

INSPECTION REPORT

WITHINGTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Withington, Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115703

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Reed

Lead inspector: Mr Andy Bond

Dates of inspection: 20 – 21 June 2005

Inspection number: 268284

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	29
School address:	High Street Withington Cheltenham Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL54 4BQ
Telephone number:	01242 890 349
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Webb
Date of previous inspection:	29 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Withington Church of England Primary School is a small village school in Gloucestershire with 29 pupils on roll (20 boys and 9 girls), catering for pupils aged 4 to 11 years. The school serves a diverse community, which includes pupils from high socio-economic homes as well as pupils from deprived backgrounds. On balance socio-economic indicators are below average. Free school meals entitlement is above the national average with 21.4 per cent of pupils qualifying. Children generally begin school with below average attainment.

The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average (28.6 per cent). The majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties and two have Statements of Special Educational Needs (6 per cent), which is well above the national average. All pupils are of white UK heritage. Almost a quarter are from traveller homes. During the inspection period traveller pupils were not present because they had moved to another site outside the county. No pupils are identified as being at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. The number of pupils who have joined or left the school part way through their primary education is high.

The present headteacher began in September 2004; otherwise there have been no major staff changes in recent times. The school received the Investors in People award in 2004 and the Basic Skills Quality Mark in the Summer term of 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17263	Mr. Andy Bond	Lead inspector	English Science History Geography Physical education Foundation Stage English as an additional language
9189	Mr. John Horwood	Lay inspector	
19507	Mrs. Beulah Andrews	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Personal, social and health education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Withington Church of England School is an effective school, which gives sound value for money. Standards over time vary, but are generally below average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6. This year, standards are average at the end of both Year 2 and 6. Pupils receive a good education and achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning is good, as is the curriculum provision. Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection, the school has improved satisfactorily.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are improving.
- The school is led and managed well by the headteacher, governors and key staff.
- The curriculum provision is good. It caters well for pupils of different ages and abilities, although there are too few opportunities for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, but teachers do not place enough emphasis on developing pupils' rapid recall of mental calculation skills.
- Assessment is good. Procedures are thorough and constructive, although teachers' marking does not indicate sufficiently what pupils need to do to improve further.
- There is a very positive ethos for learning in the school. Pupils enjoy school because they are well cared for; they behave well and work hard.

The school was last inspected in June 1999; since then it has made satisfactory progress. The key issues for improvement have been addressed well. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 has improved and is now judged to be good. The provision for gymnastics and dance has been included in the curriculum. Clear and comprehensive plans have been produced for future school development and formal systems for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching have been established. Standards have improved by Year 6 but in Year 2 improvement over time is below the national trend. Mathematics has been the weakest area, but in the last year there have been positive signs of improvement by pupils in both Years 2 and 6. The quality of teaching and learning, leadership and management and the curriculum provision have all improved since the last inspection. Many previously reported strengths have been maintained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - Very high; - 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. Caution should be taken when interpreting school data because year groups are very small and this can distort annual results.

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Children begin in Reception with standards that are generally below average. They achieve well and many reach the Early Learning Goals¹ in the required areas of learning² by the time they begin Year 1. In communication, language and literacy, children achieve well, even though few reach the expected level by the end of their first year of

¹ The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the beginning of Year 1 in primary schools.

² The areas of learning are communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, physical development, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. All the latter three areas were not inspected in depth.

schooling. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2. This year, standards by the end of Year 2 are higher than previously. Pupils' attainment is above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics, science, ICT³, music and physical education. Achievement remains good in Years 3 to 6 and standards this year in Year 6 are above average in English and average in mathematics, science, ICT, music and physical education. In the other subjects – art and design, design and technology, history and geography – insufficient evidence was gathered to make a valid judgement on standards and achievement. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, as do children from traveller families.

The school's overall provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Relationships in the school are a particular strength. Attendance and punctuality are both good. The personal development of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning throughout the school are good. Classes are managed well and pupils apply themselves conscientiously to their work. Learning support assistants make very valuable contributions to pupils' learning, especially in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' planning caters well for all pupils, although not enough emphasis is placed on improving pupils' rapid recall of mental calculation skills. Assessment procedures are good but teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always indicate how they can improve further.

Curriculum provision is good. The school offers its pupils a well-planned curriculum by means of a broad range of learning opportunities, which caters well for all ages and abilities. However, there are too few opportunities for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Partnerships with parents, other schools and the community are good. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Support, advice and guidance are very good. Involvement of pupils, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views, is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The recently appointed headteacher provides the school with effective leadership and management. There is a very good team spirit in the school amongst staff and governors. Management systems are good and well focused on raising pupils' achievement. The governors fulfil their roles well. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but fail to meet some requirements in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the education that the school provides for their children. Pupils also have very positive views of the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop methods to increase pupils' rapid mental calculation skills in mathematics.
- Improve marking strategies so that pupils receive more guidance on how they can improve their work.
- Provide more opportunities within the curriculum provision, for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the Governors' Annual Report to Parents includes information related to school security and admission arrangements for pupils with disabilities; include in the document the names and contact addresses for the Chair of Governors and the Clerk.

³ Information and Communication Technology

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards have been generally below average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6. Pupils presently in the Reception age group and those in Years 2 and 6 attain average standards. All pupils in the school achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Standards are above average in English in the present Year 2 and Year 6 age groups.
- Mathematics standards have in the past been low, but are now beginning to improve.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- The very positive learning ethos in the school has a favourable impact on pupils' achievement.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school with attainment levels that are generally below average, especially in communication, language and literacy. However, the good teaching and support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants enable them to make good progress in their learning. Teaching is directed towards building up the basic skills of literacy and numeracy to equip children properly for their future education. The curriculum is well planned to cater for children's needs and assessment is used effectively to monitor progress and adapt the provision to suit the ability of each individual child. Adults work well together and give children encouragement to work hard and do their best. By the time children enter Year 1, attainment has reached the expected level in personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development. Despite good progress in communication, language and literacy, standards are below the expected level. In other areas of learning – knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development – insufficient evidence was gathered in the time available during the inspection to make a firm judgment on standards and achievement.
2. Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 to 6. Classes are small and this enables teachers to give pupils more individual attention. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are given a high profile by teachers. Lessons are well planned to cater for the range of ages and abilities in each class. The tasks set are generally challenging and interesting, so that pupils apply themselves and produce a good standard of work. Teachers have good levels of expertise in the subjects taught; this ensures that pupils make good gains in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding in lessons. There is a very positive ethos for learning, which prevails throughout the school. It is built on very good relationships between pupils and staff. Staff are continually using positive strategies to boost pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to do better. All pupils are given good opportunities to learn and make progress, including traveller children and pupils with special educational needs.
3. The number of pupils in each year group is very small and this results in extreme variations in national tests. For instance, in English in Year 6, standards have ranged from very high to well below average in the last five years. Therefore, care should be taken when analysing test results in small schools such as this, and a long-term overview needs to be taken. Over time, standards are generally below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. The results of Year 6 tests in the last five years show that English and science standards are broadly average, whereas mathematics standards are well below average.
4. Standards in the present Year 2 age group are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics and science. In Year 6, standards are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The school recognises that these two year groups

