

INSPECTION REPORT

SWAINSWICK CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Upper Swainswick, Bath

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109206

Headteacher: Mrs L. Cripps

Reporting inspector: Mr C. D. Taylor
23004

Dates of inspection: 24th - 26th March 2003

Inspection number: 246893

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Innox Lane
Upper Swainswick
Bath

Postcode: BA1 8DB

Telephone number: 01225 859279

Fax number: 01225 851204

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R. Shackell

Date of previous inspection: 24th - 27th February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23004	C. Taylor	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Mathematics Science Geography History Music	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9769	M. Morrissey	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10053	J. Simms	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Provision for pupils with special educational needs English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections

Grasshoppers
1 Anglesey Close
Chasetown
Burntwood
Staffordshire
WS7 8XA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Swainswick Church of England Primary School is a voluntary controlled school catering for boys and girls aged four to eleven years. The school is much smaller than most primary schools, with 55 full-time pupils. The school is situated in the village of Upper Swainswick on the northern outskirts of Bath. It also serves the hamlets of Woolley, Tadwick and Langridge. Most pupils come from private housing in Lower Swainswick, Larkhall and Bath, while some pupils come from farther afield. Numbers have decreased slightly since 1998, but are currently increasing. Five per cent of pupils - below the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils have attended a nursery or pre-school playgroup and join the reception class with levels of attainment roughly typical for their age, though standards on entry were higher this year. Eighteen per cent of pupils - close to the national average - are on the special educational needs register. No pupils currently have statements of special educational needs. Most pupils with special needs have specific learning difficulties (dyslexia), behavioural difficulties or speech and communication difficulties. Only one pupil is from an ethnic minority and there are no pupils whose mother tongue is not English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Swainswick CE Primary is a very effective school. Standards fluctuate from year to year because of the small year groups, but are above average overall. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. Teaching and learning are very good. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good, while relationships are excellent. Consequently, pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Attendance is well above the national average. The school benefits from very good leadership and a strong commitment by all staff to improve the school further. Although expenditure per pupil, as in many small schools, is well above the national average, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good teaching ensures that standards are above the national average in mathematics, science and religious education by the time pupils leave the school.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and relationships are excellent; attendance is well above the national average.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities is good, enhanced by many visits and visitors, and a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and the partnership with parents is very good.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management.

What could be improved

- Although standards in English are in line with the national average, they could be higher.
- The role of subject co-ordinators could be developed further.
- Many subject policy documents could be updated to reflect and promote good practice.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the previous inspection in 1998, the school has made very good progress in improving the areas identified in the last inspection report. It has effectively clarified attainment targets for each year group to ensure that all pupils in the mixed-age classes are appropriately challenged and stretched. It has made good progress in ensuring that teachers' expectations are sufficiently high, in order to challenge the older and higher-attaining pupils at all times. It

has raised educational standards by widening consultation about the school's educational aims and philosophy, and has improved its partnership with parents. It has made good progress in planning the reception curriculum in relation to the early learning goals for young children, and annual reports are now written under these headings. In addition, teaching and learning have improved and standards are higher throughout the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and is now good.

STANDARDS

As the number of pupils in the year group is less than ten, the results of the National Curriculum tests are not reported. Because of the small numbers, there is a considerable variation in standards from year to year. Inspection findings show that attainment in the current Year 2 is in line with the national average in English and above the national average in mathematics and science. This is better than standards gained in the national tests in 2002 because there were more pupils with learning difficulties in Year 2 in 2002, some of whom had only joined the school recently. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects except in religious education, where standards are above expectations. Standards have improved in mathematics and science since the previous inspection because of better teaching. There is only one pupil currently in Year 6. Pupils in Year 5 are in line to achieve the national average in English, and above average standards in mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. Standards in all other subjects are close to those expected nationally, except in religious education where standards are higher than expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Suitable targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the national tests in 2003 and 2004.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and are well motivated. They are enthusiastic and involved in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and helpful and behave very well in class and around school. There were no exclusions during the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils and with members of staff are excellent. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to take initiative and to carry out responsibilities around the school.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Teaching and learning is very good, overall. The teaching of English, including literacy skills, is good and the teaching of mathematics, including numeracy skills, is very good. Strengths in teaching include very high teacher expectations, effective planning that closely matches

work to pupils' individual needs and very good class management. The pace of learning is most rapid among the oldest pupils. This is because teachers constantly urge these pupils to work faster and lessons move at a very brisk pace. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to assist teaching and learning across different subjects of the curriculum. As a result, pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Aspects of teaching were occasionally less successful when work was too difficult for younger pupils in the mixed-age classes or there was not enough variety of activities during lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive good assistance from teachers and learning support assistants. Homework is used effectively to reinforce pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors, and there is a good variety of extra-curricular activities for the size of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive plenty of assistance and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good, overall. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good, with clear teaching of right and wrong. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good, and includes participation in music and drama events, and visits to the church, museums and places of historical interest.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for the personal support and guidance of pupils and for promoting good behaviour and attendance are effective. The school has sensible strategies in place to check how well pupils are doing in English, mathematics and science, but procedures are not as rigorous in most other subjects. Teachers generally use assessments well to plan work that is appropriate for pupils of different abilities and different ages.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good. The school benefits from very good parental involvement and receives the valuable support of an active friends' association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The new headteacher provides very good leadership and ensures that the school is moving forward with clear educational direction. Subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work, but, with the exception of literacy and numeracy, have not yet been given sufficient opportunity to observe and evaluate teaching and learning in other classes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors carry out their statutory duties well, with the exception of a few omissions in the prospectus and annual report. They are actively involved and play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and other staff monitor and evaluate the school's performance well. Teachers and governors both have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school supports educational priorities well through good financial planning. Specific grants, including funding for pupils with special educational needs, are used well. The school applies the principles of best value well by comparing itself with other schools, consulting widely, and ensuring competition through tendering. The accommodation is satisfactory and is well maintained. The school is very well staffed by experienced teachers and by well-qualified learning support assistants. Resources are good in Reception and Year 1, and are satisfactory elsewhere.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school. • They make good progress in their work. • Behaviour in the school is good. • The teaching is good. • Parents are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed • The school helps children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-thirds of the parents responded to the questionnaire. One eighth of those who responded (5 parents) felt that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection findings support the parents' very positive views. It is the inspectors' judgement that the range of extra-curricular activities is good for a small school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards fluctuate from year to year because numbers are very small and pupils' abilities vary considerably from one year group to the next. Consequently, great care must be taken when comparing the achievements of pupils of different ages.

2. When children join the school, their knowledge and skills are usually typical for their age, though standards have improved recently and most children's attainment on entry was higher this year. All children, including those who have special educational needs, make very good progress towards the early learning goals for young children. By the end of the reception year, most children have exceeded the levels expected for their age in communication, language and literacy skills, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Their mathematical understanding and personal and social development is very well developed for their age. This is better than standards at the time of the previous inspection.

3. By the end of Year 2, inspection findings show that the attainment of pupils is average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics and science. This represents good progress for the majority of pupils who entered school with average skills. Attainment was found to be close to the standard expected nationally in all other subjects except in religious education, where standards are higher than expected. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were reported to be in line with national expectations in all subjects except religious education, where they were above the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have improved in mathematics and science because of better teaching. Standards are better than those shown by the results of the national tests in 2002 when attainment was below average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. This is because there were more pupils with learning difficulties in Year 2 in 2002, some of whom had only joined the school recently. There are no significant variations in attainment between girls and boys.

4. In English, inspection findings indicate that attainment in the current Year 2 is close to the national average. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are typical of those expected for their age and most pupils make good progress in developing confidence when speaking. Teachers have good communication skills and use questioning well to encourage pupils to speak in whole class situations. In reading, standards are broadly average for their age. Most pupils make good progress because they are taught effectively and have plenty of opportunities to read at school and at home. Standards in writing are broadly average, as pupils are taught how to construct stories and write for a variety of purposes. Some pupils use punctuation accurately and handwriting is generally good, but spelling is weak and many struggle to spell words correctly. Extra assistance provided for pupils with special educational needs helps them to make good progress.

5. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in Year 2 is above the national average. Most pupils perform at least in line with national expectations and make good progress, while higher-attaining pupils are given suitably challenging work and do even better. There is a good focus on basic numeracy, counting and mental calculation skills, as well as solving simple word problems. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment by the end of Year 2 is above national expectations. Pupils have a good understanding of materials and living things and are given plenty of opportunities to carry out their own investigations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress

in science. Pupils' attainment in ICT is in line with standards expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and pupils use the mouse and the keyboard with increasing confidence.

6. There is only one pupil currently in Year 6. Inspection findings show that standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 5 are in line with the national average in English and on target to be above national expectations in mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. Again, standards have improved in mathematics and science since the previous inspection because of good teaching. Attainment in Year 5 was found to be close to the standards expected nationally in all other subjects except in religious education, where standards are above national expectations. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, and there are no significant variations in attainment by gender. Many pupils are withdrawn from classes for additional sessions with well-qualified staff who ensure that their achievements in English and mathematics are boosted to the levels of which they are capable.

7. Inspection findings indicate that, in English, older pupils continue to make good progress in their reading as there is a well-structured programme and pupils take books home regularly. Pupils make good progress in developing their speaking skills and often join in discussions and role-play to develop their confidence. Standards in writing are better than usual by Year 5 as pupils are encouraged to develop a wide range of interesting vocabulary to improve their written work. Progress is particularly good for boys, especially when writing poetry and short stories. Standards of handwriting and presentation are generally good, but spelling is still an area of weakness despite teachers' efforts to improve standards.

8. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in Year 5 is above what is expected nationally. The successful adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school has ensured that teaching is focused well on appropriate skills. In science, standards are above national expectations. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of physical processes and living things, and they are given ample opportunities to carry out their own investigations. Attainment in ICT is in line with national expectations. Pupils learn to use e-mail and the Internet to enhance their research skills. They continue to develop their keyboard skills, though these are still relatively weak among some older pupils.

9. Suitable targets have been set to raise standards in English and mathematics in 2003 and 2004. In particular, the school is focussing on improvements in spelling, fiction and non-fiction writing across all subjects of the curriculum and quick mental calculations in mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. This is a happy school where pupils take good advantage of the many opportunities offered to them. They learn effectively and relate to others with a high degree of sophistication for their age. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and their excellent relationships are strengths of the school.

11. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to fulfil their role in the school community. From reception onwards, they are confident to express their own opinions and they work hard to follow instructions in a sensible manner. They make good contributions to discussions during lessons and maintain their concentration well throughout the day. Independent learning skills are developed well and pupils use the facilities available to research topics at school and at home. Pupils produce high quality work when co-operating together in pairs and in small groups, and they display very good teamwork. During a basketball coaching session, for instance, pupils showed a keenness to succeed but also the ability to congratulate and encourage other teams. Pupils' work is displayed attractively in all

classrooms. Examples of good work are used effectively by teachers to illustrate how other pupils can improve their standards.

12. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. This enables lessons to proceed in an industrious and positive atmosphere. The mixed-age classes work well, with older pupils providing positive examples of good behaviour and appropriate role models for younger children. Teachers are consistent in using appropriate rewards and sanctions. As a result, pupils are inspired to work to the best of their ability.

13. Relationships across the school are excellent. Pupils have confidence in their teachers and are secure in the knowledge that their needs will be met with kindness, care and understanding by all staff. Relationships between pupils are also outstanding. There is a real atmosphere of friendship and care both in lessons and during break times. When asked to write down their feelings about the school, one pupil wrote *We have our own perfect place, we have everything we need*, while another added *Teachers make learning fun*.

14. All pupils, according to their age, have a good range of opportunities to develop their personal skills. A very effective school council is organised democratically and pupils are elected by their own age groups. All pupils have an opportunity to be councillors and each class contributes issues for discussion. The council works to bring about improvements to the school and encourages good community involvement by producing badges for the *pupil of the week*. *School leaders* are nominated from Years 5 and 6. These pupils provide positive role models for younger children and take responsibility for many jobs including preparing the room for assemblies and helping with their smooth delivery. The school provides a wide range of activities and works closely with other organisations to develop pupils' personal skills. Pupils are involved in the Bath International Music Festival, for instance, and attend many events with other children from the East Bath cluster of schools.

15. Attendance is well above the national average. Pupils nearly always arrive punctually. This allows lessons to begin in a calm atmosphere and prepares pupils well for the day ahead. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching is very good. During the inspection, it was never less than satisfactory and was very good or better in just over half of the lessons. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when teaching was reported to be very good or better in a tenth of all lessons. Where teaching is particularly good, it often involves very high expectations, effective planning that closely matches work to pupils' individual needs and very good class management. Where aspects of teaching are less successful, this is because work is occasionally too difficult for younger pupils in the mixed-age classes or there is not enough variety of activities during a lesson. Consequently, some pupils do not make as much progress as they might.

17. Teaching for children of reception age is very good. Children are taught in a mixed-age Reception / Year 1 class, though pupils are often taught in two separate groups by the class teacher and the learning support assistant. This arrangement works well for both age groups and children make very good progress. The teacher and learning support assistant have a good understanding of how young children learn, and make learning enjoyable. They have very high expectations for all the children and constantly encourage them to build their confidence. The curriculum is well planned and lessons have clear learning objectives, leading towards the early learning goals for young children. The teacher frequently checks children's knowledge and understanding, and provides tasks that are well matched to children's individual needs. There are excellent relationships among the children and the

adults provide very good role models. They give very good support and guidance to children who are less confident and they make very good progress as a result.

18. Teaching is good in all subjects observed in Years 1 and 2. No teaching was seen in art and design, design and technology, geography, ICT, music or religious education. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics, science and religious education in Years 3 to 6, good in physical education, and satisfactory in geography. No teaching was seen in art and design, design and technology, history, ICT and music. Good teaching is the key to the improvement in standards in mathematics and science since the previous inspection.

19. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and is often very good. This ensures that pupils learn sound techniques and acquire accurate information. In a Year 2 and Year 3 games lesson, for example, the teacher had a very good understanding of the rules of basketball and was able to use her expertise to develop pupils' ball handling skills. Teachers' planning is very effective and benefits from following schemes of work based on national guidelines. This helps to ensure that teaching builds on earlier work in a logical order. Teachers make clear what pupils are to learn at the start of lessons, and review what they have learned at the end. This helps pupils to consolidate their learning.

20. The teaching of literacy skills is good and numeracy skills are very well taught. Teachers' planning in English, mathematics and science uses the results of assessments to ensure that work planned for pupils of different abilities and different ages in the mixed-age classes closely matches their individual needs. In a mathematics lesson in Years 2 and 3, for example, lower-attaining pupils coloured in halves and quarters of various shapes. Average pupils coloured in two-thirds or seven-eighths of a whole, while higher-attaining pupils used a variety of strategies to calculate fractions of larger numbers. Teachers have very high expectations and ensure that work for older and higher-attaining pupils is challenging enough so that they make good progress. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection.

21. In other subjects, assessment is not always used as effectively, and work is not always matched so closely to individual pupils' needs. As a result, younger and lower-attaining pupils occasionally find the work too difficult. This occurred in a geography lesson in Years 4, 5 and 6, for example, where younger pupils were set a task which many of them found too difficult.

22. Teachers usually employ a good variety of teaching methods. They commence lessons by referring to the previous session to reinforce pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of searching questions to encourage pupils' thinking skills, and develop pupils' vocabulary by using the correct mathematical, scientific or musical terminology. In a Year 4, 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, for instance, the teacher referred to *isosceles triangles* and *symmetry*, while in a science lesson, pupils learned to distinguish between *parallel* and *series* circuits correctly. Occasionally, there is not enough variety of approach in a lesson and pupils become tired of doing a similar activity for a second or third time. This occurred in a personal, social and health education lesson in Years 4, 5 and 6 when pupils were asked to discuss their own opinions in small groups several times during a lesson.

23. In science, there is a good emphasis on pupils carrying out their own investigations. In Years 2 and 3, pupils explored the local area to discover a variety of *natural* and *man-made* materials, while pupils in Year 1 conducted their own practical experiments to see how different sounds travel. Pupils record their observations in an appropriate manner and make good progress as a result. Teachers often use pupils' skills to demonstrate good practice to the rest of the class. In a Year 2 and 3 physical education lesson, for example, pupils with good expertise demonstrated different ways in which to pass a basketball. This helped other pupils to evaluate and improve their own work.

24. Good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a cheerful and productive atmosphere. Very effective class management is reflected in high standards of behaviour and very positive attitudes to work. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and usually concentrate well. This was clearly evident in a lesson where boys in Year 5 worked hard on writing their own poems and were keen to share them with the rest of the class.

25. The pace of learning is better among older pupils than with younger ones. Teachers of older pupils constantly encourage them to work faster, and time activities carefully to keep lessons moving at a very brisk pace. With younger pupils, lessons progress at a more leisurely pace and do not have the same sense of urgency that is required to encourage pupils to work faster. Support staff work closely with teachers during lessons and provide valuable assistance for pupils with special educational needs. They assist with work that closely matches children's needs and, consequently, these pupils make good progress. Support staff withdraw small groups of pupils from lessons on a regular basis for additional help in English and mathematics. Two pupils in Year 5, for example, made good progress in a *Springboard* mathematics session led by a well-qualified learning support assistant. Classroom assistants also provide very good support for pupils with behavioural difficulties, and, as a result, other pupils do not suffer from disturbances that might otherwise prevent good learning. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources, and this helps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. In a literacy lesson in Reception and Year 1, for instance, the teacher introduced a poem about a *sampan* by showing a Chinese lantern, made good use of the photographs in a large print book, and located the position of China on a large globe. Teachers make good use of ICT to assist teaching and learning across different subjects of the curriculum. In a Year 2 and 3 history lesson, for example, pupils used the Internet and a CD-ROM to research information on Roman times, while in a Year 4, 5 and 6 science lesson, pupils use an electronics program to create virtual circuits. Teachers mount attractive displays of pupils' work in classrooms to stimulate pupils' thinking. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend learning, while marking encourages and motivates pupils, and often includes helpful comments on how the work can be improved.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

26. The school provides a good curriculum. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are covered appropriately, with religious education conforming to the locally agreed syllabus. Planning allows a satisfactory length of time for each subject, and suitable breadth and balance for pupils of all ages and abilities. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, though the school recognises the need to up-date many of the policies to reflect current practice. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies are well embedded into the curriculum, using a variety of materials and resources appropriate to the school's needs. Support for pupils with special educational needs and for gifted and talented pupils is well planned. The balance of the humanities curriculum, however, favours history at the expense of geography, and needs some correction.

27. Teachers plan meticulously for a two, or occasionally, three-year cycle in order to ensure that no pupils cover the same ground. They do this well, together with complex planning for pupils of different ages and different abilities within their classes. Recognising the relative isolation of this small school, a strong feature is the rich provision for visits and visitors of all kinds to enhance pupils' learning. These visits are planned effectively into schemes of work and broaden pupils' experiences significantly. The school also makes very good use of its immediate environment to enhance teaching and learning. A good example of this was seen in religious education, where a role-play of Christ's entry into Jerusalem by pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 was very effective. The teacher took pupils on a journey ending in

the adjacent parish church, asking them how they would feel if the church was desecrated like the Jewish temple in Jesus' day. Similarly, a Year 2 and 3 science lesson was made much more meaningful to pupils when they experienced the look and feel of materials such as wood, stone and rusty metal on another walk in the local area.

