

INSPECTION REPORT

MISERDEN C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stroud

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115692

Headteacher: Mrs M Davies

Lead inspector: Mr C Deane-Hall

Dates of inspection: 9 – 11 February 2004

Inspection number: 256928

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:	66
School address:	Miserden Stroud Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL6 7JA
Telephone number:	01285 821463
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R. Eldridge
Date of previous inspection:	29 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Miserden C of E (Aided) primary school is smaller than average with 66 pupils, of which 35 are boys and 31 are girls. The school attracts pupils from several nearby villages, with nearly one third travelling from Stroud. Although no pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, the pupils come from eight different Wards and have a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Around 94 per cent of the pupils are of White–British heritage. The number of pupils who join or leave the school part way through their education is low. However, since numbers in each year group are relatively small, these pupils often have a significant impact on the school's overall standards. Children start school in the autumn term after their fourth birthday. When they start school their overall attainment varies from year to year. However, the attainment of children in the current Foundation Stage is broadly in line with that expected of children of their age. No pupils have English as an additional language and a broadly average number of pupils (12) have special educational needs. Of these one has specific learning needs, another has social, emotional and behavioural needs and one speech or communication needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Miserden C of E school is a successful school. The good quality of the leadership and management displayed by the headteacher, staff and governors is a key factor in its success. The quality of pupils' learning is good, they achieve well and standards are rising. This is a direct result of consistently good teaching. Pupils' learning opportunities are well matched to their needs which helps to ensure that they make good progress as they move through the school. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children get off to a flying start.
- Teaching and achievement are good in the Foundation Stage and from Years 1 to 6.
- Standards overall in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are above the national average.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good. Pupils' attitudes to learning, their behaviour and relationships with others, are very good.
- Teachers use information gained from assessment well to help pupils' learning.
- The school provides an inclusive and caring environment; it has very strong links with parents.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities helps to enrich the curriculum.
- Pupils in Year 6 do not develop aspects of their writing as well as they should.
- The outside learning environment for children in the Foundation Stage is insufficient.

The school has developed well since the last inspection. All but one of the issues from the last inspection has been addressed and improvements have been made to the outside learning environment in the Foundation Stage. The management role of subject leaders has improved as has the provision and use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning. Opportunities provided to develop pupils' cultural awareness have improved. The governors and staff, well supported by parents, have had the vision to improve the learning environment and plans are afoot to move into phase three with a purpose built hall and classroom.

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	A	E	E*
Mathematics	B	A	D	E
Science	B	A	C	E

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

Achievement is good by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards overall in English, mathematics and science are above average for pupils in Year 6. For mathematics and science, this is an improvement since the last inspection. At first glance standards appear to be slightly lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is not the case, but a reflection of variations that occur between year groups in a small school. A high proportion of pupils in the year group had joined or left the school with several high attaining pupils transferring to schools in the private sector. The year group also had high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and several of those who joined the year group in Year 3 or later, were lower attaining. Inspection evidence indicates that standards this year are much higher and similar to those observed at the time of the previous inspection. The school set challenging targets for 2003. It successfully met these in English and mathematics and just fell short of them in science.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with average levels of attainment and achieve well. Many exceed the goals by the end of reception. In Year 2, standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good; they have very positive attitudes and behave very well. Attendance has improved and is now very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are also good across the school. Strengths include the way that teachers analyse pupils' needs and tailor their teaching and the curriculum to help ensure that pupils achieve well. This together with teachers' and learning support workers' high expectation of pupils in terms of their capacity to learn, their attitudes and behaviour, results in highly motivated pupils who are keen to learn.

The curriculum provides a good breadth of opportunities for learning. It is enhanced by the quality of the out of school activities and joint projects with other schools in creative and aesthetic education. The school cares well for its pupils and provides very good support and advice for them. This is complemented by good links with the community and other schools and very good links with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. Leadership has a shared vision for the future of the school and the increasingly strong management is well placed to achieve the goals. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met. The governing body is well informed about the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement. It has successfully ensured that strategic planning is not pushed off course by the effects of fluctuating pupil numbers on the budget.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents at the meeting were very supportive of the school, its leadership and the achievement of their children. They feel that their children are happy at school, teaching is good and their children make good progress. Both parents and pupils feel that the curriculum is interesting and wide and the quality of care is very good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in writing to enable pupils to develop writing skills in the main categories of non-narrative texts.
- Improve the designated outside learning environment for reception children.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good. Standards overall in English, mathematics and science are above average. For mathematics and science, this is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology are similar to those expected. There is no significant difference in achievement by boys and girls. This is a smaller than average school so each year group is small. In addition, small variations in year group numbers, gender and pupils' ability can lead to significant differences in attainment from one year group to the next.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and many will exceed the goals that are nationally expected for children of their age.
- Pupils in Year 6 achieve above average standards in mathematics, science and some aspects of English.
- As they move through the school, all pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils in Year 6 do not develop their skills in aspects of writing as well as they should.

Commentary

1. Children are assessed when they start school in reception. The results of these tests and inspection findings show that attainment on entry to the school for the current group is average and that high proportions of children will reach the expected levels for five year olds at the end of the reception year and several will exceed these goals.
2. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, achieving well. They build effectively on the gains made during their reception year and achieve as well as they can. In Year 2, standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are average. At first glance standards appear to be slightly lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is not the case, but a reflection of variations that occurs between year groups. Currently, there is a large group of higher attaining pupils in Year 1 who are already achieving standards in reading and writing that are higher than those being achieved by a small group of lower attaining Year 2 pupils.
3. The hard work and progress made in Years 1 and 2 underpin and contribute to the success in the following years. Pupils continue to make good progress year by year. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been improving over the past few years although there was a sharp dip in all three subjects in 2003. This was due to a combination of factors. There had been a lot of pupil mobility in the year group with high attaining pupils transferring to schools in the private sector. The year group also had high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and those who joined the year group in Year 3 or later, were mostly lower attaining. Inspection evidence indicates that standards this year are much higher and similar to those observed at the time of the previous inspection. Nearly all Year 6 pupils are already attaining average standards in English, mathematics and science. High proportions of pupils are achieving at the higher level 5 in mathematics and science. In English, whilst high proportions attain at level 5 in reading and speaking and listening, few are doing so in writing. This is because that they are being given insufficient opportunities to develop skills in writing for a range of different purposes.
4. The school set challenging targets for 2003. It successfully met these in English and mathematics and just fell short of them in science. For 2004, clear targets are set which are based on the school's analysis of pupils' progress. These too are sufficiently challenging and

the indications are that they will be successful in meeting them. The careful tracking of pupils' progress has been vital in helping the school to set realistic targets for the future. The monitoring activities of key staff have provided the school with sufficiently detailed data to allow the necessary analysis to take place.

