

INSPECTION REPORT

CHALFORD HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chalford Hill, STROUD

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

115509

Headteacher: Mr J Bocock

Lead inspector: Marie Gibbon

Dates of inspection: 13th October to 15th October 2003

Inspection number: 255748

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5-11years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	207 pupils
School address:	Chalford Hill Stroud
Postcode:	GL6 8LG
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Richard Bradley
Date of previous inspection:	27/4/98

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a village primary school of average size, which has 207 pupils, including 28 pupils who attend part time in the Reception class. There are broadly similar numbers of boys and girls. There are seven classes, which are housed in a newly refurbished and extended Victorian building and in two temporary classrooms across a lane. The school serves the village of Chalford Hill and draws pupils from the surrounding villages, mainly from Bussage and France Lynch. Attainment on entry is broadly the same as for most pupils of this age. Socio-economic factors are above average. Very few pupils have free school meals. Approximately three per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, but none is at an early stage of English language learning. There are 17 pupils on the register of special educational needs, including one pupil who has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This is a lower proportion than is found in most schools. These pupils have varying needs, including speech and communication difficulties and moderate learning difficulties.

The inspection took place in the first half of the autumn term. Consequently, a limited range of evidence was available for the inspection team in some subjects.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23434	Marie Gibbon	Lead inspector	English, art and design, music
9092	Ron Elam	Lay inspector	
24111	Pam Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, religious education, special educational needs
23674	Wendy Simmons	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Chalford Hill Primary School provides a very good standard of education for its pupils.

Standards are well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science by Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve very well as they move through the school. Teaching and learning are very good overall. This enables pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN) to make very good progress. The curriculum is broad and enriches pupils' experiences very effectively. The very good leadership of the headteacher and the good management of key staff are effective in ensuring pupils very good achievement. The governors are good at monitoring the work of the school and together with the headteacher and key staff provide clear educational direction to the work of the school. The school offers very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher, which sets high standards and expectations in all aspects of the work of the school.
- Standards of attainment in English and mathematics are well above average in Years 2 and 6 and very high in science in both years. Pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and behave very well.
- Very good teaching in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6, which significantly enhances pupils' achievement. Good teaching in Years 3 and 4, which ensures that pupils achieve well.
- Links with parents are very good.
- Accommodation for Reception children is unsatisfactory and this limits their achievement.
- In some subject areas pupils do not learn as quickly as they do in English, mathematics and science. This is because teachers do not always understand sufficiently clearly what pupils know and can do.

There has been a good improvement overall since the school was inspected in 1998. Standards have risen significantly in Year 2. High standards have been maintained in Year 6 in English and mathematics and have improved in science across the school. The quality of teaching has improved and there is a higher proportion of good and better teaching. Pupils, including more able pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) now achieve very well as they move through the school. The quality of accommodation has significantly improved in the main building of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	Schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	B	A	A
Science	C	A	A*	A*

A very high- in the top five per cent of schools in the country; A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is very good overall. It is satisfactory in the Reception class, very good in years 1 and 2, good in Years 3 and 4 and very good in Years 5 and 6. Children in the Reception class are secure in their basic skills by the time they move into Year 1, but their better achievement is restricted by the limitations of their accommodation. The rate of pupils' achievement improves in Years 1 and 2 as a result of often very good teaching and good personal development, which increase their confidence well. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have continued to achieve very well despite a period of staff changes and the disruption of major building works because teaching is particularly effective in these years. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged and encouraged to

do their best. During the inspection well above average standards were observed in design and technology in Year 6. Standards are above average in information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design. Very good attitudes and behaviour are encouraged and promoted throughout the school and this has a very positive impact on pupils' achievement. Pupils with SEN achieve very well as a result of the expertise of the coordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) and the supportive and caring ethos of the school.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are **very good**. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is also **very good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching is very good. It is satisfactory in Reception, good in Years 3 and 4 and very good in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. In Reception basic skills are well taught, which helps pupils to leave Reception with above average mathematical development and writing skills. Very good teaching in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 reflects high expectations of pupils' skills and knowledge, and teaching methods that challenge, extend and interest pupils. Good teaching in Years 3 and 4 often promotes pupils' learning well but does not always use assessment information effectively to achieve the consistent sharp challenge and very productive pace of learning seen in other years. Teachers use information from assessments in English mathematics and science very effectively. However, in some subjects, such as ICT, inconsistencies in the use of assessment information restrict pupils' better achievement. Teachers are confident in teaching the subjects of the curriculum and their often very good subject knowledge is used to create interesting and stimulating activities, which very successfully take pupils forward in their learning. Provision for pupils with SEN is very effective in meeting their individual needs. Good levels of care help pupils to feel secure and happy in school. Very effective links with parents and the community support and extend pupils' learning very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The very good leadership by the headteacher is a strength of the school. He is very well supported by key staff. Management is good overall, but there is very good management in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). This is having a significant impact on pupils' very good achievement. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and are well involved with its work. They provide a good forum in which to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with all aspects of the school. Pupils are also happy with their school and a high proportion feel that teachers show them how to make their work better and they like being in school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that accommodation for children in the Reception class enables them to experience fully all the required areas of learning.
- Improve the systems for assessment and their use, in areas where they are weaker, to match the very good practice of the main subjects of the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in Reception is satisfactory and for pupils in Years 1 to 6 it is very good. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average in Years 2 and 6. Standards in science are very high in both Years 2 and 6. This is because the quality of teaching is very good and teachers seek to challenge and extend pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils attain well above average standards in design and technology by Year 6. In both Years 2 and 6 above average standards in art and design and ICT were observed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average and very high in science.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average in Year 2.
- Standards in design and technology are well above average by Year 6.
- Standards in ICT and art and design are above average by Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science is very good across the school.
- Pupils with SEN achieve very well because they receive very good support, which is closely matched to their needs.

Commentary

1. The school's results in national tests show that over the past three years, standards in English have been consistently well above average by both Years 2 and 6. In mathematics standards have varied between above or well above average in both Years 2 and 6 over the past three years, but in the most recent tests (2003) standards were well above average in both years. While there are some differences in the relative standards attained by boys and girls over the past four years, these standards reflect differences of ability in groups of pupils. No significant differences were observed during the inspection.

2. When compared with similar schools standards in Year 2 are average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. In Year 6, when test results in 2003 are compared with pupils' results in Year 2, their achievement has also been well above average in mathematics and English and high in science. This reflects a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in Year 6. This is because of very good teaching and because the school has made effective use of very good assessment procedures to target individual pupils and monitor their progress. Standards in the most recent tests show that all pupils in Year 6 and most pupils in Year 2 attained at least average standards and a high proportion attained above average standards. Standards in speaking and listening across the school are above average. This standard is lower than other aspects of English and the school has already identified the need to focus more closely on the progressive development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.

3. School records show that pupils enter the school with broadly average patterns of attainment and make very good progress during their time in school. In the school's previous inspection, higher attaining pupils were not always achieving as well as they should. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils who have the potential to reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science are able to do so. This has been achieved through the very effective use of assessment information and very good teaching, which encourages and

challenges pupils to do their best. The high standards achieved by pupils in literacy and numeracy support them well in other areas of the curriculum.

4. Children in the Reception class are well prepared in their understanding of basic skills as a result of good teaching of basic number skills and writing. By the time they reach Year 1 they have above average skills in their knowledge of mathematics and writing. The development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world, and their physical and creative skills are satisfactory overall. Pupils' better achievement is hampered by the limitations of the accommodation, which means that pupils are not able to undertake spontaneous investigation of the world around them or to develop their independence fully.

5. The school successfully identifies pupils who are more able in English, mathematics and science. During the inspection very good teaching challenged and extended these pupils very effectively and this was well supported by the evidence from analyses of pupils' work in this year and in the previous year. The school has not yet identified gifted and talented pupils. However, it seeks, through its very good provision to extend and enrich the curriculum and its very good range of activities outside the school day, to encourage all pupils to achieve as well as they are able.

