

INSPECTION REPORT

PARTON MANOR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Churchdown, Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115564

Headteacher: Mrs J Thorogood

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis
20893

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd March 2001

Inspection number: 197375

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Craven Drive Churchdown Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL3 2DR
Telephone number:	01452 713262
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr C McCrum
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D J Curtis 20893	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Physical education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (results and achievements) How well are pupils taught?
Mr B Jones 9542	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (attitudes, behaviour and personal development) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs B Rimmer 20655	Team inspector	English Religious education History Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Mrs J Bavin 16038	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Parton Manor Junior School is situated in the village of Churchdown in Gloucestershire and takes pupils from the ages of 7 to 11 years. There are 230 pupils on roll in eight classes, with 114 boys and 116 girls; this is an average-sized primary school. There are a small number of pupils from a home where English is not the first language. There are 75 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; this is above the national average. There are 11 pupils with a statement of special educational need; this is above average. Fifty-three pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is above the national average. Nineteen pupils are designated as 'Travellers', of whom 11 receive additional funding to support their learning. Pupils enter school with standards which are below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which is effectively led and managed by a headteacher who is committed to achieving and maintaining high standards. Teaching is good and pupils achieve above average standards at the end of Year 6 in many subjects. The very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are a significant feature of the school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, religious education, design and technology, history and physical education are good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and contribute successfully to their learning.
- Teaching is good, with 25 per cent very good, and makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and have resulted in significant improvement in the school.
- The curriculum provided for pupils is good, with extra-curricular provision being excellent.
- The teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs are good.
- The use of assessment to plan pupils' future learning is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What could be improved

- The standards achieved in numeracy by more-able pupils in Year 3 and the teaching of these pupils.
- In English, the consistent use of skills of punctuation, spelling and grammar in pupils' writing.
- Provision for the small number of pupils with English as an additional language.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since its previous inspection in September 1997. It has addressed successfully the key issues arising from the previous report. Pupils now take care and pride in their handwriting and the presentation of their work. They now have more opportunities to show initiative and work independently. There are clear procedures in place to ensure that pupils make progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding as they move up through the school. The results of assessments made of pupils' work, including results of National Curriculum and other tests, are used effectively to plan their future learning. Teachers' marking makes clear to pupils where they are successful and how they might improve their work.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	D	D	B
Mathematics	C	D	E	D
Science	A	B	C	B

Key

very high	A*
well above	A
average above	B
average	
average	C
below average	D
well below	E
average	

Similar schools are those with more than 20 per cent and up to 35 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

The above table shows the results for pupils who left the school last year. Inspection findings show that for the current group of Year 6 pupils, standards in English are average, with those in mathematics and science above average. Standards have improved as the result of good and very good teaching, linked to the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

Standards in information and communication technology are good and exceed national expectations. In religious education, standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In design and technology, history and physical education, standards are good. In art and design, geography and music, standards are satisfactory.

Pupils apply their literacy skills successfully in other subjects, with good examples of word-processing stories, poems, posters and front pages of newspapers. Numeracy skills are used effectively in other subjects, including science and design and technology. Pupils make good use of information and communication technology to support their learning. Skills in desk-top publishing are good and pupils are confident in the use of spreadsheets.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. They are supported effectively by class teachers working in close partnership with learning support assistants. Pupils' individual education plans set clear, realistic and achievable targets.

Pupils from 'Traveller' families make good progress in their learning; they receive good support from teachers and the local education authority support service.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy coming to school and show very positive attitudes to their work; they work exceptionally hard in lessons and persevere with their tasks. This is a significant feature in Year 6.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils behave extremely well in lessons, when moving around the school and at breaks and lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils are polite, friendly and very welcoming. They relate well to each other and to all adults with whom they come into contact.

Attendance	Satisfactory; pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good overall; it has a significant impact on the standards achieved and on pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. In 69 per cent of lessons, teaching was good, with 29 per cent very good. Of the remaining lessons, 27 per cent were satisfactory, with 4 per cent judged as unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is a significant strength of the school.

Strengths of good and very good teaching include strong subject knowledge, high expectations of what pupils can achieve and detailed planning which meets the individual learning needs of pupils. In lessons, pupils are made very aware of exactly what is to be done and how much, with the result that concentration and application are very good.

Teaching of key skills, including literacy and numeracy, is very good. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are implemented effectively. Expectations are high, with the result that pupils achieve well. In numeracy, the decision to use additional funding to teach pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 in three ability groups (sets) is having a positive effect on standards.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers work effectively and in partnership with the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the learning support assistants to support pupils in their learning.

Teaching of pupils from 'Traveller' families is good and contributes successfully to the good progress they make and to them playing a full part in the life of the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the school complies fully with the teaching of all National Curriculum subjects. Extra-curricular provision is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; pupils' individual education plans contain clear, detailed and achievable targets. Pupils' learning is supported by the effective partnership between the co-ordinator for special educational needs, class teachers and learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory, although the school does not fully identify their particular learning needs.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; spiritual development is good. Moral and social development is very good and contributes significantly to good behaviour and positive attitudes. Cultural development is good, particularly in art and music.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, with particular strengths in the assessment of pupils' learning and the use of that information to set targets for improving pupils' performance. Procedures for child protection and pupils' day-to-day welfare are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and management; she has a very clear vision of creating a school which sustains good standards. She is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; governors are supportive and effective in the work of the school. They fulfil all of their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the headteacher and governors are very aware of the school's strengths and areas for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are good and support pupils' learning effectively. Very good use is made of specific grants and additional funding.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good. • Their children make good progress at school. • The school has high expectations of their children. • Their children like school. • The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant concerns raised.

Twenty parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and 64 questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings confirm the positive views of parents. At the meeting, parents valued the school's 'caring ethos' and stressed that children 'gel', are 'taught to be polite' and are 'happy and take care of each other'. Parents feel that their children leave the school as 'well-rounded individuals'.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were average in science, below average in English and well below average in mathematics. When compared to those in similar schools¹, the results were above average in English and science, but below average in mathematics. In English, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 and above was well below average, but the percentage achieving the higher Level 5 was above average and confirms that more-able pupils are challenged. In mathematics, the percentage achieving Level 4 and above and the higher Level 5 was below average. In science, the percentage achieving both levels was average. The previous inspection report judged standards to be 'average' in all three subjects. Since then, standards have shown a slight downward trend in English and mathematics, but an upward trend in science. However, from year to year standards in the school are affected by significant variations in the number of pupils within each year group on the school's register of special educational needs. In addition, the number of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than of normal admission/transfer fluctuates from year to year and can be quite high.
2. Current inspection findings judge that, by the end of Year 6, standards in English are average, with those in mathematics and science above average. In all three subjects, more-able pupils are being challenged effectively and achieve well. Improvement is the result of very good teaching in Year 6, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies most effectively and this is having a significant impact on raising standards.
3. In literacy, pupils' reading skills are average. They are confident, independent readers and use a wide range of strategies to read unfamiliar and challenging books. Pupils are self-motivated and enjoy an increasing range of short novels, stories and poems. They are confident, independent writers who write freely and imaginatively in a wide variety of styles and formats. They write creatively and at length in poetic and narrative forms. Pupils write letters, use bullet points to make notes, label diagrams, produce lists, tables, charts and posters to present information and communicate messages in a meaningful way.
4. In numeracy, pupils' skills in mental arithmetic and their knowledge and use of times tables are good. They are confident at explaining how they find answers to mental arithmetic problems. Pupils read, write and order numbers to one million accurately. They show a good understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They have a good knowledge of graphs, including conversion graphs.
5. In science, pupils have a secure understanding of life processes and living things and materials and their properties; a significant minority have a mature understanding of scientific principles. For example, more-able pupils explain the process of photosynthesis with a detail and depth that exceeds expectations for their age.
6. Standards in information and communication technology are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age. Pupils show particularly good skills in the use of a desk-top publishing program and in the use of spreadsheets. They use computers successfully to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. In addition, pupils use

¹ Schools with more than 20% per cent and up to 35% per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

computers, including the Internet, effectively to support their learning in other subjects, including science and religious education.