5. Although national test results indicate that there may be differences in the attainment of boys and girls, the inspection findings reveal that they do equally well in all National Curriculum subjects. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities in the school. Across the school, lower attaining pupils and those identified by the school as having special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They are well supported by both teachers and learning support assistants. They are offered work providing appropriate challenge and the tasks set for them closely mirror those offered to other pupils. This ensures that they feel included in all activities. Higher attaining pupils at Year 2 do well in English, mathematics and science. At Year 6, higher attaining pupils do well in mathematics, science and some aspects of English but could do better in writing.
6. The last inspection found that pupils achieved average standards in all subjects throughout Years 1 – 6. By Year 6, in mathematics, science and some aspects of English higher standards have been observed during this inspection. Pupils attain average standards in ICT and by Year 6 they use computers with a high degree of confidence. Work seen and discussions with pupils indicate that standards in all other subjects are average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (18.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.8 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.9 (18.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are both very good. This is at least due in part to the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education provided by the school. Attendance is well above the national average and punctuality is very good. There were no exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very positive attitudes and are keen to come to school.
- Very good pastoral care leads to positive relationships throughout the school.
- The provision for moral and social development is very good and contributes well to the learning process.
- Attendance is well above the national average and punctuality is very good.

Commentary

7. Attendance and punctuality are both very good with children keen to come to school and to arrive on time. As a result classes start promptly. Registers are taken within each class and any lateness or absence duly noted and where necessary acted upon.
8. Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work are very good. They are enthusiastic about the school and keen to attend. One parent commented that, "The ethos here makes my child excited about coming to school". Nearly all pupils listen well to the views of others, co-operate

- well and are responsible. They are polite, confident and friendly and respond well to teachers' high expectations.
9. Behaviour is very good throughout the school, in lessons, assemblies and playtimes. Expectations of behaviour are high and the vast majority of pupils live up to this. There is an effective recognised system for rewards leading to the presentation of awards at a weekly assembly. Each week one pupil is awarded the Endeavour Cup. This is highly valued by the children who see it as the ultimate prize which can be won by any child for true effort, whatever their level of skill or ability. Pupils are taught right from wrong through constant reinforcement and in lessons called 'Circle Time'. This helps to ensure that they understand the difference and engender a community spirit of acceptable behaviour. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers, who offer them very good examples of courtesy and fairness. Parents recognise that the school develops the maturity of their children and pupils feel that the vast majority of pupils behave well and are friendly. Most pupils are confident when dealing with adults and are keen to talk to visitors about the school and their individual work.
 10. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and is set within a clear Christian ethos. An example of how the school responds positively to the needs of individuals and supports pupils' social development is exemplified by the pupils' use of sign language. Staff and pupils learnt how to 'sign' to support and fully integrate a profoundly deaf pupil into the school. Although the pupil has now moved on to a secondary school, signing has become so much part of the school that they have continued to use it, such that in a morning act of worship pupils used sign language along with their singing.
 11. Pupils are keen to take responsibilities around the school. For example, even the youngest children take responsibility for tidying their classroom at the end of lessons. In Year 6, pupils act as monitors and help to ensure the smooth running of the school and organise the music sound system for morning worship. Relationships between pupils and adults and amongst pupils themselves are very good. The personal, social and health education programme gives an effective support to pupils' social and moral development. The school has responded well to the need to involve younger pupils in the decision making process within the school. The school council has representatives from Years 1 to 6 and is a valued part of pupils' life in school.
 12. The school provides many opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. Teachers regularly provide pupils with opportunities to think about why things are as they are and why others behave as they do. These opportunities are often planned into learning; for example, in a dance lesson pupils had time to reflect on their own and others' dance sequences and how they might depict a garden scene. Acts of worship also provide valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect; for example, many were visibly moved on hearing the little known parts of the account of how Captain Webb became the first cross-Channel swimmer.
 13. The school promotes good appreciation of the range of cultures represented in its community and further afield. The school has forged links with a school in Italy and provides good opportunities for pupils to experience and celebrate different cultures and customs by holding a 'European Day'. A visiting poet enabled pupils to consider different views and deal with such issues as ageism. Educational visits provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures; for example, a visit to Bath museum helped pupils to appreciate the diversity of Native American culture. The school also capitalises on its own local community through studies of rural backgrounds and through visitors.
 14. In the Foundation Stage, children's personal, social and emotional development is addressed well. They are likely to meet and many to exceed the goals that are expected at the end of the year. From their first days in the school staff work to develop children's independence; for example, all children quickly learn how to put on their coat before going out to the playground and many manage to use the zip to fasten it. Children are expected to take a full part in maintaining their classroom by helping to put resources away at the end of lessons and they clearly enjoy taking on these responsibilities. Teachers plan activities which help children to

develop their social skills and constantly remind them in their work of what is good behaviour. Adults provide very good role models for children to mirror. Teachers understand the importance of promoting children’s emotional development. They gently coax children to become fully involved in classroom activities, praise them for answering questions and putting forward their ideas. This results in confident and happy children who are keen to work hard and learn. Since the last inspection attendance has improved and pupils’ attitudes and behaviour has been maintained at a high level.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

No exclusions have taken place over the last year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The overall quality of teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum all contribute strongly to this judgement. In addition, the care, guidance and support provided for the pupils, as well as the positive way in which the school works in partnership with parents and the community, all play an important part in the effectiveness of the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** across the school. Systems for assessment are also good. Information gained from assessment is generally used well to support pupils in their next steps in learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of teaching is at least good.
- A lot of care is taken to meet the learning needs of individuals.
- Systems of assessment and tracking of pupils’ progress are thorough and used effectively to influence what is planned and taught, particularly in mathematics and science.
- More detailed analysis of pupils’ learning is needed in English to support the development of pupils’ writing as they move into Year 6.
- The use of homework is not sufficiently clear to parents.

Commentary

15. In nearly all of the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good or better. This teaching included the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, geography and physical education. The school has maintained the good aspects of teaching noted in the last inspection and improved the use of information and communication technology, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6. It has also recognised the need to use assessment information to influence teachers’ planning to help ensure that individual pupils are provided with learning opportunities which are well matched to their needs. This has extended from mathematics into English and science and is particularly true in the case of higher attaining pupils. The result is that pupils are often challenged in their

work. They rise to the occasion, often in response to good relationships which exist between pupils and their teachers and, as a result, their learning is often good. Parents who expressed a view about teaching all felt it was good; this was mirrored by the vast majority of pupils.