6. Standards are well above average in design and technology as result of very effective teaching and learning and very good curriculum planning. Projects, such as the slipper design project in Year 6, provided challenging and wide ranging opportunities for pupils to develop, evaluate and practise their design skills. Standards in ICT and art and design are above average. They reflect the enthusiasm and commitment of coordinators who are confident and effective in their roles, and good and often very good teaching across the school. In some subjects, such as music, art and design and history, coordinators' monitoring roles are underdeveloped and their support for consistently good or better standards is more limited.

7. Pupils who have SEN make very good progress towards their targets because they receive very effective support from the coordinator of SEN and because they are well involved in lessons and all other activities offered by the school. They receive good care and support from teaching assistants in the school and this helps them to develop a good level of confidence and trust. Their very good progress is evident in the significantly fewer pupils on the school's register of special educational needs in the older classes in the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are very good. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well, have very positive attitudes to work and enjoy being at school.
- The level of attendance is well above that of schools nationally.
- The school's provision for social, moral and cultural development leads to very good relationships and social awareness.
- The school successfully introduces a spiritual element into lessons.

Commentary

8. The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. The level of attendance has maintained its high level since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is exceptionally low. Both these indicators are a reflection of the very high support for the school by parents and show the extent that pupils like coming to school. Punctuality is very good at the start of the day with few pupils arriving late and, even then, normally by only a few minutes. The very effective procedures at that time result in the pupils settling very quickly ensuring a prompt start to the day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.9	School data:	0.1
National data:	5.4 (previous year)	National data:	0.5 (previous year)

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

9. Pupils' social development is very good. The school values its members and encourages pupils to integrate well both at work and at play. This approach results in very positive relationships between pupils themselves and between pupils and staff. The pupils show maturity in fulfilling their responsibilities around the school. For Year 6 these include supporting the youngest pupils at lunchtime and being school councillors reporting back to other classes. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 monitor the 'befrienders corner' in the playground. Their awareness of the wider world is enhanced with pen pals abroad, attendance at events such as the dance festival and the regular visiting student teachers from various European countries. Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults have maintained the high level at the time of the last inspection, and contribute to the quality of work in lessons and to the progress they make. They are interested in the ideas of others and listen respectfully to the contributions of others in class discussions.

10. The pupils' personal development is also very good. Their very good spiritual development was seen on several occasions during lessons such as the Year 5 pupils glowing with delight at successfully explaining condensation with the accurate use of scientific vocabulary or the triumphant "yes" following the correct answers in a mathematics lesson. When cooling down at the end of a physical education lesson, Year 2 pupils became very calm and reflective. Following the weakness identified at the last inspection the school now regularly provides many opportunities in lessons for the pupils to develop their problem solving skills and to work by themselves and in groups. Pupils have the confidence to show initiative and have developed independence in their learning. They consider that teachers listen to their ideas and they are trusted to do things on their own.

11. Pupils' moral development is very good. The school stands for positive values and there are clear expectations of high standards of behaviour and acceptable conduct to which the pupils respond. Pupils behave well in the classroom, at play and lunchtimes. They are open, well mannered, polite to adults and to each other, courteous and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school in an orderly way even when not supervised. Pupils confirm that there is no bullying or aggression, although there is the usual occasional falling out of friendships. There were no exclusions in the last school year as shown in the table below.

Ethnic background of pupils year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – other
Mixed - White and Asian
Any other ethnic group
Parent/pupil preferred not to say
Information not obtained

Exclusions in the last school year

No. of pupils on roll	No. of fixed period exclusions	No. of permanent exclusions
103	0	0
15	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0
4	0	0
53	0	0

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

12. The provision for cultural development is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Its strength lies in the fact that many subjects provide pupils with a fuller understanding of the world around them. A good example of this was during a Year 3 dance lesson. The teacher built upon the African music he played so that the pupils could correctly identify the different work patterns of both men and women in rural villages on that continent. The study of world faiths in religious education helps them to appreciate others' practices and beliefs. The European dimension is enhanced by the very good teaching and learning of French and German, complemented by a residential trip to France. Painting and music develop aesthetic awareness through artwork including Western artists as well as African and Aztec. Discussions with the pupils show they have a good awareness of people having different cultures. Nevertheless, the cultural diversity of modern day Britain is not strongly reflected in the work of the school.

13. Provision in the Reception class for children's personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory. Staff work effectively to develop pupils' confidence and to help them to play cooperatively. There is good attention paid in the teacher's planning to help children to think for themselves and to develop their independence. However, the lack of a secure adjoining play area restricts these aspects of their development.

14. The pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. This includes those of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils concentrate well, enjoy their work and want to do well. They listen attentively, follow instructions well and settle quickly to the task given. These positive attitudes reflect the quality of teaching with, for example, the good pace and variety of activities maintaining the pupils' interest. They have confidence in their own abilities, are eager to answer questions and are prepared to contribute their ideas. They are keen to become involved in different activities both within the school with different clubs and outside with community events.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The strongest features of the provision are: the very good teaching in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6; the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs; the school's links with parents and the very good assessment procedures and use of assessment in English, mathematics and science.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. It is satisfactory in Reception, good in Years 3 and 4 and very good in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. Assessment in Reception is satisfactory. It is good in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. Some excellent teaching was seen in Year 5. This high quality teaching helps to raise pupils' attainment and supports their very good achievement.
- Very effective use of assessment in English, mathematics and science helps pupils to reach high standards.
- Teachers know their pupils well and have high expectations for pupils to behave very well. This allows pupils to make the best of their learning time and creates a strong learning ethos.
- Teachers plan imaginative, stimulating lessons and often have an infectious enthusiasm, which inspire pupils to learn.
- Teachers often use very challenging questioning, which encourages pupils to think more deeply and to clarify their ideas.
- Very good teaching and learning for pupils with SEN enables them to work productively in lessons and often to achieve average standards.
- The school's decision to employ additional teachers helps older pupils to achieve very well overall.

- Assessment in ICT and music is underdeveloped.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
[2]	[10]	[11]	[6]	[0]	[0]	[0]

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

15. One of the key strengths of the very good and excellent teaching seen during the inspection is teachers' ability to communicate their own interest and enthusiasm to pupils in their class. Their enthusiasm is often infectious and this creates a very positive climate for learning. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science particularly, these qualities are combined with very good knowledge of their subjects and this enables teachers to plan effectively for all levels of ability in their groups, particularly for the more able pupils. The school's decision to employ additional specialist teachers to support groups of pupils in Year 6 in English and mathematics has effectively enhanced teaching in these subjects. The improvement of planning to meet pupils' needs was a key issue in the previous inspection and the school has been successful in addressing this issue well.

16. Where teaching is most effective teachers plan lessons that are imaginative and stimulating and inspire and engage pupils' interest and attention well. Questioning techniques are used very well to challenge and extend pupils' thinking and encourage them onto the next stages in their learning. Resources are carefully selected and often well supplemented by teachers' and parents' own contributions. They are selected to support the lesson effectively, but also to involve pupils in their learning well and stimulate their interest. Where teaching is not as strong, teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils and information from assessment effectively. In these lessons, planning and activities do not have the same consistent, sharp challenge for all pupils that is evident in the very best practice.

17. A strong feature of teaching throughout the school is the provision for pupils' personal and social development. Teachers have high and consistent expectations of pupils' behaviour throughout the school. These expectations are well supported by very good relationships between adults and pupils, which begin in the Reception class. Here pupils quickly develop trust and confidence in the adults who work with them and in this positive atmosphere pupils are willing to work and do their best. As a result, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are very good throughout the school.

