

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Denehurst, Ruardean Woodside

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115519

Headteacher: Mrs M Dunn

Lead inspector: Mr C Deane-Hall

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 May 2005

Inspection number: 268303

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	101
School address:	Denehurst Ruardean Woodside Ruardean
Postcode:	GL17 9XP
Telephone number:	01594 542287
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Maurice Bent
Date of previous inspection:	September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Woodside Primary School is smaller than average, with 101 pupils. Of these, 59 are boys and 42 are girls. Most of the pupils are drawn from the village but a sizeable proportion, around a third, comes from surrounding villages. Around 10 per cent travel to school by bus. Just over nine per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Almost all of the pupils live in one of seven different wards and have a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. All of the pupils are of White–British heritage. The number of pupils who join or leave the school part way through their education is low (15.5 per cent). However, since numbers in each year group are relatively small, these pupils often have a significant impact on the school's overall standards. Children start school on a part-time basis in the autumn term after their fourth birthday. When they start school their overall attainment varies from year to year. However, the attainment of children in the current Foundation Stage is broadly in line with that expected of children of their age. No pupils have English as an additional language and a slightly lower than average number of pupils (15) have special educational needs. The range of needs includes social, emotional and behavioural, speech or communication needs and one pupil who is on the autistic spectrum. The school received a Schools Achievement Award in 2000 and is a partner in the Brookdean Cluster and The Forest Families, an extended school initiative. The pre-school Woodside Squirrels share the site with the school. The school has experienced an unsettled period of prolonged staff illness.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23757	Christopher Deane-Hall	Lead inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Geography History Physical education Information and communication technology English as an additional language
9519	Sue Pritchard	Lay inspector	
12764	Wendy Thomas	Team inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Religious education Music Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Woodside Primary School provides an overall satisfactory standard of education. The clear leadership of the headteacher is a key factor in its success. The quality of pupils' learning and achievement are satisfactory, overall, as is the quality of the teaching. Commitment to educational inclusion by staff is impressive. The school provides good learning opportunities for pupils within an increasingly extended curriculum. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Admission arrangements for children entering the Foundation Stage are very good
- Standards in mathematics in Year 6 are good because pupils achieve well in the upper part of the school
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- Financial management and attendance rates are very good
- The school ensures a very good environment for pupils' personal development
- The school provides an inclusive and caring environment where pupils' views are valued
- Links with parents and the community are strong
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils' participation in sport and other activities
- Standards in writing, together with its use in different subjects need to improve further
- In religious education insufficient emphasis is given to how beliefs influence the lives of faith communities
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) need to improve as does its use in other subjects

Improvement since the last inspection has been **satisfactory**. Since the last inspection, the school has suffered from a period of staff illness and turnover, which despite the leadership's best efforts, led to some disruption. Effective action has been taken to address the issues identified for improvement in the last inspection. Standards in Years 2, 3 and 4 are improving as a result of focused use of assessment information, though more can be done to improve pupils' understanding of how to improve their work. The outside learning environment supports provision for children under five effectively and the school development plan is a comprehensive and useful document. ICT resources have much improved, though more still needs to be done in this area. The school has well-developed plans to continue to improve the accommodation.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement is satisfactory, overall. Standards, overall, in English and science are broadly average for pupils in Year 6 and mirror those in the table above. At first glance these appear to be lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is not the case, but rather a reflection of the variations that can occur in year groups in a small school. In mathematics, standards are above average. Standards in ICT have improved but not at the same rate as many other schools and are just below the level expected. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was average

in English and mathematics and below average in science. It should be noted, however, that in 2004, a high proportion of pupils in Year 6 joined or left the school in Years 3 to 6 (57 per cent) and the year group had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (36 per cent). When taking pupils' prior levels of attainment into account, their progress against similar groups was above average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. The school set realistic targets for 2004. It exceeded these in English and fell just short in mathematics.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with average levels of attainment and achieve satisfactorily. By the end of reception, nearly all meet the goals expected and several exceed them. In Year 2, standards in writing and mathematics are average, and in reading, several pupils attain standards which are above average. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they behave well. Attendance continues to be very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall. Teaching of mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is consistently good, with much that is very good in Year 6. Strengths include the way that teachers ensure a positive learning atmosphere and insist on and gain good behaviour. This, together with the skilful way that they plan and provide for the needs of pupils with special educational needs, and their ability to motivate pupils, results in pupils having good attitudes towards **learning**.

The curriculum provides a wide range of learning opportunities. It is enriched by very good opportunities for pupils to participate in sport and other activities. Partnerships with other schools provide a valuable part in this provision. Pupils are well cared for, their ideas are valued by staff and they have very good relationships with adults in school. These, together with the strong links with parents and the community, provide a harmonious school community which supports pupils' achievement and enables them to flourish and develop well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school. She has a high level of commitment and leads the school well. There is a shared view amongst staff of the importance of meeting the needs of individuals and a commitment to ensuring a fair and inclusive school. Governance of the school is satisfactory, with all statutory requirements met. Governors are highly committed to the school, very supportive, and have strong links with the community. However, their appreciation of how the school evaluates its strengths and areas for development is limited and their strategic role is not sufficiently developed. Financial management is very good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and many good things to say about it. They especially appreciate the hard work and dedication of the staff. Pupils, too, are very fond of their teachers, and their rural village school. One pupil summed up the feeling of many in saying... *'I like the school because it is small and the field because it is big'*.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in writing and develop its use across the curriculum.
- Improve standards in information and communication technology and increase its use in different subjects.
- Improve teachers' subject knowledge of religious education and improve pupils' understanding of the significance of faith in the lives of believing communities.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Standards in English and science are broadly average and in mathematics they are above average. For mathematics this is an improvement since the last inspection, whereas for English and science this is slightly down. Standards in ICT are slightly below those expected nationally. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. There is no significant variation in the achievement of boys and girls. This is a smaller than average school and so small variations in year groups can lead to significant differences in test results from one year to the next.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 achieve above average standards in mathematics and achievement is good in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well in relation to their capabilities.
- Standards in ICT are not as high as they should be.
- In Years 1 to 3 and Years 5 and 6 pupils do not develop their skills in aspects of writing as well as they should.