16. Teachers have a strong understanding of their subjects. This is particularly evident in the Foundation Stage where adults understand well how young children learn. However, there is a need in English for teaching in Years 5 and 6 to have a more secure command of non-narrative texts to help ensure that pupils develop writing skills as well as they should; for example, in persuasive writing, non-chronological reports, explanation, argument and procedures.
17. A common and positive feature of teaching is the high expectation that staff have of what pupils can do. This is matched by similarly high expectations of their behaviour and a common wish for pupils to do their best. The result is that pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good; they are often active learners and generally enjoy their activities. All this, when harnessed to carefully planned and well-matched work helps to ensure that pupils often achieve well. These same features of teaching have a positive effect on the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are clear about what these pupils need to do to improve their learning, and their planning is well supported by the pupils' individual education plans. Teachers and learning support workers know pupils well. They constantly check their levels of understanding, often through skilful questioning, offer advice and give reassurance about what is being learnt. The effect is often impressive. Pupils' self-esteem and confidence rise, their motivation improves and learning is often of a high order. Even young children quickly learn how to work independently and then to collaborate with others. Both parents and pupils feel that teaching provides interesting activities in lessons and also that pupils are expected to work hard.
18. Teachers increasingly use information and communication technology in their lessons. This is particularly the case in Years 2 to 6. The Internet provides pupils with another easily accessible learning resource; for example, when finding out about a river's courses. Older pupils gain from having an interactive white board (IAW) in their classroom which is often used to good effect as a teaching aid. When asked, pupils felt that the new facility provided them with greater opportunities to understand new ideas and to appreciate their classmates' methods of solving problems in mathematics.
19. Learning support workers are experienced and deployed effectively, particularly in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs. The quality of pupils' learning benefits well from their experience and skill. Teachers use homework to support learning satisfactorily. However, there is a lack of consistency from class to class. This can sometimes cause confusion as to what is expected and although teachers respond very quickly to parental requests for information to help them support their children at home, this is an aspect of teaching which could be better.
20. Systems for assessment have improved since the last inspection. It is good in English, mathematics and science and provides teachers with valuable information to support their future planning. The 'tracking' systems provide useful information on the rate of pupils' progress. Teachers analyse the results of national and end of year tests well in mathematics and science and have successfully adapted their teaching to improve aspects of pupils' learning; for example, pupils' achievement in the use of mental mathematics and problem solving. However, in English the analysis has not sufficiently identified the need to improve pupils' writing skills and hence identify possible solutions to improve standards in writing in Year 6.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	2	12	2	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a good quality curriculum that meets the needs of its pupils. A very good range of extra activities provides many opportunities for pupils to develop musical and artistic talents. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements and meets the needs of its pupils.
- The enrichment of the curriculum is very good.
- The provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Some aspects of writing provision need to be improved in Years 3-6.

Commentary

21. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that effectively meets the needs of its pupils and complies with statutory requirements. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and continues to be so in Years 1 to 6. Particular strengths of the school's curriculum include an emphasis on music, information and communication technology and a well-developed personal, health and social education programme. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies but has yet to ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in writing non-narrative texts in Years 3-6.
22. The school finds many ways to enrich and develop the curriculum that it offers to its pupils. This is very good. Music and art are a high priority for the school. The school belongs to 'The Wool Pack', a cluster of small schools that works to enrich creative aspects of the curriculum. Funds from this group assist the school to work with poets, artists and musicians from a range of cultural traditions. This in turn helps pupils to develop their creative skills. As a result the school has joined the cluster to produce two CD ROMs containing traditional songs for the area and music that the pupils have composed. The school makes good use of visitors to extend pupils' learning. The 'Live Van' puppeteers, visitors from the Diocese, the school nurse, woodman and gamekeepers from the local estate, all work to develop the pupils' understanding of personal, social, health and safety education issues. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to undertake school visits so that they learn about different parts of the country. A good number of extra-curricular activities are offered that extend learning outside the school day. There are two gym clubs and opportunities for pupils to learn short tennis and tag rugby.
23. All pupils have good access to the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual education plans are detailed and fully meet the requirements of the new Code of Practice. Support in class is carefully planned and organised so that it is of maximum benefit to the pupils concerned and ensures that they have access to the school's curriculum. The school makes good use of the information provided from assessments. This helps to ensure that pupils of differing prior attainment are provided with a curriculum which matches well their particular needs.

24. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Sex education and drugs awareness is addressed through the personal, health and social education and science curriculum and taught in the context of a healthy lifestyle. Parents are made aware of the materials being used for sex education and know when lessons are due to take place.
25. The school does a great deal to prepare pupils and their parents for starting school. Home visits and visits to the school are all aimed at and succeed in assisting young children to settle into school quickly. Pupils are also well prepared for transferring to the next stage of their education. There is a good level of liaison between the school and neighbouring secondary schools, which ensures that appropriate arrangements are made for all pupils as they transfer schools.
26. The accommodation of the school is satisfactory. Attractive displays are used to make the school cheerful. The area designated for the reception class supports the curriculum satisfactorily, although the outside learning environment is not sufficient to ensure that children can make the most of their time when using it. Resources are satisfactory for all subjects except information and communication technology and music where they are good. Class libraries are well resourced although the central library has insufficient non-narrative books. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is good.

Care, guidance and support

The provision of care, welfare, health and safety is good. Overall the school provides good support, advice and guidance based on monitoring with certain aspects that are very good or excellent. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in the life and work of the school and the school council enables pupils' views to be sought and acted upon.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel secure and well cared for in school and have excellent relationships with staff.
- Pupils have access to very well informed support, advice and guidance.
- The arrangements for the induction of pupils are very good.
- The school council involves pupils in the school' work and development.

Commentary

27. The school has maintained its good quality of care, guidance and support noted in the last inspection. There are very good arrangements for children when they start school. These include visits to the school by both parents and children for 'familiarisation' as well as exchange of information between the local playgroups and nurseries. These arrangements help teachers to get to know the children quickly and as a result they settle quickly into school and start to make good progress.
28. Child protection procedures are well understood by all staff and fully in place. The school carries out regular risk assessment and pays good attention to health and safety issues, including fire safety. This results in a clean and litter free environment. Accidents are rare but the school keeps an incident book where all such items are carefully recorded and ensures that pupils are well cared for. For example, during the inspection a pupil fell in the playground before morning school and was immediately cared for by a member of staff. During the day other staff checked on the child's welfare, as did many other pupils.
29. Assessment of pupils' academic progress is made twice per term and this is used well to inform teachers' planning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Monitoring of the progress and needs of these pupils is thorough and helps to ensure that the agreed learning targets closely match their needs. The assessment of pupils' personal development is less formal but still good. There are frequent staff meetings where any issues

affecting a child are discussed and appropriate action planned. There is an excellent relationship between staff and pupils and the pupil survey shows that they have at least one adult to turn to if they are worried at school.