18. An important factor in the high standards pupils achieve in test results is the very good use of information from tests and assessments. Teachers use the well-detailed information carefully to track pupils' progress, identify those pupils who are not achieving as well as they should and plan activities and lessons that match pupils' needs well. Teachers also know their pupils well personally and this helps them to refine their individual targets more effectively.

19. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEN is very good. The expertise of the coordinator for SEN is effectively used to teach small groups during either their literacy or numeracy activity sessions. The identification of their needs and the targets on their individual education plans are clear and well represented in teachers' planning. Most pupils who have support for SEN are in the younger classes in the school and there is a very good partnership between teachers, teaching assistants and the coordinator for SEN to provide effectively for their needs. As a result, these pupils achieve very well and often attain average standards. They require less support as they move through the school and often need no additional support at all.

20. In some subjects, such as ICT, music and religious education, systems of assessment are underdeveloped and do not support teachers well in planning for the needs of pupils of all abilities and for their progressive learning across the school. This is particularly evident in planning for more able pupils in ICT.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum provided at Chalford Hill Primary School is good. It is satisfactory in Reception and good in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school's support of the pupils' learning outside the school day and the range of opportunities offered are very good. The accommodation and resources support the implementation of the curriculum appropriately in all areas, except the outside learning area for the Reception class.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good breadth to the curriculum that ensures that all pupils are able to make progress with their learning.
- There is good provision in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, which aids the pupils' development well.
- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs supports very good achievement for these pupils.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs that enable pupils to continue learning beyond the school day.
- The lack of appropriate provision for an outside area for the pupils in the Foundation Stage inhibits their opportunities for learning.

Commentary

21. The school regularly monitors the effectiveness of its curricular provision and implements changes when necessary. Effective use is currently being made of putting some of the curriculum strands together. For example, information and communication technology and mathematics are planned into a geography lesson when analysing land use in the village. Careful planning ensures that a good range of learning opportunities take place, incorporating different curriculum areas. The school has responded well to key issues from the previous inspection to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their organisational skills and their independence. The school's 'challenge week' gives problem solving activities a high profile. The project work in design and technology provides a very good example of how the school is encouraging pupils to develop their organisational skills.

22. Lessons are carefully planned to take account of the abilities of all pupils. This planning is supported by the effective use of part-time specialist teachers for English and mathematics. There is good curricular provision for the teaching of two modern foreign languages, French and German. Very good support is offered by the special educational needs co-ordinator. As a result of her meticulous assessment and planning and procedures, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Individual education plans are of good quality and have clear, specific targets, which address pupils' needs well. The special educational needs co-ordinator teaches groups of pupils, which further ensures good progress for these pupils.

23. The school supports the curriculum well through a good range of educational visits and visitors to the school. Year 5 pupils experience life as Victorian pupils to enhance their history lessons on the Victorians. Year 6 pupils undertake geography fieldwork in the Forest of Dean and older pupils have also had residential trips to France as part of their European links. Pupils

also participate in local community events. A good number of pupils benefit from the opportunities to have additional music tuition from visiting specialist teachers. Pupils learn to play the guitar, violin or percussion instruments and significantly enhance their skills and knowledge of music as a result. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, although they are directed mainly at pupils in Key Stage 2. Most of the pupils in this key stage participate and have a wide choice including, athletics, cricket, netball, art, recorder, cross-country and computer clubs. The provision for pupils to increase their knowledge of natural history in the nature club resulted in them coming second in a country wide nature quiz. The high quality of athletics training resulted in the pupils recently becoming district champions. These results reflect the high standard of teaching pupils are receiving beyond the school day.

24. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. Circle time, a programme that develops emotional and social skills has been introduced and 'Golden Times', the reward for good behaviour and respect for others, on Friday afternoons is well supported by the local community who come and run a range of activities for pupils. The result of this programme is that pupils are increasingly able to work in groups and take responsibilities. All Year 6 had the opportunity to have a role on the school council and they co-ordinated the wishes of pupils for the design of the new playground. Pupils are given responsibilities for tasks and the care of other pupils and take their responsibilities seriously. The school has encouraged healthy eating with the facility of a fruit shop and water bottles in classrooms.

25. The quality of accommodation in the new building is very good, but parts of the school are still unable to provide suitable facilities for the full teaching of the curriculum. There is a lack of dedicated outdoor provision for the Reception class, which restricts the range of outdoor learning that can take place.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good and support pupils' learning appropriately. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is good overall. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective arrangements for following locally agreed child protection procedures.
- The school provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to express opinions about life in the school.
- The school effectively monitors pupils' academic progress through the school.

Commentary

26. The staff know how to deal with any situations that may arise on **child protection** issues and who to report to in the school if necessary. The designated teacher ensures that all staff receive guidance. The arrangements for first aid are appropriate with all classroom staff and a midday supervisor having the relevant training. The governors are actively involved with staff in touring the school to carry out hazard monitoring regularly. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology and, for example, each classroom has a fire notice written in language understandable to the pupils. Pupils are closely supervised when crossing the road between the two sites. Nevertheless, although health and safety risk assessments take place they lack detail on specific areas of risk and on the precautions taken.

27. Though the school has over 200 pupils the feeling and support in the school are reminiscent of the warm family atmosphere more often associated with small village schools. Pupils consider that they are supported well by the staff and know who they would go to if they needed

help. Their self-esteem is raised by the way they are supported and praised by the staff and by the recognition of achievements at a weekly assembly. In particular, pupils consider that they settle in well when first arriving into the school. The school actively seeks the views of pupils through the school council. These are Year 6 pupils who obtain the ideas of other pupils throughout the school by surveys, talking with pupils in other classes, and when helping the younger pupils at lunchtimes. They have successfully been involved in designing the playground, selecting games equipment and in developing an anti-bullying policy.

28. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress overall is good. In subjects such as English, mathematics and science it is very good. In these subjects monitoring includes individual assessments of pupils' standards in each aspect of these subjects. Teachers have a secure understanding of the requirements of National Curriculum Levels and identify clearly what pupils need to do reach the next level. This information is shared with pupils and targets in English and mathematics are discussed and agreed. In other subjects monitoring systems are more variable. In ICT teachers are not always secure in their understanding of what older pupils need to do to reach the higher levels. In subjects such as music and religious education systems are informal and do not sufficiently identify expectations for higher attaining pupils.

29. The monitoring of progress of pupils' personal development is less structured and relies mainly on the knowledge of the teachers and support staff who, nevertheless, have a very good understanding of the abilities and needs of all the pupils. Some teachers keep informal records. Pupils' personal qualities are discussed with parents and pupils at the meetings in the autumn and spring terms and targets set where necessary.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good overall. Links with the local community are good. Links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents' support at home and in school make an important contribution to pupils' achievement.
- Wide range of information provided about school life and the curriculum.
- The annual reports to parents do not include pupil targets for improving achievement.

Commentary

30. As at the time of the last inspection, parents are pleased with what the school provides. They consider that the staff are approachable and that they receive a wide range of information. The inspectors confirm that the arrangements for providing information are very good. The school sends home regular newsletters about general matters and summarising the school's policies and highlighting the importance of good attendance and punctuality. They are supplemented with others that outline what is to be taught in each class. The prospectus emphasises that teachers are readily available; they are at the school gate at the end of the day and from the informal conversations seen to take place during the inspection, it is apparent that parents are comfortable talking to the staff. The annual report on pupil progress in the summer term properly concentrates on what the children know and can do, although it lacks targets for improving achievement. Nevertheless, these are discussed and reviewed at the termly meetings in the autumn and spring terms.

31. Parents' involvement with the school makes a very good contribution to its work and to the achievement of the pupils. Pupils confirm that their parents actively encourage and help them at home. Some 20 to 30 parents and other relatives regularly help in school each week. All families come to the consultation evenings and there are very high turnouts at curriculum workshops and other activities such as numeracy and literacy classes for fathers and sons and mothers and daughters. The Parent Teacher Association is very supportive in arranging both fund-raising and

social events. Parents are actively involved in helping to formulate school policies. As well as discussions with parents visiting the school, it also sends out questionnaires and, for example, the parents were part of a working party to discuss accessibility.