7. In religious education, standards are good and exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the main features of Christianity and have a good understanding of the importance of other world faiths. They learn about the Holy Trinity from Bible stories, such as 'Moses and the Burning Bush' and the 'Conversion of Paul', and consider the qualities that make a person a Christian.
8. Standards in design and technology, history and physical education are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age. In art and design, geography and music, standards are satisfactory and meet expectations for pupils of this age.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning as measured against the targets set in their individual education plans. They are supported effectively in lessons by teachers, classroom assistants and the co-ordinator for special educational needs.
10. Pupils who are designated as coming from 'Traveller' families make good progress; they are supported by an effective partnership between the school and the local education authority support service. However, the local education authority support service was withdrawn and is not used as effectively to support pupils with English as an additional language and these pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning.
11. The school, through the very effective assessment of pupils' learning, has set clear and challenging targets for each year group by the time they reach Year 6. Inspection evidence is consistent with the school having the quality of teaching and the leadership and management which will allow it to meet those targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their life at school. In response to the high quality teaching they concentrate very well and work hard in lessons. Their attitudes were very good or excellent in 28 per cent of the lessons seen and good in a further 42 per cent. The eagerness shown by many pupils with special educational needs enhances the quality of their learning. Pupils of different abilities have the confidence to tackle exceptional projects. They take part enthusiastically in the excellent range of activities in sports and the arts. For example, 44 pupils rehearsed after school to dance in a local festival.
13. Pupils behave well in lessons, in breaks and at lunchtime. In the week of the inspection, their huge enthusiasm for marbles almost supplanted the usual soccer games. Pupils are courteous towards visitors. They respect their school and keep it tidy. Throughout the day, if something needs doing, they say, 'Can we help you?' The school has a few pupils with behavioural difficulties. These pupils respond well because the school identifies them quickly and gives them good support. There have been no exclusions in the past year. The school is free of oppressive behaviour and sexism. Parents say that bullying is rare and the school takes great care to deter and manage a situation if it happens.
14. Relationships at school are very good. Pupils work together very well in whole classes, groups and pairs. There is harmony with pupils from 'Traveller' families. Older pupils befriend the younger children and look after them in the playground. Pupils are very considerate of others with physical difficulties. Recently a girl in a wheelchair was a star of the school's Christmas production. Pupils encourage a handicapped pupil to take a full part in their gymnastics sequences. A class clapped enthusiastically when a pupil with

learning difficulties solved a tricky problem in mathematics. Pupils relate very well to their teachers and other adults. They take the adults' models of teamwork and friendship to develop caring relationships within the school.

15. Pupils show very good initiative and responsibility. A key issue in the previous report was to improve pupils' opportunities for personal development. This has happened. Pupils take their opportunities confidently. Each class has two representatives on the school council. The school gave them a budget of £1,200 for playground improvements. The school council found that pupils wanted extra seating; they researched which were the most suitable seats and sited them in the right places in the playground. A pupil entered a letter writing competition to tell Prince Charles what improvements he hopes for when he becomes king. His letter said, 'My dream is to make my mum better because she has a crumpled spine and a slipped disc. My second dream is to get everybody better.' His letter won him an invitation to take his mother, headteacher and class teacher to meet His Royal Highness at Highgrove. A Year 4 pupil hit the headlines when she wrote to her local council about a threat to build on local land. 'If you don't stop building, where will the fairies live?' she asked. A councillor replied that there are no plans for incursion into Churchdown's green belt.
16. Pupils build their teamwork and leadership in performing arts and sports. They sing, act, dance and work backstage on the school's successful musical productions. The school has star performers in instrumental music, dance and gymnastics. Pupils have won their way into county and city squads in soccer, cricket and athletics. A pupil plays badminton for the South West of England. A recent pupil captains her county netball team. All these activities enhance pupils' self-confidence and pride in the school.
17. Attendance is satisfactory at 94.3 per cent. It has gone up by 1.3 per cent since the previous inspection. Pupils from the 'Traveller' families achieve a good level of annual attendance. Pupils arrive promptly each morning. First lessons often start with a fun activity, such as solving 40 number puzzles within a tight time limit. This encourages good punctuality.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The previous inspection judged the quality of teaching to be 'satisfactory or better' in 97 per cent of lessons, with 4 per cent very good. Three per cent of teaching was judged to be 'unsatisfactory'. Half of the lessons observed were judged to be 'good or very good'.
19. Inspection findings show that the quality of teaching is good and that it has improved since the last inspection. Although 4 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory, 69 per cent were good, including 29 per cent which were very good. One lesson observed was excellent. Good and very good teaching is having a positive impact on the standards achieved and on the good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils. Inspection findings confirm the views of parents that teaching is good.
20. During the inspection, excellent teaching was seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson. Examples of very good teaching were seen in literacy, numeracy, physical education and science. Examples of good teaching were seen in all subjects, except music. No teaching of history was observed. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in numeracy in Year 3 and in science in Year 6. In both lessons, teachers' planning did not challenge pupils in their learning, with the result that they lost concentration and made insufficient progress in the lesson.
21. The teaching of literacy is good. It is consistently very good in Year 6, where high expectations of work and behaviour lead to very good attitudes towards language work

and good progress for pupils of all levels of ability. Teachers plan interesting and varied activities that successfully generate interest and excitement for literature and language activities. A strength of the teaching across the school is the very good presentational skills during introductions that gain and hold pupils' attention effectively. Good questioning skills develop speaking and listening skills well. In the best lessons teachers make excellent use of time and incorporate new grammatical knowledge with the reinforcement and consolidation of basic skills for pupils of all levels of ability.

22. The teaching of numeracy is very good and contributes to the significant improvement in standards. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and implement it effectively in lessons. The mental arithmetic session is challenging, with a strong expectation that pupils explain how they find the answers to questions. Group work is managed effectively with work matched well to pupils' learning needs. Final or plenary sessions are used to assess pupils' knowledge and to set homework. The decision to use additional funding to teach pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 in ability groups (sets) is having a positive impact on standards, especially as three ability groups are made from the two classes.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and allows them to make good progress. Pupils receive strong support from class teachers, classroom assistants and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. They are supported effectively in lessons and on the occasions when they work away from their own classrooms, for example, with the special educational needs co-ordinator.
24. The teaching of pupils designated as coming from 'Traveller' families is good and these pupils make good progress in lessons. Teachers work effectively with the local education authority support service in planning for the learning needs of these pupils.
25. The teaching of the very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory. However, teachers do not make full use of the support service in assessing pupils' learning needs and in planning teaching programmes to specifically meet those needs.
26. In the best lessons, teachers show good subject knowledge which they pass onto pupils with interest and enthusiasm. As a result, pupils are interested and absorbed in their lessons. Teachers make good use of resources to teach pupils new knowledge. For example, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, the teacher used empty cans very effectively to show how to make triangular numbers. By matching the teaching to the idea of a fairground game, the pupils were interested and quickly understood the idea, and then made good progress in the lesson in finding the pattern of how triangular numbers grow. In lesson introductions, teachers use questions effectively and this contributes successfully to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. For example, in a Year 5 numeracy lesson, pupils were asked, 'Explain to me how two-fifths is equivalent to nought point four'.
27. Group work is taught effectively as the result of good and detailed planning which matches the individual learning needs of pupils. A strength is that teachers plan challenging extension work for those pupils who complete the main task for the lesson. For example, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson where the task was to find all the prime numbers between one and one hundred, the extension activity was to find the prime factors of a range of numbers. Pupils know that no time is to be wasted in lessons and enjoy the extra challenge.
28. Teachers manage pupils effectively and this contributes successfully to very positive attitudes to learning. In over half of the lessons observed, pupils' attitudes to learning

