

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRIST CHURCH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stroud

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115677

Headteacher: Mrs S McMurray

Lead inspector: Miss M A Warner

Dates of inspection: 13th – 14th July 2004

Inspection number: 255799

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	50
School address:	Chalford Stroud Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL6 8PP
Telephone number:	01453 882138
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Samuda
Date of previous inspection:	16th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Christ Church C of E Primary School in Chalford, near Stroud, with 50 pupils aged 4 to 11 on roll (including one part-time, Reception-aged place), is smaller than most schools nationally. The majority of children begin school with standards below, and sometimes well below, the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning. The socio-economic context of the school is favourable, with the majority of pupils coming from the village. The school also attracts a large number of pupils with special educational needs from outside the immediate catchment area, whose parents want a small school for their children. Movement in and out of the school occurs throughout the year. All Year 6 pupils in 2003 entered the school in Year 1, whereas only one third of the present Year 6 attended from Year 1, 50 per cent having joined the school in Year 4. The 13 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the 18 per cent national average. There are no pupils whose first language is not English. The 32 per cent of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well above the 18 per cent national average. The 2 per cent of pupils who have statements of special educational need is above the 1.6 per cent national

average. The school was awarded the Artsmark Award in 2002, and has recently been involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1728 8	M A Warner	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English; Information and Communication Technology; Geography; History; Music.
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Christ Church C of E Primary School is an effective school and gives good value for money. Standards overall are average across the school, and pupils achieve very well. Standards on entry are below average. There is a larger than average number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in the school, and support for them is very good. In this small school, the inclusion of all pupils in all that it provides is very good. The quality of teaching is good. The school has recently experienced a period of turbulence which has been stabilised very well over the last year.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is well led and managed and effectively governed.
- Pupils achieve very well in Reception to Year 5, and are achieving well in the current Year 6.
- Children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Pupils are very well cared for and relationships are very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- The governors have no long-term school improvement plan, and the short-term school improvement plan is not complete.
- The school has no whole-school policy on the curriculum.

This is an improving school, and has rapidly improved in important areas in the last year. Improvements have been made in all the issues raised in the last report. The teaching and provision of information and communication technology (ICT), and the quality of the accommodation, have improved satisfactorily. There have been substantial improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Satisfactory improvements have been made in the time pupils spend in writing and in investigative mathematics. Improvements in the progress children make in the Foundation Stage have been very good. Further improvements have been achieved in the teaching of science in Years 1 and 2, and in standards and provision in physical education across the school. The care and support for pupils' learning and development have substantially improved from satisfactory to very good. Science and art and design, in Years 3 to 6, are not as good as they were at the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	E	E*	E*
Mathematics	D	E	E	C
Science	A	E	C	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

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

Caution is needed when interpreting the data above as the number of pupils who took the tests was very small.

Overall, pupils achieve very well. **They achieve very well from Reception to Year 5, and they achieve well in Year 6. Children start their Reception Year with standards that are below average, and reach the learning goals set for children at the end of their Reception Year in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical and creative development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They exceed these goals in their personal, social and emotional development, and in physical development. Year groups are small, and the number of pupils with SEN varies between these year groups. Overall, standards are in line with national expectations in Years 1 to 5 and below average in Year 6. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average. In the current Year 6, standards are below average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Standards in Years 3 to 5 are average, and sometimes above, in English. Pupils achieve well science in Years 1 and 2 and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Pupils also achieve very well in athletics in Years 3 to 6. Differences in standards between boys and girls vary from year to year.**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. **Pupils have very good attitudes and they behave very well. This makes a strong contribution to their very good achievement. Attendance is average.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is also good; **especially good in Reception to Year 2, and good overall in Years 3 to 6. Planning is good overall and excellent in Reception to Year 2. Teachers show their strengths in the methods they use, and in their effective use of time. They have very good subject knowledge and work very productively with teaching and support assistants. Support staff are very clear about their roles and, quietly and efficiently, move from one group to another, teaching and giving support. As a result, equality of opportunity for all pupils is achieved. Pupils work collaboratively and independently very well. They listen very attentively and use the knowledge they have gained both in their verbal answers and in their written work. Assessment is very good for Reception-aged children and satisfactory, overall, across the rest of the school. However, there are areas which are unsatisfactory, such as in the assessment of pupils' skills in the foundation subjects. The breadth and balance of the curriculum is satisfactory, but the school has no overall curriculum policy to underpin the planning of future developments in each subject. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, especially for a small school. Good use is made of community expertise, especially in sport. The school takes very good care of its pupils, knows them well, and provides very good support and guidance. Pupils' views are sort and acted upon well. The school has good links with parents, the community and with other schools.**

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. **The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and staff are good, and the school is governed well.**

The headteacher, supported by her staff, has clarity of vision, a sense of purpose and high and relevant aspirations for moving the school forwards. Together, over the past year, governors, headteacher and staff have created a good ethos for learning, but their shared vision has not yet been formalised into a long-term school improvement plan. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 are very good and, as a result, a highly effective team has been created. The school complies with all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Most parents feel comfortable approaching the school, and appreciate the way their children are expected to work hard. Most appreciate the contribution made by the new headteacher in creating a more positive atmosphere in which boundaries are clearer to pupils and parents. A minority would appreciate better arrangements to hear and consider their views on a range of whole-school matters. Pupils like the encouragement and support provided by staff, who always make time for them. There is no matter on which there is a significant level of pupils' dissatisfaction.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- **Create a long-term strategic plan for the school and complete the existing short-term school improvement plan.**
- **Agree a curriculum policy so that subject leaders have a clearer view of how to develop their roles, their subjects and assessment procedures.**

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils achieve very well and reach average standards. Reception-aged children and pupils in Years 1 to 5 achieve very well, and pupils in Year 6 achieve well. Attainment on entry varies. At present, attainment on entry is below average. The school has a larger than average number of pupils with SEN. Numbers of pupils in the different year groups are too small to make any comparison between the achievement of boys and girls.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **Reception-aged children achieve very well and reach above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical development.**
- **Standards are above average in English in Year 2 and in athletics in Year 6.**
- **Pupils achieve very well in science in Years 1 and 2.**
- **Pupils achieve well in English and geography in Years 3 to 5, and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.**
- **Higher-attaining pupils in Year 5 and 6 achieve very well in ICT and music.**
- **In the current Year 6, standards are below average in English, science and geography.**

Commentary

1. The school has two classes. Reception-aged children and Years 1 and 2 pupils are taught by one class teacher with support from two part-time support staff, for pupils with SEN, and a full-time teaching assistant. Most lessons in this classroom begin and end with all years being taught together and they divide into their different year groups for the middle of each lesson. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught by the other class teacher, but Years 3 and 4 are taught separately for literacy and numeracy, by a very experienced part-time teacher in a third classroom each morning.

2. Children in Reception to pupils in Year 5 have made considerable progress since the new headteacher arrived last September. However, standard of pupils in Year 6 are still affected by the changes in leadership over the last few years and by the higher than average number of pupils with SEN this year group. Standards and achievement in this school are extremely complex because of the small numbers, together with the varying numbers of pupils with SEN, in year group, and the recent, past history of the school.

3. Standards are below average in all areas of learning when children start school, but by the end of their Reception Year the same children are reaching standards that are above average in their personal, social and emotional development, and in their physical development. They achieve very well in these two areas of learning. These

children are reaching average standards, and are achieving well, in the remaining four areas of learning. This is as a result of very good planning and teaching and the very good example set by pupils in Years 1 and 2, with whom they work. Reception-aged children show very good levels of confidence and work very well, independently and co-operatively. This applies equally to their work in class and to their physical activities outside. For example, when playing a parachute game, they travelled underneath it, from one side to the other, with high levels of confidence, control and co-ordination.