32. The good links with local nursery schools and playgroup help to ensure a smooth transition into the Reception class with the new pupils able to visit the school on several occasions in the summer term before they start. The school has developed good links with the local secondary schools. This has led to a variety of initiatives such as a visit for an engineers' day and a secondary science teacher has taken lessons. The contacts between staff and the opportunities for Year 6 pupils to visit ensure they settle quickly into their new school when they finally leave. Trainee teachers come most years from a nearby training college for their teaching practice. In addition there have been several student teachers from a variety of European countries.

33. The involvement of the wider community has broadened the experiences for pupils' personal, social and academic development. They benefit from a variety of visitors such as artists during an arts week, dance and theatre groups, the police and a local doctor. The pupils have taken part successfully in a countywide nature quiz competition. The pupils hold various presentations in local churches. Pupils meet others in the community when they deliver Harvest Festival gifts to older people. Particular mention must be made of the excellent support of a former parent who teaches French and German, providing pupils with a very good introduction to those languages, enhanced by residential visits abroad.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership of the school is very good and the management is good. The leadership of the headteacher is a strength of the school. This view is supported by parents, governors and staff at the school. There is a strong emphasis on raising standards and ensuring that all pupils achieve to the best of their ability. Key staff in the school support this emphasis well, particularly subject leaders in English, mathematics, science information and communication technology and the coordinator for special educational needs. The monitoring role of some other subject leaders is under developed. The governance of the school is good. Governors have a good understanding of their roles, their responsibilities and the work of the school. They share the headteacher's vision for the development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has established a strong feeling of community.
- He has a clear vision for the school, which is led by standards and pupils' achievements.
- The leadership and management of English, mathematics, science, ICT and SEN are very effective.
- There is a strong drive for improvement, which is evident in the school improvement plan.
- There is an effective teaching team and their strengths and expertise are used to the benefit of pupils in the school.
- There are very good systems for monitoring and reviewing performance data and acting on the results.
- The governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are very supportive of the work of the headteacher and staff.
- The school's financial resources are used well and efficiently administered.
- There is a strong commitment to the continued professional development of staff.
- Some monitoring of the foundation subjects is underdeveloped.
- The school has not yet been able to provide satisfactory accommodation to ensure that pupils in the Reception class experience fully all the required areas of learning.

Commentary

34. The strengths of the very good leadership of the headteacher are the value he places on all those involved with the work of the school and his high expectations for all individuals. As a result, the school is a strong community, where individuals feel valued and respected and encouraged to do their best. This means that pupils, their well being and their achievement are at the heart of its work. Parents' comments refer to the reputation of the school as a 'high' achieving school. The school has retained the welcoming atmosphere associated with a smaller village school because the headteacher knows pupils, teachers and parents well and is readily available on a daily basis to talk to parents when they wish to do so. The school's previous inspection commented similarly on the qualities of the headteacher's leadership.

35. The headteacher has a clear agenda for continuing to raise standards of attainment and the rate at which pupils achieve. All staff are involved in the identification of priorities, which are clearly reflected in the school's improvement planning and in the well detailed and balanced evaluation that the headteacher prepares for the governors on a termly basis. The good quality of the school's evaluation procedures has been recognised by the local authority.

36. There are very good and rigorous systems in place for monitoring the effectiveness of the school's provision in English, mathematics and science. Information from assessment is used to provide clear targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics and to track the rate at which pupils achieve through the school. There is very detailed, rigorous analysis of national tests' results which is used very effectively to support teaching and the development of the curriculum. Systems for measuring the effectiveness of the school's provision in other subject areas, while satisfactory overall are less well developed by comparison. The school is aware of this and has identified this area as a priority in the school improvement plan.

37. The headteacher is well supported by other senior staff including the deputy headteacher, coordinators for English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and the coordinator for SEN. All, including the headteacher, are very good role models in their own teaching practice and in their enthusiasm and energy with which they are undertaking and developing their areas of responsibility. The effectiveness of their management is reflected in the improvements in standards in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection. In these subjects there are good opportunities for coordinators to monitor standards of teaching and learning. In some other subjects, such as music, religious education and art and design, there are insufficient opportunities for the coordinators to be aware of standards and to ensure that good and very good practice is consistent across the school.

38. Accommodation for Foundation Stage pupils does not, at present, include an adjoining secure outdoor play area that pupils can use freely for developing and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them and their personal and social skills. This is a barrier to their better achievement. The school is aware of the limitations of the current provision, but has not yet succeeded in making more appropriate arrangements.

39. The governance of the school is good. Governors have a good understanding of the needs of the school and are fully supportive of the headteacher and staff. They are well involved in the work of the school and recognise and appreciate its contribution and value to the whole community. They are active in calling the school to account to raise standards, and provide an effective forum to discuss and develop the future shape of the school.

40. The headteacher has created an effective team of teachers whose commitment to pupils and to the work of the school contributes significantly to the strong ethos of the school. There are good and useful links between school development planning, performance management and the continuing professional development of all staff. Teachers appreciate and value the opportunities they are given to extend and develop their skills and expertise. Very good use is made of the expertise of part time specialist teachers and the very effective partnership teaching in Year 5.

41. Financial management and administration are good. The priorities in the school improvement plan guide the setting of the budget, which is carefully monitored throughout the year. The

administrative officer has efficient systems for financial control and keeps senior staff and governors well informed from month to month. As a result of these effective procedures, the curriculum is appropriately resourced and the school is well staffed. These factors have a positive effect on pupils' achievement.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	£494,831
Total expenditure	£476,280
Expenditure per pupil	£2,300

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	£33,453
Balance carried forward to the next	£18,551

42. The school's expenditure per pupil is similar to most schools. The high budget surplus of the previous year was designated and used for major building works carried out that year. It makes good use of the finance available to provide additional specialist part time teachers in English and mathematics. The school's careful evaluation of the benefit of this provision indicates that pupils' progress is enhanced as a result.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**. The judgements made about each section are broadly similar to the last inspection, with satisfactory improvement in aspects of writing and mathematics. However, the overall judgement about provision has altered from good to satisfactory.

43. Satisfactory leadership, management and teaching all combine to result in sound learning overall. Children's standards of knowledge and understanding are broadly average by the end of their time in the Reception class. Achievement is satisfactory overall. However, better achievement is partly hampered by the accommodation, which is unsuitable for the needs of these very young children. Nonetheless, children are well prepared in their understanding of basic skills as they move into Year 1. The teacher and assistants work together very effectively as a team. There are good relationships between adults and children, which makes children happy learners. Activities are suitably planned. Parents are involved well in supporting their children's learning. When children enter the Reception class they benefit from a good induction programme, which helps them to settle and also fosters very strong links with parents and carers.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Children settle quickly and behave very well, due to good relationships and sensitive support and encouragement of the children.
- Basic skills in language and mathematics are well developed by Year 1.
- Computer skills are of a high standard.
- Role play is used effectively to extend social skills.
- There is very good provision for children with SEN.
- There is no adjoining, secure outside play area, which is a basic requirement for children in the Foundation Stage.
- There are missed opportunities, in the lessons seen, to make focused assessment of exactly what children know and can do.
- There are missed opportunities to further develop creative activities.