were very good, with excellent attitudes shown in 25 per cent of lessons. As a result of interesting and challenging work, pupils make good progress in their learning. Relationships are good and pupils are confident in answering and asking questions. If they have a problem, they know that they will be supported by their teachers; they value the opportunities to work in small groups with classmates identified by the teacher as having the same problem. For example, in a Year 5 numeracy lesson, the teacher identified that some pupils were finding it more difficult to match fractions to decimals and used successfully a game of fractions dominoes to reinforce pupils' understanding.

29. Teachers mainly mark pupils' work effectively and guide them forward in their learning, although the marking in English is inconsistent. Good use is made of day-to-day assessment to identify gaps in learning. Teachers use the information from marking pupils' work, including homework, to adapt their teaching to reinforce gaps in knowledge. In Year 6, a teacher reminded pupils that part of the problem that they were having with mathematics homework was that, 'You are not reading the questions carefully'.

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

30. The school provides a very good variety of high quality, stimulating learning opportunities that fulfil the learning needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. It includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and is based on carefully chosen topics. The planning and organisation of the curriculum are vigilant and thorough. There is a well established structure that is constantly evolving through collaborative teamwork. The curriculum has breadth and balance and successfully provides relevance, interest and enjoyment of learning through effective links between subjects. The school carefully incorporates guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority with its own good practice, schemes and policies. The curriculum enables pupils to make very good progress in their standards of work and personal development.
31. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the core subjects² by carefully structured programmes of work outlined in detail in their individual education plans. Teachers and adults know pupils very well and help them to become fully integrated in the daily life of the school. These pupils make good progress in the basic skills, which gives them sufficient independence and self-esteem to work alongside others for most of the other subjects. All pupils have equal access to and benefit from the full range of learning experiences available.
32. The introduction and successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are strong features of the curriculum, having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. They provide for the learning of skills in a systematic, clear progression, resulting in an improvement in standards, particularly in mathematics, since the last inspection. Booster classes³ for targeted groups of pupils make an effective contribution to pupils' progress in language development and mathematics.
33. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for information and communication technology since the last inspection. An ICT suite has been provided and a structured programme of work gives all pupils the opportunity to develop their skills and use their learning effectively in other subjects across the curriculum.

² [English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education](#)

³ [The school receives additional funding to provide extra lessons for pupils, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6.](#)

34. Pupils' personal, social and health education is an integral part of the timetable following staff training in 'Circle Time',⁴ and the school's provision is very good. It is committed to the development of the whole child. The curriculum includes sex education and attention to drugs misuse, taught both formally as part of a personal and social development programme and in science in Years 5 and 6. Good relationships and frequent opportunities for pupils to speak their views and opinions build confidence to enable them to ask questions.
35. The curriculum is significantly enhanced by the excellent provision of an exceptionally rich variety of extra-curricular opportunities. These are very well supported and include music, technology and a wide range of sporting activities. Many pupils participate keenly in competitive inter-schools sport with considerable success. The school's staff strongly encourage and support pupils in these additional activities.
36. The community contributes to pupils' learning well through strong links with local churches and charitable organisations such as Rotary and Round Table. There are positive links with the partner institutions of the infant school and two of the comprehensive schools to which pupils transfer at 11, providing continuity. A science day for pupils in Year 5, for example, prepares them in a positive way for the next stage in their school life.
37. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. They are taught to think for themselves and they follow rules out of a genuine respect and care for themselves and for others.
38. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. They acquire high levels of understanding of the spiritual beliefs of others through religious education lessons and well-chosen stories and themes in assemblies. They have frequent opportunities to consider relationships and feelings during discussions of poetry and literature; they consider fundamental issues affecting their own lives during planned sessions. The daily act of collective worship is broadly Christian and fulfils statutory requirements.
39. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and a strength of the school. The school successfully fulfils its aim to create a sense of discipline within a caring atmosphere. The discipline policy is well known and teachers and other adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manners. They provide very good role models through their very good relationships with one another and pupils. The school policy to use support staff in both classrooms and at lunchtime ensures consistency of standards and expectations of behaviour. As a result, pupils behave well, are very polite and contribute thoughtfully to school and class rules. A 'Life Education Bus' presents them with good opportunities to reflect on drugs issues and for some individuals it provides considerable insights into their own lives and those of their families. Parents are right to believe that their children learn to behave themselves in school.
40. Pupils are given many varied opportunities to work with one another in pairs and groups in the classroom, at play and during out-of-school activities. Pupils benefit from residential visits to the Isle of Wight and the Forest of Dean from as early as Year 3. They are increasingly encouraged to show initiative and take responsibility for themselves and for others in a variety of jobs in and around school. They learn to be good citizens by taking part in elections for house captains and organising their own meetings and agendas. The school awards 'Special Citizen' certificates to pupils, encouraging thoughtful behaviour. A particularly effective innovation since the last inspection is the introduction of a School Council. Pupil representatives are given responsibility for spending, on occasion, large

⁴ In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and, through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other, talking about issues, which touch them all.

sums of money. They make decisions and suggestions about playground provision and games, which are listened to with genuine respect. The school most recently carried out democratically agreed plans, such as the provision of additional benches to provide quiet areas, for example.

41. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development through many subjects of the curriculum, including mathematics, art, music and history. Pupils learn to appreciate and value their own traditions, such as when they take part in a local Remembrance Service and participate in the Cheltenham Dance Festival, for example. They include members of the Travelling community successfully, by encouraging them to be proud of their tradition and share their experiences. Pupils gain an understanding of British culture through visits to museums and places of interest. A rich and varied programme of visits for all pupils provides valuable first-hand learning experiences. There is a suitable multi-cultural element to the curriculum. Pupils learn about the customs and traditions of different faiths, such as Islam and Judaism, through religious education lessons. During the year, they benefit from visitors to the school from different cultures, including an Ethiopian storyteller. Teachers take advantage of pupils within their classes who can share first-hand experiences. In a Year 4 class, for example, pupils are most interested to hear details of Mendhi hand painting from a boy from a Bangladeshi background.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school cares well for its pupils in respect of welfare, child protection and health and safety. Staff follow the clear and up-to-date health and safety policy. They are aware of requirements for safety in subjects. For example, they ensure that pupils remove or tape earrings before physical education lessons. Members of the governing body and the headteacher carry out a full check of the premises every term. The school is clean and has brought pupils' toilets up to an acceptable standard. However, there is a health and safety concern – a broken tile on the staircase leading to the Year 5 classrooms has a sharp edge. The school has good arrangements for first aid. Three members of staff have trained in first aid for schools. The nurse in the adjacent doctors' surgery is available in case of accident or emergency. The headteacher is the designated teacher for child protection. She has received full training and ensures that staff are aware of current issues and requirements. The school works closely with local agencies and follows local procedures.
43. The school has very good procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development. Teachers know their pupils very well. The headteacher knows the pupils well and is very aware of their needs, strengths and ambitions. Teachers keep detailed written records of pupils' progress in behaviour and personal development. All pupils have files recording their achievements which allows teachers, parents and pupils to see how they have made progress during their time in the school.
44. The school provides very good support for pupils' personal development. This is a significant improvement. A key issue in the previous report was that the school needed to improve opportunities for pupils to show more initiative. The school has a school council that meets once a fortnight. Each class chooses two pupils as representatives. Pupils ask their classmates what they want and put the ideas across clearly. They chair the meeting and take the minutes expertly. The school gave the school council a budget of £1,200 to spend on playground equipment and the council chose to buy benches and additional litter bins. Year 6 pupils supervise the agenda and the election of captains at the school's four house meetings. They monitor technological resources and help with wet breaks and lunchtimes. Year 5 pupils are responsible for mathematics resources and recently ran an athletics programme. Every half term in each class one pupil wins the right to be a 'Special Citizen' and wear the special badge with great pride. Parents

interviewed say that their children become polite, well-rounded individuals. One parent said, 'The school has helped my children to enjoy learning and believe in themselves'.

45. The good, clear policy for behaviour and discipline has effective procedures to encourage positive behaviour. Pupils receive stickers for good behaviour. These build up into awards at the weekly assemblies. If there are behaviour difficulties, the pupil gets a 'positive comments' book and takes it home two or three times a week. Parents say they feel 'an enormous sense of support and care'. The school has good procedures to deter bullying. Parents say incidents are rare and the school sorts them out reliably. The school has eight supervisors to provide support at lunchtime. If pupils or small groups become over-excited, a lunchtime supervisor works with them, taking 'time out' in the library if necessary. This is effective in avoiding troubles in advance.
46. The school has good procedures to promote attendance. If parents do not explain an absence, the secretary telephones them or sends a note. Two educational welfare officers work closely with the school. One provides good support for the travelling families. Together they have a positive impact on pupils' attendance. The school has improved its procedures to encourage punctuality. It closes classroom doors promptly at morning registration time.
47. Assessment procedures are very good. The school tests pupils twice each term in English, mathematics and science. It obtains very specific information about how to help a class, a group or a pupil. In mathematics, for example, the system goes beyond detecting a general weakness in fractions. It shows very accurately, for example, whether pupils can put in order a line of fractions such as $\frac{3}{4}$, ? and ? . It encourages teachers to note on the assessment sheet how they will modify their lessons to correct any weakness. Very specific testing in English also feeds into teachers' planning. The school sets targets based on this assessment information. It currently uses the information to enhance the booster classes for Year 6 pupils. Marking of pupils' work in English is inconsistent across the school and ranges from good to satisfactory.
48. The school provides very good support for pupils with special educational needs. It holds regular review meetings with parents. It invites pupils to participate in these meetings. This is very good practice and helps pupils progress well towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice⁵ in support of pupils with statements of special educational need.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents have a very good opinion of the school. They feel that it is an open school and they find it easy to talk to the class teacher or the headteacher. At the pre-inspection meeting parents said their children make good progress and really enjoy their projects and other work at school. In response to the questionnaire, more than nine parents out of 10 agree that teaching and behaviour are good, and that the school is well led and managed. Parents say that the school helps their children grow into the wider world. Almost all agree that their children like the school. One mother said, 'My children would rather be at school than on holiday!'
50. The school has very good links with parents. At the time of the previous inspection it held two formal meetings each year with the child's class teacher. Parents asked for another meeting and the school added one in the spring term. Parents find these meetings valuable even though they already keep in touch through informal meetings and

⁵ Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

home/school contact books. The school arranges meetings to tell parents what their children will be learning. These include invitations to literacy lessons and a 'maths fun day'. Parents are enthusiastic about the 'hands on' sessions in the new information and communication technology suite. They try the new computers themselves and the school guides them on using the Internet safely at home. The school has a thriving parent-teacher association and parents support it strongly. The programme includes discos which build up pupils' social skills. Pupils take responsibility for stalls at the summer and Christmas fairs. They raise funds successfully with competitions to guess the name of the football team or the weight of the cake.

51. The school provides good information for parents. It issues attractive newsletters monthly. In the autumn term, after the curriculum evening, it sends a summary showing what pupils in each class will learn. The prospectus and the governors' annual report are clear and informative. The annual reports to parents could be improved. The reports show a sympathetic understanding of pupils' personal development and give detail in English and mathematics. They correctly cover attendance figures. However, last year's reports used only one side of an A4 sheet. The superb new assessment system that the school introduced this year is a reason to reconsider what will go into this year's reports. Several parents at the pre-inspection meeting, said they were sorry there was little target setting in the reports last year.
52. Parents contribute very well to their children's learning. The impact of their involvement in the school is very good. Eleven volunteers help regularly in class. Parents join teachers on trips to local sites of interest. Most parents keenly support the school's homework policy. They welcome the ambitious project work, for example, on history and the environment. Pupils read independently at home and many pupils interviewed say they read with their parents at least once a week. Parents play their part in support of the many extra-curricular activities in the arts and sport. In the week of the inspection, parents made beautiful costumes for their children's participation in a dance festival at Cheltenham.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher guides pupils and staff with determination and sensitivity. She works purposefully toward her goal of continuing improvement within a nurturing and supportive environment. One of her greatest successes is promoting a school ethos that genuinely values all pupils and so helps them to learn effectively. Governors and staff want every pupil to be valued whatever their needs or circumstances. This commitment enriches the school's work and the daily experience for pupils. It has a direct bearing on the very positive attitudes held by pupils and their impressive enthusiasm for school. The headteacher also knows her staff very well; values their strengths and supports their further development. Her leadership has been instrumental in the school's continued improvement and has many strengths.
54. The senior management team ably supports the headteacher. Together they lead a staff that reflects upon and thoughtfully evaluates the school's work, constantly seeking to improve standards. There are very good systems in place for analysing and linking the impact of the quality of teaching to the quality of pupils' learning. These procedures account for the good teaching and the good achievement of most pupils. The school has successfully managed significant improvements in assessing what pupils know, understand and can do, and is using this information to meet individual pupils' needs. The quality of leadership provided by subject leaders is a strength of the school. They take responsibility for their subjects with considerable enthusiasm and expertise. They plan for specific development, then review what they have achieved and report back to the headteacher. Each subject leader supports colleagues with ideas for resources and activities. This

leadership makes a significant contribution to the rich and varied curriculum that pupils enjoy, including the exceptional variety of clubs and visits that are on offer to them.