contain pupils of average and above average ability. There are no pupils with special educational needs in these age groups. Test results show that there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in national tests. The school sets realistic targets for improvement by the end of Year 6.

5. The staff are making a determined effort to boost standards in mathematics, especially in Years 3 to 6. Standards have been well below average in the past, but there are signs of improvement. The co-ordinator has introduced a regular cycle of monitoring, which evaluates pupils' work and the quality of teaching and learning. Test results are now analysed more closely and perceived weaknesses in pupils' performance targeted for improvements. There are still areas which require further attention, notably pupils' quick recall of number facts to speed up calculation skills, but the school is attempting to rectify this element of learning. Standards this year in the Year 2 and Year 6 age groups are considerably better than in previous years.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall because they are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Their achievement matches that of their peers because the extra support they receive is planned precisely to meet their individual needs. Pupils from traveller backgrounds were not present during the inspection; however, school assessment and discussion with parents support the judgement on good progress. Support is given by the local education authority traveller service, which provides useful advice and expertise as well as direct teaching on two afternoons per week.
7. Standards are average in ICT and physical education at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. In music, standards are also average and achievement satisfactory. In the other subjects of history, geography, art and design and design and technology there was insufficient evidence gathered during the inspection to make a firm judgement on standards and achievement. However, from the discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of pupils' work that was undertaken, evidence suggests that standards in all four subjects are generally average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships and the lack of any form of harassment contribute to creating a very good learning environment.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of social responsibilities and this is demonstrated by their good behaviour, their positive attitudes to learning and by their consideration toward others.
- The school promotes fairness and the non-acceptance of any form of harassment very well.
- All aspects of personal development are very well promoted.
- Pupils are very keen to help both in class and around the school but in some lessons the opportunities for them to talk and explain the methods are limited.

Commentary

8. The school has a very welcoming ethos and pupils arrive with positive attitudes for learning. Most pupils live locally but a few parents have chosen the school even though they have to travel a considerable distance. Almost all pupils are accompanied to school by an adult and the majority now arrive early to join the Breakfast Club, which starts at a quarter past eight in the morning. Parents and pupils all agree that pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy being there. The level of attendance has fallen since the last inspection and overall is below the national average. However, if the traveller children are removed from the analysis, the attendance figures are above the national average. The attendance figures for the traveller

children are well below the national average for primary school pupils but are significantly better than the average for traveller children. The school has very good systems in place to monitor attendance, with rewards systems for both good and improved attendance. Punctuality throughout the day is good.

9. Children in the Reception age group have good attitudes to learning. They settle down well to formal schooling and mix comfortably with older pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy school and form good relationships with their classmates.
10. Pupils are given good opportunities to be actively involved in lessons and in other activities, such as assemblies, where they prepare equipment, read prayers, play recorders and sing the hymns. In a few lessons there is too much direction, with limited opportunities for pupils to explain how they have completed the work. Pupils willingly carry out duties to help the teacher and a number belong to the school council, which has recently been regenerated.

Exclusions

11. Very good relationships exist throughout the school, with pupils and adults showing mutual respect and trust. Both in lessons and at playtimes the behaviour of pupils is at least good and frequently very good. No form of harassment was seen during the inspection and, although one parent had identified an isolated incident of bullying, it had been dealt with very well. There was one pupil excluded last year but he was a pupil admitted to the school following exclusion elsewhere and he has since left the school. There have been no exclusions this year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	27	2	0
Information not obtained	2	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

12. All aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good and are fundamental to the ethos of the school. Spiritual development results partly from the well-planned assemblies, which fully meet the requirements for a daily collective act of worship, and not only explain issues to pupils but also gives them good opportunities to reflect on them. Other support for spiritual development comes from the religious education course as well as indirect guidance from the adults in the school. The school operates as a 'large family' and pupils' moral development is part of the normal process of support and guidance. Pupils clearly understand right from wrong and their relationships, attitudes and behaviour demonstrate they have very good moral and social development. This is also demonstrated by the charity fund-raising they have done, much at their own suggestion. Whilst there are only limited opportunities for pupils to experience a multi-cultural society in the local area, the curriculum provision about other cultures is good and this is enhanced by projects including writing to other pupils in Ghana and following up charity work to support Sri Lanka. Other faiths are studied within the religious education course and a visit to a local synagogue has been undertaken.
13. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the personal development of pupils and in the quality of relationships whilst the quality of the attitudes and behaviour has been maintained. The changing cohort within the school has resulted in a lower attendance figure but the judgement of attendance is the same as at the last inspection.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	1.5
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are also good throughout the school. Curricular opportunities are good and pupils' learning is supported effectively by a very good school ethos. Care, guidance and welfare are very good. There are good links with other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Assessment procedures are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and this ensures that pupils achieve well.
- Classes are managed well and pupils apply themselves conscientiously to their work.
- Learning support assistants make very valuable contributions to pupils' learning, especially in support of pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers' planning caters well for pupils of different ages and abilities.
- Assessment is good, although teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always indicate how pupils can improve further.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	10	3	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

14. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all three primary phases: in Reception, in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Children in the Reception group achieve well because they are taught the basic language and mathematics skills well. Very good relationships are developed between staff and children, which encourages children to try hard and do their best. The work set is well tailored to the needs of individual children. In Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are also good. In the subjects it is judged to be good in English, mathematics, ICT and physical education. In music it is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence obtained during the inspection to make a judgement on science, art and design, design and technology, history and geography.
15. Teachers use a good range of management strategies to create a positive learning ethos in their classrooms. They develop very good relationships with pupils and have high expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils are given clear guidance about what is expected to be completed and they settle to the task conscientiously, which usually results in

a good volume of well-presented work. Pupils themselves confirm that they work hard and get good help when they have a problem with their work. Praise is used effectively so that pupils' self-esteem is boosted and provides further incentive for improvement. All pupils, regardless of their backgrounds, are provided with very good opportunities to learn and make progress in their learning.