Commentary

1. Children are assessed, soon after they enter the school in reception, in each of the six areas of learning. The results of these assessments and inspection findings show that attainment on entry to the school for the current group is average. Children make steady progress and a high proportion reach the expected levels for their age in all six areas of learning by the end of the reception year and several exceed the level expected.
2. Pupils continue to make steady progress in Years 1 and 2, building on what they have previously learnt. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve well, doing as well as they can. Other pupils achieve satisfactorily, though in writing, achievement could be better. This is because insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to consolidate and improve their writing skills in different subjects. In Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are improving, following a sharp drop in 2003. This year standards in Year 2 are likely to be similar to the national average in writing, mathematics and science and above average in reading.
3. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. In mathematics, achievement is good. This is directly attributable to the quality of teaching. Teachers have a very good grasp of the subject and know how to reduce barriers to learning for pupils, for example, by using a range of suitable teaching styles, that match learners' needs. By grouping pupils for mathematics lessons according to their prior attainment, teachers are able to plan their lessons so that the content closely matches pupils' needs. This often results in high quality learning and good achievement. In contrast, achievement in English is not as rapid. This is mainly due to the way that writing is taught. Much emphasis is given to teaching techniques but insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use these new techniques in different subjects. As a result pupils' achievement in writing could be better.
4. Standards in English and science are likely to be in line with the national average and, in mathematics, they are above average. Standards in ICT are just below those expected in Years 3 to 6. This gives the impression of a fall in standards. This is not the case. Standards in the school have improved but have not kept pace with those expected nationally. The school has considerably improved its resources for ICT and opened a new

ICT suite this school year. Even so, these improvements have not yet had time to have an impact on standards, and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their use of ICT. Pupils generally do not use their ICT skills as well as they could in other subjects.

5. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve well. This is because staff have a high level of awareness of the needs of these pupils. Individual education plans (IEPs) provide clear learning goals which are attainable and carefully monitored. Teachers and support staff are aware of these learning targets and tailor pupils' work and necessary support well. Tasks are often similar to those of other pupils, although the learning intentions may well differ. By providing similar tasks, suitably supported, teachers ensure that pupils feel included in all activities.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.2 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.0 (13.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.7 (15.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (25.8)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.4 (28.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.3 (29.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils behave well, establish very good relationships and have good attitudes to learning. They have very good records of attendance and their punctuality is good. The provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and helps pupils value themselves and others.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school boosts pupils' confidence and self-esteem well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their well-above average attendance rate.
- Pupils value friendships, show a lively interest in learning and want to do well.
- Some pupils lose the incentive to behave well in lessons when teaching lacks pace and rigour.

Commentary

6. Governors, staff and parents all expect good behaviour and the pupils respond accordingly. Throughout the school, pupils work and play together well, showing good levels of co-operation and mutual respect. They play harmoniously in the playgrounds where it is obvious that they are much more interested in keeping up a friendship than an argument. The pupils agree with the parents that incidents of bullying are rare and that there are good procedures to deal with these should they arise. Pupils are both intrigued and enthused by the different ways teachers have of managing their behaviour and can explain these well. However, the most effective behaviour and positive attitudes are achieved through lively introductions to

lessons, clear explanations, probing questioning, purposeful activities with high interaction, all conducted at a brisk pace. Pupils in lessons where all this takes place are far too involved in what they are doing to waste time or misbehave. However, when teaching lacks pace and the pupils have to sit through over-long explanations, they become restless and their behaviour and motivation to work hard and achieve their best suffers as a result.

7. The school promotes equal opportunities well. The value placed on every pupil's contribution in lessons promotes their self-esteem and sends a clear message that everyone has a right to be listened to. As a result, pupils are very patient when pupils with behavioural problems sometimes call out ahead of their turn. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well in all activities. They show good attitudes to work because teachers value their efforts and because the well-planned curriculum allows for pupils of different abilities to achieve and learn in different ways. The very good range of out-of-school activities, for example, is successful in motivating the interest of the school's young athletes, chefs, environmentalists, gardeners and technologists.
8. Pupils' cultural development is good. Visiting artists, musicians and representatives from churches and charities, bring added value to pupils' learning. Good quality displays in school help pupils to recognise the distinctive costumes and traditions found in certain other countries and cultures. The school also plans well for pupils to learn about British customs and traditions. Pupils gain much from their visits to local farms, museums, theatres and other places of educational interest. Traditional country dancing also features in the school's calendar. Harvest-time celebrations give pupils the chance to reflect on and recognise the value of others in the community.
9. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Lessons and assemblies offer good opportunities for pupils to empathise and reflect on their own existence and being. The highlight of a Year 3 religious education lesson, for example, came when pupils drew a set of sketches symbolising their personalities, finding the right colours to express their moods and feelings. Pupils here showed a high degree of emotional involvement in their learning.
10. Pupils' moral development is good, as is their social awareness. The essential values of self respect and care for others form the basis of all assembly themes. As a result, pupils develop a good ability to make judgements on moral issues. This is particularly evident in their concern for the environment. Pupils protest to the appropriate authorities when, for example, they find litter thrown on to their playing-field or are concerned at the amount of traffic outside the school. Pupils have a good sense of social awareness and an ability to adapt their behaviour to different situations. On their visits to the school, the governors are impressed by the way pupils conduct themselves. Pupils lean towards 'doing the right thing', a quality upheld by the parents who give a high level of support to the school and its rules.
11. Attendance levels are very good and well above the national average. Almost all pupils arrive in good time for morning registration. There are good procedures to chase up the few who might not. Rigorous monitoring reveals that all but a very small minority of parents comply with the school's request not to take family holidays during term-time. Parents know that regular attendance and good time-keeping play a very important role in helping their children to adopt mature and responsible attitudes to school.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

The three fixed-term exclusions, as shown in the table below, reflect the school's firm stand on unacceptable behaviour, physical violence or racism, and the steps that it is prepared to take to prevent pupils from being permanently excluded from the school.

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	97	3	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Important contributory factors to this overall judgement include the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum. Other important factors are the good quality care, guidance and support provided for pupils and the extremely good links with parents and the community. Each of these aspects plays an important part in the quality of education provided.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Within this overall judgement there are aspects of both which are good. Procedures for assessment are effective in Years 1 to 6 and often good in reception. Information gained from assessment is used satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematics is good and particularly so in the upper part of the school.
- Learning support assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers' insistence on a high standard of behaviour results in pupils applying themselves well to their tasks.
- More use could be made of assessment information for target-setting.
- Targets to support pupils' progress are not reviewed, and, where necessary, adjusted frequently enough to accelerate pupils' achievement.

Commentary

12. In all of the lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning were at least satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In mathematics, teaching is good and is the main cause for the good quality learning in the subject. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is always at least satisfactory. Several of the aspects of teaching, noted as areas for improvement at the time of the last inspection, have been addressed. For instance, teachers are clear about what they intend pupils to learn in lessons and the teaching in Years 3 and 4 is much improved. The good aspects noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
13. Examples of very good teaching were seen in mathematics. In these lessons, planning is very clear and expectations of what the pupils could do are high. Teaching and learning are based upon strong relationships between the teacher and pupils. Teachers use information

gained from assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do very effectively in their planning. This means that in the best lessons, pupils are provided with well-structured work, which builds well on what they have already learnt.