55. The governing body works hard to meet its statutory responsibilities. Governors contribute wide ranging, relevant skills and experience to their work with the school. Those who have served the longest know the school well and recently appointed governors are embarking on this process. While the chair of governors recognises the advantages of several governors also having support roles in school, he is alert to the possible disadvantages. He is aware that this situation could lead to the governing body being too inward looking and clearly seeks to balance this with constructive challenge. He and the headteacher regularly debate issues, such as determining sufficiently high and realistic targets for pupils, especially those with special educational needs. The headteacher and governing body share an immense commitment to both the academic and social well-being of each pupil. They work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. Consequently, the school works efficiently and effectively in fulfilling its chosen aims.
56. Working together, governors and senior staff budget prudently. They are impressively successful in ensuring that financial planning supports the school improvement plan. A recent result of this planning, for example, is the well equipped and attractive information and technology suite. Characteristically, this new provision is used extremely well because staff are receiving suitable training and lessons are now planned to incorporate information and communication technology for the whole class. Subject leaders appreciate the financial support for their subjects. This means that there are plenty of good quality resources to support each subject including, for example, the excellent provision of extra sporting and musical activities offered outside lessons. The school manages special grants well and makes very good use of government funded projects. Once the budget is decided, governors, senior staff and subject leaders monitor the effect of the decisions. This is systematic and without exception because the school has developed a culture of constant review and evaluation. The effect of this is that staff challenge present practice, make good use of advice and links with other professionals, and compare their performance with other schools. This is a significant factor in the school providing good value for money.
57. Another result of this highly efficient management of financial planning closely linked to educational priorities is the well-developed accommodation. In addition to the new 'ICT Suite', the school benefits from a spacious library. The dining room has recently been adapted and now provides useful and flexible extra space for dining, changing or small group work. The school has a swimming pool, a pond and a conservation area. The governor with specific responsibility for science has developed resources to enhance the use of the pond and conservation area. However, plans to continue with this development reflect the school's commitment to continued improvement. Similarly, the school's commitment to providing pupils with opportunities for personal and social development is reflected in the allocation of £1,200 to the student council. The pupils' representatives used the budget sensibly to enhance the accommodation, by selecting two sturdy seats for the outside play area.
58. The school makes exceptionally good use of new technology to collate information about standards in mathematics for individual pupils and groups of pupils. Teachers have a detailed and individual printed profile of what each pupil knows and can do that highlights the areas for development. In other areas of school life, technology is used well, for example in producing good quality assessment and planning information, including tables and charts that enable senior staff to analyse information and act on it to benefit all pupils and staff.
59. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school's co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable and carries out her role with skill

and expertise. She provides valuable advice and support both formally and on an informal basis. There is an appointed governor with responsibility for special educational needs to oversee the provision made by the school. She also acts as a learning support assistant and is very positive in her support of the school. Provision has improved since the last inspection report. The school has installed a disabled toilet and made the main school accessible to pupils in wheelchairs by the recent installation of ramps. Resources are good. Additional grants are used appropriately to pay for learning support assistants to support the school's aim of integration.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. To further improve the quality of education and the standards achieved, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) ensure that in numeracy more-able pupils in Year 3 achieve higher standards by improving the quality of teaching through:
 - improving the quality of planning;
 - raising expectations of what can be achieved;
 - ensuring that, particularly in group and/or independent work, pupils know what they are expected to achieve; (paragraphs 20, 75 and 81)
 - (2) ensure that teachers are consistent in reinforcing their expectations that pupils should apply the skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation in their writing; (paragraphs 65, 67 and 71)
 - (3) improve the provision for pupils with English as an additional language by:
 - identifying more accurately their learning needs;
 - providing detailed targets for their learning;
 - seeking effective support from the local education authority's support service. (paragraphs 10 and 25)

In addition, the governors may wish to consider including the following in their action plan:

- introduce target setting into pupils' annual written reports; (paragraph 51)
- reduce the use of the hall as a thoroughfare, particularly when physical education lessons take place; (paragraph 126)
- repair the damaged tiles on the Year 5 landing; (paragraph 42)
- improve the consistency of teachers' marking in English (paragraphs 29, 47 and 71).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	28	40	27	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	230
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	75

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.04
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	40	25	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	26	37
	Girls	19	15	21
	Total	43	41	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (70)	63 (64)	89 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	24	28
	Girls	17	15	20
	Total	36	39	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (69)	60 (62)	74 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	223
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	29

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	399,845
Total expenditure	403,289
Expenditure per pupil	1,633
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,196
Balance carried forward to next year	27,753

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 27.8%

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	31	5	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	41	54	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	63	8	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	61	10	2	0
The teaching is good.	55	40	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	47	14	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	22	3	5	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	23	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	57	9	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	50	40	3	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	44	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	36	6	2	6

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

ENGLISH

61. The results of the 2000 statutory tests show that pupils reached standards which were below the national average at the end of the key stage. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was above average. In comparison with those in schools with similar characteristics, results were above average. Standards in English, as measured against the findings of the previous inspection report, have declined marginally since the last inspection, with writing being the weakest element in pupils' attainment.
62. Evidence from this inspection indicates a wide variation in ability between the year groups. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are better than in the previous year, but still below the average because of a high percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs in language development. The school has put effective strategies in place, including the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, high quality teaching at the end of the key stage and good levels of additional support for pupils needing help. This has resulted in good progress for pupils at all levels of ability in all aspects of English, including writing. Pupils in the current Year 6 are likely to attain above the expected standards in speaking and listening and average standards in reading and writing at the end of the key stage.
63. Pupils reach good levels of speaking and listening. Most teachers are very good role models for speaking and they provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in a wide range of contexts. The School Council, for example, teaches pupils how to use language in formal situations. Pupils speak in front of large groups during assemblies. In a presentation of the Ten Commandments, for example, Year 5 use character, action and narrative to communicate the meanings effectively. As a result, by the end of the key stage pupils are confident talkers and listeners. They listen most attentively to well-told stories, clear instructions and interesting language topics. During discussions and debate, pupils listen respectfully to one another, as is evident from their ready and logical responses. Many of the more-able pupils are articulate speakers and express their views and ideas in extended, complex sentences with confidence and clarity. They answer questions and volunteer information with well-organised speech, clear diction and a good command of spoken English. Pupils with special educational needs develop their confidence and self-esteem in small groups with the special educational needs co-ordinator. They are encouraged to participate in lessons and demonstrate good oral skills, even though they need help to transfer their thoughts and ideas in writing.
64. Standards in reading are in line with the national average. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils are confident, independent readers, using a range of strategies to read unfamiliar and challenging books. Pupils are self-motivated and enjoy an increasing range of short novels, stories and poems. They read aloud competently as a class from a wide variety of shared texts. These include instructional texts about the environment and poetry. Although some pupils struggle to keep up with the brisk pace set by the majority, they adapt their intonation and volume to show considerable understanding and sensitivity. They draw inferences from the text readily, with good understanding of characters' motives. The most able predict outcomes and show good understanding beyond the literal. Less able pupils read familiar words accurately with expression, but still lack fluency. They are not always aware when misread words do not make sense. Pupils enjoy reading. A Year 4 pupil writes in her book review of a Harry Potter book, '... it's so good you just can't get your head out of it'. Pupils express their preferences and give reasons for their choices. They have well-developed research skills. They make use of their secure knowledge of library systems and terms such as 'index', 'contents' and 'glossary', to independently find

information for their topic work from a wide range of books in the attractive, well-organised school library.