30. The school supports its pupils well. It creates a caring environment built upon Christian values, which encourages pupils to do their best. The school council operates with representatives from each class and year group. School councillors are chosen by the pupils from a list of nominees produced by the class teachers. The views of pupils are aired at council meetings and their views taken into account. For example, the school council recently wanted to run an event themselves to support a charity. They organised a "bring and buy sale", enlisting the help of staff and parents but with much of the planning and operation done by the pupils themselves.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership between the school and parents is very good. Links with the local community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weakness

- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- Parents receive very good information regarding their child's progress and activities within the school. This partnership has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning.
- The school has good links with local primary schools and is developing those with the secondary schools in the area.
- The school works well with the local community, the parish church and the diocese.

Commentary

31. Parents hold the school in high regard with all who returned their questionnaire agreeing that "My child likes school". Several chose to send their children to the school because of the positive links between home and school. Arrangements for the induction of new pupils are very effective and valued by parents. Parents receive an informative weekly newsletter, which includes a response form, which can be deposited at the school office enabling them to comment on any aspect of the school. Many pupils travel in from the surrounding area to the school and parents often bring their children into the buildings or playground and take advantage of the opportunity to talk informally to the teachers. This is much valued by parents and is instrumental in developing an open and positive relationship for all. Most parents appreciate the time and effort that staff make in responding to parents' informal visits at the start or end of the school day. Termly consultation meetings for parents and teachers are held in all classes and although these are held soon after the end of the school day, in recognition of distances travelled by several parents, parents who are unable to attend are welcome to make alternative arrangements with the school. These consultation meetings are well attended.
32. Annual reports provide parents with a helpful overview of how well their children are doing at school and nearly all parents are pleased with how the school keeps them informed about how their child is progressing in school. The school has recently started to provide parents with useful information about the areas of study for the term. Parents are particularly pleased with the school's high expectations regarding their children's work and behaviour. As a result they see the school encouraging their children to become mature and independent. The staff work hard and successfully to ensure that the school is totally inclusive and that all pupils are supported to achieve well. Parents who attended the meeting also felt this to be the case.
33. The school works closely with local pre-school organisations, sending invitations inviting parents to visit the school and attend school events such as the teddy bears' picnic and sports day. There are good links with the local group of primary schools. One major outcome of

this has been the additional funding to broaden the curriculum by employing artists in residence, who worked with children on projects such as sculpture and mosaics. The group of schools produced a CD of pupils singing local traditional songs. Links with a nearby initial teacher training institution has had a positive effect on pupils' learning. The school makes good use of local resources. For example, links with the museum of Bath enabled the school to run a project on the life and culture of Native Americans and so enrich pupils understanding of different cultures from around the world. Since the school draws pupils from a wide area, the number of secondary schools with which the school links is growing. These links are good; for example, the school works closely to support pupils' transfer, particularly those with special educational needs.

34. The school has good links with the local community and the parish church where the school holds services at Christmas, Easter and Harvest time. The school also has a close relationship with the diocese. Each year there is a leavers' service held in the cathedral for all the schools in the diocese. Advantage is taken of local rural craftsmen such as foresters, gamekeepers and gardeners who come into the school to talk to the pupils about their work. Elderly residents of the village are invited in to answer questions from children about village life over the years. These links helps children of all backgrounds see themselves within the local rural community. The school has built upon it strengths in its partnership with parents, other schools and the community. For example, the school's web site is often used by pupils past and present to communicate with staff at the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The good contribution of the governing body, strong leadership of the headteacher and key staff, complemented by good management have resulted in a good quality of education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, supported by other key staff, provides a strong direction for the school based upon a caring environment in which all pupils achieve well.
- The school improvement plan provides clear and appropriate targets within a realistic time frame.
- There are good procedures for evaluating the school's performance.
- Leadership and management together make sure that pupils' needs are met.
- Governors have a clear strategic view of how the school can be improved.
- Very good systems for financial management, including the use of best value principles, ensure that the school's priorities are met.

Commentary

35. The leadership continues to be strong with the headteacher providing a very good role model for her colleagues. The leadership role of subject leaders has improved and there is a shared vision for the future of the school and a sense of purpose as to how the vision will be achieved. The leadership of special educational needs is good. It ensures that the needs of pupils are clearly identified and appropriate management systems ensure the day-to-day effectiveness of the support. The school improvement plan provides a useful point of reference for the school community and reflects the school's ambitions and goals. The leadership ensures that the curriculum provides a well-balanced model to support pupils' learning and encompasses the school's strongly held belief in the importance of equality and concern for individuals.
36. There are good systems for management. The school's systems for self-evaluation are good and information gathered through evaluation is effectively reviewed and, where necessary, included in the school's improvement planning. Subject leaders monitor the impact and effectiveness of their subject and draw up an annual action plan for inclusion within the school's improvement plan. This is effective in identifying strengths and areas for improvement to support pupils' achievement and standards. The quality of teaching is effectively monitored and evaluated by the headteacher; subject leaders monitor learning.

Common issues arising are reviewed by staff and included within the school's performance management procedures. Professional development needs are well provided for, including those of support staff. For example, the school has benefited greatly from recent training for staff in information and communication technology (ICT). As a result, staff are more confident and competent in the use of ICT. The subject leader has also benefited from attending management training, which has resulted in a review of the curriculum map and an increased use of ICT to support pupils' learning and achievement. The school has recently resurrected its links with a local initial teacher training institution and provides placements for a small number of students. This has benefited both parties and in the case of the school, the presence of additional adults in lessons has allowed teachers to organise more small group and individual support to improve learning.