Commentary

Personal, social and emotional development

44. Provision in personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory. The teacher and assistants place a strong emphasis on helping children to grow in confidence. Many of the children are only just beginning to play directly with others, but through focused encouragement and sensitive intervention, adults help them to learn how to play co-operatively. For example, adults helped the children in the 'Old Macdonald' role play area to play at being farmers and then prepare a family meal of pizza for supper. Staff help pupils to understand class rules and overall, children behave very well. Adults give much attention to helping the children to learn about sharing and how to take turns. Sessions are planned to help children to begin to think and make decisions for themselves, but they cannot access the full range of Foundation Stage activities,

which would help them to use their initiative to the full, due to the constraints of the accommodation. Support for pupils with SEN is very good.

Communication, language and literacy

45. Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**, showing improvement especially in writing since the last inspection. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall. Children are helped to grow in confidence as they talk to adults. For example, when talking about the children's families, they had family photographs to help them to explain things with clarity. Higher attaining children often use a comprehensive range of vocabulary. A strong emphasis is put on developing early reading and writing skills, as seen when the children grappled with learning letter sounds and began to use them in their letter writing to Lola (a soft toy leopard). Children quickly learn how to write their names, but are sometimes reluctant to write independently. Careful modelling of writing by the teacher helps children to see how writing should look. However, in the lessons seen, opportunities to assess exactly which sounds pupils do and do not know were missed. Regular writing opportunities help pupils to reach higher than average standards by Year 1. At this early stage in the term most can hold a book correctly and copy the main story line from their memory or from the clues in the pictures. More able pupils recognise some words accurately. By Year 1, while some pupils reach above average standards, most pupils have average reading skills.

Mathematical development

46. Provision in mathematical development is **good**. Teaching and learning are good. There is a strong emphasis on learning basic numbers and the range of practical activities supports their understanding. More able pupils are suitably challenged and those with special educational needs are very well challenged and supported. This was evident in how a pupil mastered counting up to three, by using lots of touch and feel activities using wooden cut out shapes. The children are already growing in confidence in recognising numbers and the quantities up to ten. Children are beginning to recognise and name simple shapes, especially when making pictures or when using the computer.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

47. Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**. No overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching and learning, as there was not enough time to evaluate all the aspects of this area of learning during the inspection. When using computers, the children learn very good mouse control skills and are able to open programs confidently. Moreover, they draw shapes and select and change colours for their work, showing perseverance and concentration, which reflects the effective help from adults. Children have access to a broadly suitable variety of construction materials and are able to develop their designing and building skills appropriately, as seen when a child made a castle using recycled boxes. However, the lack of an outside area limits opportunities to make very large constructions. They make interesting books about their homes and families, which shows progress since the last inspection. Currently, it is difficult for the children to embark on spontaneous investigations outside due to the constraints of the accommodation. Nonetheless, the children benefit from learning about their environment on local walks.

Physical development

48. Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**. Children develop physical skills satisfactorily. They are able to jump and land safely and have time to play with a bike and on the climbing area in the school's main playground. However, the lack of an outside play area means that they are unable to spontaneously make up games and take risks, which naturally develop their co-ordination and agility. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. There is good teaching of pencil control skills.

Creative development

49. Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**. There are suitable opportunities for the children to play and make decisions about their creative activities. Resources are organised so that children can select things for themselves and engage in exploration of such things as painting. When using the role-play area, the children are helped to develop their stories and games by adults who join in to extend their discussions. Overall, children are encouraged to use their imaginations satisfactorily and are beginning to explore colours and design as seen in their painting and pictures. However, there are limited opportunities to experiment with music and to learn how to mix paints for themselves. Creative development has a satisfactory impact on children's spiritual and cultural development. Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are well above average by Years 2 and 6.
- Very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 and very good teaching overall enables pupils to develop their English skills very well and is very effective in motivating and sustaining their very good achievement.
- Detailed analysis and evaluation of pupils' achievement is ensuring that pupils achieve very well as the move through the school.
- Very effective leadership and management of the subject are ensuring that high standards are maintained.
- Very good support for pupils with special educational needs and a very good understanding of their needs is enabling these pupils to achieve very well.
- Standards in speaking and listening are not as effectively developed as other aspects of English.

Commentary

50. There has been a good improvement in standards in Year 2 and high standards have been maintained in Year 6 since the previous inspection.

51. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy reading. They are able to discuss their favourite authors and explain, often in detail, why they enjoy their books. Higher attaining and average ability pupils are able to talk about the language authors use to create humour and interest. They are able to identify expressions they particularly like. They read aloud fluently and with good expression. They are developing a good understanding of some of the more advanced reading skills to help them use information texts efficiently. Lower attaining pupils are competent and effective readers, but the range of their reading is more limited.

52. Pupils in Year 2 are reading confidently and higher attaining pupils are reading independently and with good expression. They are able to read their books accurately and use their knowledge of sounds well to help them read unfamiliar words. Most pupils are able to talk about the books they are reading in school, outlining elements of the plot and making simple predictions. Most are able to talk about their favourite authors and books and some lower attaining pupils are sometimes able to quote words and phrases from their favourite story.

53. The school has focused on developing pupils' skills in writing and this has been effective in ensuring that pupils at all levels achieve very well. Most pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are already working within average standards at this early stage of the academic year.

54. Analyses of pupils' writing in the current Year 6 and in the previous year, indicate that pupils generally have a good range of vocabulary and expression. Higher attaining pupils are adventurous and effective in their use of language and are beginning to use words with precision. They use a very good range of literary techniques such as metaphors and similes to good effect in their poetry writing. One pupil describes winter as 'flowers drop as winter comes, like soldiers struck by enemy fire; an ornate garden soon becomes a graveyard'. Although the strengths of their writing are in the creative genre pupils have experiences of a good range of other kinds of writing. Pupils write with a good and often very good level of accuracy, however, there are some weaker elements in the spelling of a small number of average and lower attaining pupils. The school is aware of this and is planning a specific programme to address these weaknesses.

55. Analyses of pupils' work for the previous Year 2 indicate that a high proportion of pupils produce some good pieces of extended writing and are able to sustain and develop their ideas well. They understand how to plan, draft and edit their work achieving generally accurate sentence construction and often including a good range of vocabulary for interest and effect. Lower attaining pupils have a clear awareness of sentence structure and make good use of their phonics to help them spell unfamiliar words.

56. Standards of presentation are good across the school. Pupils take a pride in their work and write neatly and carefully. A joined style of writing is taught from an early stage and young pupils form their letters clearly. Expectations are high and clearly identified in their comments in pupils' books.

57. Standards of speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. Pupils are confident in contributing to class discussion and in answering questions. Most pupils speak audibly and are able to express their ideas clearly in class. They listen carefully to their teacher and to each other's contributions. There are good planned opportunities for pupils to have experiences through the school of speaking to different audiences, such as the whole school productions, role play activities and presentations. However, the planning and assessment of this very good range of opportunities do not sufficiently focus on the progressive development of pupils' skills. They do not, as a result, achieve as high a standard as they do in other areas of English.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall with some especially good teaching and learning seen in Year 6 and evident in the analyses of pupils' work in Years 1 and 5. Most teaching is good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. A key feature of all teaching is the energetic enthusiasm of staff, which they communicate effectively to pupils. They have very secure subject knowledge and know how to interest and motivate their classes. As a result, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Lessons are well planned to include all aspects of the subject and use the elements of the National Literacy Strategy effectively to meet pupils' needs. In most lessons teachers provide a good level of challenge for all pupils in their selection of activities and texts. In the best teaching there is very effective 'pacey' questioning and high expectations, which push pupils to extend their thinking and their skills. These qualities help pupils to achieve very well. In a very small proportion of lessons the pace of the lesson slows during over-extended explanations and opportunities are, therefore, lost for pupils to contribute their ideas. Teachers manage pupils very well and relationships in all classes are very good enabling pupils to work with confidence in groups or individually and have good concentration on their work. All teachers mark pupils' work regularly, with good encouragement and support. Most teachers carefully identify how pupils can improve their work and give pupils' individual targets a high profile in their books.

59. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from class teachers and teaching assistants and the coordinator for special educational needs. Some good focused teaching was

seen when the SENCO took small groups of pupils to develop speaking and reading skills. Her high level of expertise and activities to make learning enjoyable enabled her to get the best out of pupils and sustain their interest.

60. The subject coordinator is a very effective manager. She has a very thorough and comprehensive knowledge of both pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. She has identified clear and relevant priorities for the subject and is a committed and very effective practitioner herself. The school has very good systems for tracking pupils' progress in reading and writing and for setting targets for whole classes. The coordinator is well involved in the very thorough analyses of test results and end of year assessments, which enable the school to identify pupils who are achieving well and those who might be underachieving. Individual target setting is well established and targets are regularly reviewed and have a high profile in pupils' books. Resources are of a good quality and number and support the curriculum well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. The development of literacy across the curriculum is good. In design and technology and art and design there are very good opportunities for pupils to consolidate and develop a wide range of literacy skills in projects such as the slipper design project and the 'Making Day held during the inspection. Writing skills are developed well in a range of subjects such as history where pupils set out their observations of Victorian artefacts clearly and write about their visits to places such as Sevington and the Holst Museum. In science pupils organise their writing about their investigations appropriately using a good range of scientific language.

Modern foreign languages

62. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to develop a good foundation in both French and German. The specialist skills and enthusiasm of a previous parent and teacher are used very well to develop pupils' interests in languages and an enjoyment in their learning. One lesson was observed during the inspection in Year 5. These pupils have been learning French since the beginning of the academic year. As a result of the teacher's very good command of the language and very good range of strategies, pupils have achieved very well. They understand a good range of basic questions and instructions. The teacher makes very good use of the target language in class and, as a result, pupils are developing well their abilities to respond to questions and give appropriate answers in a range of everyday situations. The teacher's expertise and high expectations are helping to develop a good awareness of pronunciation. Higher attaining pupils are well provided for when the teacher identifies links between languages and how other languages have contributed and enriched vocabulary and expression in the English language.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The staffing provision is very effective in ensuring high attainment by pupils of all abilities.
- The use of ICT is well used to support learning.
- Teachers manage and control classes well leading to good behaviour and attitudes from pupils.
- The very good leadership and management of this subject identifies priorities for improvement and ensures that teachers receive the necessary training to implement them.
- There is an overemphasis on careful presentation in exercise books at the expense of pupils' use of their own mathematical workings.

Commentary

63. Standards of attainment are well above average in Years 2 and 6 and this is similar to the 2003 test results where the number of pupils gaining Levels 3 and 5 remains well above average. In Year 2 pupils are confident in their use of basic numbers, and higher attaining pupils are confidently ordering numbers up to and beyond one hundred. They develop their awareness of mathematical shapes well and are confident in using information and communication technology to support their learning. Teachers introduce new concepts and language whenever an opportunity arises and build very effectively on their earlier learning. As a result, pupils' achievement is very good.

64. In Year 6 higher attaining pupils are able to give a very good range of reasons why they use certain strategies and for their interpretation of numbers. Pupils of all abilities are excited and interested in mathematical investigations and apply their knowledge confidently in new situations. As a result of very skilful teaching, higher attaining pupils are beginning to use their knowledge of fractions and decimals to convert them to mixed numbers. There is an atmosphere of challenge and moving on and this enables pupils to achieve very well.

65. Good use is made of teaching staff to teach mathematics in both ability groups and small focussed groups of pupils. The lessons are carefully matched to the needs of pupils and as a result, they make very good progress. Pupils with SEN are well supported by teachers, assistants and the SENCO.

66. The teachers provide activities that are well matched to the abilities of the pupils. In addition many of the activities have been made fun and so pupils enjoy being taught mathematics and are confident about taking on new challenges. A lesson on improper fractions with some Years 5 and 6 pupils concluded with a class game. Pupils had to roll a dice and identify the improper fraction on the flip chart at the front of the class that matched the number they had rolled. Pupils cheered when they were told that the game would be harder the next time it was played. The ethos of enjoyment that underpins the teaching of this subject has resulted in many pupils deciding that it is their favourite subject. It has also resulted in the good behaviour of pupils who do not want to waste time when they are enjoying their work.

67. Teachers use resources well, and ICT is especially well used. Year 4 pupils are able to explain how they will transfer a tally chart onto the computer and use the figures to produce a range of graphs. They can explain which format of graph they prefer and why they think it is best for their purpose.

68. Opportunities for problem solving have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 1 are able to identify that all numbers that contain one identical digit, will produce a straight line pattern on a number square. Year 4 pupils are able to draw a range of two dimensional shapes given a fixed range of perimeter lengths. They sustain concentration and are able to discuss the challenges of the task with a partner.

69. However, most of this investigative work, and some number work, is recorded on loose paper or worksheets leaving exercise books for well presented formal number work. There are lost opportunities for pupils to use their exercise books for their own jottings and workings, which are an important part of their mathematical learning.

70. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator analyses test results and uses assessment to track pupils' progress. As a result the achievement of pupils is increasing. Pupils are now making better progress in Years 3 and 4 and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. He is developing the role of pupils in their own learning through negotiating learning targets with them. There is a drive to improve the attainment of lower attaining pupils through the use of games; an initiative undertaken in conjunction with the local education authority.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. Opportunities for mathematics across the curriculum are **good**. They are used by Year 4 pupils in a geography project on land use in the village, when numbers, including fractions, have to be tallied. Year 5 pupils record details from their 1891 census data, as part of their history work. Year 6 pupils use mathematics in science when classifying and organising groups of animals and plants for a key. Pupils in these lessons show that they are able to transfer the strategies they have learnt in mathematics lessons to other areas of their curriculum and that they can interpret the figures that they use.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very high by Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils achieve very well overall, whatever their ability.
- Leadership is of high quality, rooted in a drive to raise standards.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- The curriculum supports pupils' wider learning in many subjects.
- Pupils think and learn for themselves.

Commentary

72. The results from teachers' assessment of pupils' work show very high standards by Year 2. By Year 6, test results show standards, which are in the top five per cent of the country. Most noticeably, the improvement in higher Level 5 results is outstanding. These have risen, in Year 6, from 41 per cent in 2002 to 72 per cent in 2003. The very good support for pupils with SEN and very good challenges of higher attaining pupils are significant factors in why pupils do so well.

73. Achievement is very good throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a strong knowledge of plants and insects, which is due to the interesting range of investigations. More significantly, pupils learn and use precise and often complex scientific vocabulary. For example, that a 'plume' is the beginning of a new shoot. Pupils are very keen to talk about their investigations and think of how to make tests fair, as evident when finding out in what their cress plants need to survive. They have growing knowledge of electricity and forces and motion, as evident in the good Year 1 lesson, where pupils developed their understanding by exploring how toys work.

74. As pupils move through the school, they learn new things quickly, reflecting the very good planning that is evident in science. Pupils talk about a very wide range of scientific activities and clearly enjoy doing investigations. Pupils' work samples show many independent ideas, which often require them to make complex measurements and opportunities to link their work to literacy, and skills, such as note taking and bullet point recording of investigations and possible predictions.

75. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good, which shows significant improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Now, the challenges for the most able allow them to achieve very well for their ability. One of the key strengths of teaching is the superb range of questioning by teachers, which really makes pupils think and clarify their understanding and engage in problem-solving activities. Assessment procedures are very good and as a consequence of teachers actually using the information gained from assessments, pupils are helped to revisit activities that they have not grasped, or move swiftly on to new activities. Lessons are very well planned, so that knowledge and skills build up progressively over a few weeks. One excellent lesson was observed where Year 5 pupils were learning about changes as a result of condensation.