16. Learning assistants make valuable contributions to lessons; they explain clearly what pupils are expected to do and use questions skilfully to guide learning. Their very good support is particularly effective in raising the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and learning support assistants are aware of their specific targets and give well-focused support during lessons. Most pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to that of other pupils.
17. Teachers plan thoroughly to ensure that the work set for pupils is well matched to their age and ability. They concentrate on developing the basic skills required to build up pupils' competence in literacy and numeracy, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have good levels of subject expertise and the knowledge and understanding required to enhance pupils' learning are also given prominence in their planning. The methods used to promote learning are generally good, as in the use of a puppet and a teddy bear in Years 1 and 2 to stimulate pupils' interest in reading. However, some of teachers' questioning is too closed and does not give enough opportunity for pupils to expand and embellish their answers to the questions raised.
18. There are few weaknesses in teaching and learning. Although lessons move along at a reasonable pace, some introductions are too long and do not give pupils sufficient time to complete the tasks set. In mathematics, some sessions, which involve mental calculations, are rather slow and sluggish and lack a sharp, snappy response from pupils. However, there is a generally improving picture of the quality of teaching and learning, which is making a positive impact on raising standards, especially in mathematics. The monitoring of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work undertaken by the headteacher and other staff are also contributing effectively to the provision. Since the last inspection, improvement has been good. No unsatisfactory lessons were recorded during the inspection and the number of good lessons has increased.
19. Assessment procedures are good and used successfully to improve pupils' achievement. A good range of standardised tests is used by the school to monitor pupils' attainment throughout the school year. Progress is tracked throughout the school and realistic predictions made for pupils' performance at the end of Years 2 and 6. Teachers evaluate their lessons and make constructive comments about individual pupils' progress within the lesson. This information is used well to tailor future lessons to the individual needs of pupils. Pupils are set clearly displayed individual improvement targets in literacy and numeracy, which are reviewed fairly frequently to ascertain the degree of achievement. This is proving successful. Teachers' marking is thorough and supportive. Comments at the end of each piece of work give pupils an understanding of how well they have done. However, too few comments inform pupils what further steps they need to take to improve their performance. Since the last inspection, assessment procedures have improved overall.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is good. The school offers its pupils a well-planned curriculum by means of a broad range of learning opportunities. Overall, resources and accommodation remain satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum promotes the shared ethos of the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

- There is very good support for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the full range of subjects.
- The introduction of National Curriculum guidance programmes contributes to the rising standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening are limited.

Commentary

20. The curriculum promotes the shared ethos of the school and meets statutory requirements fully. Pupils respond well to the breadth of interesting opportunities offered through the curriculum. The introduction of national strategies contributes to the rising standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. There are computers and interactive smart boards in both classrooms that are used regularly and effectively for teaching and learning. There have been good improvements since the last inspection.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve as well as their classmates. Their needs are identified early in their school life and individual programmes of work are set for them. As they progress through the school, these pupils are well supported in classrooms and, when they are withdrawn, through suitably planned work delivered effectively by teachers and learning support assistants. Parents are involved in the development and review of their children's statements and targets. Learning opportunities for traveller children are also good. They achieve well because they are supported properly and well integrated into school life.
22. Curricular planning to meet the needs of mixed age classes is good, reflecting the national strategy for Primary Schools 'Excellence and Enjoyment'. Opportunities for cross-curricular links are identified well. There is good planning in place for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE), including a suitable level of tuition for drugs awareness and sex and relationships education. These elements of the curriculum meet statutory requirements.
23. The recently appointed headteacher has developed good monitoring systems that track pupils' progress and secure continuity in their learning. Issues related to meeting recommendations for the minimum length of the school day for pupils in Years 3 to 6 are also being addressed. All pupils are treated fairly and have good access to the curriculum.
24. Music and physical education are now taught by a specialist teacher and instrumental tuition is taught by a visiting peripatetic teacher. This has improved provision. Links with local schools are good. These links are used effectively to enrich the curriculum, providing pupils with opportunities to learn French and German at a local primary school and visit the local secondary school for concerts. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities, especially in physical education and music. In addition, clubs for ICT, mathematics and art and design help to increase pupils' learning in these subjects. Pupils are properly prepared for secondary education. Links developed with industry, use of the locality, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school are all used to extend and enrich pupils' learning.
25. Relationships with the church are very good and contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils take on whole-school and class responsibilities. They have opportunities to voice their preferences and views. For example, school clubs are chosen by the pupils, while their views and preferences are expressed in the school council. Teachers give their time freely to support these extra-curricular activities. The school maintains links with other schools through e-mail and there is participation in joint sporting and music activities. The school has strong links with the local playgroup, and links with other primary schools and the local secondary school, which supports pupils in the smooth move to the next stage of their education.
26. The staff are well matched and well qualified to teach the age groups and various subjects in school. They work well together as a team and share assessment information effectively in

order to tailor the curriculum for individual pupils. The level of expertise is generally good. The accommodation is satisfactory. The building, although of Victorian design and lacking in some facilities, such as a school hall, is used effectively. Displays are bright and attractive, reflecting the very positive ethos of the school. Space is used well to create storage areas, offices and a small library. A suitable covered play area has been created for children of Reception age. Learning resources are adequate. However, ICT resources have improved, especially with the introduction of interactive smart boards. Since the previous inspection, the quality and match of the school's staffing has improved quite significantly. Accommodation and learning resources have improved satisfactorily.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Provision of support, advice and guidance is very good. Involvement of pupils, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views, is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extent to which each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adult in the school is excellent.
- The school provides very good care of pupils throughout and beyond the school day.
- The induction arrangements for new pupils are good.
- The school is very involved in health promoting initiatives.