37. There is a supportive and active governing body, which fulfils all of its legal responsibilities. Governors have evaluated their role and are in the process of agreeing revised remits for the various committees. They provide the headteacher with valuable support and challenge. They are well informed about the school effectiveness through reports and visits to the school and are clear about the school's many strengths and its areas for improvement. They have a strategic view of where the school should be heading and as a part of this vision, have been successful in liaising with both the Diocese and the Local Authority to improve the building and facilities. Phase two has recently been completed and phase three, whereby a new school hall and permanent classroom will be built is becoming a reality. Governors have at the centre of their work the need to ensure a good quality education of the pupils, and in this they succeed.
38. Financial procedures and administration are very good. Budgetary planning, control and monitoring are extremely efficient. The school deals well with the regular movement of pupils, particularly at the end of Year 2, and the impact this can have on strategic financial planning. The school has successfully used specific grants, in line with the improvement plan, to enrich the curriculum; for example, the collaborative work with other local schools to support the creative subjects of the curriculum such as art and dance. Grants to support major initiatives such as the development of ICT have also had a positive impact on standards and achievement.
39. The school ensures that the best value principles are in place. The higher than average surplus balance on the school's budget has been carefully allocated to provide the school's share of the building development costs. Despite the recent physical changes to the school building, the staff have maintained a pleasant school environment in which pupils can learn and grow. Parents at the meeting and in the questionnaires felt that the school was well led.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	191,231.90
Total expenditure	178,798.69
Expenditure per pupil	3,451

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	34783.34
Balance carried forward to the next	47,216.55

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children start school at the beginning of the autumn term after their fourth birthday. As a result there is often nearly as much as one year's difference in some of their ages, which at this young age, sometimes results in very different profile of attainment for the group from one year to the next. Induction procedures for children are very good. Staff begin a personal profile for each child, working in partnership with pre-school organisations, parents and carers. This information is used to support teachers in planning children's work and is used to record children's progress and achievement throughout their time in the Foundation Stage. It is also used to set begin to set targets for later in the child's education.

Many children start school with good speaking and listening skills. This is recognised in the way that the curriculum is planned and adults use this strength as a good way of supporting children's learning in other areas of learning, such mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. It is based on a well-planned curriculum, which embraces all of the required areas for learning. Provision is well organised and managed. Staff work together well, complementing each other's work and building well on the children's experiences. Children's progress is carefully monitored and any particular needs for individuals or groups are built into the weekly and daily planning. This is a strong feature and helps to ensure that each child is provided with activities which match well their needs. In this way children achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage. The staff provide a calm, secure learning environment where children rapidly settle into school and often make rapid progress. The school has maintained and built upon the good provision identified during the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given opportunities to take responsibility and develop their initiative within a well structured and secure learning environment.
- Teaching builds well upon children's learning experiences and helps to ensure that they achieve well and develop a good attitude to their work.
- There are many opportunities for children to use their speaking and listening skills to support their progress in other areas of learning.

Commentary

40. Staff have high expectations of how children will behave. This results in an harmonious and settled learning environment where children are confident to try new activities and work happily alongside their classmates. Planning and teaching are good and children respond well to the adults who work with them. Children share their class with Year 1 pupils. This has a beneficial effect, since it helps the children as they start school. Parents too feel that their children settle in quickly when they first start school. Older children provide good role models for younger children, which helps them to quickly settle into the routine and join in with activities. Older children too gain in confidence and self-esteem. Staff expect children to help around the classroom doing little jobs; for example, being responsible for tidying up at the end of sessions and collecting and putting on their own coats at the end of lessons, and this they do well. Without exception, parents who expressed their views felt that staff encourage their children to become mature and independent.

41. Teachers plan activities which are designed to help develop children's social skill. For example, they will often work in a small group with a learning support worker who frequently reminds them of how to share, talk to others and work harmoniously. Staff make a point of sitting with children and modelling good social skills as well as seizing opportunities to engage in conversation and so develop the children's personal and social skills as well as their understanding, particularly those with special educational needs. Children are likely to meet the goals that are normally expected at the end of the Reception Year, and many will exceed them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are interested in books, and writing material and are confident in speaking and listening.
- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language and use it to support learning in other areas of learning.
- Achievement is good and most children make rapid progress.

Commentary

42. Consistently good teaching is producing interested children who want to read, who concentrate on what is said to them and who are eager to share their ideas. Teachers rightly regard this as a particularly important part of the curriculum, and one, which is central to children's learning. Every opportunity is taken to engage in speaking and listening with the children. For example, when developing their use of 'describing' words, the book "The Queen's Green Beads" provides children with opportunities to recount the story so far, to explain the importance of the peach tree to the main character and begin to develop their skill in describing the characteristics of the characters. Adults who work with the children, frequently reinforce earlier learning and use new words to extend understanding and knowledge. For example, when developing their understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shapes, adults use questioning very effectively to consolidate children's prior learning. They ask them to name colours and two and three-dimensional shapes. In doing this they build and widen the children's vocabulary.
43. The use of questions plays an important part in helping children to be fully involved in their learning. For example, when sharing a 'big book' the teacher encourages children to explain the meaning of particular words such as 'succeed'. She expects children to join in with the story and sing any songs which are a part of it. In this way children have their interest recognised and grow in confidence. In addition, as a result, not only is learning enhanced for the questioner, but also for the whole group. Many children are confident enough to come and show their work to adults and to initiate a conversation. When asked a question, nearly all will readily engage in conversation, expressing their preferences. Many children speak in simple sentences and understand and use simple conventions such as 'hello' and 'goodbye'.
44. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills. Most children are beginning to correctly write letters and copy words. The development of sounds and reading are given high priority. For example, during story time, the story "The Iron Man" was read; good use is made of well-known rhymes to help develop and consolidate the learning. During the story, many children successfully identified why the iron man's parts would clang down the cliff and a few realised that the creature with five legs was one of his hands. Nearly all of the children recognise their own name and all gain considerable enjoyment from books and stories. As soon as children start school they are provided with reading bags and can take books home to share with parents and carers. All of the children are likely to reach the goals expected but most will exceed them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many opportunities are provided for children to develop their mathematics in other areas of learning; for example when singing counting rhymes.
- Opportunities to count and match are often planned.