28. Pupils with special educational needs are identified soon after they join the school, and teachers ensure that they have appropriate access to work at the right level. Early support is available to help pupils' speaking and language skills, with additional literacy support provided as pupils move up the school. Similar assistance is available to encourage higher achievement in mathematics. In addition, several pupils are withdrawn from classes for short reading and comprehension sessions. These occur in small groups, with a very well qualified learning support teacher, so pupils can concentrate better and make good progress. Pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties that could prevent others from learning effectively are well supported in class to prevent such disturbances. Gifted and talented pupils are identified early and suitable provision is made for them to attend courses such as Saturday workshops organised by the local authority where they are suitably stretched. The school's aim of valuing and supporting each individual child is well fulfilled by giving all pupils appropriate opportunities to succeed.

29. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is good for such a small school. A variety of clubs occurs at lunchtimes and recently strengthened contacts with local sports organisations have added to the range of sporting fixtures available. Pupils regularly participate in the Bath International Music Festival, giving them an unusually rich opportunity to take part in musical and visual arts experiences. The local church, with its festivals and traditions, forms a very strong focus for pupils' spiritual development, and pupils often take part in services.

30. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is also good. Class discussions provide an important opportunity for all pupils to articulate their concerns or worries, and for staff to share topics about which pupils should be aware. Every opportunity is taken to dispel pupils' anxieties, for example, in a discussion about the Middle East situation during a religious education lesson in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils were able to express differing views and emotions with confidence, in a well-supported environment. The school's healthy eating campaign is also reinforced at every opportunity, for instance, through the investigation of Internet sites in Years 2 and 3.

31. The local community, including the vicar, governors and parents, contributes well to pupils' learning. The Reception and Year 1 class teacher visits local playgroups to prepare pupils for entry to the school. Recently, useful contacts with a larger local school have provided good opportunities for the only pupil in Year 6 to attend some lessons in the company of similar-aged pupils. Links with the local cluster of primary schools, and with a neighbouring secondary school, are extending the range of sporting and cultural events where pupils can experience competitions, tournaments and joint performances. Visiting sports coaches, such as a basketball coach, provide good role models for pupils and help to raise standards. There is wide range of other visitors who make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. These include local residents who talk about the village's history, a Scripture Union schools worker, visiting theatre groups, and members of the local police force and fire brigade.

32. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeates all aspects of school life and is a strength of the school. Pupils' spiritual development is good. The school lays considerable emphasis on promoting a strong Christian ethos. Pupils receive many opportunities to explore the values and beliefs of the Christian faith through daily assemblies and the strong links with the village church. The school's mission statement is well reflected in the daily life and conduct of its pupils. Spiritual development is also promoted spontaneously through other aspects of the curriculum, though it is scarcely evident in teachers' planning. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to explore the wonders of creation in science, creativity in art and design and in music, and to reflect on personal matters in personal, social and health education.

33. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. When children join the reception class they learn to trust others and to play and work together well. This lays successful foundations for the very good behaviour and excellent relationships found in the school. High expectations also form an important element in pupils' moral development. Teachers and other staff provide pupils with very good role models and the school successfully encourages pupils to relate positively to other pupils, staff and visitors. Topics in history and geography provide pupils with good opportunities to consider moral issues from the past and to discuss present concerns about the environment.

34. The provision for pupils' social development is excellent. The school is a significant focus for the local community. It encourages pupils to feel part of that community by worshipping in the local church, distributing harvest gifts in the village, and singing carols at a home for the elderly. Pupils enjoy working together in small groups and learn to share equipment and to help one another when developing ideas. Pupils accept responsibility for distributing and tidying away resources for use in their classrooms. Pupils are taught to help those younger or less fortunate than themselves. A successful system of playground *buddies* ensures that older pupils help younger ones to feel secure and valued at playtimes. Each year, pupils help to raise funds to support children's charities in this country and abroad. Older pupils join in a residential adventure holiday in Somerset. Pupils enjoy activities such as mountain biking and walking in the Quantock Hills, while the experience of living away from home helps to develop valuable social skills.

35. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. The school teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and to celebrate the diversity and richness of other cultures through studying life in countries such as India and China. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate their own cultural heritage through work done in art and design and music, where they study the work of famous musicians and artists. They enjoy visits by drama groups and participate in projects such as the Bath International Music Festival and a *musical marathon* at a local church. Pupils begin to appreciate the legacies of Roman culture at the Roman baths, learn about life in India during geography lessons, and study different faiths and customs in religious education. A multicultural arts week, with African dance and music workshops, is being planned for the summer term to help pupils appreciate the wide range of cultural diversity within our own society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school makes good provision for the health, safety, and personal welfare of all its pupils. All staff give appropriate emphasis to providing an establishment where pupils' personal development is a priority, supported by a healthy and safe environment.

37. Pastoral care is provided by the class teachers with the support of the headteacher. Pupils in this small school are well known to all the staff. Children are well supported and well prepared when they enter the school. Similarly, personal care and preparation are good when they leave to continue their education at secondary school.

38. Child protection procedures are good. The school has an agreed policy that is well known to the staff. The designated officer has good working relationships with all the relevant support agencies and this provides good protection for all pupils.

39. Health and safety provision is good, and is well monitored by the headteacher and the governing body. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy that meets statutory requirements fully. There are good relationships with a range of outside agencies to ensure pupils' welfare.

40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The school's behaviour policy is understood and used consistently by all teachers. As a result, pupils appreciate the school's expectations for good behaviour and this helps create an environment in which lessons can progress without unnecessary interruptions. Pupils help enthusiastically to produce their own classroom rules and are equally keen and successful in ensuring they are adhered to. Procedures for dealing with any incidents of anti-social behaviour are very good. The school promotes racial harmony well, and pupils were keen to tell inspectors that they do not allow any bullying.

41. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good and are well known to staff. Registers are marked correctly and are monitored for absences and punctuality. As a result, attendance is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence.

42. Procedures for checking pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. Assessment is more detailed in English and mathematics. In these subjects, assessments of different aspects of pupils' work are made regularly and are compared with National Curriculum levels. Pupils also take annual tests in English and mathematics. Teachers can therefore track pupils' progress effectively across the years. Termly assessments are also used well to set individual targets for pupils. More detailed advice on the specific skills needed to reach the next level of attainment, however, would improve assessment even further. Marking of pupils' work is also good, with supportive, helpful and encouraging comments.

43. The assessment of pupils' standards in other subjects is not developed so well and could usefully be reviewed by subject co-ordinators, particularly in ICT and in design and technology. Teachers generally make sound use of assessments to modify their teaching to meet the needs of individual pupils and to identify where further support is required. *Booster classes* in English, for example, have been focused on understanding and writing non-fiction text, because assessments revealed that these aspects needed strengthening. Pupils with learning difficulties and gifted or talented pupils are identified well and are supported effectively. The changing requirements of pupils with special educational needs are identified well. Pupils' individual education plans are re-assessed termly and the level of support needed is amended accordingly. Outside agencies are used when appropriate to provide additional support.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' views of the school are excellent. There is unanimous agreement that standards are high and pupils make good progress. Parents are delighted with the very good behaviour and attitudes the school promotes. All parents feel confident to approach the school with any concerns or suggestions. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Overwhelmingly, parents feel teaching is good and teachers are very approachable. All parents feel the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. This is another improvement since the last report. Parents confirm that pupils are keen to come to school, and that homework is achievable, appropriately challenging and compliments current work in school. The inspection findings support all the parents' positive views.

45. Links between home and school are very good and this results in very effective parental involvement in pupils' learning. Parents give vital support at home by listening to their children read and by overseeing homework. Parent volunteers support classroom activities such as cookery and arts and crafts. Parents support after school clubs by assisting, for example, with transport to football matches and helping to organise fixtures. Parents are invited into school to share in assemblies, school performances and events such as World Book Day. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted regularly to ensure that the support provided for their children will help them to achieve their potential.

46. Parental support for the school is very good. Many parents offer help in the classroom, on school visits, with performances or in practical work. This enhances the school environment and encourages pupils' interest and involvement in learning. School meetings and events are very well supported and build on the good home-school liaison which permeates the ethos of the school. The Friends of Swainswick School fulfils its aims by raising funds while furthering the valuable link between home, school and the community. It is an active and very hard working body and organises a wide range of fundraising and social events for parents and pupils. By raising substantial funds, it has enabled all classes to have access to a well-equipped play area.

47. The quality and the quantity of information provided for parents is good, overall, although there are a few omissions in the school prospectus and the annual report to parents. Very clear communications between home and school take place in a variety of ways including regular parents' evenings, newsletters and detailed and informative end-of-year reports. All prospective parents receive good information about class routines and this helps pupils to settle quickly into the school community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The new headteacher provides very good leadership. Although she has only been in post a short time, she has clear priorities and realistic plans for the future. She is committed to meeting the needs of pupils of different abilities and of those with special educational needs. She has already begun to monitor teaching and children's work informally, and to invigorate pupils and staff alike. She has very good relationships with parents and keeps them well informed of school events. She works very closely with the other teachers, sharing ideas and co-ordinating leadership responsibilities. As a result, the school is moving forward with clear educational direction.

49. The school has good aims and values that are reflected very clearly in its work. The school seeks to prepare children to be citizens of the future by fostering the ability to work collaboratively and independently. It seeks to provide a happy, caring and secure atmosphere where Christian values are upheld in all aspects of school life. It does this by providing a

stimulating environment, a broad and balanced curriculum and an enriching programme of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. It is successful in these aims.