4. In 2003, standards in Year 2 were well above average in writing but below average in reading. In 2004, all pupils reached the expected Level 2 in both reading and writing, and one pupil reached the higher Level 3. Speaking and listening were not as strong, and not all the pupils reached the expected level.

5. In 2003, standards in Year 6 were low compared with results in schools nationally, and when compared with results in similar schools. In 2004 six pupils took the tests, including four with SEN. Three did not reach the expected Level 4 in writing, but one pupil reached the higher Level 5 in reading.

6. The current Year 2 pupils are achieving very well indeed in English, reaching above average standards. This is the result of very good teaching and the excellent teamwork of the adults involved; each with particular areas of expertise. Pupils achieve well in English in Years 3 to 5, but their speaking skills are not as well developed as other aspects of the subject. Regular reviews are helping to raise standards in writing. Literacy skills are promoted well in other subjects; for example, in design and technology, and in geography.

7. Pupils are achieving very well in mathematics in the current Year 2, reaching average standards. Pupils in Year 6 also achieve well and reach average standards. Pupils in all classes are taught very well, and this helps them to learn successfully and make good progress.

8. Pupils achieve very well in science in Years 1 and 2 as a result of very good teaching. In the class containing Years 3 to 6, however, all pupils carry out the same tasks. This restricts the range of opportunities which would enable the older and more able pupils to reach higher standards. Pupils' written and investigative work is under-developed.

9. Pupils who have SEN are excellently supported and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans (IEPs). Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from class to work individually or in a group, at other times support is given in class. Very good records are kept for these pupils, both on the progress made in a session, and on the overall progress made against the targets on their IEPs. The same degree of support is not always given to higher-attaining pupils, who equally need personal plans in this small school.

10. In Years 3 to 6, higher-attaining pupils achieve very well in ICT; for example, in control technology and when making animations. Higher-attaining pupils also

achieve very well in some aspects of music; for example, more-able pupils sing very well, as demonstrated in the video of nativity plays and a musical. They also create and perform their own musical compositions very well. Pupils achieve well in geography in Years 3 to 5, but standards are below average in Year 6. Pupils' achievement in history is below that of other subjects across the school. The very good subject knowledge of athletics' coach, results in above average standards in athletics in all classes. Pupils achieve very well in this subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils show very positive attitudes towards school and to their work in lessons. Their behaviour is very good, underpinned by very good relationships with their peers and with adults. Pupils' behaviour has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils' personal qualities are well developed: their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, overall, is good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' attitudes towards school and to their work are very good.
- Pupils' are very well behaved and relationships between pupils are very good.
- Pupils' personal qualities are well developed: their moral and social development is very good, and their spiritual and cultural development is good.

Commentary

11. Nearly all pupils are proud of their school and enjoy attending. School plays an important part in their lives. For example, a group of pupils ranked school ahead of hobbies, on a par with friends and only behind family, in a list of the important things in their lives. The key features that influence pupils' very positive attitudes to school, are friendships with other pupils, and the way adults encourage and care for them. Pupils also realise that being in a small school contributes to the strong sense of community that prevails here. In most lessons, they listen very well and show very good levels of interest, concentration and determination to complete set tasks. Pupils respond particularly well when expectations are high, lesson tasks are demanding and they are able to engage in a variety of practical activities. Discussions with pupils confirm that they particularly enjoy practical lessons, especially art and design, design and technology and physical education.

12. Behaviour has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Rules are clear and fair. Pupils know that they will be dealt with firmly but fairly if they engage in any form of anti-social behaviour. Nearly all pupils are very keen not to let down their teachers or themselves. For example, older ones talk about the sense of responsibility they feel to set a good example for younger pupils. The very good and reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils is a key element in the very positive atmosphere for learning and social development that now prevails. Pupils and parents confirm that rare incidents of bullying or other anti-social behaviour are now taken very seriously and rapidly resolved by staff. One exclusion has occurred during the past year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Asian
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
42
2
2
1
3

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	1
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

13. Very harmonious relationships among pupils are a very positive feature of the school, irrespective of background, attainment level or gender. Teachers value pupils' work and consistently praise effort and good work. As a result, from an early age pupils are comfortable asking questions and seeking help from teachers. This significantly assists their learning.

14. By the end their Reception Year, most children exceed the Early Learning Goal related to their personal, social and emotional development. Allowing for their age, a significant majority of pupils in all classes are noticeably calm, happy and consistently well mannered. As a result, teachers are able to rely on the majority of pupils to work sensibly in groups during lessons. Across the full range of subjects, most lessons contribute very well to pupils' moral and social development. Pupils

take responsibility for themselves and others in a sensible way. The school's use of 'Circle Time', when pupils share their feelings and concerns, is an important contributing factor to pupils' very good social development. Pupils' self-esteem and confidence are also positive features. Nearly all pupils have a very well developed sense of right and wrong. They hold the rewards system in high regard and fully support the school's use of sanctions. Pupils talk of the confidence they gain from teachers, who treat them as more grown-up as they get older. Nearly all pupils show respect and care for others. For example, they hold doors open for adults and are kind to peers who are feeling unwell or left out. Older pupils exercise responsibility for themselves and others in a sensible way. When questioned in groups, pupils listen attentively and with respect to different views expressed by others.

15. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, together with good opportunities to sing and pray in assemblies, and reflect in lessons, make important contributions to their spiritual development. For example, their appreciation of the natural world was evident in their writing after looking at slides and listened to music, when learning about rivers in geography. They also express their feelings and responses through poetry. Pupils' understanding of their own culture is very good, aided significantly by direct involvement in local church and village events. There are positive features in pupils' multi-cultural development, including a study of the beliefs of the major world faiths in religious education. However, the school does not use a full range of opportunities to develop pupils' multi-cultural awareness through, for example, its artwork and programme of visits.

16. Attendance has been broadly in line with the national average in recent years. The table below provides attendance and absence data for the latest complete reporting year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003.

17. The school's procedures to monitor absence and promote high attendance are good. A key measure is the first day contact with home in the event of unexplained absence. As a result, parents clearly understand the importance that school places on attendance, and most parents contact the school in the event of absence. Punctuality is satisfactory. Most pupils arrive on time for school and settle to work prior to registration. However, a small minority of parents are still arriving during registration, and this leaves some of their children somewhat anxious and unready for learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Strengths are in the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning across the school, provision for pupils with SEN, the support and guidance of all pupils and in the range of extra-curricular

activities provided. There are also good links with parents, the community and with other schools. A major weakness is in the lack of a whole-school curriculum policy from which subjects can be developed.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is very good in Reception to Year 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is satisfactory, overall, and very good in the Foundation Stage, but unsatisfactory in science and the foundation subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers plan well, and the planning and organisation of Years 1 and 2 are excellent.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge, and use an extensive range of methods to help pupils learn.
- Teachers and support assistants work as very effective teams, and time is used very well.
- There is very good equality of opportunity for all pupils, and those pupils with SEN are taught very well.
- Teaching in lessons is better than is reflected in pupils' work.
- Not enough time is planned to produce work of consistently good quality in Year 5 and 6.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent.
- Pupils listen very well and work successfully in groups and independently.
- Assessment is very thorough in Reception and for literacy across the school.
- Assessment of science and foundation subjects is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

18. Teachers plan lessons well across the school. The planning and organisation of Reception and Years 1 and 2 are excellent. As a result, pupils of all ages are provided for very well, and their ability to learn is very good. In Years 3 and 4 mathematics lessons are planned very well with clear learning objectives. These objectives are shared with pupils and have a positive impact on their capacity to learn and the standards they achieve. In Years 3 to 6, the planning of the twice-weekly carousel, including design and technology, ICT, music and handwriting, is very successful, and enables pupils of all ages and levels of attainment to work at their own level.

19. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, and use a good range of methods to help pupils to learn. For example, in mathematics, teachers have a very good command of the subject and use technical vocabulary and resources particularly well to support the pupils' learning. In English, in Year 3 to 6, the teacher uses a good range of resources, including individual white boards, the interactive screen and the computer, in order to write an e-mail. This approach keeps pupils interested, and demonstrates how to write for a particular purpose. Teachers have good ICT skills and use them effectively.

20. Teachers and teaching assistants work as very effective teams, and time is used very well. These features are particularly good in Reception and Years 1 and 2, where all adults move from one activity to another as the lesson progresses, often enabling the class teacher to spend time with a group and then move on, while the first group is then supported by the teaching assistant. The support of pupils with SEN by two teachers is also very effective in this class. Good integration of a pupil with a statement is arranged; with the result that very good progress is made. In a Years 3 to 6 carousel lesson of design and technology, ICT, music and handwriting, adults worked very effectively together, with the technician making a significant contribution to extending pupils' ICT skills. In all lessons the pace is good, and time is used very well. A literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4 was particularly well paced.

21. There is very good equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school has assessed and identified the needs of the pupils with SEN very well. They are given excellent support by the SEN teacher, who keeps detailed records of their progress which she shares with the class teachers and the headteacher. These pupils are taught in withdrawal groups or supported in class, as their needs require. In most year groups the higher-attaining pupils are challenged well, often working with the year above them. However, small numbers of higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 do not have this advantage and provision for their needs has not been sufficiently identified. Within the class situation, however, the class teacher meets their needs in the best way possible, but further consideration as to how individuals can be best challenged is needed.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	9	3	0	0	0	0

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

22. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good, but the quality of teaching and learning, as reflected in pupils' books, is only satisfactory. This reflects the fact that teaching has improved over the year, and is confirmed in records of visits by the local educational authority advisor. However, marking is inconsistent, and is not used well to show pupils how they can improve. In Years 5 and 6, work often remains in draft, with insufficient time given to pupils to edit and produce work of good quality. The reverse is true in English in Years 3 and 4, however, where the presentation of pupils' work is particularly good. In history, pupils have little to show for their studies.

23. Pupils listen and concentrate well throughout the school, and work successfully in groups and independently. For example, in mathematics there is a good balance of opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. They work well in groups in design and technology when they make fairground rides and evaluate them, and in music when they work together at composition. A very successful group project was the ICT animation, worked at by a group of pupils in their break-times. No opportunities were observed for pupils to work independently at research in the library, but individual research was evident in one boy's study of the Nile.

24. Assessment of Reception-aged children is very thorough, and has been instrumental in moving these children forward this year. Assessment of pupils with SEN is also very good, and identifies clearly where each pupil needs support. Individual education plans (IEPs) are very well written and clearly show the small steps that need to be taken. Assessment is used well in literacy and is satisfactory in mathematics. Questioning is used well in class at the start and end of lessons, to measure pupils' degree of understanding. A particular strength in Years 5 and 6 is the review that is carried out regularly with individual pupils, showing them what they need to do next to improve their literacy skills. This also takes place in mathematics, but is less successful because targets are too long-term. The school has data on pupils' achievements in literacy and mathematics over a number of years, but it is not in a form that can easily be used to track individual pupils' progress, or to measure the value added by the school. Assessment of science and the foundation subjects is unsatisfactory. The school has not yet focused on these subjects, but has identified this as an area in need of improvement. The development of science, as a core subject, is an urgent priority.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum but includes both strengths and weaknesses. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory across the rest of the school. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **Provision for pupils with SEN is very good in all classes.**
- **There is a very good match between the teachers and support staff and the needs of the curriculum.**
- **The range of extra-curricular activities is good, especially for a small school.**
- **The school has no curriculum policy to underpin future developments.**
- **Book resources need updating.**

Commentary

25. The school provides very well for pupils with SEN; the very good quality of teaching enables them to access the school's curriculum successfully who access the curriculum with success. All pupils, therefore, are included in all that the school provides.

26. Although it is a small school, some teachers and support staff are part-time, and this provides a wider level of expertise than might otherwise be available. Specialist expertise is not always fully exploited, art is an example, but very good use is made of specialist contributions from the community in sport and music. Pupils are taught the violin by a peripatetic teacher, and ICT is supported by the visiting technician. Pupils regularly take part in a nativity play or, most recently, the musical 'Oliver'. They also took part in the Primary Schools' Dance Festival at Cheltenham. The pupils are very well served for a small school.

27. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy a lunch-time choir led by the chair of governors, athletic activities led by a sports coach, an ICT club supported by the technician, and a young journalists' club. Local visits are made, and much enjoyed, which link with the taught curriculum and, for Years 3 to 6, a residential visit to Brecon following an historical theme is organised.

28. Whilst the curriculum is satisfactory overall, the school has no curriculum policy, based on an agreed philosophy. This makes it difficult for subject leaders to develop their subjects to whole-school criteria, or for parents to understand how subjects are taught. Over the last year, literacy, mathematics and ICT have been developed well. Science and the foundation subjects have not been discussed, but meet basic National Curriculum requirements. National guidance is followed, but the school has no schemes of work which meet the needs of the school in its own context, and which clearly show how pupils' skills are to be developed and assessed in each age group in these mixed-aged classes. As a result, standards depend too heavily up on the outcome of a given task, rather than the progressive development of skills.

29. Resources overall are adequate, but book resources are in need of updating, particularly in the library, where many are old and worn, and for guided reading where there are a limited number of sets. The range of fiction books that appeal to higher-attaining boys in Year 6 is also limited. Whilst the ICT curriculum can now be taught using the hardware and software available, opportunities for pupils to use their skills are limited by the number of computers in the school. Plans are in place to improve the ratio of computers to pupils over the next few years.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares very well for its pupils. Pupils are given very good support, advice and guidance. There are good measures to involve pupils in the school's work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **The school cares very well for its pupils.**
- **Support, advice and guidance are available at all times.**
- **The school monitors the support and guidance of pupils very well.**
- **The school regards the views of pupils as important to its work.**

30. Staff know pupils very well. If there are concerns, teachers and other staff, including outside specialists, work very closely with pupils and their parents to identify the cause, and how the concerns can be overcome. They act quickly if a pupil is unhappy or under pressure, and are careful to make sure new arrivals are helped to settle in quickly. As a result, the pupils' survey confirms that they feel they are fairly treated and have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults. Levels of minor accidents are low in the playground. First aid and health and safety arrangements are in place, as are arrangements for child protection and for 'looked after' children. Parents justifiably talk about the high quality of care, which is based on the staff's underlying belief in treating each pupil as an individual. Pupils talk very positively about the way staff make time for them if they have a problem or concern.

31. The monitoring of pupils' achievements is thorough and effectively shared with pupils. Good attitudes, good work, and achievements outside school, are all recognised and celebrated in assemblies. Older pupils say that teachers expect them to behave in a more grown up way as they move through school, and they do. Staff discuss the outcomes of tests with pupils, and marking sometimes provides helpful suggestions on how their work can be improved. Constructive marking of this kind, however, is inconsistent. Individual targets are used very well to support pupils' personal development, and their academic progress in English and mathematics. For example, pupils are involved in termly reviews of these targets.