Commentary

45. Most children are on course to attain the goals expected for children by the time they enter Year 1. Already, many correctly understand everyday words to explain position. For example, in front of, between and behind. Higher attaining children understand the position of others to themselves. One or two children correctly name a cylinder and several understand the concept of a 'flat shape' (two-dimensional shape) as opposed to a 'holding shape' (three-dimensional shape). Nearly all of the children understand that a circle is round and several correctly name it.
46. Teachers promote mathematical language well. For example, in story time, counting rhymes are often used as a way of enhancing learning. Children are encouraged to practise their numeracy when they are involved in activities in other areas of learning. As a result many children recognise the spoken names of numbers and recognise numerals. Most can match the right number of objects to a figure and are confident in their knowledge and use of numbers to at least ten, often using this knowledge in their play. Children derive great enjoyment from sorting plastic animals. This activity helps children to begin to count and add numbers. For example, in one lesson children successfully ordered shapes by size and then sorted them by colour. A few then began to investigate the idea of adding a group of two to a group of three.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is rich and varied
- Children are very interested in the world around them

Commentary

47. Photographs of last year's work shows that varied experiences are provided by teachers and many of these link well with other areas of learning. For example, children understand how to care for themselves and how to keep themselves clean through washing. Many understand the concept of cause and effect, for example, babies often cry when they are hungry. Children correctly classify objects under the headings of 'alive' or 'not alive' and these studies are often enriched by good use of the local environment and through first hand experience. A visit by members of the local community helps children to gain insights into how people lived in past times.
48. Children work purposefully with construction equipment and enjoy using a computer. The use of new technology, such as a digital camera, is beginning to be planned into activities by the teacher to good effect. In this area of learning, most children will attain and many will exceed the learning goals for children of their age by the end of the year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's fine control, such as holding pencils is generally good.
- The outside learning environment does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to make the most of the opportunities available to improve their physical development.

Commentary

49. Most children reach and a few exceed the goals set for children of their age by the time they enter Year 1. In one lesson seen, children moved with confidence and imagination, showing good co-ordination and control. Resources are satisfactory overall but the secure outdoor area is not sufficient to allow children to achieve as well as they could. Sit-on wheeled toys provide good opportunities for children to balance, climb and improve co-ordination. However, their use is severely limited by the small space available and does not provide adequate scope for children's physical development. Since the last inspection the school has improved the provision, but more still needs to be done. The school has interesting plans to improve this aspect of the provision by a 'Trim Trail' and the enlargement of a secure learning area both of which are greatly needed.
50. Teachers' planning indicates that plenty of opportunities are provided for children to develop their manipulative skills by handling pencils and paint brushes. Activities seen show that there are good links with other areas of learning, such as language and literacy, number, and knowledge and understanding of the world.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have plenty of opportunity to dance and sing.
- Teachers' planning shows good links with other areas of learning.

Commentary

51. Children are provided with good opportunities to develop their imagination through this area of learning. For example, when making a collage depicting spring, they use tissue paper and appropriate 'growth' colours such as pinks, yellow and green. Completed work shows that when making snowmen, children carefully cut and stick coloured paper, placing it to good effect. They use a range of media including paint, pastel crayons, chalks and printing. Throughout creative activities staff intervene when working alongside children to support language and mathematical development. For example, when working on aspects of shape, they happily burst into singing well known counting rhymes.
52. In a dance lesson, children thoroughly enjoyed singing a favourite song, "The Princess and the handsome Prince". Most of them remembered the storyline to the song and all joined singing in rhythm and to the beat. In acting out the parts several children skipped in time with the music, while others swung their arms in time to the music. Teaching is carefully planned to match children's needs and to link in and build on previous learning. For example, the dance lesson followed on from the music of the week – The Ballet Suite by Tchaikovski. By skilful use of questioning, the teacher successfully led the children towards describing how

certain parts of the music made them feel. Several commented that it made them feel happy or quiet and most recognised 'loud' and 'quiet' parts in the piece. The likelihood is that attainment in this area will be at least in line with the goals expected by the end of the year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** and overall pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils achieve above average standards in speaking and listening and reading.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils have good attitudes to work and behave very well.
- Older pupils need to be given more opportunities to develop skills in writing non-narrative texts.

Commentary

53. In the 2003 national tests for Year 2 standards were above average in reading and writing. Compared to schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in reading and writing were average. The 2003 English results for Year 6 were well below average. Standards have fluctuated slightly since the previous inspection but they have mostly been above average for Year 2 pupils and well above average for pupils in Year 6. The sudden decline in the 2003 Year 6 results reflects the standards of a lower attaining group of pupils several of whom had all joined the school in Year 3 or later.
54. Inspection evidence shows that most Year 2 pupils are attaining average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in speaking and listening. Pupils read simple texts accurately demonstrating skill in sounding out words or drawing on their knowledge of sentence structure to help them decode words. Only a small number of pupils are attaining at the higher level 3. Year 2 pupils are given many opportunities to write different types of texts. They use capital letters and full stops to punctuate sentences. Their ideas are developed as their writing progresses and descriptive vocabulary is used to add interest for the reader. Pupils speak with confidence and in all of the lessons observed, they asked relevant questions or offered appropriate ideas, which demonstrated how carefully they were listening to what was being said. Given their starting points, all pupils achieve well by the end of Year 2. This is because of very good teaching and targeted support that enables lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to make good progress.
55. A high proportion of Year 6 pupils are attaining above average standards in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in writing are average. By Year 6, pupils talk in a lively and interesting way about their work and contribute well to class discussions. High proportions of pupils read very fluently, discuss favourite authors and comment on the distinct features of the books that they enjoy reading. In their writing, Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They structure sentences well and use simple and complex sentences for effect. In their narrative writing, they develop characters and settings well and their work is well structured. However, they have few opportunities to develop the same level of understanding of non-narrative texts, so that they are less familiar with the way to structure and organise writing for some of these types of texts, such as reports or explanations. The focus on narrative writing, whilst promoting above average standards in this area, limits pupils' overall progress and achievement in this aspect of English.

56. The relationship between adults and pupils is very positive and this leads to productive teaching and learning. Lessons are well structured and paced. When books are read with the whole class they are introduced enthusiastically so that pupils' interest is stimulated. Pupils respond positively to this and contribute their ideas, work hard and behave very well. Teaching and learning are good overall.
57. Assessment is used particularly effectively to track pupils' progress in reading. Progress in writing is carefully monitored and is very effective in picking up a lack of progress in narrative writing, sentence work, spelling and handwriting. However, the tracking procedures do not indicate whether pupils are developing writing skills across a range of different types of texts.
58. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader is an able practitioner who encourages and supports her colleagues well. Monitoring procedures are being developed although they are not sufficiently well established to enable the subject leader to have a secure overview of the strengths and weaknesses in provision across the school. Resources for this subject are adequate and used effectively throughout the school. However, there are insufficient non-narrative text books for pupils to read.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. A good start has been made on developing writing skills through history and geography. Younger pupils particularly write well in many different subjects. They undertake all forms of writing so that they label diagrams, recount science investigations and describe things in history. Whilst aspects of this were also seen in the work of older pupils it was not such a strong feature.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The process of monitoring pupils' progress and setting demanding targets is very effective.
- The achievement of pupils from Year 1 to 6 is good.
- The quality of teaching is good.