65. The standard of writing is in line with the national average at the end of the key stage. Pupils in Year 6 are confident, independent writers who write freely and imaginatively in a wide variety of styles and formats. They write creatively and at length in poetic and narrative forms. They write letters, use bullet points to make notes, label diagrams, produce lists, tables, charts and posters to present information and communicate messages in a meaningful way. Their choice of writing form has real purpose and an awareness of their audience. Biographies of family members, for example, incorporate many skills, including interviewing, use of narrative text, word processing and lively and expressive language. The most able pupils reach very high standards of work. They use their imaginations well to produce delightful nonsense words such as 'cumberfrumptious' and the 'frollybroke' in their own poems based on Lewis Carroll's 'Jabberwocky'. Pupils of all abilities achieve good standards when they produce well-balanced arguments on controversial issues ranging from fox hunting to the wearing of school uniform. They have a secure understanding of parts of speech and show advanced levels when they create compound adjectives to describe chosen nouns. Pupils make good use of dictionaries and a thesaurus to find correct spellings or synonyms. One pupil, for example, when describing the sea, improves her adjective, 'sand-eater' to the more expressive 'sand-gobbler' after consulting her thesaurus. Pupils show high levels of understanding of punctuation, including apostrophes, speech marks, exclamation marks and brackets. They use paragraphs appropriately. Able pupils are beginning to recognise their own errors and give explanations for using 'bitter' instead of 'biter', for example. However, many pupils continue to make the same repeated errors in sentence construction, such as capital letters and full stops incorrectly used. Common words are often inaccurately or phonetically spelt and pupils lack a secure knowledge of basic spelling patterns.
66. Most pupils use clear, joined handwriting, some of a very good style. It is neat and legible with letters accurately formed. This is developed very well in Year 6 because of very good teaching. One pupil comments that her 'diagonal joins have improved with practice'.
67. Pupils achieve well and make good gains in their learning. They add to their knowledge of grammatical skills over time and gain an understanding of punctuation and parts of speech to a good extent. Year 3 pupils are keen to identify verbs in instructional texts, such as recipes, as a result of good questioning skills by teachers. They write for a wide range of purposes, but need adult support to write logically sequenced sentences. Although they produce good standards of atmospheric writing about the playground, they need help to spell frequently used simple words accurately. Their writing contains a mixture of upper and lower case letters within sentences and letters are often incorrectly formed. Pupils in Year 4 make good progress in speaking and listening and satisfactory progress in writing. Whilst the most able pupils write in well organised sentences accurately spelt, many continue to make basic errors in sentence construction and rely on a framework for writing given to them by teachers. Year 5 pupils are enthusiastic and thoughtful when they produce ideas based on a poem about feeling 'Left Out'. They are developing ideas very well, but standards of spelling and grammatical accuracy are below average.
68. In all year groups, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards set targets in spelling, reading and writing. They benefit from a systematic programme of support, well taught by the special educational needs co-ordinator when they are withdrawn for individual and small group work. They are supported well by learning support assistants in lessons to ensure full access to the learning opportunities in the lesson. Pupils with statements of special educational need are particularly well integrated into lessons and make good progress.

69. Pupils' attitudes towards English are very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6. They behave well and show a lively interest in language activities. The least able in all year groups are keen to improve their reading skills and take pride in their achievements, recognising the progress they are making. Most pupils apply themselves purposefully and diligently to tasks, confident that their efforts are well received. After a very good lesson on 'Kenning Poems'⁶, pupils in Year 6 continue exchanging ideas for adjectives with delight and enthusiasm. Pupils are particularly good at working together in pairs and in groups, and co-operate and collaborate well. An excellent example is the way Year 5 empathise closely with the character in a poem and share ideas to produce a class poem of a high standard.
70. The quality of teaching is good. It is consistently very good in Year 6 where high expectations of work and behaviour lead to very good attitudes towards language work and good progress for pupils of all levels of ability. Teachers plan interesting and varied activities that successfully generate interest and excitement for literature and language activities. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. Strengths of the teaching across the school are the very good presentational skills during introductions that gain and hold pupils' attention effectively. Good questioning skills develop speaking and listening skills well. Teachers have established very good relationships with pupils. They encourage them to be thoughtful and value their responses, giving them confidence and self-esteem. In the best lessons, teachers make excellent use of time and incorporate new grammatical knowledge with the reinforcement and consolidation of basic skills for pupils of all levels of ability.
71. Teachers have a good understanding of the literacy hour. Its successful implementation is having a positive impact on pupils' progress in reading and writing. Lessons are well structured, with the learning objectives clearly identified and shared with pupils. The quality of planning is of a high standard, with assessment procedures successfully incorporated. Teachers' good use of curriculum time immediately after registration has given pupils good opportunities to develop basic skills in reading, spelling and handwriting. In a minority of lessons in Years 3 and 4, pupils often carry out the same work and tasks are not sufficiently matched to pupils' levels of understanding, resulting usually in satisfactory, rather than good, progress. Positive and constructive marking in most classes provides good examples for pupils and corrects work appropriately to aid progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Where pupils' work is uncorrected, however, in the lower half of the school, pupils do not learn sufficiently from their mistakes and progress is not as evident over time.
72. Other subjects make an impressive contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. Pupils make accurate and original observations about Churchdown in geography, produce high quality writing about the Tudors in history and in religious education a pupil records that 'St. John's Church is a bit unusual because it doesn't have any stained-glass windows.' There is a rich variety of opportunities in mathematics, science and design and technology to produce tables, charts and diagrams using labels and notes to good purpose.
73. The school has successfully improved the standards of handwriting and presentation, which were issues in the last inspection.

⁶ An old Norse form or style of poetry

MATHEMATICS

74. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were well below the national average. When compared to those in similar schools, the results were below average. The percentage of pupils who achieved the expected Level 4 was below average, as was the number who achieved the higher Level 5, and this depresses the school's results. At the previous inspection, standards were judged to be 'average'. Taking the years 1998 to 2000 together, the trend shows standards to be below average. However, there are significant variations within year groups in the school in relation to the number on the register of special educational needs and those who join or leave the school at times other than of normal admission or transfer. These factors do have a bearing on standards.
75. Inspection findings show that standards are good and are above average. In the current Year 6, more-able pupils achieve well and this is a significant factor in improving standards. In addition, the teaching of numeracy is very good and the National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented effectively. In Year 5 and Year 6, the school is making efficient use of additional funding to teach pupils where they are grouped by ability into three 'sets' from the two classes. This is having a positive impact on raising standards. In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils are taught in ability groups, but there are only two groups made from the two classes. In Year 3, more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently and are not achieving as well as they should because teaching is unsatisfactory.
76. Pupils successfully apply their literacy skills to their work in mathematics, particularly in reading and understanding problems. Numeracy skills are used effectively in other subjects, particularly in science, where pupils make good use of graphs and charts to record the results of experiments and investigations. In information and communication technology, pupils use spreadsheets successfully to develop their numeracy skills, for example in calculating percentages.
77. Pupils make good progress in the use and application of mathematics in problem solving and investigations. In Year 4, pupils use their addition skills accurately to calculate the length of a journey, for example, from Southampton to London to Birmingham. In Year 6, pupils carry out successful investigations into finding triangular numbers⁷ by exploring patterns. From the pattern, they are confident in predicting and checking, for example, the 17th triangular number. Through further investigation they discover that by adding any two consecutive triangular numbers they will always get a square number as an answer.
78. In number work, progress is good. By Year 4, pupils read, write and order numbers correctly to 9,999 and they use the four rules of number accurately in calculating the answers to sums with hundreds, tens and units. In Year 5, pupils add and subtract accurately to 10,000 and they round off numbers correctly to the nearest ten, hundred or thousand. They understand decimals and solve problems using addition and subtraction. In Year 6, pupils read, write and order numbers to one million. They have a very good understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils show good knowledge of factors and square and cube numbers. Mental arithmetic skills are good. In Year 6, more-able pupils mentally use the digits 2, 5, 7, and 8 and their knowledge of decimals to predict the answer to the equation, '0. __ x __ = 2'. Knowledge of times tables is good; pupils show good quick mental recall and apply their knowledge quickly and accurately in mental and written problems. Pupils who show a thorough knowledge and understanding of times tables win a 'Gold Medallion Award' in recognition of their efforts.