Following an experiment using a bowl of hot water, covered in film, with ice cubes above this layer, pupils observed what happened. The main reasons why the lesson was so engaging was the quality of quick fire challenging questioning by the teacher, such as, 'What evidence do we have to tell us that gas is changing into a liquid?' and 'What process are we thinking about here and will the droplets go on forming?' Pupils were encouraged to make notes and share ideas and draw their own diagrams to explain reversible and irreversible change. Not only were the pupils really motivated by this, their learning was consolidated on the following day when they made bread. Here, they confidently explained condensation and the process of using the gas to make the dough rise.

76. The use of ICT in teaching and learning is developing steadily, with some very exciting examples of how it supports pupils' learning about food chains. For example, in Year 6, every child has to work with a partner to design and produce a multimedia presentation, which included downloading pictures, graphics and the spoken word on a moving presentation. However, the use of digital microscopes and cameras is underdeveloped.

77. The quality of leadership and management is very good. There has been a drive to raise standards, which reflects the co-ordinator's excellent knowledge of the subject and commitment to evaluating results and watching teachers teach, so that they can be supported to further develop their practice.

78. Since the last inspection, standards have risen considerably, reflecting changes in staffing; a strong commitment to staff development and clear priorities for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Years 2 and 6.
- Very good leadership is having a positive impact on standards.
- The school has good resources, which are used very effectively in teaching so that pupils learn new skills quickly.
- Pupils make good use of ICT in other subjects.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to make decisions for themselves.
- Pupils achieve well overall, but very good achievement is hampered by a limited assessment of pupils' level of work.

Commentary

79. Standards in information and communication technology are above average. At this early stage in the year the school has a very high proportion of pupils working at the expected level for their age. In addition to this, a growing proportion of pupils, confidently demonstrate higher level skills.

80. The pupils' rate of achievement is good overall; it is best for average attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Although higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, better achievement is hampered by limited assessment of what pupils actually know and can do. For example, teachers are not able to quickly identify the difference between work of average standard and higher level skills. As a consequence of this, there is inconsistency in the challenges for the most able learners. For example, when writing poems in Year 3, pupils confidently grasped the idea of how to find, copy and paste pictures to illustrate their work, but further challenges, such as altering the style and layout of the text were missed. Sometimes pupils' speed of typing is too slow and, as yet, the school is not using a programme to help pupils to master speedy and accurate typing skills. This is a further factor why their rate of achievement is not yet very good.

81. Three lessons or part lessons were observed and together with the sample of work and discussions with pupils, teaching and learning are judged to be good in Years 1 to 6. Since the

last inspection there has been a major focus on training teachers and improving resources. The school now has a higher than average proportion of computers than recommended and teachers feel confident in their ability to teach a range of skills. Teachers make very effective use of the ICT resources, such as the new large teaching screens for mathematics. Nonetheless, there are a few missed opportunities in the use of the digital camera and microscope.

82. Careful thought has gone into how teachers plan their lessons so that pupils can use ICT in a wide range of subjects. For example, in Year 6, pupils confidently used the Internet to find information about Lord Shaftsbury so that they were able to write notes for a history presentation on Lord Shaftsbury's speech in parliament. This work also exemplifies how ICT support pupils' cultural knowledge. Additionally, pupils really enjoy sending e-mails to their pen pals in Romania and France. Furthermore, ICT really enriches pupils' spiritual awareness due to the many opportunities when pupils enjoy the sense of satisfaction at accurately controlling a range of technology. For example, as evident in Year 2, when pupils gasped in amazement as they programmed a moveable toy so that it made precisely measured shapes with right angles.

83. The subject is very well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic coordinator who, together with the headteacher and governors, has worked hard to make very good improvements in the subject since the last inspection, when standards were average overall and the school did not have an ICT room. Leadership shows determination to further raise pupils' achievement. Management is good, showing rigour in auditing resources and in monitoring how teachers teach and pupils learn. The coordinator has conducted a very focussed evaluation of what the school does well and where there are weaknesses. This is to be commended as it has resulted in a high quality plan for continued improvement, especially noting the importance of developing assessment procedures in the forthcoming year.

Humanities

84. One Year 6 geography lesson was observed and one Year 5 history lesson. No religious education lessons were seen. Very little work had been completed in geography and religious education. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils, looked at teachers' planning documents and held discussions with subject leaders. In geography there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of provision. In religious education there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards or the quality of teaching and learning.

85. The time allocated to religious education through the year is appropriate to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Lessons are taught on a weekly basis. Planning documents show that topics include Harvest, Christmas and Easter. From a discussion with Year 2, pupils are able to retell simple stories such as the story of Noah's Ark and the Creation. They know why Harvest Festival is celebrated and why Christians celebrate Easter. At Key Stage 2 pupils can also identify milestones in their life and know about the Christian rites of passage, baptism and confirmation. Year 6 pupils also learn about Jewish Rites of Passage such as Barmitzvah. They can recognise the name of artefacts used during the ceremony including the tallit, torah scroll and yad. There is a good comprehensive file about the subject, which is full of ideas and help for teachers.

86. Although there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in geography the evidence seen indicates that there is an interesting range of opportunities. Good use is made of ICT when creating graphs and analysing the findings of land use around the village by Year 4 pupils. There are also opportunities for Year 4 pupils to debate the hypothetical proposal on whether the school field should be used for housing. Pupils are able to identify good reasons both to support and oppose the proposal. There are opportunities for pupils to undertake field studies at first hand in the Forest of Dean.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a clear grasp of what history is.
- The work provided interests pupils.
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake independent work in Key Stage 2.
- Good use is made of local historical places of interest.
- Good use is made of ICT in this subject.
- The worksheet based format for much of the recording prevents pupils being able to plan the content and presentation of their own work.

Commentary

87. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards, teaching and learning during the week of the inspection. The analysis of work and discussion with pupils in Year 6 suggests that there is good provision in this subject, which enables pupils to have a clear understanding of what history is and how it is open to interpretation. Pupils value the opportunities that they have to use a range of artefacts and experiences in this subject. They understand how it feels to be a Victorian pupil. Year 6 pupils say that they were anxious about making mistakes during the Victorian lesson. Year 5 pupils are able to make predictions about likely findings of the research they are about to undertake, namely that most of the males will go into farming and factories and that women will go into factories and domestic service. As a result of a visit to a local 'Victorian' school pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to compare and contrast educational provision then and now. Year 3 pupils have visited the Holst Museum in Cheltenham and as a result, are able to identify how a Victorian middle class household would be organised. Pupils in Year 2 have a small area of their classroom set out as a Victorian classroom, which helps to bring the subject alive.

88. In the one Year 5 history lesson the teacher made good use of challenging questions to develop pupils' understanding of data interpretation. In preparation for the main part of the lesson she asked pupils why the number of scholars was decreasing in the 1891 Glington census and what was the pattern for female scholars compared to males? The pupils were intrigued to find that girls stayed at school for longer and were able to give good reasons for why they thought this was the case.

89. Strong links with ICT are made in this subject, not only with the research being undertaken on the 1891 census material where Year 5 pupils had to analyse what happened to pupils under 14 years old, but also in Year 6 where pupils were set an independent research task. These pupils were asked to use the website to compile evidence on the working conditions of children in Victorian times, for Lord Shaftesbury to use in his speech to Parliament. The good literacy skills that pupils have provide a good foundation for pupils, especially those in Key Stage 2, to undertake the planning and presentation for their own work. However, much of the work seen in history books was constrained by the use of worksheets that over-directed the written response of pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

During the inspection, samples of art and design and design and technology work were evaluated and whole and part lessons in physical education and art and design were observed. A singing lesson for all pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 and a singing assembly for Years 3 to 6 were seen. In addition inspectors talked to pupils about their work and held discussions with teachers.