14. Teaching across the school is characterised by a clear understanding of pupils' needs. Teachers and teaching assistants are well aware that several pupils have particular learning difficulties. Lessons are organised to make sure that pupils with special educational needs are provided with tasks that are carefully matched to their needs, and are well supported by teaching assistants. Individual education plans identify short-term targets to which teachers give careful attention when planning lessons.
15. Pupils are well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. This is because lessons move along at a good pace and are characterised by a calm purposeful atmosphere where pupils engage in tasks and learn satisfactorily. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour consistently well, responding to individual's needs calmly, sensitively, firmly but fairly. Consequently, pupils know what is allowed and co-operate fully so that minimum learning time is lost through managing misbehaviour. Where pupils with behavioural difficulties find learning difficult, or are likely to interrupt the learning for others, teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of effective procedures to support the individual, whilst ensuring that the rest of the class is not disrupted. Lessons often begin with teachers clearly explaining what they expect pupils to learn by the end of the lesson. For example, in ICT and numeracy lessons with older pupils, expectations are made clear, tasks are explained carefully and pupils know how long they have to complete each activity. As a result, pupils settle quickly to their work, often becoming totally engrossed, leaving teaching assistants and teachers free to work with individuals or groups. This focus on learning helps pupils to progress at a good rate. The strategy is successful in allowing pupils of different ability to settle to their work, often for the same reason; it is a particularly strong aspect of good teaching.
16. In mathematics, pupils are organised according to their prior attainment. This has a positive effect on the rate of pupils' achievement and allows teachers to focus more carefully on pupils' needs. As a result, pupils of differing ability are catered for effectively, often achieving well.
17. A common weakness in teaching is the variation in the use of ICT to support learning. It is used well as a teaching resource in Years 4 to 6, for example, in mathematics, but has limited use as a learning resource that is available to pupils. Too much reliance is placed on a whole class using the ICT suite at the same time, which is not always particularly effective, rather than planning ICT into lessons in different subjects. Teachers' confidence in ICT is inconsistent. This is reflected in its use to support learning and, to an extent, in pupils' rate of progress.
18. Assessment is satisfactory, overall, and procedures for assessment are good in the Foundation Stage. Procedures for assessing pupils' level of understanding, skills and knowledge in English, mathematics and science are sound. They provide the headteacher and subject leaders, particularly in English and mathematics, with a good picture of pupils' progress. End-of-year and national tests are analysed and the information gained is used effectively to identify common strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Any necessary changes in the curriculum are then made. Targets for individuals and year groups are set based on this assessment information. However, the review and any necessary adjustment of these targets to boost achievement is not carried out frequently enough within the annual cycle. Written feedback to pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, frequently lacks sufficient detail to help pupils move forward. Teachers do not consistently use individual targets for pupils to work towards. Where they are used, they help pupils to focus on what they need to do to improve. Even where they are in place, limited subsequent reference is made to them, which is a lost opportunity.

19. However, other forms of assessment are well developed. The use of praise and oral feedback to pupils on what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve still further, is well established and effective in most lessons. Good use of questioning techniques helps teachers to check what pupils have learned and guides them in what to teach next. In a lower-attaining numeracy lesson for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, for example, the teacher expertly asked questions of pupils who had been set a challenge to solve with a 'buddy,' to check their understanding. Evaluation of progress made over time is thorough and teachers use the information successfully to modify their plans. This helps to ensure that pupils of different ability are generally provided with work that matches their learning needs. The school's use of home learning has a positive effect on pupils' overall achievement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	6	13	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

Provision in the curriculum is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of after-school activities.
- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Commentary

20. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The school plans the curriculum carefully for pupils in mixed-age classes. Since the numbers in each year group varies from year to year, the curriculum is reviewed annually to ensure that pupils' needs are met. Programmes for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness are taught. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils and these are not only very well attended but also provide much enrichment to pupils' learning. The school joins with local schools in many sporting and other joint activities, such as football tournaments and dancing and music festivals. Older pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential visit to Llangorse and pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a short (two night) residential visit to a local environmental centre. These help pupils to develop their academic, personal and social skills. Pupils are also able to gain from visiting violin and woodwind tuition.
21. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest such as Gloucester Cathedral, The @Bristol Centre, the Waterways Museum, a Farm Park, as well as visits to the Royal Forest of Dean Theatre and Nature in Art in Gloucester. There are also many visitors to the school to support different curricular areas. A member of the 'Wilderness Centre' came to talk to pupils about recycling and, as a result, they have introduced a number of recycling activities in school. The school is also involved in a healthy eating project. The local fire service and community police have also visited the school to talk to pupils.
22. Most of the pupils transfer to the local Technology School and arrangements for this are good. Year 5 pupils spend a day there, experiencing various activities. The Year 6 pupils have a three-day induction visit in the summer term before they transfer to the school. There are also open evenings, some of which are social occasions. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils with special educational needs are also good. The head of lower school visits to discuss pupils' individual needs before transfer.

23. The school has sufficient teachers and support staff who are appropriately qualified. Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, especially for those pupils with special educational needs. Resources for learning are satisfactory, as is the accommodation. However, whilst the outdoor accommodation is spacious, some of the classrooms are rather cramped. In larger year groups this makes it difficult to undertake some practical activities.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils are good, overall. Staff give good support to pupils' personal needs and satisfactory guidance on their academic progress. The school takes very good account of pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are always listened to; their comments are valued and acted upon.
- Pupils are guided well in their personal conduct and satisfactorily in their work.
- The school actively promotes a healthy life style for its pupils.
- Although pupils are well looked after during the day, the formal risk assessment procedures are not sufficiently extensive.