32. The very positive relationships between pupils and their teachers create a very positive atmosphere in which to hear pupils' views. Pupils in all year groups create a set of class rules at the start of the school year. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and 'Circle Time', where pupils share their feelings and concerns, is a well-established feature. The school council has a very positive impact on various aspects of school life. It has been influential in improving behaviour and the choice of play equipment, including a beautifully designed 'buddy bench' to support pupils who are feeling lonely or upset. The views of pupils are effectively sought about the progress they have made towards their targets. However, the views of groups of pupils do not yet form part of subject reviews. Not surprisingly, survey returns show that the great majority of pupils agree with the statement that the 'school listens to their ideas'.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents make a good contribution to the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. Links with the wider community also make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **There are good links with parents, including good information about pupils' progress.**
- **Parents contribute significantly to the successful partnership.**
- **Visitors to the school and visits outside, including church and community links, contribute well to pupils' personal development.**

- **Links with the local cluster of small schools and the main secondary school make an important contribution.**

Commentary

33. Teachers are accessible and approachable. They listen and address parents' questions or concerns about their children. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through parents' evenings and good quality written annual reports. The reports helpfully identify areas for improvement, and include space for parents' comments. There are, however, no systematic references to the effort levels pupils are making, or a simple indication of how pupils are getting on by national standards. Termly curriculum information gives parents a clear outline of what pupils are learning. The school has sought parents' views on specific issues such as access to water and protection from the sun. The headteacher plans to increase parental involvement through surveys to establish how they would like to help the school, and what they consider to be the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This is important; as a significant, small group of parents do not consider that the school currently seeks their views effectively on a range of whole school issues. There are established procedures to address parental complaints. The inspection survey reveals a very high level of satisfaction with what the school provides and achieves.

34. Parents of nearly all pupils attend the parents' evenings. Through the Parent Teacher and Friends' Association (PTFA), parents organise successful fundraising events, which have helped fund playground equipment and canopies for sun protection. These events also contribute to pupils' personal development, and the very good sense of community, as staff, parents and pupils are all involved.

35. The school plays an important part in village life. For example, the choir accompanies a group of local singers in summer and Christmas performances. Pupils contribute to the local newspaper. There are very strong links with Stroud Athletics Club, in which a significant proportion of the pupils train and compete. There are close links with the local church. Pupils attend carol and Easter services and benefit from the use of the church as a resource in religious education. The new vicar plans to take assemblies on a regular basis. Visits and visitors, such as theatre groups, contribute significantly to pupils' personal development. Pupils take part in a range of collections and sponsored events for charity. Pupils' participation in athletics and swimming events provide an additional understanding of the local area, whilst developing their sense of competition and fair play.

36. The school is an active member of the local small-schools' cluster. Regular meetings between the headteachers are leading to common approaches to some issues, and the sharing of good practice on issues such as self-evaluation and workforce reform. There are effective links

with the main feeder nursery and playgroups. There are good pastoral links with the high school to which most pupils transfer. Curriculum links do not include any bridging units in English and mathematics to support an effective academic transition. Pupils' artwork forms part of the display organised by the Stroud pyramid of schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. **The school is governed effectively, with the governors having regular informative contacts with the school. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher, with good support from teachers and support staff. The headteacher, supported by her staff, has clarity of vision, a sense of purpose and high and relevant aspirations for moving the school forwards. Good management structures and procedures support the every-day work of the school, and the application of best value principles is good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **The headteacher, governors, teachers and support staff, including the administrative secretary, all makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.**
- **The governing body supports and challenges the school well.**
- **Staff work very well as effective teams, making a good contribution to the leadership and management of the school.**
- **There are good systems in place for the school's self-evaluation and its use.**
- **There is a very effective performance management system, supported by good induction procedures and a good commitment to staff training and development.**
- **Day-to-day financial management is good and best value principles are applied well.**
- **Budgeting identifies well the main immediate resource priorities of the school.**
- **Governors have no long-term strategic plan based on the stated aims and values of the school.**
- **The school improvement plan does not yet cover all subjects of the curriculum.**
- **The headteacher, supported by the recent appointment of subject leaders, is starting effectively to discern the developmental needs of all subjects.**

Commentary

37. The headteacher, newly appointed to the school in September 2003, assisted well by her staff, has successfully established a team who are committed to making good provision for the all-round development of pupils. She has a good sense of vision for further developments. This has resulted in an improvement in the level of resources, and an upgrading in the accommodation enjoyed by the school. The governors work well with the headteacher, and challenge and support developments in the school in a positive manner. A good committee structure ensures that new initiatives and proposals from the headteacher receive constructive challenge, and that the appropriate monitoring and review systems are always used.

38. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. Her vision is shared and understood by all, and followed with commitment and enthusiasm by all the staff with the best needs of the pupils in mind. Staff across the school understand their roles well. They work effectively as a team, and are committed to running an inclusive school that enables most pupils to make the best of their abilities. Unfortunately, pupils of higher ability are not always sufficiently identified and challenged through the school's assessment procedures.

39. Procedures to collect and analyse the school's performance are usually carried out effectively. The school's priorities for development are secure and are relevant to the needs of the pupils. Teaching and learning is regularly monitored in literacy and numeracy. In other subjects monitoring and evaluation is just starting to take place, following the appointment of subject leaders. The school improvement plan (SIP) does not include all subjects of the curriculum. There are sound performance management procedures. These effectively support the relevant identified developments in the SIP. The school is committed to staff development, and the training undertaken matches well the needs of teachers and support staff and the requirements of the school.

40. The curriculum is led and managed well by the headteacher. Because of the small number of teachers employed, the headteacher has taken on many of the curriculum responsibilities herself. As new appointments are made she is allocating responsibilities to the teachers supporting them with on-going training. There are very good lines of communication between all staff. Staff qualifications and expertise are matched well to the needs of the curriculum, but action plans, to a common format, have not yet been written for all subjects. The leadership of the curriculum by key staff is satisfactory. The headteacher and chair of governors understand the need to complete the school improvement plan, addressing all subjects and their resource needs, and intend to do this in the near future with an updated school improvement plan.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	212,941.08
Total expenditure	216,241.88
Expenditure per pupil	4,324.83

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19,180.00
Balance carried forward to the next	16,059.00

41. The school achieves its educational objectives well because it has a good approach to financial management. Day-to-day finances are managed well by the headteacher, ably assisted by an administrative secretary, with over-sight from the chair of the governors' finance committee. There has been no recent formal audit, but frequent checks are made by the financial officers of the local educational authority. The principles of best value are well established in all spending decisions. These are tracked and monitored well by the governors. The school handles its finances very well, with a small surplus carried forward from year to year. The effective way that the school budgets, enables all spending areas to be well resourced. There have been

considerable improvements made in the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. This has been greatly assisted by the governor's decision that the headteacher should not be given a teaching work load until the past problems facing the school are overcome. The other problems discerned by the monitoring of provision by officers of the local education authority, between the last inspection and her appointment, are now being addressed well. However, a long-term strategic plan of development has not yet been created.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **The Reception-aged children achieve very well in all the six areas of learning.**
- **Overall, the quality of teaching and learning are very good.**
- **The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are excellent.**
- **Reception-aged children are very well supported by experienced support staff. The class teacher and support staff work very well together.**
- **Reception-aged children benefit very well from working alongside older Year 1 and Year 2 pupils.**
- **Assessment is very well used to track the children's progress and to plan the next stage of their learning.**
- **The accommodation is cramped, and there is insufficient space and provision outside for the use of large play apparatus.**

Commentary

42. At the time of the inspection there were seven children of Reception age. They are taught with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils at the start and end of most lessons, but are given well- planned time on their own during most lessons. Under the guidance of the class teacher, and supported by an experienced support assistant, the children are able to cover the six areas of learning. Their progress in these sessions is very well recorded, and is used to plan for the children's future needs. The attainment of the children when they start school is below average. By the end of the Reception Year their progress has been rapid: they attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning, and exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. The children achieve very well in all the areas of learning.