Commentary

60. In one very good lesson, pupils built on their understanding of how to plot co-ordinates and successfully made two translations using all four quadrants with a high degree of accuracy while higher attaining pupils also successfully rotated a two-dimensional shape about a point or outside the shape. Furthermore pupils were able to explain correctly what they were doing using correct mathematical vocabulary. This standard of work in Year 6, in the first part of the spring term is indicative of the standard of work underway. Since the last inspection standards and pupils' achievement have improved. In Year 2, standards are broadly in line with the national average. In the current Year 6, pupils attain standards which are above the expected levels. This is due in the main to good procedures for monitoring pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs, using the information gained to set well focused targets for pupils' next steps in learning and ensuring that, within the small year groups, work is well matched to individuals' needs through good quality teaching. The rate of pupils' learning has improved since the last inspection and achievement is good. This is very clearly exemplified by the results of school's assessments where pupils' progress is carefully tracked. It is worth noting that the results of the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003, whilst providing an accurate measure of pupils' attainment, do give a misleading picture of the school. The cohort for that year was small (seven pupils) and the characteristics of the year group were very different from previous and subsequent years. The cohort was a lower

attaining group and included one pupil with special educational needs who was profoundly deaf. Any one pupil accounted for 14 per cent of the overall results. These factors need to be taken into account when viewing the standards from one year to the next.

61. Between Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' progress is often good. Once again care should be taken when analysing the results. Of the Year 6 cohort of 2003, three out of the seven (42 per cent) joined the school in Year 3 or above. The data provided does not take account of these local patterns.
62. The effect of the school's improved monitoring of pupils' learning is that teachers are carefully matching pupils' work to their developing needs. Pupils are able to work alongside others of similar prior attainment and regularly rise to the challenges set within their work. This results in good achievement, particularly for higher attaining pupils who achieve particularly well in Year 6. The challenge for the school is to continue to raise the attainment of average and below average attaining pupils so that the overall standards improve. The signs are beginning to show that this is indeed what is happening.
63. Pupils show a good knowledge of number. For example in Year 2 they use simple strategies mentally to calculate multiples of 5 and 10, are competent in place value to hundreds and recognise the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. By the time they are in Year 6 most pupils have a good understanding of positive and negative numbers and manipulate these to solve problems. They successfully add, subtract and multiply to three decimal places. Most pupils understand how to calculate the area of regular and irregular shapes and are developing their understanding of how to find the square root of a given number. Higher attaining pupils draw on their subject vocabulary and use it appropriately to describe how they went about solving a problem.
64. All of the teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory and much was good; there was one very good lesson. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and how to tailor it to meet the needs of individual and groups of pupils. Learning is enhanced by the good deployment of support staff who work closely with the teacher in preparing learning objectives for particular groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs. Teachers are increasingly including the use of ICT in their teaching. In several lessons an interactive white board (IAW) was used to good effect and pupils are increasingly using the Internet to research information and support their learning; Pupils themselves recognise the positive way in which ICT helps them to learn and understand new concepts more quickly. A hallmark of the teaching is the high expectations which teachers have for their pupils. Lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to build upon previous learning and teachers' strategy to require pupils to explain how they solve problems is paying off in terms of helping pupils to use and apply their understanding in new situations.
65. Leadership is providing the necessary direction and impetus for improvement. Management has successfully brought about improved levels of resources, good monitoring and assessment procedures as well as increased and effective use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning. Analysis of tests and assessments has allowed the school to 'fine tune' the curriculum to ensure that relative weaknesses in pupils' learning are redressed and standards improve. For example, the school realised that pupils were not doing as well as they should in mental mathematics and problem solving. The curriculum and teaching content have been changed to help ensure that these aspects of the subject are taught in more detail than hitherto. These developments are sustainable enough to help ensure the school achieves its goals for pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement has improved and standards are rising. Pupils are more adept at solving problems and using and applying their mathematics in different situations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Mathematics is effectively taught and planned across the curriculum. For example, pupils record rainfall in geography using various graphs, they use timelines in history when placing the different periods in Ancient Egypt and in science they work with measures, such as temperature, and use tables to record their work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Scientific enquiry is taught systematically across the school and has a good impact on pupils' understanding and knowledge.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Year 6 pupils are achieving standards that are above average.
- Pupils' written work is good.
- Good links are made with ICT.

Commentary

67. Teacher assessment in 2003 showed that Year 2 pupils attained standards that were below the level expected in science. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are working at levels that are similar to those found nationally. The results for eleven year olds in 2003 were average although they were slightly lower than they had been in the previous four years because there were high proportions of pupils with special educational needs. Nearly all pupils in the present Year 6 are attaining average levels in science and the majority are working at the higher level 5.
68. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the provision for science which is leading to higher standards. The school has also improved the science curriculum it offers pupils in Year 1 and 2. This was because there was insufficient emphasis being placed on teaching pupils about materials and their properties and this led to below average standards being achieved in 2003.
69. The school ensures that science investigations are taught systematically. Year 2 pupils understand why 'fair tests' need to be carried out and Year 3 pupils suggest ways to control variables within an inquiry. Year 5 and 6 pupils make predictions and suggest ways to improve their investigations or fair tests based on their observations and understanding of science. Pupils' scientific vocabulary increases as they move through the school. Year 2 pupils use terms such as 'friction' and 'force' to explain differences in the way toy cars move across different surfaces. Year 6 pupils use terms such as 'evaporation' and 'condensation' to describe changes they have observed in their work on the water cycle. Pupils' written work demonstrates good achievement. As they move through the school they record their scientific ideas in greater detail using written accounts, graphs and diagrams. Computers are used purposefully to tabulate, analyse and graphically represent data from investigations increasing the accuracy and clarity of results.
70. Teaching and learning are good across the school. A strong feature in all lessons was the skilled way that teachers used questions to encourage pupils to explain their ideas using scientific language. Work is also carefully matched to meet the different levels of ability within each class. Teachers use assessments effectively to check pupils' understanding. This ensures that pupils' achievement is good and their progress sustained. Learning support workers are deployed well to ensure that pupils with special educational needs participate fully in scientific investigations, which leads to good achievement.
71. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, having introduced a new scheme of work for the subject. Resources are good and are used effectively throughout the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use ICT confidently.
- Resources for the subject are good.
- The leadership of the subject is good.
- Cross-curricular links are planned effectively and promote pupils' learning well.