Commentary

24. Pupils' personal well-being is a priority for staff. Despite the significant changes in personnel, all adults in school take time to talk to the pupils about their achievements, to inspire their confidence and to gain their co-operation. The school council is used well to consult pupils and to gauge their views. Consequently, pupils turn readily to the adults in school for support and are very confident about asking for help when they need it. The verbal feedback given by teachers to pupils during lessons is good. Pupils agree that teachers are *'very friendly and always helpful'*. There are frequent examples of good practice where teachers help pupils gauge how well they have done in relation to the main learning intention of a lesson or unit of work. However, this is not always sufficiently focused on helping them to understand exactly what they need to do to improve.
25. There are very good arrangements for all pupils, including those of the higher ability groups, to work with pupils of other schools on a wide range of creative, scientific and sporting activities, all designed to extend and improve their motivation to achieve. The school makes good efforts through liaison with parents and health agencies to ensure that pupils with specific medical needs receive the care they need to take part in school activities. Good support is afforded to pupils with special educational needs. Their individual education plans are subject to frequent reviews to ensure that targets are met and the progress of each pupil is carefully tracked. The school's child protection procedures are secure and staff have a good understanding about their responsibilities towards children at risk. All staff listen closely to what children say and are careful to report any concerns they may have at once to the headteacher.
26. There are satisfactory procedures to ensure the school is a safe working environment. Although the governors have given due consideration to how the school might be adapted to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, slow progress has been made towards fulfilling some of the recommendations made in the resulting 'Accessibility Plan'. This means, for example, that people with impaired mobility are not likely to be able to access all areas of the school for some time yet. Pupils are looked after well but the risk assessment procedures are limited in their scope because governors do not conduct wide-ranging audits of all potential hazards. Access to the school pond, the administration of medication to pupils by staff and the level of adult supervision in assemblies are areas that currently fall outside of the risk assessment procedures. There are, however, well-established procedures for

general health and safety issues, with a good number of staff trained in basic first aid. The accident book is kept up to date but not checked for particular trends or circumstances relating to accidents that do occur.

27. There are some very good procedures to help pupils to know, understand and follow a healthy life style. Many pupils take advantage of the very good opportunities they are given to enrol and engage in sporting activities both in and out of school. The healthy living/nature club reinforces pupils' understanding of how to look after themselves, their health and their environment. Governors acknowledge the benefits the school bus service brings in terms of pupils' safety, attendance, punctuality and in securing numbers on roll. There are very good arrangements for children starting school. Pre-school nursery and classroom visits and briefing meetings help the process considerably and parents appreciate these. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting commented favourably on the help and guidance they receive at this time.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents, others schools and the community are very good and support learning and achievement very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a high standing in the local community and is valued by parents and visitors
- Very good use is made of the community to promote the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- Links with local schools and local organisations enrich and strengthen the curriculum.

Commentary

28. Parents and governors have very favourable views on the work of the school. They are especially pleased with the success it has in encouraging pupils to behave well and work hard. The school is supported well by the community it serves. Governors remain committed to improving the facilities in the local area. Since the last inspection they have succeeded in getting a private nursery up and running on the site. Children transferring from this to the main school are given a very good introduction to school routines through a programme of well-planned visits and play sessions. Links with the school to which most pupils transfer are also very effective in helping to improve pupils' attitude to learning. For example, pupils from Years 5, 6 and 7 enjoyed finding out more about chemical reactions at a science and technology workshop hosted by the local secondary college. Significant advantages arise from the well-established links with a network of local schools. Teachers make very good use of the opportunities these present to share resources and good practice, exchange ideas and find joint solutions to common problems.
29. Links with the community are very good, highly productive and purposeful. Local groups are proud to be connected with the school and are happy to lend their support to it, often in very practical ways. Members of the Old Scholars' Association, for example, raise funds solely to make regular donations to the school's book fund. Other events hosted by the very supportive Parents, Teachers and Friends' Association, the seasonal festivals, barbecues and games evenings, enable the whole community to meet and celebrate together. Visitors from places as far apart as Africa and Japan are valued for the talks they give to pupils about the cultures and traditions of their countries. Pupils are currently working on a project with the Forestry Commission comparing the wildlife found at a nearby woodland site with that found on their school playing-field. These innovative and very worthwhile links make a very strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
30. Co-operation between home and school is very good. The end-of-year reports form a good basis for a constructive discussion at the regular parent/teacher consultation sessions.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs have additional and good opportunities to discuss their children's targets and be involved in setting new ones. The school has very good links with the educational psychologist and other agencies to support pupils with special educational needs. Information to parents is good as it originates from a variety of sources; governors, parents, the school and the local community. School newsletters, for example, as well as publishing lists of dates and events, provide helpful information on what pupils will actually gain from taking part in a planned activity. All this, plus regular curriculum updates and the good, controlled, access parents have to the school and its displays, means that parents are kept well informed about what their children are doing all day and are thus better prepared to help them at home. A recent questionnaire encouraged parents to share their perceptions about homework. This was a good move on the part of the school because it was able to use the responses to help improve the provision to a standard that parents are now much happier with.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. There is a strong sense of commitment and teamwork by the staff to continue to raise academic standards and provide a good framework for personal, social and health education to help pupils take their place in the community. Governors are very supportive of the school but need to be more strategic in shaping the future of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership based upon a clear vision and is a very good role model.
- The leadership shows a very strong commitment to inclusion and concern for the needs of individual pupils.
- There are good procedures for evaluating the school's academic performance.
- Governors have very good links with the community.
- Governors are not sufficiently clear about how the school evaluates its provision and do not place enough emphasis on their strategic role.
- Very good financial management helps to ensure that the school's priorities are achieved.

Commentary

31. The leadership of the headteacher continues to be a strong factor in the success of the school. The headteacher has a very good knowledge of the pupils and ensures that their progress is monitored regularly. There is a shared vision for the school based upon achievement for all within a caring, inclusive environment. The positive ethos of the school manifests itself in pupils' respect for others, good manners and generally good levels of behaviour. The leadership of special educational needs is good. Pupils' needs are clearly defined and good management systems help to ensure that pupils are provided with clear IEPs to support their learning. Leadership has allocated additional funds from the school budget to help ensure that pupils' learning is capably supported by suitably trained staff and the necessary learning resources. This has had a beneficial impact on learning and helps to ensure that pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
32. The school's systems for self-evaluation are good. Subject leaders monitor the impact and effectiveness of their subjects and develop an annual subject action plan. This is included in the school's development plan. The headteacher and subject leaders for English, mathematics and science undertake lesson observations to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Common issues arising are reviewed by staff and, where appropriate, are included in the school's performance management procedures. Subject leaders of subjects other than English, mathematics and science are beginning to monitor the quality of pupils' work. Samples of pupils' work are recorded in subject portfolios to help provide an overview of the work covered. However, these do not always provide subject leaders with a sufficiently

clear overview of standards in foundation subjects because they are not compared with nationally expected standards.