Commentary

27. Health and safety procedures are fully in place covering all the required aspects including risk assessment. Medical procedures are clear and most staff are trained in first aid. Child protection procedures are fully in place, with staff receiving regular training. Responsibilities are clearly defined and procedures are reviewed as required. Governors are fully involved in health and safety audits and have appointed a governor to be responsible for child protection. There are currently no pupils at the school who are in public care.
28. During the day all activities are well supervised and the small number of pupils in the school means they are well known by all adults. To extend the care of pupils beyond the school day the school operates a breakfast club, which the majority of pupils attend. A significant number of pupils are from traveller families and the school ensures that they are fully included in the care provision. Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are good. The school analyses the performance of different groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, keeping records of their progress. Learning assistants are well briefed to meet the needs of all pupils in order to facilitate full access to school life. Although pupils are normally accompanied to school by an adult, the school will always contact parents by half past nine if they have not been notified of absence to ensure their well-being. This arrangement is not always appropriate for traveller families but the school will contact them if possible at an appropriate time.
29. The school is unable to provide cooked lunches for pupils and they all have a packed lunch. To promote healthy eating, fruit is provided for all the younger pupils at break time and older pupils are encouraged, through the rewards scheme, to have a healthy snack.
30. Relationships are excellent in the school, built on a mutual trust. The low number of pupils in the school ensures that the teachers are able to provide regular individual support and guidance. Teachers have the pupils in their class for several years and their individual knowledge of them is now being enhanced through the improving assessment systems in the school.

31. The induction procedures for new pupils are good. Only a few pupils join each year and they may have a 'package' designed to suit their needs. All pupils will spend a day in their new class and those joining the Reception class will start on a part-time basis. The school prospectus has been revised and gives parents new to the school all the information they need.
32. The school involves and consults pupils well, mainly through informal contact supported by the already established excellent relationships. Pupils are very confident and frequently make suggestions or constructive comments to the staffs, which are always listened to. The school council became 'dormant' a few years ago but has now been regenerated. Whilst it is now active and has already resulted in pupils making suggestions, which have been acted on, it is still in its infancy and not fully established as an ongoing school facility. The very good levels of care have been maintained since the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents, other schools and with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very good opportunities to discuss their child's progress.
- The very close partnership with the local church makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The partnership with the Gloucestershire Traveller Education Service ensures good support for traveller pupils.
- A significant number of parents are involved in school activities.
- Annual progress reports are satisfactory, but could be more helpful to parents by providing information on achievement compared to expectation, as well as detailed written advice on how their children could improve.

Commentary

33. The parents' questionnaires and comments made at the parents' meeting show that parents are very pleased with most aspects of the school. They are particularly pleased that their children are encouraged to become mature in a school where staff expect them to work hard. They also feel comfortable about approaching the school. They also think teaching is good and their children are treated fairly. These positive views were confirmed during the inspection. The only areas of concern, for a small number of parents, were about behaviour and bullying but these were not confirmed during the inspection.
34. The annual progress reports are considered to be satisfactory as they contain all the required information. The format of the reports does not make it easy for parents to identify how well their child is doing compared to expectations but there are other opportunities for them to find this out. Parents have three opportunities each year to discuss the progress of their child and to look at their work. Teachers also share information formally and informally about children's work with parents. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are also invited to take part in the annual review of their individual programmes of work. Parents are also encouraged to become fully involved with their child's education and the school's open door policy enable them to arrange to discuss any concerns at any time.
35. A questionnaire is sent to parents each year to gather their views and informal opportunities are taken when parents are on the playground at the end of the day. Information about the school is provided by weekly newsletters to supplement the very informative prospectus. There is a school website which is very user friendly, although the content is limited. A significant proportion of parents support the school as governors or by providing transport for school trips. The Friends' Society, which is organised by teachers and parents, provides financial support and organises social events.

36. The school has very close links with the local playgroup that use the school facilities on two days a week. Good links exist with the 'cluster' of local schools both for staff in-service training and for pupils' sporting activities. There are good links with the secondary schools to facilitate smooth transition of pupils from Year 6 to 7 and also some secondary school pupils have work experience placement in the school. Links also exist with local colleges as the school supports student training most years. The school also employs a specialist teacher for one day a week to enhance provision in physical education and music.
37. Partnerships with the community are good and these include the very strong links with the local church. The two local clergy are both school governors and play an active part in school life, including taking regular assemblies. Pupils from the school also regularly visit the church and provide displays of their work in the church. The school is one of the focal points of the village and acts as a central point for providing local information to the local newspaper. The headteacher provides a regular article for the parish magazine and the school newsletters are available from the church for non-parents. The school uses a number of local sporting facilities, such as the tennis court at the old rectory and the village recreation ground for sports days and athletics practice. Good links have been forged with Gloucester County Cricket Club, which results in an annual visit to their ground in Bristol. Representatives from a local technology company visit the school annually to organise a technology day, called 'Knex' challenge. These sporting and business connections strengthen the school's community links and curriculum provision. Most aspects of partnerships are at a similar level to those seen at the previous inspection, although increasing demands on parents' time and the changing cohort of pupils have reduced the participation of some adults and visitors to the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The recently appointed headteacher provides the school with effective leadership and management. The governance of the school is good. The leadership role of other key staff is developing well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear view for improving the school and has created a very good team spirit amongst the staff and governors.
- The recently introduced management systems are beginning to make a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Staff are managed and deployed very effectively.
- The governors have a very good understanding of the school, although they fail to comply with some minor statutory requirements.

Commentary

38. The headteacher provides good leadership and has introduced effective management systems since her appointment in September 2004. There is a clear vision of how the school can improve, which is shared with all the staff. Relationships in the school are very good. Each member of staff feels valued and as a result, contributes fully to developing a more effective school. Standards and achievement are improving because school priorities are clear, well focused and shared with staff and governors. There is an openness and underlying determination exhibited in the headteacher's leadership of the school.
39. Management systems have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now judged to be good. There is a well-structured School Development Plan with clear objectives, based on an audit of each area. It indicates action to be taken, expected outcomes, the cost implications, lead personnel for each aspect, timescales to be met, monitoring procedures and an overall evaluation of the progress made. Proper analysis of test results has been established and monitoring of teaching and learning is now embedded into school management systems. The co-ordinators' role is also expanding to include scrutiny of pupils'

work, monitoring of teaching and learning and action planning for the future. The leadership of the curriculum is good because it caters thoughtfully for the wide range of ages and abilities in each class. There is a strong commitment to the promotion of equality and the needs of groups and individuals. Evidence from the initial visit to the school, when the traveller children were present, shows that they are treated equally and with understanding.