43. The Reception-aged children benefit greatly from working alongside older pupils, in particular for their social and emotional development and physical development, and also for the development of their speaking and listening skills. At the start and end of every lesson they are involved in answering questions, carefully adapted to their levels of understanding. They respond well with confidence, listening carefully and articulating their answers clearly in sentences. Opportunities for role-play, and social and physical interaction with the older pupils, greatly benefit their progress. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Encouragement and engagement of the children, and insistence on high standards of behaviour, are excellent. The use of teaching assistants and other support is likewise excellent. The children show positive attitudes to all their tasks and are very enthusiastic learners. Their work is well presented and effectively assessed by staff.

44. Because of the constraints of the accommodation, the Reception-aged children have to share the main play area of the school. This is on a sloping site and restricts the use of large toys. A small, more level, grassed area sustains a limited amount of activity with large play equipment, but the space is far from ideal for the youngest children. The governors, aware of this shortfall, are actively considering how this problem can be overcome.

45. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are excellent. The teacher in charge is newly qualified and is new to the school, but for many years, before qualifying as a teacher, she worked as a nursery nurse with children at the Foundation Stage. Her expertise,

supported by the school, and excellent teamwork, has been very significant in raising the overall standard of the Foundation Stage. This is a very considerable improvement since the last inspection, when the children only made sound progress. Their progress is now very good.

46. In the area of personal, social and emotional development, the children learn and achieve well, supported by very good teaching. The presence of the older Year 1 and Year 2 pupils sets them very good examples of how to respond and behave. The children are confident when they tackle their work, and make appropriate choices and decisions. They work independently and co-operatively as required. They listen very carefully, successfully responding, taking turns and sharing resources. The Reception-aged children are secure and very happy learners.

47. Supported by very good teaching, the children achieve well in developing their communication, language and literacy skills. Speaking and listening are very well developed through careful questioning, and with the language used being carefully structured to meet the children's assessed needs. By the end of their Reception Year, the children have a very good appreciation of books, and understand that print and writing convey meaning. They join in well, sharing words and phrases that can be used in stories and poems. They enjoy displaying their writing skills by writing their names and forming words and simple sentences. They enjoy using their phonic skills to spell out words, using the sound of the letters to construct their words. During the inspection, they displayed their confidence in using their literacy skills when working alongside the older pupils from Year 1 and Year 2. In their role-play they displayed emotions, and confidently used words such as 'happy', 'sad', 'smile' and 'frown', and then used them in sentences such as, 'I am frowning' in an appropriate context. They could also read some of the words on display. The co-operation and teamwork between them and the older pupils was particularly effective when they presented and acted out their developed roles to the whole class. The children have their own reading books which they take home frequently, and have very good access to a wide range of resources to further promote their skills in reading.

48. The children achieve very well in their mathematical development, supported by very good teaching. By the end of their Reception Year, the children have a good understanding and knowledge of number. They recognise numerals, and count up to and beyond 20 with confidence and accuracy. They recognise coins up to 10 pence. They recognise that, when telling the time, the hour hand is the short hand and the minute hand is the long hand. They recognise and name the numbers on the clock and know which are the larger and which the smaller numbers. Opportunities are found for the children to develop mathematical concepts through exploration. They learn through first-hand experiences with sand and water play.

49. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is very good by the time they transfer to Year 1. Teaching is good overall, with the children having many opportunities to be involved in activities carefully matched to their respective needs, and taught separately as a group after a whole class introduction. During the inspection the whole class, including pupils from Year 1 and Year 2, were exploring how plants and animals can be the same and yet different. After a very carefully

structured introduction by the class teacher, with her questioning very carefully matched to the three different age groups of pupils, the Reception-aged children went outside with the support assistant to find and discuss a range of plants and animals they could see in the grassed areas around the school. Planning and previous samples show work that is related to looking at their own families to find out about past and present events in their own lives; and to identify features in the places they live, and what they like and dislike in their environment. Religious education is taught regularly, with prayers led by older pupils or the children themselves. The children have relevant resources for the use of ICT with suitably modified equipment, such as a large mouse, to enable them to access the range of available software, which they do with surprisingly high levels of understanding.

50. Despite the limitations of the site on which the school is situated, and the lack of access to large wheeled toys and other large apparatus, the children achieve very well in their physical activities. This is due to careful planning and very good teaching. Existing resources are used effectively to meet the children's needs. In the small grassed area there is a suitable climbing frame which gives the children opportunities to climb and to travel over, under and around the apparatus. In the classroom there are resources which give the children a range of opportunities to handle tools, and to construct objects using resistant and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. All the children are taught by a qualified athletics' coach who attends the school regularly to take them for a wide range of gymnastic and athletic activities. During the inspection the children responded well to a parachute game where they had to exchange places on command, or according to a colour that was called out. They showed very good handling of the parachute to control a rolling ball, passing it from one to the other across the top of the parachute. When getting under the parachute to travel to the other side they moved with confidence, control and co-ordination.

51. Supported by very good teaching, the children achieve very well in their creative development. Due to the expertise and skill of the class teacher, resources are appropriately available within the classroom. They are organised in such a way that children have regular access to them throughout the day, where they are either guided by the teacher or left to work more freely, according to choice. The class teacher is aware of their needs. Many opportunities are given for them to use paints and a range of modelling materials. During inspection, the children painted what they had observed when examining insects and plants in the school grounds, using a finger painting technique. Others enjoyed making three-dimensional models of butterflies and bees, using dough. One child said, when he made a model larger than the others, 'This is a mummy bee'. Work by artists, and people from different cultures, are examined. There is a full range of percussion and other instruments for the children to play, and to use for composing their own music.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good, but book provision is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **Standards in Year 2 are above average and pupils achieve very well.**
- **Planning for literacy is good, and team work is excellent.**
- **Book resources are unsatisfactory.**
- **Pupils' speaking skills are not as well developed as other aspects of the subject.**
- **Teaching and learning are very good in Years 1 to 4 and are good in Years 5 and 6.**
- **Regular reviews help to raise standards well.**
- **Literacy skills are used well in other subjects, especially in Years 3 to 6.**

Commentary

52. In 2003, standards in Year 2 were well above average in writing, but below average in reading. In 2004, all pupils reached the expected Level 2 in both reading and writing, and one pupil reached the higher Level 3. Speaking and listening was not as strong; not all pupils reached the expected level. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average. Teaching is very good and pupils achieve very well. Work over the year shows that higher- and average-attaining pupils reach above average standards, and lower-attaining pupils reach just below average standards.

53. The number of Year 6 pupils (three) taking the National Curriculum tests in 2003 was very small. Standards were low compared with those of similar schools, and when compared with schools nationally. In 2004 six pupils took the tests, four of whom were pupils with SEN. Three pupils did not reach the expected Level 4 in writing, but one pupil reached the higher Level 5 in reading.