33. Performance management is managed effectively and supports school improvement. Professional development needs of staff are well provided for, including those of support staff. Staff in the Foundation Stage have attended training for assessment. As a result, they have revised and implemented improved procedures for assessing children's learning. The subject leader for ICT has also benefited from attending management training, which has resulted in the school having a more accurate picture of the standards in the subject.
34. The school benefits from a very supportive governing body, which fulfils its legal responsibilities. Several governors have particularly strong links with the local community, including the Old Scholars Association, which is very supportive towards the school. Governors are kept informed about the school's effectiveness through reports and several visit the school regularly. However, governors are not clear about how the school evaluates itself. Governors' involvement in strategic planning is limited. The governing body is rightly concerned about the increasing workload placed upon the headteacher, but the opportunity to be actively involved in helping to shape the future of the school, and at the same time support the headteacher, has not been grasped.
35. Financial procedure and administration are very good. Budgetary planning, control and monitoring continue to be extremely efficient and are suitably linked to the school development plan. The school ensures that the principles of best value are in place. At the meeting for parents, prior to the inspection, and in their completed questionnaires, parents felt that the school was well led.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	303,961
Total expenditure	318,739
Expenditure per pupil	3,155

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	74,048
Balance carried forward to the next	59,270

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

At the time of the inspection there were 15 reception age children in a mixed reception and Year 1 class. Children start school in the September following their fourth birthday. They attend part time for a settling-in period. At the time of the inspection all children were attending full time. Induction procedures for children are very good, with the result that children quickly settle into their new school. Parents particularly appreciate the way in which staff link with the nearby Woodside Squirrels as well as home. The information provided for parents by the school before their children start school is very informative. When children start school their attainment is broadly average. However, there is a wide range of attainment and experience. A small proportion of children have well-developed skills in all the areas of learning. A significant proportion also has skills that are less well developed. A small proportion of children are identified as having learning difficulties. Once children start school, staff undertake an assessment for each of the six areas of learning. This provides a useful 'base line' from which staff plan future learning. Assessment procedures are good, ensuring that adults who work with the children review individual's progress regularly and use the information to focus on future learning needs.

Teaching in all the six areas of learning set nationally for children of this age is satisfactory, overall. It is based on an appropriately planned curriculum. Teachers and support staff know the children well; they work well together to provide a wide range of stimulating learning activities for children. Although there is a reasonable balance between teacher-initiated and carefully structured child-initiated activities, there are still occasions when opportunities for children to make decisions and take responsibility for planning their own activities are restricted. Adults working with the children have a tendency to 'over-direct' activities. For example, when carrying out a language and communication activity, which involved cutting and sticking, adult direction hindered the development of children's independent learning and chances to observe and assess children's skills were missed.

The outdoor learning environment is much improved since the last inspection. However, although the provision is secure and carefully resourced, space is rather limited, particularly when the large wheeled apparatus is used.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy school, they are settled and happy and respond well to school routines.
- Relationships are good.
- The majority of children are likely to meet or exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

36. There are good relationships between children and adults. Teachers and teaching assistants are good role models for children. This enables children to get on well together and they respond very well to the opportunities provided. Children are happy and settled in school. They play together happily and are good at sharing toys and resources. They take turns in games and enjoy shared activities. Children respond well to class routines and know how they are expected to behave in class and in the school. They listen well to one another and are becoming sensitive to the needs of others. The majority of children are likely to attain or exceed the early learning goals for this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have well-developed speaking skills.
- Teaching of reading is good.

Commentary

37. Children start school with a wide range of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. A good proportion of children are confident and fluent speakers when they start school. Children speak confidently in a range of situations. For example, when working on the story 'Each Peach Pear Plum', several recognised rhyming words such as 'eye,' 'spy'. Many joined in with the story, and happily discussed the characters. One higher-attaining child describing the three bears as being 'outside' the window. They have good hand control and their writing skills are developing well. Children listen well to one another in class discussions. They have a good knowledge of sounds and are making steady progress in writing. They recognise initial letters and many are beginning to write independently. Writing skills are taught effectively, though opportunities for children to write independently could be developed further. Reading skills are taught well and children are making good progress. They are developing good knowledge of sounds and relate this knowledge to printed words. Children enjoy stories and are happy to spend time reading. The majority are on course to attain or exceed the goals set for them nationally for this aspect of learning by the end of the reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in mathematical development is good
- Children make good progress in their mathematical knowledge and understanding

Commentary

38. Little direct teaching of mathematical activities was observed during the inspection. However, teachers' planning and work in children's folders shows that a good range of mathematical work is covered. The majority of children count confidently to ten and most can count accurately beyond this. Most relate their knowledge of numbers to everyday things. For example, many know that spiders have eight legs. Work in children's folders shows that they are confident in matching numbers and objects. They sequence numbers and identify which number is one more than or less than a given number and describe lines as being 'longer' or 'shorter' than others. Several children have a good knowledge of mathematical shapes, for example, they correctly identify and name simple two-dimensional shapes such as a square, and triangle. Higher-attaining children know the simple properties of these shapes, explaining that a square has four sides and a triangle three. They confidently recognise number when throwing dice and count the corresponding number of objects. The majority of children are likely to attain or exceed the early learning goals for this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a good general knowledge.
- They are curious and keen to find out about their surroundings.
- Opportunities for investigation and independent learning could be improved.

Commentary

39. Children start school with a good level of general knowledge. They show curiosity and are interested in finding out about the world. When talking about their families they correctly place their brothers and sisters chronologically and know who is the eldest or youngest. A few explain how babies need to be cared for. Several children showed a good knowledge of countries, one child relating a holiday in Bulgaria. They know that some countries have hot weather and higher-attaining children confidently explained that to go on holiday they had to fly in an aeroplane. Children have access to computers, though these were rarely used during the inspection. One or two children used a mathematics program to record the results of a recent survey. Several children spontaneously explained a display of 'The Tale of Two Tadpoles', confidently talking about the life cycle and how we need food to grow. Although children were happy to show the seeds, that they were growing, the classroom is rather cramped and does not offer children many opportunities to explore and investigate and some of the activities are too directed by adults.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use small tools confidently.
- Children are on course to meet or exceed the early learning goals for physical development.

Commentary

40. During the inspection there was little direct observation of the teaching of physical development. In the outdoor learning area children play safely and confidently, showing awareness of the space around them. At present, there is no fixed climbing apparatus but children have access to climbing equipment in physical education lessons. This was not observed. In the classroom, most children have good hand control and use pencils, brushes, scissors and other tools with confidence and safety. They use a range of construction toys to build models and are developing good co-ordination. Children are on course to meet the early learning goals for this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of activities provided for creative development is limited.
- Opportunities for role-play are limited.

Commentary

41. Very little provision for creative development was observed during the inspection. Whilst provision is satisfactory, this area is a comparative weakness in the Foundation Stage. No music or dance activities were observed. Children do explore colour and texture. They paint and draw, for example, in the style of Vincent Van Gogh's 'Rodin' but there was little evidence of exploring texture and shape using a range of media. The classroom does not provide many opportunities to stimulate children's imagination; for example, through role-play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are improving.
- Writing is still an area for development in Years 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.
- Writing in Year 4 is good.
- Pupils' achievement in English is satisfactory.