⁷ 1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 28, 36, 45 etc

79. In work on shape, space and measures, progress is good. By Year 4, pupils recognise right angles and tell the time accurately to the nearest minute. They name and give the properties of two-dimensional shapes and measure correctly to the nearest centimetre. In Year 5, pupils draw and measure angles accurately; they know how to find the diameter and radius of a circle. In Year 6, pupils identify all angles correctly, including reflex angles. They draw accurate nets for three-dimensional shapes and construct the shapes with care and precision. Pupils know the properties of a rhombus and of a parallelogram; they read scales accurately using standard units of measure, for example grams and kilograms.
80. In work on data handling, pupils make good progress. By Year 4, they are confident in using tally charts to collect data and to transfer the information to block graphs, for example, showing favourite ice cream flavours. In Year 5, pupils show good skills in drawing line graphs which show, for example, the number of units and cash value left on a phonecard. In Year 6, pupils draw accurate line graphs showing temperatures in major world cities; they interpret the graph successfully by using their knowledge of positive and negative numbers. They know how to use conversion graphs to work out how many French francs they will get for a given number of pounds.
81. Teaching is very good and contributes significantly to improving standards. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was very good in 60 per cent of lessons and good in 30 per cent. In the remaining 10 per cent (one lesson), teaching was unsatisfactory. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, more-able pupils in Year 3 are not challenged sufficiently. Expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons are not made clear to them, with the result that they do not concentrate and make insufficient progress in their learning. There is too much chatter, particularly when they should be working independently.
82. The best lessons begin with fast and challenging mental arithmetic sessions which keep pupils alert and interested. Teachers ask questions and expect pupils not just to give the answer but to explain how they found it. All pupils are involved and teachers use this as a good opportunity to carry out day-to-day assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers use resources effectively and make good use of explanation and demonstration to teach new knowledge. For example, in Year 5, a teacher made good use of a whole square, one divided into 10 strips and another into 100 squares to teach decimals. By the end of the lesson all pupils knew that two units, three tenths and five hundredths are written as '2.35'. Teachers plan the group work part of the lesson effectively. Work is carefully matched to the learning needs of pupils, and teachers recognise that even within ability groups there is a wide range of need. For example, in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were changing fractions to decimals, the teacher decided that one group would benefit from playing a game of fractions dominoes in order to reinforce their understanding. The final or plenary session is used effectively to assess pupils' understanding and to set homework.
83. The subject is managed exceptionally well by the co-ordinator, who has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Monitoring of teaching is good. A significant strength is the quality of assessment and its use to support pupils' future learning. Pupils are tested regularly and a computer program analyses the results in great detail, showing individual, group and class strengths and weaknesses in learning. This information quickly identifies gaps in learning and teaching is amended to ensure that gaps in knowledge are filled as soon as possible.

SCIENCE

84. Results in the end of key stage assessment tests have varied over the last four years with the different year groups of pupils, but the trend has been above average compared with national standards. However, while results for 2000 show attainment for most pupils to be good when compared with that in similar schools, they are average when compared with standards nationally. The standards of work scrutinised during the inspection are above average by the end of the key stage. Inspection evidence is consistent with that if current standards are maintained, the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is likely to exceed national averages. This demonstrates sound improvement since the last inspection.
85. Pupils' work at the beginning of Year 3 is very basic. For example, they describe food that contributes to both healthy and unhealthy diets. However, they soon increase their skills of observation and are able to record a good investigation about the best growing conditions for plants. Teachers prepare pupils very well for practical work. For example, in a test to see which materials are waterproof, pupils plan which variables to change, what to observe and what to measure. Pupils in Year 4 extend their understanding of materials in conjunction with their work on electricity. For example, they begin the electricity project with discussion about the benefits that it brings to everyday life. They continue by building simple circuits and defining 'conductors' and 'insulators'. They then develop their understanding by conducting an investigation to determine the best material to make a tea cosy. They decide that cotton and wool make better insulators than 'bubble wrap' or foil.
86. Teachers plan to introduce and then revisit scientific topics as pupils move through the school. The combination of this system of planning and teachers' high expectations contributes to good standards. It ensures that pupils that are more able have an opportunity to exceed expectations for their age. For example, pupils in Year 4 observe the separation of a mixture of solids and begin to see the benefits of filtration. This is a very good basis for work that most pupils are expected to understand fully in Year 6. Similarly, in Year 5, pupils make a good start to explaining physical phenomena when they begin to explain how shadows are formed. National expectations are for this work to be fully understood in Year 6. Given the good quality of planning and very good teaching, it is not surprising that standards are high. Most of the current Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of these topics and a significant minority have a mature understanding of more advanced scientific principles. For example, more-able pupils are able to explain the process of photosynthesis in detail and in depth. In a practical lesson to see what happens to the weight of various items in water, pupils begin to use their good scientific understanding to explain their findings. Their predictions are thoughtful and reasonable, even when inaccurate.
87. The teaching of science is very good. Four lessons were observed during the inspection, reflecting an equal distribution of unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good and very good teaching. However, the judgement of very good teaching is based upon the scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the school as well as planning and assessment documentation. Teachers clearly plan very carefully to provide a balanced curriculum, with topics repeated at different stages as pupils mature. This, together with meticulous assessment of individual pupils, enables them to meet the needs of different groups of pupils successfully. This high quality planning also means that teachers provide lessons that proceed at a brisk pace, so that pupils cover a wide range of topics without sacrificing depth of knowledge and understanding. Teachers in Year 6 also make very good use of regular homework. They expect that this work will be completed and tackled conscientiously and so most pupils work very hard. Most pupils achieve very well in science as they move through the school. On the rare occasion when teaching is unsatisfactory, it is because of ineffective behaviour management and lesson organisation. Most pupils, regardless of their

ability, family background or gender, enjoy science, participate enthusiastically but sensibly in practical work and achieve very well in the subject.

88. The subject is led conscientiously, with a commitment to review, evaluate and improve standards. The subject leaders ensure that good use is made of materials from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. They are currently reviewing supplementary materials to support colleagues and raise standards further. These materials encourage the development of the structure of a science lesson to help staff assess pupils rapidly at the beginning of each topic. This enables staff to meet the needs of groups of pupils even more effectively. The co-ordinators strongly support the school's system for assessing the main subjects and they analyse the assessment test results. They then present their findings to colleagues and discuss the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. This means that there is a close link between planning and assessment, to support individuals as well as addressing trends in pupils' knowledge and understanding. The subject is well resourced and there are plans to develop resources further. Currently, the one imbalance in the subject is the lack of opportunity for pupils to select test materials independently and to devise individual means of recording their experiments.