54. Planning for literacy, both medium and short term, has considerably improved, and is now very good. The local education authority's literacy consultant has been instrumental in this. Teachers now plan well for different age groups and for pupils at different levels of attainment. The Derbyshire planning kit has been adopted. The lesson with the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2 was very successful, with all age groups taught at the start and end of the lesson at levels appropriate to each group of pupils. They then worked with their own age group at tasks which challenged them well. During the first part of the lesson, Reception-aged children with SEN were taught separately by the SEN teacher. The children enjoyed and benefited from the special attention given to them, and were taught about letter sounds. Year 1 and 2 continued with their lesson before dividing into two groups. The management of this lesson was excellent, with pupils with SEN excellently supported, and higher-attaining pupils given more challenging tasks. As a result, all pupils were highly motivated and made very good progress at their own level. The success of this lesson was due, not only to excellent planning, but also to the excellent team work of the adults who went quietly from one tasks to another, as previously planned, fully aware of their different roles.

55. More-able readers in Year 2 reach above average standards while those in Year 6 reach only average standards. There is a lack of books to interest boys in Year 6. Many of the books in the school are old and need to be replaced, particularly non-fiction books in the library. The number of sets of books for guided reading is also limited. Overall, book resources are unsatisfactory.

56. Pupils listen well in all classes, but unlike the younger children, speaking skills are not as well developed, and many pupils answer hesitantly and quietly when asked questions. In a literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils were reminded how they should stand when speaking to an audience. However, few pupils actually use their voices so that they can be heard, either in class or in assembly. In the video seen of school productions, a few pupils speak very well, but the majority do not have a spoken part. All, however, take part and these productions contribute very well to pupils' social skills and are of good quality. The most recent one 'Oliver' was well acted, well sung and much enjoyed, especially by the main characters. They contribute well to pupils' work in drama and music.

57. Standards in the current Years 3 to 5 are average and sometimes above average in English, but in Year 6 they are below average. Groups are small and the number of pupils with SEN varies between groups. Standards between boys and girls vary from year to year. While standards remain around average, and sometimes above or below, pupils achieve very well from Reception to Year 5 and they achieve well in Year 6. Years 3 to 6, who are normally taught all together, are taught in two groups for literacy and numeracy: Years 3 and 4 are taught by a part-time teacher, and Years 5 and 6 by their class teacher. This is a successful arrangement. In Years 3 and 4, pupils reach above average standards in much of their work, and it is often re-drafted and well presented. Year 3 understand how to use collective nouns and have written books of very imaginative poems. The quality of pupils' writing is above average in the class book of giant stories. Year 4 write at length, using paragraphs successfully. Overall, pupils in Years 3 and 4 produce a range of work of good quality of above average standard. Their handwriting and presentation skills are very good, and good use is made of ICT, as seen in pupils' folders and their class books. In the lesson observed teaching and learning were very good and pupils achieved very well.

58. In the lesson observed in Years 5 and 6, teaching and learning were also good, and pupils achieved well, reaching average standards. In this lesson pupils were writing about their recent visit to the local sewage works. Lower-attaining pupils achieved well with extra support both from the class teacher and SEN teacher. The higher-attaining pupil had advanced ideas and was keen to put them forward, but lacked the competition of others of his age and ability with whom to discuss and test out his ideas. Working with higher-attaining pupils of a younger age meets his needs to a limited degree, but the school has not fully considered the needs of isolated higher-attaining pupils in Years 6, and whether joint provision with other small schools could be a way forward to challenge and support these pupils better. The higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils in Year 5 reach above, and sometimes well above, average standards and produce thoughtful work. This reflective work was seen, for example, in work about Wordsworth's 'Daffodils'. Work is well presented and of good quality. The subject contributes well to pupils' cultural

development. Lower-attaining pupils make steady progress, but their standards remain below average. Marking is satisfactory, overall, but incorrect grammar is not always corrected. Marking of lower-attaining pupils' work is helpful. The standard of work in Years 5 and 6, by pupils of all levels of attainment, is often higher for an assessment task than it is for work in other lessons. This is particularly so for the higher-attaining Year 6 pupil, and indicates a degree of under-achievement. However, work over the year shows that pupils have learned to put forward a balanced argument, planning and arguing it well, and there is evidence of very good descriptive writing, such as on Scrooge. Report writing is also good and well constructed. Lower-attaining pupils make steady progress with the help of constructive marking, but their spelling causes them problems.

59. The teaching of handwriting, in a lesson where different subjects are taught in a 'carousel' arrangement, is very successful in Years 3 to 6. Whilst four groups alternate between design and technology, music, ICT and handwriting, the pupils working at handwriting are in a group small enough to be given individual attention; this helps them to practice what needs particular improvement in their own handwriting.

60. A particular strength in English is the regular detailed assessing and reviewing of pupils' work, which is helping to raise standards. These reviews are carried out with each pupil to identify their strengths, and to show them what they need to do to improve. The subject is very well led and managed and standards are rising.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Literacy is used well across a range of subjects. Skills learned in literacy lessons were used well in history and geography when pupils wrote newspaper articles about the mill workers' strike in Victorian times, and described the flowing of a river from the source in the mountains to the sea. Literacy skills are used when evaluating design and technology models. In a geography lesson, literacy was used to create a first draft, but not enough time was planned to improve skills and raise attainment through editing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weakness:

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good across the school.
- Pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 their achievement is good.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to their work.
- Pupils are not always clear what they need to do to improve.
- The use of ICT is developing well.

Commentary

62. With the very small number of pupils in each year group, it is difficult to make a reliable judgement on standards compared with the national average. Because of these small numbers standards vary widely from year to year. Compared with similar schools, pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2003 attained average standards. By the end of Year 6 they were well below average. Very few pupils attained the higher levels. In the yet to be validated 2004 tests, standards by the end of Year 2 are average, but are below average by the end of Year 6, where four out of the six pupils taking the tests had SEN. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils are achieving well by the end of Year 2 and achieve average standards. Pupils by the end of Year 6 do not achieve as well, but they attain average standards. This is because they are well supported by very good teaching as they

move through the school, and they learn well. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress. Pupils with SEN, well supported by teachers and support staff, achieve as well as their classmates. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, when they were average across the school.

63. In Year 2, pupils are working within the expected range for their age, developing a knowledge and understanding of place value and recalling addition and number facts to at least 10. They recognise number patterns and effectively use a range of appropriate strategies to solve number problems. For example, older pupils showed a good understanding of time and understood the meaning of 'half past', 'quarter to' and 'quarter past'. They successfully counted forward in tens and fives. In another lesson they measured hand spans in centimetres, and showed an understanding of what meters are. Other work shows them recognising shapes and being able to measure a range of articles, recording their evidence by tallying and the use of bar charts and graphs. As they move through the school the same good range of work covers all the four attainment targets for mathematics. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the lack of time spent on investigative work was a key issue. Their speed and range of mental calculations has increased, together with their ability to solve increasingly difficult problems. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, the pupils displayed considerable ability when using simple fractions. They understood what the decimal equivalents of the fractions were, and used them in their calculations. In a Year 5 and 6 class, the pupils could find pairs of factors of numbers up to 100 and beyond with confidence and accuracy. They could make relevant statements about odd and even numbers, identify number patterns and list relationships, such as in the properties of squares.

64. The school has invested in suitable software for computers. Pupils use them to practice their numeracy skills and interpret data. The present provision of two computers in each classroom means that pupils have to take turns when using them.

65. The quality of teaching and learning was very good in all lessons observed and in all age groups. Strengths include:

- * Very well planned lessons, that have clear learning objectives that are shared well with pupils, have a positive impact on pupils' learning and standards.
- * Teachers' very good command of the subject, very good use of mathematical vocabulary, and well-prepared resources support pupils' learning successfully.
- * Teaching challenges the pupils and holds their interest.
- * Questioning is very well used to check pupils' progress and aid their thinking.
- * Very good evaluations are carried out as the pupils progress with their work.
- * Teachers' very good balance of activities and use of time gives pupils opportunities for independent and collaborative learning.
- * Very good plenary sessions further test and consolidate the pupils' understanding.