40. The leadership and management of special educational needs are shared between the headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Withdrawal of pupils is minimal and carefully planned to take advantage of the expertise of the special needs teacher and learning support assistants. This aspect is well managed and reflected in the good quality of provision for these groups of pupils. The co-ordinators have high expectations and are successful in assisting pupils to achieve well.
41. The systems in place for addressing the issues related to the deployment and workload of staff are very well developed. Teachers have guaranteed release time to complete administrative, planning and co-ordinator roles. The quality of education is not compromised by their absence from the classroom in any way because a teacher with specialist expertise teaches physical education and music to their classes on a weekly basis. This is having a positive effect on pupils' achievement in those subjects and creates a refreshed teacher workforce. Performance management systems are thoroughly in place and teachers' continuing professional development needs are well catered for, dovetailing neatly into school priorities. A good example is training for ICT within the local cluster group of primary schools, which has proved to be very successful in developing staff expertise in the subject.
42. The governance of the school is good. Governors are astute and articulate. They know the school very well and have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Structured visits are made to the school and evaluations made of the quality of provision. The headteacher keeps them well informed of school developments and the governors share the headteacher's long-term vision of the school. Governors are supportive and prepared to voice their opinions on matters which are fundamental in shaping the direction of the school. Statutory requirements are met. The only weaknesses lie in omissions from the Governors' Annual Report to Parents, which fails to include information related to school security and admission arrangements for pupils with disabilities. Although the names of the Chair of Governors and the Clerk to the Governors are included, no contact address is given.
43. Financial matters are properly managed. The carry forward sum from the previous year is marginally in excess of the nationally recommended level but the governors have very clear plans for the use of these funds. The most recent audit of March 2003 concluded that the school's financial systems were operating effectively. The recommendations were few and have now been implemented successfully. The school has a good understanding of best value principles and these are applied well when using funding. Costs per pupil are well above average compared to those of all primary schools, nationally, but in general the cost of educating pupils in village schools tends to be high. Taking into account the effective provision and the good achievement of pupils, value for money is judged to be sound. The leadership and management of the school have improved since the last inspection. Formal monitoring and evaluation are stronger and long-term planning is more detailed.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	140,065
Total expenditure	129,208
Expenditure per pupil	4,455

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9,501
Balance carried forward to the next	1,356

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is good and Reception children achieve well. Most children begin school having some pre-school experience. They enter Reception with standards that are generally below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. However, because of the small number of children admitted each year, attainment on entry fluctuates greatly. The children are taught as part of a class which includes pupils in Years 1 and 2, but they are given specific tuition at certain times during the school day by the class teacher and learning support assistants. There are also planned occasions when children join the playgroup, usually for creative and physical activities. The leadership and management in the foundation stage are satisfactory.

By the end of the Reception year children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development. In communication, language and literacy, the majority of children will not reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year, despite receiving generally good teaching. In the other areas of learning – knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development – it was not possible to make a judgement on children's attainment in relation to the Early Learning Goals because insufficient information was gathered in the time available during the inspection. Children with special educational needs also achieve well because there is very good support from learning support assistants and from volunteer helpers. Although traveller children were not present during the inspection period, school assessment indicates that the progress of these children is also good.

The curriculum provision is generally good. Children have a wide variety of experiences, with a strong focus on developing the basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Teachers' planning is well linked to the early years 'stepping stones' curriculum⁴ and there is very good liaison with learning support assistants and other adult helpers to build a team approach to teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are good. Comments on the progress of each child are carefully compiled and directed towards providing a well-matched curriculum for every child in the group. The school makes the best use of the accommodation available and there are opportunities for the use of wheeled toys and structured play activities in a covered area adjoining the classroom. Resources are satisfactory. It is not possible to make a judgement on improvement since the last inspection because the previous report did not provide a detailed description of the provision for Reception children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attitudes to learning are good.
- Teachers and adults create a very positive atmosphere, which enables children to mature socially and emotionally.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well in this area of learning because staff and adults create a very positive, supportive atmosphere in the classroom. They use frequent praise when children are successful and encourage them to try hard and do their best. A high level of trust exists between adults and children. Using the illustrations in a book, they use their imagination to explain the events and sustain concentration for a reasonable period of time. They play

⁴ ⁴Stepping stones – The recommended curriculum for children in Nursery and Reception classes.

alongside other children and co-operate in physical activities, such as when passing a ball to each other. With encouragement, more mature children undress and dress themselves when getting ready for outdoor activities. In collective worship sessions they listen well and make an effort to join in prayers and hymn singing. Teaching is good. Teachers are patient with children, yet insistent. Very good progress has been made by children with special educational needs in this area of learning. In general, children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in this aspect.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Teachers and learning support assistants focus strongly on developing children's language and literacy skills.

Commentary

45. Children enter the Reception with generally underdeveloped skills in communication, language and literacy. They achieve well in their first year of formal education, but the majority do not reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception stage. Teachers and learning support assistants build up children's word recognition skills by using flash cards in short, sharp sessions. Children recognise key words, such as 'for', 'she' and 'come'. Praise is used effectively to give children encouragement to succeed. Sid, a furry puppet, is introduced to add interest to the session and help children to pronounce initial sounds of words. Teachers introduce books at an early stage so that children are encouraged to seek out the title and author. Children handle books properly and use the 'magic finger' to point to words in the text. Teachers maintain a suitable flow of questions about the text, but most are too closed and require one word responses. Only the more able children provide any detail in their answers. Children are beginning to write their names in a recognisable form and provide simple captions to illustrations. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are skilful at engaging children and maintaining their interest. Although some children's concentration is limited, they listen to instructions and enjoy activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Practical activities are a valuable aid to children's learning.

Commentary

46. Children achieve well in the Reception group because teaching and learning are good. Practical activities help pupils to understand the value of numbers less than 10. Teachers use appropriate vocabulary to explain how an addition number sentence can be formed by partitioning a group of skittles. Expectations are high, both for behaviour and the standards that can be attained. Children know and recognise numbers up to nine and count accurately. They understand terms such as 'more than' and 'less than'. In their normal activities in the classroom they use everyday words to describe position and refer to objects being 'big' or 'little'. They recite familiar rhymes, such as 'Incey Wincey Spider' and count the legs of the creature correctly. Children's progress is monitored well. Learning support assistants are a great help to children, especially those children with learning difficulties. Adult to children

ratios are very favourable and this enables individual support to be given. Overall, children are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year.