50. The management of the school is very good. The headteacher works with the other teachers when they are planning together and has a clear overview of planning across the school. In addition, she has observed teaching in other classes, and is beginning to make suggestions on how to raise pupils' attainment. Some of the future visits will form part of the performance management programme that is operating successfully in the school. The headteacher and other staff have a good grasp of pupils' standards. They analyse National Curriculum test results and optional test results to track pupils' progress from year to year and to identify weaker areas of the curriculum needing attention.

51. Responsibility for various aspects of the curriculum is delegated appropriately to subject co-ordinators who initiate policy documents, audit resources and propose improvements to be incorporated into the school development plan. Co-ordinators regularly monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work across the school, but, with some exceptions in literacy and numeracy, have not yet been given sufficient opportunity to observe and evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. In addition, many of the subject policy documents are out of date and do not reflect the good procedures that are often seen in practice.

52. The co-ordination of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs has recently passed to the new headteacher who is currently re-assessing the school's policy and procedures. Good management over a number of years has ensured that these pupils make good progress whatever their level of need. The school makes effective use of the learning support assistants to promote the learning, behaviour and welfare of these pupils.

53. The governors provide strong support for the headteacher and fulfil nearly all their statutory responsibilities well, with the exception of a few omissions in the school prospectus and the annual report to parents. In particular, the prospectus does not contain national results of the annual tests against which parents can compare the school's achievements, and the annual report does not include details of professional development undertaken by the staff. Governors have a good working knowledge of the school and a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept well informed by regular reports from the headteacher. Several governors, including the Chair, visit the school on a regular basis. Link governors for literacy and numeracy have observed teaching throughout the school and have reported their findings back to the governing body. Link governors for other subjects are being encouraged to follow suit when their other commitments allow them to do so. Committees meet regularly to discuss the curriculum, personnel, health and safety and the school's finances. Governors debate standards, performance management and budget issues and help to determine the priorities facing the school. Several governors have taken part in training sessions to improve their effectiveness.

54. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The detailed school development plan identifies appropriate targets and ensures that resources are directed towards raising pupils' attainment. The personnel, resources and timings are identified clearly, but there are no costs linking new developments to the annual budget and no specific criteria by which the impact of these developments can be evaluated. The school makes good use of resources allocated to assist specific groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs. The governors' finance committee monitors the school's budget regularly and satisfactory financial controls are in place. The principles of best value are applied well. The school seeks competitive tenders for all major spending decisions to ensure it receives good value for money. It assesses its performance in comparison with other schools, sets challenging targets for each pupil and consults widely to gain the opinions

of parents and children. Day-to-day administration is efficient and computers are used effectively for handling invoices and for keeping pupils' records.

55. Staff and governors share a very good commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning and the school has a very good capacity to succeed. Appropriate targets have been set for raising standards in English and mathematics in the national tests in 2003 and 2004.

56. The school is very well staffed by experienced teachers whose various talents meet the requirements of the National Curriculum well. They are supported very effectively by well-qualified learning support assistants who provide carefully focused help in lessons and in small group work outside classes. The quality of administration is good and this ensures the school runs smoothly. Both present and former staff worked hard to ensure a smooth changeover on the arrival of the new headteacher.

57. The school has an attractive site, but the steep slope on which it is built means that access for pupils with physical disabilities would be very difficult. The accommodation meets the needs of the planned curriculum satisfactorily, though there is no dedicated room for small group teaching, no large hall for physical education and no playing fields for sports. The school compensates for the latter by using the school's trust funds for transport to alternative facilities in the local area. There is no separate area for young children to play outdoors, but the school arranges its timetable so that children of reception age often have times when they enjoy the exclusive use of the playground. The school library, sharing the only area available for a staff room, is not ideally situated, but the school has plans to re-develop the library when funds permit. The building is very clean and is maintained to a high standard. Classrooms are suitably furnished and the quality of display throughout is good. Outside, in addition to the hard play area, there is a small garden and conservation area and an attractive adventure playground.

58. Resources for teaching are good for children in the reception class and Year 1. Elsewhere, there is a satisfactory range of materials to support pupils' learning, although there is currently a need for more equipment for use with overhead projectors in mathematics, more artefacts in history, and additional items of equipment for physical education. There is a satisfactory stock of information books, stories and poetry books in the school library and in classrooms. Resources are used effectively and are easily accessible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve standards in English by:
 - improving pupils' spelling.
(Paragraphs: 5, 7, 71, 72, 73, 77)
 - continuing to improve pupils' writing skills in accordance with the strategies in the school improvement plan.
(Paragraphs: 72, 73)
 - ensuring that older pupils know what targets they are aiming at in order to achieve the appropriate skills at each National Curriculum level.
(Paragraphs: 42, 75)

- (2) Develop the role of subject co-ordinators to include:
 - observing and evaluating teaching and learning in all classes.
(Paragraphs: 51, 77, 91, 95, 99, 105, 111, 117, 122, 131)
 - updating policy documents in English, science, ICT, geography, history, music, art and design, and design and technology to reflect and promote good practice.
(Paragraphs: 26, 51, 77, 91, 95, 99, 105, 111, 117, 122, 131)

In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issues in its action plan:

- The school should ensure there is sufficient geographical content in the humanities topics studied in Years 2 to 6.
(Paragraphs: 26, 101)
- The governors should ensure that the prospectus and the annual report to parents contain all the information required by law.
(Paragraph: 53)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	9	6	3	0	0	0
Percentage	5	47	32	16	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	55
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) and Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

As the number of pupils in the year group is less than ten, the results are not reported.

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	45	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.5
Average class size	18

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	181 270
Total expenditure	171 946
Expenditure per pupil	3 821
Balance brought forward from previous year	1 096
Balance carried forward to next year	2 397

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	55
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	24	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	73	27	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	78	19	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	60	27	5	3	5
The teaching is good.	78	22	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	35	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	10	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	16	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	76	21	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	27	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	87	13	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	41	8	5	5

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. The school makes good provision for young children. The quality of teaching for children of reception age is very good and the curriculum is well planned to help them learn effectively. Informative displays and good resources also help them to learn quickly. As a result, children make very good progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.

61. Most children join the school at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were eight children of reception age. While the majority of pupils in other year groups started school with a range of skills broadly typical for their age, children's basic skills were better developed this year. Many children attended local playgroups or nurseries and developed good linguistic, numerical and social skills before starting school. Children of reception age join with six older pupils in a mixed-age Reception / Year 1 class, though the class is often taught in two separate groups by the class teacher and the learning support assistant. This arrangement works well for both age groups and children make very good progress. By the time they leave reception, most children will exceed the levels expected in communication, language and literacy skills, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Their personal and social development and their mathematical understanding is much better than is expected for their age.

62. The teacher and the classroom assistant have a good understanding of how young children learn. They plan and work together well, provide a good range of interesting activities and manage the children effectively. Children play happily together, co-operate sensibly and are well motivated. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good because the teacher's expectations are high, tasks are explained clearly, and work is well matched to the needs of individual children. As a result, children concentrate well and work with interest. Staff check children's understanding regularly and provide tasks appropriate to their development. They have excellent relationships with the children and provide them with very good role models. Children who are shy or uncertain receive plenty of assistance from the teacher and the learning support assistant. As a result, their confidence improves and they make very good progress. Parents also help their children by reading with them at home and by encouraging good speaking and observational skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. The class teacher, learning support assistant and older pupils in the mixed-age class help those of reception age to develop very good social skills. Children are happy to leave their parents and enter the classroom confidently in the mornings. They hang their coats on their own pegs and sit quietly with other pupils waiting for registration. They quickly learn to put their hands up when answering questions and understand they must take turns when speaking or sharing resources. Children are encouraged to make their own choices. After finishing the main activity in one lesson, for instance, four children chose to make Mother's Day cards, while another girl used a drawing program on the computer. Children wash their own hands and sit quietly while they drink their milk. They get changed for physical education sensibly and put their coats on unaided at playtime. Children make good progress in developing social skills and their level of personal, social and emotional development is well above what is normally expected by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Communication, language and literacy skills are taught very well. The teacher and learning support assistant take every opportunity to talk with the children in order to develop their confidence and widen their vocabulary. They ask many open-ended questions, encourage children to discuss what they are doing, and talk about the books they are reading together. In one lesson, children spoke clearly about the activities they had enjoyed over the weekend, and discussed the pictures in a poetry book. Children take part in role-play activities to stimulate their acting skills and language development. During one lesson, two children played happily together in the *Police Station*, acting out the roles of a policeman and a robber. A good supply of dressing-up clothes ensures that children have plenty of opportunities to act out roles such as doctors and patients, shop assistants and customers. Children who are more hesitant when speaking are given constant encouragement and good assistance to develop their speech and vocabulary. As a result, all children achieve very well, and their language development is better than is normally expected by the end of the reception year.

65. Children enjoy listening to stories, and look at books enthusiastically. During one lesson, children enjoyed reading a large text book of *Poems around the world*. They read the title together, looked carefully at the illustrations, and listened attentively as they followed the text. Children take reading books home every day to share with their parents and other adults. Parents are encouraged to praise children's efforts and to record any difficulties encountered in a very useful home-school reading record. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to talking books and recorded stories. They are taught the sounds and the names of letters, and can identify the initial sounds of words. By the end of the reception year, all pupils recognise a variety of simple words. Some use a range of strategies to identify unknown words and read simple stories fluently and confidently. Children make very good progress, and most can read better than expected for their age.