Commentary

42. As year groups are small, results in national tests have varied from year to year. The Year 6 cohort in 2004 included a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Evidence from the inspection shows that results in the national tests for 11 year olds are likely to be similar to those expected nationally for pupils of their age. Standards in English at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally. When they start school, pupils have average skills in speaking and listening. In Year 2 they speak confidently to visitors and are self-assured in class discussions. They read confidently, with good expression.
43. In a Year 2 and 3 lessons, pupils talked about how to change a passage from the third person to a first person account, but they were less confident about writing first person accounts. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are also confident in talking to visitors and express their ideas clearly. In Years 5 and 6, pupils discuss how they might begin a letter to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in support of London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games. In a good Year 4 lesson, pupils worked well together in groups to produce a television advertisement. They thought about the features of advertisements they have seen, such as slogans and bargain offers. They then presented video recordings of their advertisement and the whole class evaluated each finished product. Pupils showed good understanding of how persuasive language is used in advertisements and their work was above expectations for their age.
44. Standards in reading are generally above average throughout the school, with a sizeable proportion of pupils attaining above-average standards. Whilst pupils have the reading skills to find information from a variety of sources, they only speak of a limited range of popular children's fiction and do not have knowledge of a wide range of books and authors.
45. The school recognises that pupils' writing skills are below average and this is a current priority for development. Analysis of pupils' written work shows that attainment is below expected levels in most year groups. The exception is in Year 4, where writing standards are good. In most classes there is a heavy emphasis on exercises to teach techniques but pupils are then given few opportunities to apply the skills they learn. In most classes, pupils with different learning needs are given the same work, which means that higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged and the work of lower-attaining pupils is sometimes not completed. By contrast, pupils in Year 4 attain good standards in writing. Their written poems, have been sent off to a magazine for publication. They have also produced newspaper articles related

to their history topic on the Greeks. These were informative and often entertaining. For example, an advertisement for triremes (Greek warships) read "Come to OARSOME for all your shipping needs." Pupils in this class are developing a lively personal style in their writing and show enjoyment in their work.

46. When pupils start school, they vary in their language skills from year to year. Whilst attainment in writing in most year groups is below average, achievement in the subject, overall, is satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 the attainment of most pupils is in line with that found nationally.
47. Teaching in English is satisfactory. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and this is well planned for. However, marking does not always give pupils guidance as to how they can improve their work. Writing targets are pasted in the front of their books, but for older pupils these do not clearly identify what they need to do to move their work to the next level. In Year 4, the teacher uses a variety of strategies to help pupils improve their writing. Good use is made of role-play and discussion, which engages pupils and helps them to develop their writing skills. Pupils are also encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work and suggest how it could be improved.
48. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The school is aware that writing needs to be developed further and is arranging staff training for this. Whilst at the time of the previous inspection, standards in English were judged to be above average, the small cohorts mean that results fluctuate from year to year and are influenced by the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each cohort. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. In most lessons, teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work in pairs or groups. Role-play was used effectively in Year 1, where pupils enacted scenes from a story they had read. Year 4 pupils greatly enjoyed working in groups to devise adverts for selling a compost bin (the pupils' choice) and then making a video recording of their work. Pupils' reading skills enable them to use reference books effectively and to find information from the Internet. Writing, however, is not used effectively across the curriculum. In history, pupils have made project books about the Second World War, but much of the work consists of passages copied from books or articles downloaded from Internet sites. There was little evidence of original research. The writing skills of some average and lower attaining pupils mean that, for many of them, having to write inhibits learning. Much work is unfinished. In science, pupils write up experiments but, again, average and lower-attaining pupils appear to find writing a chore and this slows their progress. This is also true of pupils' work in religious education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning are good, with very good teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- ICT is not used as much as it could be to enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

50. Standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Contributory factors to pupils' good achievement in Years 3 to 6 are the quality of the teaching, effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy as a learning resource, and the organisation of pupils according to their ability. Results show that standards in Year 6 declined in 2004 in comparison with those achieved in 2003. Whilst providing an accurate measure of pupils' attainment, they could give a misleading picture of the school's success. The particular year group was small and had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (over 35 per cent). The year group was a lower-attaining cohort. The school's records indicate that pupils achieved well, with four pupils with special educational needs coming within three or fewer marks of the threshold for nationally expected level 4. These factors must be taken into account when reviewing standards from one year to the next, especially when any one pupil accounted for nearly seven per cent of the overall results.
51. Records of pupils' progress and an analysis of their work indicate that most pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily for their capabilities, and that those with special educational needs often achieve well. These pupils achieve well because their needs are well known to staff, their work is well-matched to their needs and they are well supported by teachers and support staff. Teaching assistants encourage pupils to offer their ideas and respond to teachers' questions, so improving their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) often include targets that link numeracy and literacy. Teachers and support staff ensure that these guide the support needed to help pupils learn.
52. Further up the school, achievement from Years 3 to 6 is good. In this part of the school the rate of achievement increases for several reasons:
- Teaching is at least good, and often very good.
 - Information gained from assessment is used well to take pupils on to their next steps in learning.
 - Pupils are organised in groups according to their ability, which helps teachers concentrate on a more narrow range of learning needs.
 - The National Numeracy Strategy is used as a framework to support teachers in their planning rather than as a prescribed strategy.
53. In Year 2, it is likely that all pupils will reach level 2 but only a small proportion will attain level 3. This is because the cohort does not have a high proportion of more able pupils. Higher-attaining pupils have a secure understanding of place value to at least hundreds and average-attaining pupils correctly sequence numbers to 100. An analysis of pupils' work shows that standards in shape, space and measures are broadly average. Most pupils recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes and use this knowledge to construct nets of these shapes. They understand units of measure such as centimetres, and kilograms and deepen their understanding by applying their knowledge when estimating and measuring. Average and higher-attaining pupils use their knowledge of number bonds (numbers which add up to a target number) to calculate which combination of coins add up to 20 pence. Nearly all pupils are beginning to develop their mathematical vocabulary and, when prompted, use it when explaining their work.
54. In Year 6, pupils increasingly use and apply their knowledge to solve problems. For example, in a higher-attaining group, pupils were challenged to work out strategies for solving problems using only two and five pence coins. The teacher had excellent relationships with the pupils and they rose to the challenges set, extending their mental arithmetical dexterity well. As the lesson progressed, pupils explained the range of strategies they employed, including partitioning, estimating, and checking that their solution was reasonable. By the end of the lesson, they were enthusiastic learners, clearly enjoying their work and achieving well. Lower-attaining pupils in another group were equally enthusiastic, correctly calculating most of the prime numbers to 26.