Commentary

Design and technology

91. It was not possible to see any design and technology lessons during the inspection, however, from the sample of work seen, and from discussions with pupils, standards by Year 6 are much higher than average, showing very good achievement over time. Of the work seen, much of it demonstrated higher Level 5 skills. High expectations are evident and work is well planned, showing very good links with art and design, literacy, science and mathematics. Pupils successfully modify and improve their design and making skills and identify and overcome problems in their work.

92. No overall judgement is made about teaching and learning. The sample of work in design and technology showed high quality marking and helpful assessments, which aid pupils' learning. For example, pupils designed and made kitchens, which incorporated certain sized appliances and was limited by a specific budget. Not only did the pupils design their work to scale, but they also made accurate three dimensional models. One of the best features of learning is the way in which pupils use their imaginations. For example, as seen in the pupils' slipper designs, where the work showed excellent links with literacy, as pupils had to write stories about the characters that might wear this footwear. Both examples, showed very good evaluations of their work and a real sense of pride in their achievements. In this respect, links with spiritual and social development are very strong.

93. No overall judgement is made about leadership and management in design and technology, as it was not a main focus of the inspection. Nonetheless, there is a strong sense of purpose and high aspirations by staff, which have resulted in good overall improvement since the last inspection.

Music

94. In the music sessions seen the quality of teaching and learning was good and the standard of pupils' singing was appropriate for their ages. However, no overall judgement was made about standards pupils achieve because aspects of music such as composing and appraising were not seen during the inspection. Teachers were confident in their subject knowledge and made good use of their own abilities to lead and accompany pupils. This ensured that pupils were well involved in the lessons and sang with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Younger pupils were able to follow varying rhythms and most were able to follow high and low notes. As a result of careful teaching, older pupils in Year 2 were beginning to listen to others singing the beat and fit in the words in the correct time.

95. Older pupils in the school are able to sustain a two part harmony effectively and have a good ear for melody when they sing a new song unaccompanied for the first time. The teacher guided them effectively through more complicated sections and gave good advice as to posture and breathing. By the end of the session they had made good progress with learning the new song and sang with confidence and enthusiasm. The lesson made an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development as the teacher pointed out the link between the words of the song 'You can build a wall around you' and the theme of friendship in the week's assembly.

96. The coordinator in the subject is confident and effective in his own teaching. However, opportunities for him to monitor teaching and learning across the school are not sufficiently well developed to ensure a strong understanding of how the provision might be improved and pupils skills' consistently developed. Overall coordination is satisfactory. Assessment procedures in the subject are satisfactory, but the use of assessment to further develop pupils' skills and experiences is informal and does not support pupils' better achievement as well as it could. There is a good range of activities outside lesson to support pupils' enjoyment and participation in music. There are regular whole school musical productions at Christmas and at the end of the year, in which all pupils are able to participate. Pupils have opportunities to play recorders and a good number of pupils have additional lessons with visiting music teachers to learn instruments such as the violin, guitar and percussion. Pupils enjoy these sessions and feel they have a

positive impact on their skills' development. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

Physical education

97. Two physical education lessons were observed, which focused on dance and games skills. Both lessons were good, due to teachers' high expectations, and ongoing assessment of what pupils needed to develop, so that they improved. However, no overall judgement is made about teaching and learning due to the limited evidence. Nonetheless, it is important to note, that the school works hard to involve the pupils in a rich curriculum, which allows all abilities to flourish. For example, the school enters higher attaining pupils in many county competitions, and pupils often win cups and shields. All pupils enjoy widening their skills when they make a residential visit to 'The Wilderness Centre'. Overall, these factors combine to result in good achievement. The school makes the best use of the available accommodation, although the hall is cramped, especially for older pupils doing gymnastics.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiasm and very good practice of new coordinators.
- Good skills development leading to above average standards.
- Impact of special projects, such as Arts Week, on standards pupils achieve.
- Good links with other subjects.
- Sketchbooks not yet used consistently in all classes to develop skills.

98. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Similar standards were observed in the school's previous inspection. At this early stage of the year, there was limited evidence of completed work, but samples of work from the previous year and the lessons observed during the inspection showed that pupils are developing well their observational skills and their appreciation of line and texture. This was supported by the good part lesson observed in Year 2 where, as the result of careful guidance and well structured opportunities, pupils were developing their understanding and awareness of patterns in natural objects such as seed heads. Many of these pupils had good control of shape and line and were observing careful detail. They were able to transfer their original design in their sketchbooks and select from a range of activities how they might take their initial drawings further. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to use a range of media, including printing, collage and painting. Pupils, including those with SEN, develop their skills and understanding well, as a result of effective support and interesting and varied opportunities to develop their confidence.

99. Overall teaching and learning are good. This judgement is made on the one full and one part lesson seen during the inspection, discussions with pupils in Year 6 and analyses of pupils' work around the school. Only one full lesson and one part lesson were seen during the inspection. In an excellent Year 5 lesson the teacher guided the final session of a 'making' project to a very effective conclusion.

The teacher had carefully planned and created a stimulating physical environment, using autumn colour and a wide range of materials. Natural forms, such as seed heads, leaves and berries provided the focus for very well detailed observational drawings. Using her own enthusiasm and very good understanding of the subject the teacher encouraged pupils to analyse the processes used so far. This helped pupils to respond thoughtfully about their plans and intentions and how they were going to transfer their initial observational drawings onto a new medium, selecting materials and the next stages of their work. The teacher used very well focussed questioning and enthusiastic encouragement to help pupils create their own patterns and structures using a variety of techniques and media. She made very effective use of brief pauses during the session to identify good work, to reinforce significant teaching points and sustain her high expectations of pupils' work. As a result, all pupils were stimulated and interested in their work. By the end of the lesson they were well on the way to creating their own interpretations and designs. The teacher organised an effective plenary, which celebrated pupils' work, where they were able to identify what they felt had worked well and to consider how to improve on what they had done.

100. Discussions with pupils and analyses of their work indicate that teachers plan carefully for the development of pupils' skills and provide interesting activities, such as in Year 6 where pupils used information and communication technology to explore the work of Andy Warhol and to create their own images. Good use is made of links with other subjects in the curriculum to support pupils' skills in art and design. This is particularly effective in links such as those with design and technology where pupils developed their understanding of colour and pattern in the slipper design project. In personal and social education lessons pupils in Year 2 draw portraits of themselves and their families, and in history pupils in Year 3 develop their observational skill when they make detailed drawings of objects used by a Victorian household. Sketchbooks are not yet used consistently in all classes to develop ideas and skills progressively.

101. During Arts Week last year, the whole school worked with local artists. Pupils were able to work alongside sculptors, make Aztec masks, explore batik skills and develop art in nature around the village. Experiences of this quality have a significant impact on the standards pupils attain.

102. The coordinators in the subject are very new to the role but are very good practitioners and have enthusiasm and commitment. They have not yet had time to monitor standards or teaching but have established clear and useful priorities for the further development of the subject. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

103. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. No lessons were observed in this area but discussions with the coordinator indicate that the subject is carefully planned and covers all the required areas appropriately. The school is developing a Healthy Schools initiative and also independence and thinking skills programmes extending from Year 1. Circle time, a programme that develops emotional and social skills, is well established in all years and used as a forum to discuss ideas that are specific to the group and more wide ranging issues. In Year 2 pupils make a book about themselves which links effectively with their work in art and design on self portraits, and their writing and measuring in literacy and numeracy.

104. 'Golden Times', the reward for good behaviour and respect for others, on Friday afternoons is well supported by the local community who come and run a range of activities for pupils. The result of this programme is that pupils are increasingly able to work in groups and take responsibilities. All Year 6 have the opportunity to have a role on the school council. They have co-ordinated the wishes of pupils for the design of the new playground. Pupils are given responsibilities for tasks and the care of other pupils and take their responsibilities seriously. The school has encouraged healthy eating with the facility of a fruit shop and water bottles in

classrooms. Assemblies seen during the week of the inspection made a good contribution to this curriculum area.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