47. It was not possible to make firm judgements on children's achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development because insufficient evidence was gathered in the time available. Children have experience of cutting and gluing materials to make pictures and simple models. There have been walks to the local church and children have taken part in Remembrance services. The limited evidence gained from physical education lessons shows that children control a ball well with their feet. They use space well in chasing games and are beginning to understand that exercise affects the body in different ways. In creative development, children enjoy singing songs and Nursery rhymes. They become engaged in stories and talk about the characters.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in the present Year 2 and Year 6 age groups and achievement is good throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, although teachers do not give pupils enough guidance when marking their work as to how they can improve.
- The curriculum provision is good, although opportunities for speaking and listening could be developed more fully.
- The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well.

Commentary

48. In the present Year 2 and Year 6 age groups, standards are above average. However, the number of pupils in each cohort is very small and standards can vary markedly from year to year. Over the last five years, standards in reading and writing have been broadly below average at the end of Year 2, whilst in Year 6 standards have been marginally above average over the same timescale. Pupils achieve well in English throughout the school because teaching and learning are good and well focused on improving pupils' basic literacy skills. Lessons are well planned to cater for all groups and pupils respond well in lessons and work hard. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well too. They receive very good support from learning support assistants, which aids their progress. Although pupils from traveller families were not present during the inspection period, evidence from school assessment shows that their achievement, based on attainment on entry, is also good throughout the school.
49. Speaking and listening standards are broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6, although pupils' listening skills are generally better developed than their speaking skills. Pupils listen well during the introduction to lessons, especially those in Years 3 to 6. They maintain good levels of concentration. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen for an appropriate length of time, but tend to become restless after a long session on the carpet. Although some older pupils are confident to give their response to teachers' questions with rather elaborate answers, others have limited skills in forming well-worded responses. Teachers' questioning is often too closed, so that pupils are only required to give brief responses. Pupils are rarely asked to explain their views fully. There is little variation in approach and less confident speakers can be overlooked. Nevertheless, standards are still broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
50. Standards in reading are above average in the present Year 2 and Year 6 age groups, although over time they have been below average in national tests in Year 2. Pupils in Year 2

read with reasonable fluency and make few errors. They give due attention to punctuation when reading aloud and use phonic cues⁵ to pronounce words accurately. Pupils discuss the story and the key characters; they enjoy reading and have a good understanding of book conventions, such as how to use a contents page and index to locate information. Year 6 pupils read expressively, conveying the full meaning of the passage. Their reading is accurate, with few errors; when these do occur, they often correct themselves. Pupils also read silently and have a good recall of the passage read. These pupils are committed readers and read regularly at home. They discuss their favourite authors and the types of books they prefer. Pupils' dictionary skills are well developed. Overall, pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 in reading.

51. Standards in writing are above average in the present Year 2 and Year 6 age groups and pupils achieve well. In Year 2, pupils' writing is well structured and uses interesting vocabulary. Sentences are properly sequenced and capital letters and full stops are generally used accurately. The spelling of words is usually correct or justified phonetically. Pupils' handwriting is formed accurately with evidence of a joined script being developed. In Year 6, pupils use imaginative language in their stories, using adverbs and adjectives effectively to embellish their work. The work is properly punctuated and spelling is largely accurate. Handwriting is neat and usually joined legibly. Pupils' achievement is generally good in Years 1 to 6 in writing.
52. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan thoroughly and cater well for the mixture of ages and abilities within their classes. The work set is usually challenging. Positive relationships are developed and pupils apply themselves well to tasks. The basic skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2 and this creates a good platform for more advanced work in the later years. Learning support assistants provide very valuable support in lessons, giving guidance and help, especially to the less able pupils. There is a very good ethos for learning created by teachers through the use of positive management strategies. There are very few weaknesses in teaching. However, the pace of some lessons is a little slow with overlong introductions, and few targets are set for the completion of work. Assessment procedures are good. Teachers monitor progress carefully and modify their planning to suit the needs of individual pupils. Progress is tracked properly and good targets are set for further improvement. Marking is completed thoroughly and many positive comments help to boost pupils' self-esteem, but there are too few indications of what pupils have to do next in order to improve their work.
53. The curriculum is well balanced and provides pupils with a good range of interesting activities. Pupils write their own poetry as well as imaginative stories. In Years 3 to 6, analysis of stories includes an examination of Dickensian and Shakespearian characters. Letter writing is well developed too. In Years 1 and 2, dictation is used effectively to improve pupils' writing and spelling skills. Pupils plan and draft work and often produce finished pieces using their word processing skills on computers. Pupils' inference and deduction skills are developed through comprehension exercises. Social and moral issues are highlighted well in texts and pupils express their own views on aspects such as bullying. Opportunities for speaking and listening, although sound, lack variety. There is little evidence of drama, paired discussion and 'hot seating' being used regularly to promote speaking and listening skills.
54. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Lessons and pupils' work are monitored conscientiously and pointers for improvement are provided for staff. The most recent test results have been analysed and clear targets are set for raising standards in the future. A good team spirit is promoted by the co-ordinator and there is a willingness amongst staff to share good practice.
55. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The issue raised, relating to the National Literacy Strategy, has been resolved. Teaching is much stronger in Years 3 to 6 and

⁵ Phonics – learning to read using letter sounds

standards are improving steadily throughout the school. Achievement is now judged to be good, compared to satisfactory at the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. The school develops pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum well but language development, although satisfactory, lacks sufficient opportunities to broaden pupils' speaking skills. There are good examples of pupils writing for a range of purposes in different subjects – in history for instance, eyewitness accounts of historical events and in science, drawing coherent conclusions from completed experiments. ICT is used effectively to produce poems and imaginative writing in word-processed form. There are occasions when pupils explain their thinking and express their views but they are not well structured opportunities and are limited largely to responding to teachers' questions.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching throughout the school has improved the achievement of pupils and represents an improving picture.
- Teachers use mathematical vocabulary well to help pupils develop as mathematicians.
- The opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills, explain methods and share ideas are limited in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers and learning support assistants support pupils with special educational needs very effectively.
- Rapid mental calculations are not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

57. Standards in mathematics fluctuate because of the small number of pupils in each year group and the relatively high percentage of pupils with special educational needs within the school. Taking the performance of pupils over the last three years, standards at the end of Year 2 are very low and in Year 6 well below average compared with the national average. Currently, pupils in both year groups are attaining average standards. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and learning assistants and achieve well because the needs of individual pupils are met well. Pupils from traveller families achieve well too because of the additional support they receive and the positive learning ethos which prevails in the school.
58. Teaching and learning are good. The good teaching is characterised by clear learning objectives in lessons, effective use of teachers' questioning skills and good planning, based on on-going assessments which match tasks to pupils' needs. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, tasks were well matched using an incomplete number square, which they used for a board game. The activities reinforce their earlier work on adding and ordering numbers and are very well designed to match each pupil's capability and interest. Relationships are very good. The use of praise and the work of learning assistants make effective contributions to pupils' learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage pupils to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. For example, during a lesson in Years 3 to 6 pupils learn about relationships between multiplication and division and use mathematical terms such as 'inverse' and 'divisor' with good understanding. Pupils in Year 2 and Years 3 to 6 demonstrate a good grasp of place value. Work is marked regularly and

positive comments written by the teacher. However, few of the written comments provide

guidance on where improvements can be made. Teachers clearly discuss improvements with pupils and all pupils have suitable targets for improvement displayed on their table.