66. The school successfully adopts the National Numeracy Strategy. It also uses a commercial scheme, which ensures that all the attainment targets are fully covered, and which is used as a useful basis for assessment. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory. Targets are shared with pupils regarding what they need to do to improve, but these are usually long term and pupils are unsure what to do to improve from lesson to lesson. The quality of marking is variable and does not often indicate to pupils how they can improve. When it does, the comments made by the teacher are infrequently followed up by the pupils. Resources are satisfactory. There is good knowledgeable and innovative leadership by the subject leader, but she has not yet been given time to monitor and evaluate the teaching of the subject across the school. The governor with a responsibility for the subject visits frequently. He has seen lessons taught and reported back to the governors with a written report.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Pupils often use mathematics effectively as part of their work in other subjects. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in science and geography, and to measure materials in design and technology. The opportunities are appropriately planned for as part of their on-going work. The purchase of relevant mathematical software for ICT has considerably extended the range of opportunities for pupils to use mathematics across the curriculum, and provides good opportunities to extend and consolidate their skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good in Year 1 and 2. Provision in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weakness:

- **In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve very well as a result of very good teaching.**
- **In Years 1 and 2, science is linked very well to other subjects such as mathematics.**
- **In Years 1 and 2, pupils show excellent attitudes to their work and are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners.**
- **In Years 3 to 6, teachers sometimes cover the same work in successive years.**
- **The procedures and use of assessment are good up to the end of Year 2. This supports the very good progress and achievements of the pupils and their average standards of attainment by the end of Year 2.**
- **For pupils from Year 3 to 6 procedures for and the use of assessment are unsatisfactory.**
- **The subject has no priority for development in the school improvement plan.**

Commentary

68. During the inspection one lesson in Years 1 and 2 was observed, and pupils' work in books and on display across the school was scrutinised. The newly appointed subject leader was interviewed and discussions were held with teachers and pupils.

69. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well. Supported by very good teaching, pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2.

70. In Year 6 pupils achieved high standards in National Curriculum tests in 2003 compared with similar schools. In comparison with all schools nationally standards were average. Because of very small numbers in each group, standards have varied over the past four years from well below average to the high standards in 2003. The number of pupils with SEN in each group has a direct influence on these results. The present unvalidated test results for 2004 indicate a big drop in standards, with only approximately one third of the pupils reaching the expected level. Over the last three years, girls have performed better than boys in science, but this was reversed in 2004.

71. During the inspection, teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 were excellent, and the pupils achieved well. Pupils were examining how plants, animals and humans can be the same, yet different. During the initial whole class introduction the teacher used previously prepared displays. Examples were provided of plants that had grown because they were watered, and others that were dying because they had not been watered. Led by very effective questioning by the teacher, pupils discussed their own personal differences and similarities such as height and colour of the eyes. After this excellent introduction, they went into groups to complete their main task. This was to draw round their hand and to measure its span. Here they showed a capacity to sort the sizes of their hands into groups, collect and tally data and make comparisons. Using mathematical data to sort and classify their hands according to size, and then to communicate their findings, confirmed their complete understanding of the lesson. They also showed considerable ability when applying their scientific knowledge of living things, describing conditions needed for animals and plants to survive and living things to grow. Their motivation and enthusiasm for learning were apparent when they showed surprise at the differences in the sizes of their hands. There has been a satisfactory degree of improvement since the last inspection. Teachers now have a greater ownership of the adopted commercial scheme, and teaching has improved up to the end of Year 2. The behaviour of the pupils, overall, has improved.

72. Samples of previous work show that there is a good coverage of the subject, with tasks modified to meet pupils' needs, up to the end of Year 2. There is a satisfactory coverage of the subject from Year 3 to Year 6, but there are no rigorous assessment procedures for these pupils resulting in the subject, overall, being unsatisfactory for this age group. Assessment is not sufficiently related to scientific criteria. As a result, there is some repetition of earlier work covered in later years. Marking is inconsistent and not always followed up by pupils. Planning does not use on-going assessment to include a challenge for higher-attaining pupils. All pupils do the same task, and this restricts opportunities for these pupils to do even better. Pupils' written and investigative work is under-developed. The use of ICT to support learning in the subject is satisfactory.

73. The subject has no priority for its further progression in the school improvement plan. A new subject leader has just been appointed and shows a commitment to take the subject forward. Unfortunately, there has been no effective monitoring and evaluation of the subject on which she can build. There remain important areas for development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **Regular input from a visiting technician.**
- **Use of ICT across the curriculum.**
- **Multimedia animations.**

- **Not enough computers to teach a whole class.**

Commentary

74. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection when the provision for ICT, and the quality of the teaching and learning, were key issues. The school has drawn up a detailed ICT action plan, with support from the local education authority advisors, which should improve the provision further over the next few years. The school has an insufficient number of computers to teach pupils in year groups, but has plans to increase the number of laptops. There are two interactive white boards, which teachers are using with increasing confidence. One was used particularly successfully in a Years 3 to 6 geography lesson to show slides of rivers; at the same time to listen to music while pupils thought about how they would describe the path of a river from mountains to the sea. This resulted in pupils' writing with considerable sensitivity. Group teaching was observed in this age group when the technician, who visits weekly to check resources, had time to work with pupils on control technology. Having made fairground rides in design and technology, pupils considered how to write a program that would enable others to construct the same ride. Although few pupils actually used the equipment during the lesson, the skills they learned through watching could be used later in the week when they worked on their rides. A higher-attaining Year 6 pupil showed a particularly good grasp of the concepts involved.

75. The technician also supports a play-time ICT club. During the inspection the pupils gave a performance of their very successful animation. Three modelled characters, together with music and speech, resulted in a very effective multi-media production. Pupils had regularly worked at

their animation in the absence of the technician, who saw improvements each time he visited. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 used computers in mathematics lessons, and displays show good word-processing skills. Information and communication technology (ICT) displays also show that different tasks are set for pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, when learning to sort in numeracy. These younger pupils also know how to use programmable 'roamers'.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to enhance a wide range of different subjects, such as literacy, mathematics, design and technology and geography. For example, in literacy pupils made book covers showing their knowledge of how to use different fonts and colours, as well as combining text and graphics.

HUMANITIES

77. Geography and history were sampled during the inspection and religious education was inspected by the diocese. One geography lesson was observed, and a video of a residential visit was viewed that focused on history.

78. In geography, Years 3 to 6 pupils were learning about rivers. Teaching and learning were good in the lesson observed. After listening to music and a description by the teacher, and looking at slides on the interactive white board, the worked produced by pupils, especially the writing, was of a good quality. The subject used and developed pupils' literacy skills well. Scrutiny of work showed that pupils across a wide age range also have a wide range of attainment, with work of younger pupils often of a higher standard than that of Year 6 pupils. Those in Years 3 to 5 reach average standards whereas, from the evidence of their books, Year 6 work is often well below average. Planning shows that the choice of work is well matched to the needs of pupils of different attainment, and challenges the higher-attaining pupils. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were studying their local river, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 were studying rivers across the world. The enthusiasm of one pupil in Year 5 had been particularly fired; as a result he had completed a large amount of research on the Nile. Others wrote about the Amazon and Thames and were able to mention cities and other facts relating to them. Pupils know the names of the main features of a river, such as 'meander' and 'delta'.

