculum by organising a variety of professional musicians to perform in the school. Resources are good and well maintained.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

102. Only one PSHCE lesson, or 'circle time', was seen. Discussion with the newly appointed subject leader indicates that the school provides an interesting range of activities to support social and healthy living and drugs and alcohol abuse awareness. The school pays appropriate attention to sex and relationships education and drugs alcohol awareness. A new policy has been written since the previous inspection but a new scheme of work has yet to be implemented. Pupils consider things that they value: group membership, recycling, racial prejudice. In the one lesson seen very young pupils gained in personal development and confidence when speaking to their class about their care and concern for living things. Themes for assemblies support the subject well. The school council enables pupils to have a say in the running of their school, and contributes positively to their personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| Attendance | 2 |
| Attitudes | 2 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 2 |
| 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 | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 3 |
| The effectiveness of management | 3 |

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