66. Children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. At the beginning of the year, they develop their pencil control by drawing lines accurately within parallel lines and joining dot patterns. They learn to overwrite the letters of the alphabet and then write them freehand. They are taught the sounds associated with each letter and are shown how to spell words with similar endings. During one lesson, for example, children identified rhyming words such as *flap*, *tap* and *clap*. Later, children practised writing words that ended in *_ap*, while some higher-attaining ones used *word wheels* to compose new words ending in *_ed* or *_at*. The youngest children received good support from the classroom assistant to copy words such as *nap* and *zap* neatly, using letters that were correctly formed and approximately the same size. All pupils can copy simple phrases such as *I can swim*, and higher-attaining children can write longer sentences. After a visit by the community policeman, one child wrote *PC F... has some eye spray* while another wrote *PC F... has a not(e) book*. Overall, children make very good progress, and standards of writing are better than those expected nationally.

Mathematical development

67. Teaching of mathematical skills is very good. The teacher makes it fun to use numbers and to explore shape and size. Children folded and unfolded number lines when investigating the concepts of halving and doubling, and they used two colourful caterpillar characters from an ICT program to double the number of feelers, eyes and spots. They then followed a carefully chosen variety of activities, appropriate to each child's needs, to reinforce their counting and doubling skills. Some children stuck three or four buttons onto each side of a *policeman's jacket* and counted the total number of buttons, while others used a computer program to practise counting to ten and beyond. Children draw objects *taller* or *shorter* than themselves, identify numbers that are *one more than* or *one less than* and can read the hours on a clock face. They use a computer program to draw pictograms showing their

favourite toys and pets. By the end of reception, most children write numbers to 20 or beyond and add and subtract within ten correctly. They recognise common two- and three-dimensional shapes and use coins when adding together small sums of money. Higher-attaining pupils count to 100 and calculate halves and quarters. The teacher and learning support assistant ensure younger children and those who are more hesitant are fully involved and make good progress. By the end of the reception year, most children have mathematical skills well above those expected for their age.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. Teaching is very good and involves many opportunities for children to learn about the world around them during their own practical investigations, outdoor activities and visits in the local area. In one lesson, children discussed *sounds* and identified different types during a walk round the village. They make their own musical instruments and learn how sound is formed as strings or the surface of a drum vibrate. In one lesson, pupils used *string telephones* and investigated how sound is amplified when listening through a cup placed on top of a table. Children test different materials to see if they are magnetic, and investigate whether objects *float* or *sink* in the water tray. They observe how long it takes for ice balloons to melt and carry out a traffic survey to investigate the frequency of different kinds of vehicles. Children plant bulbs and observe them as they grow. They study human growth and identify the differences between living things and inanimate objects. Children identify the differences between *old* and *new* toys and discuss the weather outside. They use the computer mouse to print items from a picture dictionary and learn to use the keyboard to type and print their own names. Children make very good progress and their levels of knowledge and understanding are above expectations for their age at the end of the reception year.

Physical development

69. Good teaching ensures that there are many opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills and co-ordination by using pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. They pour water into containers, build *pyramids* in the sand tray, assemble construction toys and use scissors correctly. Children take part in more energetic activities both indoors and out of doors. During a dance lesson, for instance, children moved around the room using a variety of *strong* or *jerky* movements, keeping their distance from each other and changing direction carefully. They followed instructions well when asked to move *slowly* or *quickly* in time to the music. Outside, children develop better co-ordination and balance when riding tricycles in the playground or when balancing on the stepping-stones and climbing equipment in the adventure playground. Children make good progress and their physical development is above that expected nationally by the end of the reception year.

Creative development

70. Very good teaching helps children to make very good progress in developing their creative skills. Children use an imaginative variety of paints, paper, card, fabrics and construction materials. They use chalk and charcoal, for instance, when drawing trees and employ black and white crayons to create bold images of people. They make patterns by using different coloured pastels, and create a collage of fish in the sea by sticking pieces of shiny foil, tissue paper and sand onto a blue background. They paint colourful pictures of bonfires and use wax-resist techniques to create drawings of policemen and police cars. Children use cardboard covered with shiny paper to make their own games, and design their own Christmas cards. In one lesson, pupils embellished their observational drawings of a trumpet by using paints and pastels. Children sing nursery rhymes and enjoy playing percussion instruments such as drums and tambourines. They listen to a range of music during whole-school assemblies, are beginning to join in the hymns and songs, and enjoy

performing actions in time to the music. As a result, children's artistic and musical skills develop well and are better than those normally expected by the end of the reception year.

ENGLISH

71. Standards in English fluctuate significantly from year to year because numbers are so small. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2, for example, results dipped in 2002 from the above average trend seen previously, because several pupils with special educational needs joined the year group. Their standards in English were lower than their attainment in mathematics. There were no pupils in Year 6 in 2002 and there is only one pupil currently in this year group. Attainment in the current Year 2 and amongst pupils in Year 5 is broadly average. These findings are similar to those in the last inspection report.

72. Pupils currently in Year 1 are above average in English, and achieve higher standards than most older pupils did when they were this age. They have made very good progress this year. Teachers monitor pupils' achievement regularly and in Year 2, pupils are currently achieving standards that are average for their age. Their written work shows a good variety of different styles, including stories, narratives and poems, but pupils' grammar and sentence construction are not always as accurate as they could be. Handwriting is generally good, but spelling is weak, despite teachers' attempts to improve this skill. Reading shows an average range of attainment, with parents well involved in helping their children to make good progress. In Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with national expectations and they make good progress. Pupils listen carefully, both to adults and to other pupils, and their comprehension is secure. They communicate with an average range of vocabulary for their age and with sound grammatical construction. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils' handwriting and letter formation were good and they listened attentively to poems, reading along well with the teacher. Higher-attaining pupils read fluently and expressively, while less able ones struggle with unknown words. Overall, pupils make good progress, and such a range of attainment is expected at this age.

73. Attainment in Year 3 is lower than expected because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Good systems of support are provided and this ensures that all pupils make good progress. Assistance is often given through effective ten-minute one-to-one sessions with a learning support assistant and pupils make good progress in reading and comprehension as a result. Pupils' writing and spelling skills, however, still require further development. Pupils in Year 4 continue to make satisfactory progress, with handwriting remaining a strength but spelling still a weaker area. Although one pupil, for example, performed quite well in a spelling test at the beginning of a lesson, his later work included *table* spelt as *tabel* and *book* written as *boock*. This demonstrates that pupils do not always take enough care in transferring individual spellings they have learnt for a test into the context of their everyday writing. In addition, although teachers indicate incorrect spellings in written work, they do not always insist that pupils re-write the correct version. By Year 5, reading is broadly average, but pupils make good progress, and speaking and writing skills are above average. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are a strength and boys', in particular, have a good appreciation of poetry which is above average for their age. In one lesson, for example, pupils produced sensitively written poems about human feelings and emotions. Pupils made good use of descriptive vocabulary to conjure up interesting images, for example, of fences *groaning* because of the *punch of the wind*. Earlier poems show pupils empathising well with characters from nursery rhymes who apologised for things they had done. Humpty Dumpty, for example, apologised humbly for *just losing his balance* and causing mayhem. Pupils' written work is above average, overall, in Year 5, except in their spelling. Although teachers have identified this weakness and focus on it appropriately, standards have not yet improved sufficiently. Once again, pupils often spell words correctly for a test, but then misspell the same words when writing in other subjects. Overall, pupils' progress is good in Years 3 to 6,

and pupils currently in Year 5 are on target to achieve at least average standards, overall, by the time they leave the school. Given that these older pupils have had significant staffing changes recently and have only just settled down with their new teacher, achievement has been good. This is particularly so for boys, especially in their creative writing of poems and stories. Other writing styles featured in a *Booster class* in Year 6, where additional help was successful in fostering understanding of factual writing.

74. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All teachers understand the aims of the National Literacy Strategy well and plan competently for pupils of different ages in their classes. This involves a great deal of preparation to ensure that whole-class sessions and individual tasks are pitched at an appropriate level for pupils of different abilities and ages. In Years 4, 5 and 6, very good teaching ensures a lively pace and the teacher moves effortlessly onto the next aspect as soon as she detects any sign of restlessness. In contrast, a good lesson in Years 2 and 3 moved at a more leisurely pace, and did not flow quite as seamlessly from one activity to the next. Expectations are high, but teachers are sensitive to when pupils have reached their limits. Subsequently, amendments to what was planned are good because teachers understand their pupils well. Class management is firm and fair, and consistently reinforces the school's aims of helping and valuing others. Praise is used very effectively to acknowledge good work or sensible behaviour, so pupils' confidence grows considerably. Pupils concentrate well in the calm and orderly environment. Teachers expect small groups to work independently and they do this well from an early age. Some pupils with special educational needs require a greater level of adult support to develop attitudes calm enough to lead to good learning. Support staff provide this help very effectively, so classes can work peacefully and effectively.

75. Teachers use resources such as posters and books very successfully to maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Pupils use computers effectively to word-process text both directly on the screen and to improve earlier drafts. Checking pupils' progress is secure, with judgements accurately identifying the levels achieved in different skills. These assessments clearly identify spelling as a weakness, particularly among younger pupils. Teachers provide appropriate targets for pupils each term, and pupils are generally well aware of what their targets are. Assessment is not quite sharp enough, however, to inform pupils exactly what they need to do in order to reach the next level of attainment. Small improvements to the procedures would make them even more useful in helping pupils to improve their achievement. Homework is used appropriately, with an appropriate stress on reading and spellings.

76. Pupils' literacy and communication skills are developed well through writing and drama in other subjects of the curriculum. In an interesting history lesson in Years 2 and 3, for example, pupils wrote accounts of daily life in Roman times in the first person, identifying well with Roman children. In a highly effective religious education lesson re-enacting the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 took part in the kind of discussions which people in the crowd might have had. Some speculated about whether Jesus was a good person or a villain, while others added judgements based on the rumours and comments they had heard. Pupils respond very positively to opportunities for shared reading across the school. This arrangement enables older pupils to help younger ones effectively, and creates strong bonds between younger and older pupils.