Commentary

72. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain average standards. Year 2 pupils have a good grasp of the basic functions of a computer and enter, save and retrieve their work. They give instructions to the floor 'turtle' and explain how it works. Year 6 pupils confidently use the computer to carry out research using the Internet and send and receive e-mails. They design presentations and posters using a range of graphics and are critical of how they use their ICT skills. A good example of this was the personal collages that Year 6 pupils had designed using a range of techniques that included taking photographs using digital cameras, incorporating images from clip art and rotating and resizing of images. In discussions, pupils were able to discuss the impact they wished to achieve and how this influenced what they included or rejected in constructing their final collage. The school has maintained the standards that were observed at the time of the last inspection.
73. The teaching of ICT was only observed in one lesson during the inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. However, teachers' planning shows that lessons are carefully prepared in line with the school's programme of work. Pupils record their work carefully in their books, which demonstrate how they are making good progress and achieve well over time. Pupils with special educational needs make comparable progress in ICT.
74. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject. There is a detailed scheme of work based on national guidance, which supports teachers effectively. Assessment procedures are in place and a portfolio of pupils' work is being constructed to help guide teachers' assessments. Teachers' skills have been developed through training and feedback for the school's monitoring system.
75. The school's resources for ICT are good. There is a small ICT suite in all classrooms where lessons in the subject are taught. These resources also assist teachers to use ICT effectively to promote learning across the curriculum.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. Integrating ICT into other areas of the curriculum is a priority for the school. This is reflected in teachers' planning and pupils' work. There were many examples of pupils using ICT to record mathematical or scientific data in graphs or to undertake research in subjects such as English and geography. Art programmes are used to teach about pattern, collage and to familiarise pupils with the technique 'pointillism' and the work of Impressionist artists such as Seurat. There were many examples of very effective cross-curricular work being undertaken during the inspection. In the majority of lessons observed, teachers made effective use of ICT to promote some aspect of learning in English, mathematics or science.

HUMANITIES

77. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards in **history and geography**, as only one lesson was observed in geography. Teachers' planning, the curriculum plans and pupils' work were examined and a discussion held with pupils.
78. In the one lesson seen, which was a continuation of the study of the water cycle and the three courses of a river, standards were in line with expected levels. In addition, ICT plays an increasing part in supporting pupils' learning. For example, pupils used the Internet to learn about the speed and courses of a river and, as an introduction to the lesson, the teacher made good use of an IAW, which helped pupils recall learning from a previous lesson and rapidly build on it. There is indication from subject planning, displays and pupils' work that the curriculum is fully taught and links with other subjects are included in teachers' planning. Good use is made of the national schemes of work.
79. Photographs and discussion with pupils indicate that the school makes good use of theme days where, for example a 'Roman Visitor' provided a vivid and memorable learning opportunity for pupils. In geography a 'European Day' provided opportunities for pupils to experience different food, dress and explore diversity. The local heritage is used effectively to support learning in both subjects. Resources for both subjects are satisfactory and are well organised. Both subjects are satisfactorily led and managed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology and music. Therefore no overall judgement can be made on provision in these subjects. Evidence was gathered by looking at planning, displays of pupils' work, and discussions held with pupils and teachers.
81. In **art and design** evidence shows that all aspects of the subject are taught throughout the school. Long term planning is in line with national guidance, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. Displays of pupils' work indicate that standards are in line with those expected. Discussions with pupils about their work show that they enjoy the opportunities presented to use different media and that their teachers are enthusiastic about the subject. The subject leader is an able practitioner who provides sound leadership and supports colleagues well.
82. Planning shows that all aspects of **design and technology** are taught throughout the school. Long term planning follows national guidance and the standards observed at the previous inspection have been maintained. Displays of pupils' work indicate that standards are average and that they have good attitudes to the subject. The subject leader motivates and supports her colleagues well.
83. The evidence shows that all aspects of the **music** curriculum are taught. Long term planning reflects national guidance which is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' singing in assembly and recordings of their performances indicate that standards are similar to those achieved nationally. The subject leader provides sound leadership and promotes the subject well across the school.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broadened through the range of extra-curricular sports.
- All pupils swim by the age of seven.

- The school does not have its own hall where physical education lessons can take place.

Commentary

84. Only one lesson was seen in a mixed Year 2 and Year 3 class. It is not, therefore possible to make a firm judgment about standards and teaching for pupils in Years 1 to 6. The lesson was a dance lesson and the teaching was excellent. Pupils learned extremely well and made good progress in composing a dance sequence around the theme of Monet's garden. They worked hard with good concentration to develop their ideas of how water moves, included high and low, fast, slow and smooth movements and how best to sequence the different dance phrases into a three part dance. The lesson had pace and reflected the teacher's very good knowledge of effective teaching methods. The pupils enjoyed the lesson, took part enthusiastically and worked well in pairs. Standards of attainment in the lesson were above those expected. Pupils' progress was monitored well by both the teacher and support staff who augmented the learning with words of advice and encouragement. Both adults managed the behaviour of a potentially disruptive pupil very well, so that there was no significant variation in the very good achievement of pupils. The lesson provided good cross-curricular links with music.
85. The school joins with a nearby cluster of schools to enrich the curriculum through, for example, its involvement in sporting fixtures, the North American dance work and the Cheltenham Dance Festival. The success of the later was well exemplified when few in the audience realised that one of the dancers from the school was profoundly deaf. The school offers two gymnastic clubs after school and works hard to minimise the difficulties associated with not having a school hall, by enriching the curriculum through tag rugby and short tennis sessions. The school works well with parents, particularly in terms of the provision for swimming. Pupils regularly visit the local pool and parents appreciate the success of this venture since every pupil can swim by the age of seven. The subject is well lead, all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and the good management ensures that plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils. The school is keenly aware of the shortcomings associated with not having a school hall. Its answers to this obstacle are imaginative and successful.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a comprehensive programme of work.
- Teachers manage sensitive issues very well.
- Pupils enjoy PSHEC lessons.

Commentary

86. Only one lesson was seen in a mixed Year 2 and Year 3 class. It is not, therefore possible to make a firm judgment about standards and teaching for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
87. There is a comprehensive programme of work being developed which supports teaching in all classes. The programme of work also involves professionals such as the school nurse and draws on resources such as the 'Life Van' for teaching aspects of personal and health education through puppetry. The school also involves staff from the nearby estate, such as gamekeepers and woodmen to raise pupils' awareness of safety and conservation issues.
88. Pupils enjoy PSHEC lessons because teachers present them with interesting and thought provoking activities. Teachers manage sensitive issues such as incidents that had occurred in the playground or talking about feelings such as anger or embarrassment with a high degree of skill.

89. PSHEC is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator ensures that staff are well supported and able to teach this area confidently. The co-ordinator also is very effective in looking for opportunities to involve outside agencies who can promote greater awareness or understanding of some aspects of this work.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
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	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	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).