59. Since the last inspection, the school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well. Each lesson begins with pupils practising mental calculations. While these sessions are well planned and imaginative resources used, the pace at which pupils are expected to calculate is insufficiently challenging to increase the speed at which they recall mathematical facts. At the end of the lesson, there is opportunity for pupils to explain how they have completed their tasks. In the lessons observed these sessions were shortened, thereby limiting effectiveness and opportunities for pupils to explain their work and develop their thinking skills.
60. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are very good. The majority demonstrate perseverance, co-operate and collaborate well and show respect for teachers and their classmates. Behaviour during the inspection was either good or very good in lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The headteacher co-ordinates the subject well. She follows a regular cycle of monitoring that builds a clear picture of the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment data are used effectively to improve curricular provision. Pupils' performance is tracked thoroughly throughout the school. All findings are shared with staff and actions for improvement agreed. The concerns noted at the last inspection included use of assessment, the response of some pupils and inadequate resources. All these concerns have been successfully addressed. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Pupils have many opportunities to reinforce and use their mathematical skills across the curriculum. In science they measure temperature and rainfall, displaying results on a range of graphs. Concepts of time are reinforced in history. Measuring skills and concepts of symmetry and shape are used in information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology. Numeracy skills are well developed across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

63. During the inspection period it was not possible to observe any lessons in science because of the school's timetable arrangements; therefore, a judgement cannot be reached on the overall provision in the subject. However, sufficient evidence was available from the examination of school documents, assessment information and interviews with staff and pupils to make judgements on standards and achievement. Standards are broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well from Years 1 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support from learning support assistants and this enables them to achieve well. Although there were no children from traveller homes present during the inspection, evidence provided shows that they achieve well. The school has made a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection. Achievement has improved and the leadership and management of the subject are more firmly established. Monitoring and evaluation procedures of the provision are being established steadily. Test results are being analysed more systematically.
64. Pupils in Year 2 conduct experiments with different musical instruments to discover their pitch. Results are recorded in a suitably simplified form. They study how plants grow and identify locations around the school where plants can thrive. Pupils know that electricity can be dangerous as well as useful to them in the home. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of different types of foods and use the correct terms to classify them into categories, such as carbohydrates, proteins, minerals and vitamins. Experiments are properly

structured, as in the topic on friction, which involved the measurement of a shoe sliding over

different surfaces. Pupils are clear on what constitutes a fair test. Results are recorded in a variety of ways, but a suitable conclusion is always drawn at the end of the investigation.

65. The curriculum is good and caters well for the wide range of ages and abilities in each class. Topics are interesting and relevant to pupils' background. Elements of health education are incorporated well into topics. The school has highlighted the need for a greater focus on improving pupils' investigation skills and this is now being developed more strongly. Literacy and numeracy skills are well integrated into the provision and there are examples of results recorded in bar chart form and coherent written conclusions drawn from experiments. The work in pupils' books is well presented and marked thoroughly, but too little emphasis is given on how specific improvement can be made in the future. Assessment is sound, with pupils' work checked periodically to monitor progress against national expectations. However, the co-ordinator intends to develop a system to monitor pupils' investigative skills. This would be a useful addition to monitoring pupils' progress and for planning more specific tasks for individual pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information and communication technology is used effectively in other subjects.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The leadership and management of ICT are good.

Commentary

66. Evidence is based on the observation of two lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with pupils in Years 3 and 6 and watching pupils working on computers. Use of information and communication technology was seen in a number of subjects including English, mathematics, science and art and design. Provision has improved significantly since the last inspection. There are computers and interactive smart boards in both classrooms, which are used regularly and effectively for teaching and learning.
67. At the last inspection there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 but by the end of Year 6 attainment was judged satisfactory. Evidence gathered during this inspection indicated that pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are working at expected levels.
68. Pupils achieve well because the teacher plans lessons systematically to develop pupils' skills. She explains what pupils are to learn and asks them to check their answers. Pupils instructing a floor robot to travel a specified route were required to check and recheck their work for accuracy before changing instructions for direction or degrees of turn. Pupils in Year 6 use e-mail to establish links with another local school and, as a result, develop their communication skills well. They create e-mail, insert an attachment and then send their message electronically.
69. The co-ordinator teaches throughout the school, consequently ensuring continuity and progression. Teaching and learning are good. Plans based on national guidance indicate specific information and communication technology skills to be taught regularly in lessons. Work is assessed and there are records in pupils' books tracking progress and attainment. There are planned opportunities for pupils to work independently using CD-ROMs, computerised floor robots and interactive smart boards. Conversations with pupils indicate that many of them are confident in using the Internet to research and communicate information.

70. Although the co-ordinator has carried the responsibility for information and communication technology for a relatively short time, it is evident that she has good subject knowledge and has introduced new assessment procedures that provide on-going information about pupils' progress. She is given regular weekly time for monitoring teaching and learning in the subject. Leadership and management are good. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Pupils practise computer skills effectively in other subjects such as, English, mathematics, science and art and design. They word process, amend written work, create graphs, analyse information and produce shapes and colour work in art and design.