77. The subject is managed well. There is much discussion, both formally and informally, about pupils' standards and progress. Monitoring of teaching occurred in English lessons across the school some time ago, but needs to be reinstated. This should enable the co-ordinator to identify reasons for inconsistencies such as why strategies to improve spelling are not fully successful. The co-ordinator also needs to investigate why pupils' performance in English does not match that in mathematics or science and to develop suitable strategies to improve attainment. Individual target-setting and tracking of pupils' progress is sound, but the subject policy needs updating to include, for example, the good practice employed in tracking pupils' use of literacy across the curriculum. The need for additional literacy support is identified early and is provided successfully through the use of learning support assistants who use appropriate materials and resources. Arrangements for using library books are no more than satisfactory, with fiction books readily available in different classrooms, but little space available to browse and study information and reference books in the small room that is shared as a staff room.

MATHEMATICS

78. Standards are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and pupils in Year 5 are on target to achieve standards above the national average by the time they leave the school. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection when pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 were achieving in line with national expectations. The standards observed during the inspection reflect the results of the national tests in 2002, when pupils' scores in Year 2 were above the national average. There were no pupils in Year 6 in 2002 and there is only one pupil currently in this year group.

79. Children make good progress in developing number skills. By the end of Year 2, they place numbers up to 100 in the correct order and develop a sound understanding of number pairs that add up to twenty. They investigate the properties of common shapes, and measure capacity and length with reasonable accuracy. Higher-attaining pupils are given more difficult problems and make good progress as a result. This was well illustrated in a lesson where the majority of pupils in Year 2 were colouring in fractions of shapes such as $\frac{7}{8}$ ths and $\frac{2}{3}$ rds. At the same time, higher-achieving pupils were using a range of different strategies to solve problems involving fractions. One pupil, calculating a quarter of 16, explained *I halved 16 then halved it again*, while another pupil, working out a fifth of 30, drew 30 dots in 5 boxes and counted how many there were in each box.

80. By the end of Year 5, pupils have continued to make good progress. They order numbers to 1000 correctly, add and subtract within 100 accurately and understand simple fractions and their equivalents. They recognise isosceles, equilateral and scalene triangles, identify lines of reflective symmetry and calculate the perimeters of rectangles. Higher-attaining pupils are given suitably challenging work. They add and subtract three-digit numbers, convert fractions to decimals and investigate the properties of a variety of polygons. As a result, some pupils are already achieving standards expected nationally at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when above average pupils were not challenged sufficiently.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and is very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have very high expectations and check the standard of pupils' work regularly. These assessments are used to ensure that work is matched closely to the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and teachers manage pupils very well. This ensures that there is a productive, hard-working atmosphere. Pupils behave very well in lessons, listen carefully to teachers' instructions and are keen to join in small group activities.

82. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established and teachers are confident in using the framework. The pace of learning is particularly good for older pupils. Lessons often begin with a brisk mental mathematics session to *sharpen the brain*. In a lesson in Years 4, 5 and 6, for example, pupils answered *quick-fire* questions about *Pascal's triangle*. This quickly involved the pupils, set a very lively pace and reinforced learning previously done for homework. In a Year 2 and Year 3 lesson, pupils worked conscientiously on individual whiteboards, doubling and halving a series of numbers. Good use of questioning ensured that pupils explained their calculations well and offered alternative strategies, but the session did not have a sufficient sense of urgency in order to encourage pupils to work faster.

83. Work is chosen carefully so that there is an appropriate degree of challenge for pupils of different ages and abilities. In a Year 4,5 and 6 lesson, for example, younger pupils cut out a number of angles and stuck them onto a template in descending order of size, while older pupils measured a series of different angles using a virtual protractor on the computer screen. Pupils in Year 5 estimated and then measured the angles to the nearest five degrees, while the oldest pupils measured the angles accurately to the nearest degree. Work for the most able pupils in a Year 1 lesson was made more challenging by providing larger numbers of objects for them to estimate and then check by counting.

84. Pupils with special educational needs receive additional help from learning support assistants and make good progress as a result. Pupils withdrawn from lessons for *Springboard Mathematics* benefit from good one-to-one teaching of basic skills, but the topics covered are not currently in line with those being taught in class and this limits their effectiveness. Class teachers are careful to take account of pupils' learning needs when setting suitable work, and often bear in mind the numeracy targets in pupils' individual education plans. Some of the most able pupils who are identified as gifted and talented attend local authority courses outside normal school times to encourage higher-order thinking skills.

85. In addition to mathematics lessons, pupils have opportunities to practise and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum, for instance, when they use contours to interpret gradients in geography, take measurements in design and technology, or plot graphs and charts to record the results of science experiments. Homework is used effectively to learn tables and to investigate number patterns. Computers are used regularly to support pupils' mathematical development, for example, when creating databases and graphs or when practising problems involving addition and subtraction.

86. The subject is led well. The recently revised policy document sets out common procedures for planning pupils' work and the co-ordinator monitors planning and teaching across the school. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment using a range of tests from the mathematics scheme and optional National Curriculum tests. Teachers evaluate pupils' progress carefully and identify which aspects of the curriculum need more emphasis. To raise standards, individual targets are set for all pupils throughout the school. Assessments are used well to ensure that work set during lessons is sufficiently challenging, particularly for the most able pupils. The quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory, overall, but more resources for use with overhead projectors would help teachers to explain some topics more clearly. There are appropriate plans for further development in the subject, including more ICT resources to assist teaching and learning.

SCIENCE

87. Standards in science are above those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and pupils in Year 5 are on target to achieve standards above the national average by the time they leave the school. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection when pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 were achieving in line with national expectations. The standards observed during the inspection are better than the results of the teacher assessments in Year 2 in 2002 because there are more pupils with learning difficulties in that year group, some of whom had only joined the school recently. There were no pupils in Year 6 in 2002 and there is only one pupil currently in the year group.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and is very good in Years 3 to 6. There is a good emphasis on pupils carrying out their own practical and investigative work and, as a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when teachers' contributions to lessons were sometimes too dominant. In a very good lesson in Year 2 and Year 3, for example, pupils walked round the village identifying different materials and their uses. They sorted them into those that are natural and those that are man-made, though there was some confusion about how metals should be classified. Pupils concentrated well on this task and were very well behaved. In other investigations, pupils in Years 2 and 3 investigate the effects of exercise on the body, and find out which kinds of paper are most effective for mopping up spills. Older pupils predict the outcome prior to investigations and explain the significance of their observations. Pupils in Year 4, for example, predicted how the brightness of a bulb would change when another bulb was added to the circuit. They used a computer program well to construct virtual circuits and recorded their observations and explanations systematically. Pupils worked sensibly and enthusiastically in pairs and learned effectively by discussing their own observations and sharing them later with other pupils.

89. Teaching has a number of good features. Teachers give instructions clearly and use correct scientific vocabulary. They ask searching questions to get pupils to think and explain their observations. Older pupils, in particular, are constantly encouraged to work quickly, ensuring that lessons maintain a very brisk pace. Teachers make very good use of a wide range of resources to gain pupils' attention and to assist their concentration. A video recording in a Year 2 and Year 3 lesson, for example, provided a good introduction to different types of materials, while a computer program was used effectively by pupils in Years 4 and 5 to create virtual circuits. Work is carefully chosen for pupils of different ages and abilities. Pupils in Year 4, for example, added extra bulbs and batteries to a simple circuit while those in Year 5 constructed *series* and *parallel* circuits (though some pupils were uncertain about the correct use of these terms). Teachers monitor pupils' progress by assessing their knowledge and skills at the end of each topic. This information is then used to plan work that matches pupils' needs well. The only pupil in Year 6 regularly participates in science lessons at a nearby primary school so he works with others of his own age and tackles work that is sufficiently challenging.

90. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and this helps them to explain scientific ideas in a way that pupils can understand. Teachers encourage pupils to carry out valid experiments by conducting fair tests. In a Year 4 and Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils worked through a number of scenarios, discussing together and recording whether the investigations described would result in a fair test. Teachers manage their classes very well, and, as a result, pupils concentrate hard, are keen to answer questions and have very good attitudes towards their work. Attractive displays of pupils' work show pupils that their efforts are valued and encourage them to explore topics further.

Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants and make good progress as a result.

91. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. She monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work across the school, but has not yet been given sufficient opportunity to observe and evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. The school uses a scheme of work that covers the National Curriculum and ensures a logical progression in the teaching of scientific ideas. Pupils' progress is checked at the end of each topic, and the information gained is used effectively to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs. The subject policy document, however, needs revising in order to reflect current good practice. Resources for the subject are generally satisfactory, and there is good use of ICT resources such as an electronic microscope, computer programs and the Internet to assist teaching and pupils' work. The school grounds and the local area are used well for habitat studies and investigative work. Good use is made of visits, for example, to a chrysanthemum growing nursery and a hands-on discovery centre in Bristol. Visitors, including a rugby player and the school nurse, make a good contribution to pupils' understanding in the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

92. Standards in art and design are in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 5. This is similar to attainment reported at the time of the last inspection.

93. Pupils are provided with a good start to creative aspects of the curriculum and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. In reception and Year 1, for instance, pupils work on large paintings, based on musical ideas and embellished with mixed media collage. The standard of pupils' work in Year 1 is above average in these paintings. Pupils develop their ability to produce direct observational drawings, often based on natural forms, satisfactorily in all years. Pupils in Year 2, for example, working on a project linked to a history topic, achieved standards in line with national expectations when producing collages based on patterns in Celtic jewellery.