55. Teaching is good, overall. Lessons are well planned and build upon what pupils already know. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy as a useful framework to support their planning but are flexible enough to match lesson plans to what pupils need to learn. These are very structured, which means that pupils receive clear instructions to allow them to learn successfully. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do, use a range of strategies to help their concentration, and insist and receive high standards of behaviour. Lessons make good provision for pupils to build upon previous learning. Teachers regularly expect pupils to explain how they solve problems and this helps them to use and apply their understanding in new situations. As a result, pupils behave well, settle to their work quickly and work well together. They often help one another in their work and are very happy to share their ideas with their teacher and classmates. In the lessons observed, teachers used a range of teaching styles to good effect. The use of questioning to extend pupils' learning and assess their level of understanding is a common strength. Teachers challenge their pupils, in a caring and supportive environment. Pupils respond well to these challenges, often showing enthusiasm and enjoyment in their learning.
56. There is, however, a common weakness in teaching. Enhancement of learning through the use of ICT is limited. Pupils need to have more 'hands on' use of computers to consolidate their ICT skills and to develop their understanding that ICT can be used in practical situations. This means that teachers need to be secure in their knowledge of programs and how they can best be used to support the learning of different abilities.
57. The leadership and management are good. The subject leader monitors the quality of provision well, particularly the quality of teaching. Analysis of tests and assessments has helped the school identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and make the necessary adaptations to the curriculum to raise achievement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Mathematics is used effectively in different subjects. For example, in ICT, pupils record their findings using sensors, and in science they plot graphs and tables using collected data from experiments. Curriculum plans show that units of work covered in history and geography, as well as physical education, give opportunities for pupils to measure correctly.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are satisfactory.
- Pupils' weak writing skills hamper their progress.

Commentary

59. Timetable arrangements during the inspection meant that it was only possible to observe two science lessons. These were in the Year 2 and 3 class, and in Year 4. Further evidence was gained from analysis of pupils' written work in Years 5 and 6 and from discussion with pupils. As pupils' writing skills are below average it was very difficult to assess their knowledge and understanding in science. In discussion, pupils showed understanding of a range of scientific processes, for example, they correctly explained the water cycle. They understand how to carry out a fair test and have covered the range of work expected of their age group.
60. Pupils in Year 4, show understanding of how muscles work in opposition to raise and lower their arms. They use scientific vocabulary correctly and enjoy making models to show how biceps and triceps work. In the Year 2 and 3 class, pupils understand how light, heat and water affect plant growth. They had carried out an experiment growing seeds in different

conditions and could explain which set of circumstances was best for their seeds to grow. Work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils attain standards in line with those found nationally.

61. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. The school has recently introduced a new scheme of work to support science. However, it is too early to evaluate its impact on pupils' learning. The school has organised further training to support teachers in integrating the new scheme into the curriculum.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader effectively monitors pupils' work in books and views colleagues' planning. The curriculum is supported by visits, for example to a local nature reserve and to The @Bristol exhibition. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 attain standards, which are just below average because they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills and understanding in other subjects.
- The ICT suit provides a good learning resource.
- Standards in Year 2 are satisfactory.
- Leadership and management provide a good focus for future development.

Commentary

63. Standards attained by pupils in Years 1 and 2 are broadly average. Pupils know how to record their findings, combine text and images; for example, when designing and making invitations to a party. They use competent word-processing skills when completing a passage of writing and confidently manipulate and design using a program to illustrate objects such as a small boat. In Year 1, pupils are beginning to understand how to give instructions to control a remote toy car. Pupils in Year 2 extend their work into science. For example, they illustrate the parts of a flower, correctly identifying and naming the different parts, such as roots, stem, etc. When carrying out their work most use a 'mouse' effectively, for example, when dressing an image of a teddy bear.
64. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attain standards that are just below those expected nationally. Pupils know how to access and use the Internet for research; however, many are not sufficiently skilled in presenting their findings with the needs of their audience in mind. Too often, information is simply downloaded without synthesis and enough consideration of a suitable way to present their work. Year 6 pupils know how to enter data based on an investigation. A good example of this was a lesson, part of a sequence of lessons, where pupils had to devise a feasible investigation using a sensor. For some, this was challenging work, but by working sensible and co-operatively, and building on a previous lesson, most succeeded in devising a reasonable investigation such as 'When is it darkest in the ICT suit during the day?' and 'Which room in the school is the loudest?' In discussions, pupils were able to explain how they would undertake their investigation and how they would record their data using the computer to overlay their results graphically. However, planning shows that pupils do not experience the full range of ICT activities expected of pupils of their age. The headteacher and staff are aware of this and have already put in place action to redress the situation.
65. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. Although teachers have had training in ICT, a few still lack confidence and need to develop their skills further. Where teachers have secure ICT skills, they use these to 'transform' classrooms into bright, interactive learning environments, which

support pupils' learning. Not all teachers make sufficient use of ICT in other subjects to consolidate pupils' learning (skills and knowledge) and improve their practical application of the subject. Where opportunities are on offer, such as during the 'Carousel' sessions, they have a positive impact on pupils' achievement in both ICT and, in the lesson observed, science too.

66. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has a very clear idea of the strategies necessary to improve standards and achievement. The recently opened ICT suit and the improved level of resources, have had a major impact on provision. However, the positive effects of the improvements have yet to result in sufficiently improved standards for older pupils. The subject leader recognises that this will take a little time. Assessment procedures have been improved and information gained has been used to identify areas for improvement and to clarify standards in each year group. Action plans to improve provision and standards are in place. For example, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 can attend a computer club where the focus is on raising standards through the practical application of ICT skills. Teachers planning still has to identify opportunities for ICT to be used to support learning across the curriculum. Standards for ICT are lower than those seen during the last inspection. However, the requirements for the subject are now much more rigorous.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. Provision across the curriculum is not satisfactory. Integrating ICT into other areas of the curriculum is a development priority for the school. Aspects of the subject are used in literacy, numeracy, science and, to an extent, in other subjects, for example, in history where Year 6 pupils undertake research into Victorian times, but there is scope for further development. Teachers' planning does not incorporate ICT sufficiently to enrich and support achievement in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

68. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision and standards in geography and history as no lessons were observed. Teachers' planning documents and pupils' work were examined and discussions held with subject leaders and pupils.
69. In both **geography and history**, the school uses the national scheme of work, suitably tailored to match the local context. The curriculum maps show that statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is planned around a two-year cycle to ensure that pupils deepen and widen their learning by building progressively on prior levels of skill, knowledge and understanding. Photographs indicate that the curriculum is enriched by educational visits. In geography, pupils in Years 2 and 3 visit nearby Coleford and in history, pupils gain from a visit to Gloucester Museum during their work on the Romans, and older pupils deepen their understanding of life in Victorian times by visiting the Folk Museum in Gloucester. Pupils are increasingly using ICT to support their research at home. For example, older pupils extended their work on Britain since the 1930s by using the Internet and recording their research. However, not enough is done to help pupils to develop their research skills in school so that they sift and use their own words when recording their findings.
70. From discussions, it is clear that leadership and management of both subjects are satisfactory. Subject leaders maintain a subject portfolio, which provides a useful monitoring overview of the range and content of the curriculum. However, although the portfolio includes samples of pupils' work, it does not yet provide a clear picture of standards attained against those expected nationally. The Brookdean Cluster provides valuable funding and opportunities for both subject leaders to meet colleagues from other schools and to plan joint training. For example, a common monitoring process has been developed. Assessment tasks are built into each unit of work and teachers are increasingly using the information gained when planning future lessons. Resources for both subjects are satisfactory and are well organised.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Work is hampered by pupils' weak writing skills.
- There is more emphasis on learning facts about religion than on learning about how beliefs influence the lives of faith communities.

Commentary

71. In the lessons observed, pupils in each year group attained the standards expected for pupils of their age. Year 2 and 3 pupils know about Saint Francis of Assisi and his care for animals. Following on from this, they discussed their own pets and how they cared for them. In Year 4, pupils talked about the artefacts they had seen on their recent visit to a local church, showing a sound understanding of their significance. Several related them to their own baptism and the candles they had received when they were baptised. They also remember the vicar explaining why the vestments and altar cloths are different colours at different times of the church year. In the Year 5 and 6 class, pupils explore rites of passage. For example, many understand that Christian baptism is a sign of new life as a Christian. However, although they had been told about confirmation, several pupils were very unclear what this meant.
72. Work in pupils' books includes a lot of published worksheets and because pupils' writing skills are weak it is not always clear what they know and understand. However, much of the work is merely copying passages of text. Literacy skills are not used effectively in the subject and books contain very little original writing by pupils.
73. Teaching is satisfactory, though on occasion teachers appear to have insecure subject knowledge in terms of how to include the aspect which deals with what we can learn *from* the subject. Some work is not marked and pupils are not always given feedback on their work. This means that some misunderstandings are not always corrected.
74. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school is able to borrow resources from the local authority centre. Pupils have also made visits to Gloucester Cathedral, local churches and a mosque. There has recently been a Hindu workshop, which included cooking, dance and music.
75. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Too few lessons were seen in these subjects for an overall judgement to be made on provision or teaching and learning. No lessons were seen in **design and technology**. Samples of pupils' work show that the subject is covered appropriately and that pupils learn a range of skills. They enjoyed taking part in a design and technology competition, the Knex Challenge, and spoke enthusiastically about their models.
77. In **art**, pupils in Years 3 to 6 use sketch-books to record their ideas and practise techniques. Year 4 pupils carefully sketch to good effect different landmarks in the grounds connected with their geography work on mapping. In **music**, pupils enjoy singing and know a good range of songs. They take part in a music festival with local schools. They sing well in assemblies. Visiting specialists provide tuition in violin and woodwind.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad
- Pupils have good opportunities to develop their talents through coaching and clubs
- Nearly all pupils swim by the time they leave the school in Year 6

Commentary

78. Standards in Years 1 to 6 are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. A sample of four lessons was observed, which covered gymnastics, dance, athletics and swimming. Teaching was always at least satisfactory and often good. In Year 1, pupils are generally confident in the swimming pool. They successfully move through the water with aids, kicking their legs whilst also using their arms. Higher-attaining pupils show considerable mobility moving happily forwards, backwards and from side to side. In gymnastics, pupils in Years 2 and 3, have a clear understanding of how to develop a sequence of different balance points, moving with increasing poise and control from one 'moment of stillness' to another. In this lesson, the teaching was good. The teacher had a very secure subject knowledge and knew exactly what she wanted the pupils to achieve. Teaching allowed pupils to build on their level of skills so that they could recognise their achievements. To support the learning, the teacher modelled what she wanted the pupils to work towards. By stopping the lesson at suitable intervals and gathering the pupils together, she not only helped pupils to consider what other pupils had developed, but also to review their own and others' performance. Throughout the lesson the teacher had high expectations of what the pupils were capable of learning and provided challenging activities. Most pupils responded well to the challenges and, as a result, learning was good and pupils achieved well.
79. The school uses the national scheme of work as a basis for the curriculum. This is extended by very good links with other schools, including a nearby secondary school. The school takes part in several local sporting activities, including a local dance festival, volleyball tournament, swimming gala and football matches with other schools. The range of learning opportunities is particularly wide for a small school and stretches to include kwik cricket, unihoc, netball and short tennis. The school has recently become involved with a secondary school in arranging for average and lower-attaining pupils to develop skills in an adapted version of golf. Higher-attaining pupils are encouraged to extend their skills through local clubs.
80. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader energetically promotes the subject within the school. She has a clear view of the curriculum and advises colleagues as necessary. Standards are monitored effectively in some cases by using video to record pupils' work. These recordings also help pupils to develop their evaluation skills to improve their performance. Resources are satisfactory, overall, and the pupils' learning benefits from the use of the adjacent school field.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) including citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHCE forms an integral part of the caring ethos of the school.
- The curriculum provides well for pupils to explore sensitive issues and to share their feelings and concerns with one another and adults.
- The good provision for social and moral education supports this area well.
- The PSHE curriculum is enriched and extended through visits and contributions from visitors to the school.

Commentary

81. Personal, social and health education is an important part of the school's curriculum. It underpins the school's expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils rightly regard personal and social education as part of their everyday learning in school. The health education programme is woven successfully into the curriculum and staff deal effectively with any particular issues as and when they arise. The school's very good commitment to inclusion positively guides pupils' social development. Staff provide good role models in the way that they value the opinions and contributions of all pupils during lessons and discussions. The school council, which meets regularly, plays an important part in embedding the pupils' responsibilities to one another. It also plays an important part in developing pupils' understanding of decision-making in the school and wider community.
82. The school works collaboratively with the Forest Families initiative, which provides well for younger pupils' social development. The "Health 4 Schools Initiative" has added an extra dimension to the provision for developing pupils' understanding of healthy eating. Pupils appreciate how important it is to work together and readily celebrate and value one another's achievements. The school places strong emphasis on independence and responsibility, which promotes self-esteem and encourages pupils to develop strategies to overcome problems and achieve success.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The Leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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