HUMANITIES

72. No overall judgement was made on the quality of provision in history and geography. No lessons were observed in these subjects, so teaching and learning cannot be judged. Evidence was gained through discussion with pupils, the scrutiny of pupils' work and interviews with teaching staff. Standards in both subjects are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs and those from traveller homes, because the curriculum is interesting and challenging.
73. The quality, presentation and volume of work produced in books are good. Teachers set well-tailored tasks for the different age groups and abilities of pupils, although there could be more opportunities for individual research. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are incorporated effectively within the curriculum provision. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers evaluate their lessons and modify their work for future lessons appropriately. Periodic assessment tasks are set and compared with National Curriculum standards to ensure pupils are reaching the appropriate levels for their age. The quality of teachers' marking is sound, but there is some lack of emphasis on giving guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work. The co-ordinator is conscientious and monitors the provision periodically, when each subject is highlighted for review within the School Development Plan. Since the last inspection, a satisfactory level of improvement has been made. The curriculum has been developed to cater better for the range of abilities and ages in each class and the co-ordinator role strengthened.
74. In **geography**, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make symbols on a simple map to illustrate a journey they have made in the locality. They follow the journey of Chester Bear to Paris and compare life in France with England, drawing simple pictures with written captions. In Years 3 to 6, pupils measure rainfall using a gauge and plot daily temperatures. Pupils study the way of life in Mexico and compare and contrast it with their own. They have a sound understanding of climatic conditions in Central America. Using a globe, pupils identify the British Isles, Mexico and the equator; however, they are not familiar with the continents.
75. In **history**, pupils in Years 1 and 2 compare the seaside of today with that of a hundred years ago. They identify changes in transport, clothing and the type of entertainment provided on the beach. A visit to a toy museum has been made and this has helped pupils to compare toys from different periods, particularly teddy bears over the last hundred years. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have a sound understanding of chronology and plot key dates on a time line. Key events over the last two hundred years are plotted fairly accurately, but concepts of ancient history, such as the Greeks, are generally beyond their understanding. Pupils write good 'eyewitness' accounts of the life of a child working in the coalmine and letters of complaint to the manager of the workhouse. ICT is used appropriately to word process draft pieces of writing. A visit to the Black Country Museum has enhanced pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Victorian Period.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. No lessons were seen in art and design because this subject was not part of the main inspection focus. In **art and design** use is made of the work of artists to extend pupils' understanding of the subject. Art from a range of cultures is promoted, helping the subject to make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. It was not possible to form a firm judgement about teaching and learning or achievement in these subjects. However, displays, which included three-dimensional work as well as work in the style of artists, indicate that pupils are working at least at expected levels. Computers are used well to allow pupils to experiment with a wide range of techniques. The effective display of pupils' work creates a colourful environment and confirms that teachers value pupils' efforts.
77. **Design and technology** is planned and taught as part of whole-school topics. No lessons were observed during the inspection and consequently no secure judgement about provision and standards can be made. A portfolio of pupils' work and discussions with pupils demonstrate that teachers plan and cover the entire required programme of study.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The newly appointed specialist teacher has good subject knowledge and clear priorities for developing music.
- Relationships are good and pupils are enthusiastic.
- Pupils sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Commentary

78. Evidence is derived from school documentation, two music lessons observed, hymn singing and collective worship and discussions held with pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, presenting an improving picture of music provision. Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils are beginning to encounter a range of musical experiences that develop their learning and give them confidence in performing. It is clear from evidence gathered that the school provides a satisfactory music curriculum.
79. Pupils' musical capability is promoted because the teacher who takes lessons has good subject expertise. Pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm in collective worship and singing practice. In Years 1 and 2 pupils gain an awareness of rhythm, beat and pitch as they collaborate in accompanying a song. They record their performance and are excited when listening to their recording.
80. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are beginning to develop their auditory skills by distinguishing between ranges of musical intervals. They are well prepared during the class introduction and use their learning well to compose simple melodies. Other opportunities to develop their skills are offered through recorder group, choir or guitar groups. These occasions give pupils additional musical experiences and increase their knowledge.
81. The recently appointed music specialist has good subject knowledge and plans from a nationally recognised scheme. He relates well to pupils and is increasing their musical awareness and skills. A peripatetic music teacher visits the school so that pupils can learn the guitar. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Resources are adequate but tuned percussion instruments are in a poor condition. There has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection.

Physical education

The provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and enjoy lessons.
- The curriculum provision is good and has improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

82. Evidence gathered from the observation of two lessons and from discussions with pupils and staff shows that pupils reach broadly average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and that achievement is good in Years 1 to 6. Pupils develop their skills well in games lessons; for instance in tennis, older pupils learn how to return a volleyed service and use the backhand. In Years 1 and 2, pupils control a large ball effectively with their feet when dribbling around cones. They understand that exercise affects the body and the importance of warm up activities. Some pupils are capable of evaluating their own performance but this aspect is generally not as well developed.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A teacher with good expertise and knowledge is employed to teach physical education throughout the school. He has high expectations of pupils and sets challenging tasks. Lessons are well organised and classes managed well. This ensures that pupils are well focused on tasks, work hard on their skills and build up their knowledge and understanding. Learning support assistants make a very valuable contribution to lessons, especially by supporting pupils with special educational needs. It enables these pupils to achieve as well as others in the class.
84. Pupils enjoy lessons, especially the vigorous activities in warm ups and the paired practice sessions. They collaborate well, share equipment sensibly and provide the occasional piece of constructive advice to their partners. Their behaviour is very good.
85. The curriculum provision is good overall. The school ensures that all elements of the National Curriculum are taught, even though it has limited facilities. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when gymnastics was not taught because of the lack of a school hall. Pupils now undertake gymnastics lessons at a neighbouring school. The local community supports the school well by offering the use of a nearby playing field and tennis courts. The village schools within the locality meet for sports days. In general extra-curricular activities are good. This is an area that the school is trying to address. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. During the inspection period no lessons were observed in personal, social and health education (PSHE), so no overall judgement on provision can be made. However, useful evidence was drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff and the observation of assemblies and lessons in other subjects. Aspects of personal development infiltrate the curricular provision – for instance, writing about bullying in Years 3 to 6. In geography, pupils compare their own daily lives with those of poor people in Mexico, which helps them to appreciate differences in societies around the world. In science and physical education, pupils are encouraged to take exercise and eat healthy foods. Assemblies are well focused on moral and social issues, such as faithfulness. Pupils are expected to reflect and be reverent when saying prayers before lunch and in assembly. Relationships are strong in the school. Adults are good role models and treat pupils with respect. Pupils' self-

esteem is promoted well through a rewards system, which culminates in the award of certificates after pupils acquire sufficient credits. The school council is also beginning to make a valuable contribution to developing pupils' 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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	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).