94. Standards remain broadly in line with those expected nationally as pupils move up the school, but they have particular strengths, especially when using wet media such as paint. They control brushes and other tools well when applying paint, often using a good variety of brush-strokes and other methods of application. Although projects are based on a review of celebrated artists' works and their techniques, pupils' recording of these styles and methods is not as strong as expected as they get towards the top of the school. There is insufficient emphasis on the study of famous artists and not enough analysis of their expertise. Pupils do not incorporate their learning into the annotations in their sketchbooks, for example, or make suitable reference to the links between their studies and their own work. By Year 5, however, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made satisfactory progress, overall, and standards are in line to meet national expectations by the end of Year 6.

95. No complete lessons were observed during the inspection so a judgement cannot be made on the quality of teaching. However, teachers' knowledge and confidence are clearly satisfactory and they incorporate both two and three-dimensional work appropriately into their planning. Pupils use digital camera images when studying local buildings, but generally, more use could be made of ICT resources, including CD-ROMs and the Internet. Additional opportunities for pupils to practise their art skills are integrated into other subjects such as history, where, for example, pupils' illustrations of Roman and Celtic costume in Years 2 and 3 enhance their understanding of life in these historical times. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, but does not evaluate teaching and learning across the school. The policy document is in need of revision to reflect current practices. Pupils benefit from a range of visits and visitors. Last year, pupils in reception and

Year 1 visited Rocks East Woodland to observe and draw wildlife, while a visitor from the Museum of East Asian Art conducted an interesting workshop on Indian shadow puppets for pupils in Years 2 and 3. Future planning includes an exciting week of multicultural art in the summer term. This will contribute further to pupils' understanding of art from other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. Attainment in design and technology is in line with national expectations throughout the school. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.

97. Pupils of all ages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Years 2 and 3, for example, recently designed and assembled photograph frames for Mothers' Day. They developed their own designs in paper and card, and then decorated them individually. In Years 4, 5 and 6, workbooks, which include designs for various artefacts, show that pupils' have a sound knowledge and understanding of the design process. They talk enthusiastically about their designs and about how they made various objects. Their preparation includes notes on safety issues such as the use of saws. Pupils cover an appropriate range of elements including food technology, where they design and make sandwiches. Various items are also designed and made from textiles. A major project, in which the whole school took part, was the design and construction of a Millennium bench, encircling a tree in the garden. This involved all pupils in aspects of work relating to resistant materials. Pupils, with the help of teachers, parents and other volunteers, were involved in carting, sawing or carving the wood, connecting all the pieces of the bench together, and then painting it. This was a very successful project that pupils still appreciate and value. The fact that the paint has now peeled and deteriorated presents another challenge that will be solved in future design and technology lessons.

98. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. Younger pupils understand the concept of taking something apart to understand how it is made, and then trying to design something better. They did this recently in a project to design toys suitable for babies and toddlers. They were fascinated when watching a parent paint a new numbers grid, with snakes and ladders, in the playground. The pupils themselves had designed the game and are keen to use it when finished. Older pupils enjoy talking about projects and have a secure understanding of the design process. They know that plans must be modified and realise that understanding about why the paint peeled on the Millennium bench, for example, will help with future decisions. The current project in Years 4, 5 and 6, designing large wothy lanterns covered with tissue paper, is well linked to a project in science where pupils are learning about circuits. They plan to use battery-powered bulbs to light the lanterns, and intend to use them in a procession at a local festival.

99. No teaching of design and technology was seen during the inspection, but teachers plan lessons well, offer a good variety of experiences, and pupils have great enthusiasm for the subject as a result. Resources are satisfactory, including construction kits of various sizes to suit pupils' ages. ICT resources are used appropriately, and pupils are currently engaged in a project to plan the layout of the classrooms using computer-aided design. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over management of the subject. Her role needs to be extended further, with more monitoring of teaching to encourage good practice and to evaluate areas in need of further development. The subject policy document should also be updated. The current informal assessment procedures, for example, do not enable teachers to determine pupils' levels of achievement in relation to the skills outlined in the National Curriculum, and this needs to be reviewed, particularly for older pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

100. Standards are broadly in line with what is expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 5. This is similar to the standards reported at the previous inspection. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress as they receive additional help from teachers and learning support assistants.

101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Only one geography lesson was observed, as curriculum time alternates with history, and younger pupils were engaged on history topics during the inspection. As a result, a judgement could not be made on teaching in Years 1 and 2. An examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work, however, revealed that work only just covers the requirements of the National Curriculum as too few contrasting areas are studied, especially by younger pupils. There are far more history-based topics than geography-based topics, for example, especially in Years 2 and 3, and opportunities to expand the geographical links to study different climates and landforms within history topics are not always fully developed.

102. Pupils acquire a reasonable knowledge of some different areas. Pupils in Years 2 and 3, for example, describe differences and similarities between their own area and a village in India. They look at photographs of homes and schools in Chembakolli, and compare shops and foods with those available in Swainswick and Bath. Pupils benefit from the visits of parents who talk about trips abroad and a lady who teaches traditional Indian dances. Pupils explore features of irrigation and agriculture in the Nile Valley when studying the Ancient Egyptians, but do not contrast this with conditions in the neighbouring desert areas. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 study the formation of islands, and compare life on a tropical coral island with conditions on a volcanic island off the coast of Iceland.

103. Pupils show a sound awareness of environmental issues when studying ways in which the local area has developed. Pupils in Year 1, for example, use their own symbols to draw simple maps of places where they can play safely in the school grounds. They investigate traffic in the local village and discuss how the area can be made safer. The local area is also used effectively when pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 explore buildings in the village (a conservation area) and plot their route on a large-scale map. They use conventional map symbols and four-figure grid references, and learn how to represent relief by using contour lines. In one lesson, for instance, pupils in Year 4 marked contour lines on small models they had made of imaginary islands, and then drew contour maps to represent the islands. Pupils worked hard, with good attitudes towards a demanding task. This was an appropriately challenging exercise for the most able pupils, but some lower-attaining pupils found the concept too difficult.

104. Teachers make good use of the satisfactory range of resources. ICT resources, including a digital camera, are increasingly being used to support teaching and learning throughout the school. Pupils in Years 2 and 3, for example, use CD-ROMs and the Internet when studying life in India, while pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 follow the progress of the *Round the World Yacht Race* on a large map of the world and watch videos showing the formation of volcanoes.

105. Management of the subject is sound. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work, but does not observe and evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. The adoption of a scheme of work based on national guidelines has ensured that there is a logical development of geographical skills. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The geography policy document, however, is in need of updating to reflect current practice. Procedures for checking the standards of pupils' work at the end of each topic are

satisfactory, but there is not always enough emphasis on using these assessments to match work closely to the needs of individual pupils.

HISTORY

106. Pupils reach the standards expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 5. This is in line with pupils' progress reported at the previous inspection. Pupils currently make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Those with special educational needs receive plenty of help from teachers and learning support assistants and make sound progress as a result.

107. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall, in Years 1 and 2. Only one history lesson was observed, as curriculum time alternates with geography, and older pupils were engaged on a geography topic during the inspection. As a result, a judgement could not be made on teaching in Years 3 to 6. An examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work, however, revealed that work covers the requirements of the National Curriculum.

108. In the lesson observed in Years 2 and 3, the teacher explained the aims clearly at the start of the lesson and make good use of open-ended questions to reinforce previous learning. Pupils used information books, a CD-ROM and the Internet effectively to research information on Roman times, and then wrote about the life of a Roman child. The work was well matched to the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities. Older and more able pupils wrote up their findings as a personal diary, while younger pupils completed sentences already prepared on a worksheet. Pupils were managed well and, consequently, had good attitudes to their work, concentrated sensibly and make good progress during the lesson.

109. Overall, teachers make good use of a satisfactory range of historical source materials. When comparing old and new toys, for example, pupils in Year 1 examine a range of old toys and identify the differences between toys used today and those enjoyed by their parents and grandparents. When learning about everyday life in Victorian times, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 dressed up as Victorian children, played with Victorian toys, practised writing using dip pens and blotting paper, and observed how bees wax was used to make candles and polish.

110. Visits to museums and walks around the local village are used effectively to provide first-hand learning experiences. Pupils in Year 1 visit the toy museum at Blaise Castle, while pupils in Years 2 and 3 visit the Bristol City Museum and the Roman baths, and those in Years 4, 5 and 6 visit a Victorian school at Sevington. Older pupils carry out their own research into events associated with some of the older buildings in the village. Two pupils discovered how some of the windows of one house were filled in to avoid paying window tax, while another pair observed musket slits in the walls of the Manor House used during the civil war. Last year, pupils in Years 2 to 6 enjoyed the visit of a Tudor *time traveller*. Every two or three years, all pupils take part in a historical drama day. Last year, pupils dressed in medieval costume and visited *King Arthur's Court* at Farleigh Hungerford Castle.

111. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and checks pupils' work on display, but does not have sufficient opportunities to evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. The school has adopted a scheme of work based on national guidance and this ensures that pupils develop historical skills in a logical order. The policy document is out of date, however, and does not indicate current practices. There are suitable procedures for checking pupils' attainment and progress, and these are used to match work to individual pupils' needs. Resources are satisfactory, overall, but there are only a few artefacts. Teachers supplement the school's own resources with loans from the county museum and library services. Good use is made

of video recordings and CD-ROMs, and the school is beginning to use the Internet to assist teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Standards in ICT are broadly average in Year 2, and pupils currently in Year 5 are on target to achieve in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. This is similar to standards described in the last report. The school has more computers than at the previous inspection and staff expertise is much better.

113. No lessons were observed during the inspection, but teachers' planning indicates that pupils are covering appropriate work that develops their skills in a variety of areas including word processing, data handling and control technology. Pupils in Reception and Year 1, for example, learn how to program a floor robot, giving instructions to make it move forwards or backwards and to turn left or right. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress and their achievement is satisfactory.

114. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, use a good range of software effectively. They word-process text in English and other subjects both directly on the screen and to improve earlier drafts. They use spreadsheets efficiently, and generate graphs and diagrams from the data they input. All types of data are interpreted in various subjects of the curriculum. In geography, for example, pupils create graphs to interpret the weather and climate. Pupils have recently been manipulating shapes during a graphics-modelling project. They have drawn plans of the school's classrooms, and this will lead to planning the layout of rooms using computer-aided design. These older pupils have also used digital cameras effectively in a recent project combining local history and geography. Images of local houses formed a good basis for pupils' individual research about the buildings and their development through history. Pupils' progress in understanding the uses and applications of ICT is satisfactory. Some older pupils' keyboard skills are relatively weak, however, and many would benefit from learning basic functions such as this more securely early on in the school. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, for instance, have only recently learned how to save their work to an individual internal file, and to access their own information later on. This is rather late for pupils to acquire this functional skill and the school is aware that the schemes of work need to be reorganised to address such aspects earlier.

115. No teaching of ICT skills was observed during the inspection so no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. Teachers' confidence and expertise, however, is much improved from the time of the last report. They provide pupils with as wide a range of experience as is practicable, given the current provision of 3 computers per class. Pupils respond well to taking turns when necessary, co-operating sensibly when they share computers. The school has plans to improve the computer facilities when funds permit. Assessment of pupils' ICT skills is developing satisfactorily, with older pupils filling in records of what they have done, whether they can complete it alone or with help, and if they can reliably show others the skills needed. These systems are useful, but staff also need to make judgements about pupils' knowledge and understanding compared with the age-related National Curriculum criteria.

116. ICT is used well in other subjects of the curriculum. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils' learning in science was well supported by the construction of *virtual circuits* on the computer. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 used web sites to research information about the Romans during history lessons. They also downloaded information about healthy eating to support their learning about the properties of a variety of foods. Pupils in Year 3 with special

educational needs used ICT effectively to write their own poems about wildlife, finding appropriate verbs to describe the movement of different animals.

117. The subject is well managed and plans to improve the computing facilities are well thought out. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and checks pupils' work, but does not evaluate teaching and learning in all classes. The school has adopted a scheme of work based on national guidance so pupils develop skills in a logical order. The policy document needs updating, however, to reflect current practices. The school has useful access to an ICT technician. This is vital as the facilities are used regularly to assist pupils' learning.

MUSIC

118. No music lessons took place during the inspection. An examination of teachers' planning, however, confirmed that work covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils sing tunefully and enthusiastically in assemblies, and are keen to play percussion instruments to accompany the singing. There is insufficient evidence, however, to make judgements on the quality of teaching or the standards of pupils' work and the progress they make. Standards were in line with national expectations at the previous inspection.

119. Teachers' planning is sound. Good use is made of a commercial scheme of work with appropriate recorded music. This ensures that pupils develop musical skills in a logical order. Pupils in Year 1, for example, recognise the differences between high and low notes and make their own musical instruments, while those in Years 2 and 3 develop their singing skills. Older pupils listen to Chinese music, learn to distinguish between *pulse* and *rhythm*, and use percussion instruments to compose their own music reflecting life on a desert island.

120. Pupils enjoy performing together. Four pupils, for example, worked sensibly together practising their harmonicas before performing several pieces to a high standard at a whole-school assembly. Pupils take part in annual music and drama productions at Christmas time, and many perform in informal concerts at the end of each term. They sing at an old people's home and entertain the elderly residents. Pupils sing at the local parish church at harvest festival and took part in a *musical marathon* at St. Saviour's church in Larkhall with children from other schools. Every year, pupils take part in the opening procession of the Bath International Music Festival, singing with other children and joining the samba drumming band. All these activities make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

121. Pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to a range of music from different times and places. A variety of music is played regularly as pupils enter and leave school assemblies and opportunities are taken to talk about the composer and the style of music. Pupils sing a wide selection of modern hymns and songs during times of collective worship. They sing tunefully and reverently, and join in enthusiastically when invited to clap out the rhythm or accompany the singing with percussion instruments. Pupils with special educational needs join in confidently and enjoy their music making. During the summer term, the school has plans for an African music workshop, with visiting drummers and dancers.

122. The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject. She leads a recorder club and encourages pupils to take part in the many musical activities. She monitors teachers' planning and pupils' performances, but is not given the opportunity to observe and evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. The policy document is brief and outdated, however, and does not contain appropriate procedures for teachers to check pupils' standards and progress. The school has a satisfactory range of recorded music and percussion

instruments. Little use, however, is made of computer resources to assist with musical composition or to research about composers and instruments. About a third of the children learn to play a musical instrument. Four pupils learn the harmonica and a further twelve are taught to play the guitar or keyboard by peripatetic teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Overall, standards match national expectations at all ages, but pupils' attainment is better than expected in some aspects of the subject and they achieve well. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were average in all aspects of physical education.

124. Standards in gymnastics and games are in line with what is expected nationally in all years. The school's lack of suitable accommodation and resources for gymnastics and field sports is overcome effectively by the use of other local facilities. Pupils are bussed to gymnasiums and sports fields at other local schools so that all pupils have full access to the range of experiences required in the National Curriculum. Standards are higher than expected in some areas. In a basketball lesson in Years 2 and 3, for example, standards were above average. Pupils bounced the ball much more accurately than average, showing good control as they passed the ball using various basketball techniques. In dribbling skills too, good control was evident. The same class, in a subsequent session with an expert coach, played the game competitively, using the skills they had learnt well. Standards in swimming are also high because pupils have much more experience than is typical for their age. All pupils in Years 2 to 6 go swimming every week. As a result, all reach national expectations and there are many who can swim much longer distances by the time they leave the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in physical education, especially when considering the constraints upon the school.

125. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers are keen to promote physical education and go to great lengths to ensure that pupils have as rich an experience as possible. In reception and Year 1, for instance, pupils moved to music in different ways that stretched muscles and exercised their bodies effectively. All staff ensure that pupils warm-up properly and understand from an early age why this is necessary. Teachers emphasise the link between heart rate and breathing appropriately, and make pupils aware of the need to cool down at the end of exercise. The management of classes is very good and pupils respond well to teachers' requests to stop all activities immediately, for example, to listen to the next instructions. Swimming is taught in very small groups because some staff are qualified to teach swimming skills in addition to the local pool's own instructors. This leads to high standards of achievement in swimming.

126. The subject is managed well. The complex arrangements necessary to provide an appropriate breadth of experiences are very effective. The co-ordinator provides pupils with a good role model, creating enthusiasm for sport generally. Recently extended contacts with local and national networks are very useful in providing opportunities for competitive matches with other schools, and help to overcome the relative isolation of the school well. Extra-curricular provision is good, given the very small size of the school. Various sports activities are available, some taken by local volunteers and others led by teachers or coaches. Resources for younger pupils are broadly satisfactory and they can take part in most activities within the school and its grounds. Some new gym mats are needed, however, and these have been budgeted for in the next round of spending. Provision for physical education is good, overall, given the school's many constraints.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. Standards are above average in all year groups, as at the time of the last inspection. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, covering Christianity and two other major world faiths, usually Judaism and Islam. Pupils understand the main festivals and beliefs of each these faiths at a level appropriate for their ages, and explore similarities and differences between them. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve very well. Concepts such as belonging to a loving family are well promoted in pupils' early years, with good displays in classrooms used to reinforce these ideas. A multicultural week, to be held in the summer term, will provide a good opportunity for pupils to experience different faiths at first hand.

128. Christianity provides the main focus in this Church of England voluntary controlled school and it is in this aspect that pupils' knowledge and understanding are above, and often well above, average. In Years 4, 5 and 6, for example, pupils showed very good understanding of the many Biblical stories and parables they had learned through their school life and elsewhere. When asked to re-enact the scenes when people gathered in Jerusalem for the Passover festival prior to the entry of Jesus on a donkey, these older pupils remembered many of the things they had learnt previously about Christ's life, and used them in their discussions as members of the crowd. They chatted convincingly about rumours and stories they had heard about Jesus. Some spoke of miracles such as the feeding of five thousand people from one boy's picnic; others considered that he might be a threat because he claimed to be a king. Learning of these stories has clearly been very effective, and pupils' knowledge is above average.

129. The school strongly underpins its Christian ethos during religious education lessons, providing pupils with a practical context for their learning. Pupils understand this Christian philosophy well. The valuing of individuals and their contributions, for example, is a powerful tool in creating the very good personal development that is evident in pupils of all ages and abilities. The school's values are reinforced effectively by very good links with the parish church and by regular visits from the vicar. Religious education is also well reinforced by high quality class and whole-school assemblies.

130. Teaching and learning are very good, overall, in Years 3 to 6. No religious education lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and, as a result, no judgement could be made about the quality of teaching. The lesson observed in Years 4, 5 and 6 was excellent. Very careful planning created a memorable lesson that started in the classroom, went on a journey through the gardens into the churchyard and finished in the church itself, stopping en route for a series of well focused activities related to the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Good use was made of the church itself, the teacher gently compelling pupils to imagine how they would feel if it were desecrated as the temple had been in Jesus' day. The teacher involved pupils well in a very good discussion about anger, which led them into a philosophical discussion that was above average for their age. The discussion was carefully widened to consider other situations which anger pupils. In this way, religious education contributes very significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

131. The new head teacher has taken on the management of religious education and has already recognised the need to develop more detailed schemes of work. The subject has satisfactory resources, with good links to the church used effectively. Older pupils visit Wells Cathedral and the bishop's palace, but have recently visited a mosque or a synagogue. Similarly, opportunities to use ICT resources such as CD-ROMs and the Internet have not yet been fully explored. More monitoring of teaching across the school is needed in order to evaluate current practice and to identify weaker areas. For example, there are currently no consistent procedures for assessing the progress of individual pupils in the subject, and this

is an area for future development.