79. Pupils with SEN are particularly well helped by the support teacher who, in a withdrawal group of seven pupils, relates the subject to their own lives and their visits to the seaside or the River Severn. They learn about the Bore Wave of the Severn and look at pictures in a book of waterfalls and meanders. They are provided with a helpful writing frame to assist them in their writing. Provision for these pupils is very good and they achieve well.

80. Very good links are made with other subjects such as literacy, ICT and art, where effective collages, in black and white, have been made of rivers. The more able pupils

in mathematics have studied position and direction, as a 'challenge' to explain Pooh's visit to Eeyore. Linked to local history, pupils have studied and sketched local bridges.

History

81. The video of a residential visit to Brecon for pupils in Years 3 to 6 shows them learning how Victorians lived in this different setting. During their stay, they experience eating by candlelight, tasting gruel, and trying to work out what land was previously used for, such as for a tennis court. They also become historians and archaeologists as they study artefacts dug up at a site, measuring them and recording their findings, possibly dating back to Roman times. Their exercise books show that they use ICT and literacy skills when they combine graphics and text when writing a newspaper article about the mill workers' strike.

82. A wide range of work has been covered related to Victorian times. Pupils know about Doctor Barnardo, the potato blight in Ireland, and various aspects of Victorian life, including toys, schools, leisure pursuits and The Great Exhibition. They have copied copperplate handwriting and written about Victorian children. Although there is some variation in what different ages have learned, there is not enough emphasis on the different historical skills that should be learned in each year group, and how skills learned at an earlier age can be applied later. Pupils in Year 6 are not reaching standards that are as high as those of pupils in Year 5.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Art and design was sampled during the inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work, including displays, shows that work planned in art and design is varied and interesting. There is a satisfactory range of two- and three-dimensional work. By the end of Year 2, pupils have had a satisfactory range of opportunities to paint and use a variety of media. They successfully model what they see, producing three-dimensional models to support work across the curriculum. For example, linked with science, they produce models of insects they observe, and linked with mathematics, they produce symmetrical patterns. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have successfully examined the work of a range of artists. Arising from these studies, pupils designed and made model chairs, influenced by the artist they chose. A good display of their imaginative creations, made of wood and clay, and decorated according to the style of their chosen artist, celebrate their achievements well. On display in the entrance hall are a wide range of well-designed clay tiles and large three-dimensional papier-mâché sculptures, made with the help of a visiting sculptor. Black and white collages show good composition and a good control of the tools for cutting. Art also supports pupils' work in science; for example, there is a good display of plant drawings, very carefully drawn and coloured. When studying the work of Roald Dahl, pupils in Years 3 and 4 designed book covers.

84. Pupils' work, and discussions with the teachers and pupils, indicates that standards in art and design and design and technology by the end of Year 2 and Year 6

are broadly average, and have been maintained since the last inspection. The subjects are supported with the use of a commercial scheme, but are not given any priority for future development in the school improvement plan. There are no schemes of work to show what skills should be expected of different age groups, and assessment is based only on outcomes.

85. Design and technology was sampled. Displays around the school show pupils are gaining suitable experiences of a range of materials and techniques, and are developing their skills through designing and making a variety of products. By the end of Year 2 pupils have produced a range of constructions, mainly in card. They use pictures and words to explain their designs, and use tools to assemble, join and combine the materials they are working with. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 usually complete the same range of work. Samples of work show pupils have worked on slipper designs. During the inspection, pupils were designing and producing models of fairground rides. Evidence suggests they are achieving satisfactory standards, and these standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils use labelled sketches and consider how mechanisms can be used to make their models move. For example, the technician was working with groups, using a computer to control the speed of the rides. The work in progress is evaluated by the pupils, using a carefully worded writing frame.

86. Music was sampled. One lesson was seen in Years 3 to 6, the choir was observed and a short time was spent in a violin lesson. Music was also introduced and appreciated by pupils in assemblies. In Years 3 to 6, music is taught as part of a carousel, with design and technology, ICT and handwriting. In the lesson seen, four groups of pupils composed 'river music' and performed their compositions to the class at the end of the two sessions. Pupils were first inspired by a poem read aloud by the teacher while they watched slides and listened to music. The composition by older pupils was particularly effective, and showed the different stages of a river rushing down from a mountaintop, over waterfalls, through slower meandering paths to the wide delta before reaching the sea. A higher-attaining Year 6 boy took a strong lead, sorting instruments, putting them in order and suggesting a keyboard for the sound of the waves and a whistle for the seagulls. He led the practice and final performance very well. Their standard of composition, interpreting the course of a river, was above average, whilst the majority reached average standards. Other aspects of the subject are also taught; a lunchtime choir is very much enjoyed by a growing number of boys and girls. It is taken by the chair of governors, and high standards of singing are set. Eight pupils learn the violin and have made good progress over the year, playing simple tunes with a good tone. No evidence was collected of monitoring and assessment by the subject leader.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- **There is excellent provision for athletics.**

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- The school has no hall or field and has a sloping playground.
- Very good use is made of local sports and community amenities.

Commentary

87. Teachers and a volunteer athletics coach were interviewed, and one lesson in Years 3 to 6, and part of a lesson in Years 1 and 2, were observed. The latter lesson included pupils from the Foundation Stage, and the observation focused on this younger age group. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieved very well, reaching standards that were above average. This was as a result of the combined input of the teacher, athletics coach and support staff. The lesson was very well planned and resourced. Teaching and learning were very good, and teamwork was excellent. The pupils worked very hard, were highly motivated and responded with enthusiasm. As a result, they showed precision, control and fluency across a wide range of activities. Challenge was high with pupils discussing and evaluating each others' performances, and they suggested how these performances could be adapted and improved further. In the lesson with the Reception-aged children and Years 1 and 2, the older pupils responded well, achieving average levels. Supported by very good teaching, a wide range of movements were triggered by the use of a parachute. The children showed good control and co-ordination.

88. The school works hard to overcome the limitations imposed by its site. Through the excellent help given by a voluntary, qualified, athletics coach to all year groups, the school has successfully revised its planned scheme of work, and has examined how this extra input can meet the requirements of the recommended Programmes of Study. A suitable commercial scheme is also followed. This planning has successfully overcome the limitations of the sloping site which has no large grassed area, and no hall where physical education can be taught. Overall, pupils attain broadly satisfactory standards and achieve well. The excellent provision for athletics has enabled some pupils to attain average or above average standards in this area of work. Standards since the last inspection have improved for pupils by the end of Year 6.

89. The input from the athletics coach has established, and considerably enhanced, the quality of the physical education programme, through its range of extensive links with the community. Pupils have the use of a local secondary school's playing fields and sports hall. They have links with the Stroud Athletics Club and use of the local village hall. These facilities have resulted recently in four pupils being selected to represent Stroud District in the Gloucestershire Games: they came fourth. A team has won a Fair Play Award Trophy, and pupils have received medals for their competences in cross-country running. The school holds a very successful fund-raising plant sale to pay for some of these certificates and awards. All pupils go swimming and, in the present Year 6, two thirds are able to swim 25 metres. Pupils also join other local schools to perform at the annual Cheltenham festival of dance.

90. The role of the subject leader is underdeveloped. The school's overview of whole school development is limited by the lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

91. There is good provision for pupils' PSHE in the daily life of this small school. Most lessons contribute to pupils' moral and social development with 'Circle Time', when pupils share their feelings and concerns. Religious education, inspected by the diocese, also contributes strongly to the subject. Physical education contributes to pupils' health education. No specific scheme of work was seen relating to this subject.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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