ART AND DESIGN

89. All pupils achieve standards that are expected for their age in art. Teaching for the subject is satisfactory and promotes satisfactory rates of progress for pupils. During the inspection, only two art lessons were observed. In one, teaching was good and in the other teaching was satisfactory. However, judgements are also based upon an extensive scrutiny of pupils' artwork throughout the school. Teachers plan carefully to provide pupils with a full and balanced art curriculum. Good links are made to other subjects and these contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity. For example, at different stages in the school, pupils produce imaginative work influenced by art from India and Japan, as well as art arising from religious traditions such as Islam. Teachers have clear expectations of pupils and a strong commitment to using the subject to enhance pupils' self-esteem. For example, they take enormous care to enhance each pupil's work in their use of display techniques.

90. Younger pupils make clay tiles and models of still life compositions with the making and observational skills expected for their age. In Year 4, pupils use paint imaginatively to represent sound, in work linked with music. They begin to study the work of famous artists, such as Matisse. They scrutinise the artist's work in order to observe characteristic features and seek to emulate these in their own work. At this stage a minority of pupils attain standards that exceed expectations for their age with mature colour sketches of goldfish in a bowl. These pupils produce close representations by mixing colours carefully and accurately, and reproducing the composition of Matisse's original with a good eye for detail.

91. Pupils in Year 5 produce Tudor portraits in paint and with fabric to support their historical work. They also share ideas and explore different textures when they use modelling materials to produce face-masks. In a good lesson seen during the inspection the teacher demonstrated brushwork techniques well. This resulted in pupils learning the basis of Monet's style in specific work and using this effectively in their own work. Older pupils produce good design work. They understand the value of clear line and colour in repeated patterns when they produce work inspired by William Morris and in preparation for batik work. A significant minority of pupils in Year 6 produce good observational colour sketches of segments of fruit and vegetables. They achieve good levels of work by blending pastels carefully and using them with versatility. However, work with clay continues to be at expected levels for most pupils, who produce coil pots with lids with varying degrees of success.

92. Teachers encourage pupils to plan, prepare, evaluate and modify work in their sketchbooks, with reasonable success. For example, older pupils experiment with designs for string printing and experiment successfully with colour and line. However, the subject leaders recognise that this work requires further development and have included this in the subject action plan. They have rightly identified that teachers do not consistently exploit opportunities for providing pupils with constructive feedback about their sketches. Staff work closely together to develop shared and consistent procedures. Consequently, the school is making satisfactory progress in devising useful assessment procedures, as required in the previous inspection report.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. In the only lesson observed during the inspection, teaching was good. A scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that pupils achieve good standards of work because of this. Most pupils benefit from teachers planning lessons with high expectations of pupils. The senior teacher with responsibility for science in the school is also responsible for design and technology. This contributes to the good standards in both subjects, because there is an overlap in the subjects that reinforces pupils' learning in science and design and technology. This represents good improvement in the subject since the last inspection.
94. In Year 3, pupils consider and discard materials according to their suitability for making a lunch box. They decide, for example, that glass is impractical in case it is dropped and that wood would not survive too much washing without 'going rotten'. In food technology, pupils make and analyse the nutritional benefits of sandwiches to go in the lunch box. This project, together with the excitement of designing a moving monster, with pneumatic power, has a direct and helpful connection with their scientific understanding. In Year 4, pupils design and make 'money containers'. They plan the shape, size and location of compartments, the tools required and the type of fastening. The extent to which they evaluate the work in progress exceeds expectations for their age. Upon completion of the project they identify what they found surprisingly easy, such as applying magnetic tape; and what they found most difficult, such as 'cutting the slot'. They take account of the practical function of the item when they identify potential improvements, such as 'a handle'. Pupils make carefully measured plans, which also contribute to their understanding of the application of mathematics. They evaluate the results of their designs, for example, by testing their bridges to see how much weight they can bear.
95. In Year 5, pupils design motorised buggies, building on previous work by increasing the sophistication of their designs and using their scientific understanding to plan the power source. However, the high spot of Year 5, remembered fondly and with pride by older pupils, is the project that concludes with cooking lunch for themselves and invited adults. It is an 'occasion', enjoyed by all, with menus and place cards made by pupils. During the inspection a group of pupils planned, shopped and cooked a tasty shepherd's pie and apple crumble, which they shared with their class teachers and two inspectors. This project clearly contributes significantly to pupils' social development as well as their understanding of food technology. Older pupils design and build frames as part of a project on shelters. They experiment with triangulation in an effort to achieve sturdy constructions. Towards the end of Year 6, pupils embark on a project to design and make a pair of slippers. They disassemble a pair in order to make templates and plan to meet a design specification.
96. Pupils attain good standards and achieve well because the subject is planned well to develop skills and meet pupils' needs. Teachers are not constrained by the levels of work expected for most pupils nationally, but plan for pupils to exceed these. The subject is led with enthusiasm and expertise. The subject leader evaluates and continually seeks to develop the subject. A current project is evaluating the guidance from the Qualifications

and Curriculum Authority and considering how to amalgamate this with the school's own plan in order to provide the best experience for the pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Standards in geography meet expectations for pupils of this age. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning. They have good opportunities to use and apply their literacy, numeracy and computer skills in the subject.
98. In Year 3, pupils use successfully the results of their library and Internet research to design and make posters advertising a range of holiday resorts in Europe and the Caribbean. Their posters show a good understanding of what tourists need to know, ranging from the climate to the price of 'poolside' drinks in Barbados. In Year 4, pupils know the key features of settlements and understand which areas are suitable for growing crops or building on. They know why fishermen need a safe harbour. Pupils have a good understanding of the immediate locality and make positive suggestions as to how it could be improved, for example 'There should be more speed bumps' and 'There should be a swimming pool'.
99. In Year 5, pupils show a good knowledge of the 'water cycle' and explain clearly in writing and well-labelled diagrams the key features of the River Severn, including erosion and the uses of water. In Year 6, pupils show a good understanding of the impact of human actions on the environment, including the effects of pollution, the dumping of waste and tourism. Pupils explain the 'Greenhouse Effect' and give good examples of how to prevent carbon dioxide emissions. They use desk-top publishing skills on the computer to produce eye-catching and thought-provoking posters which warn of the dangers of pollution. Pupils use numeracy skills successfully when drawing graphs to show the results of a litter survey in the school grounds; they interpret their findings well. Map skills are good; pupils draw accurate maps of the school grounds with clear and detailed keys.
100. Teaching in the two lessons observed during the inspection was good. Teachers prepare interesting and imaginative resources which capture the attention of pupils. There is a strong expectation that pupils should carry out research through books, the library, CD-ROMs and the Internet. Pupils know exactly what is required of them in lessons and, as a result, work hard to complete their tasks.
101. Resources are good and the subject is managed effectively by the co-ordinator. The school provides a good range of residential visits to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of contrasting localities.

HISTORY

102. Standards in history exceed the expectations for pupils in this age group. It was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection. Evidence is taken from an examination of pupils' work, school documents and interviews with staff and pupils.
103. The curriculum for history is well established, competently led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who has maintained the subject's importance in the school. There is a well-planned scheme of work organised on a four-yearly topic cycle that ensures good coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. A single topic, such as the Tudors, is studied across the school, enabling the best use to be made of resources.

104. Discussions with pupils in Year 6, who have not studied history since Year 5, show good levels of understanding about life a long time ago. They accurately recall the periods they have studied and some of the most significant people, such as William Shakespeare and George Stephenson, and place them on a time line, showing a secure sense of chronology. When asked to choose who they would be in their favourite period in history, they confidently describe the main characteristics and events of Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Victorian periods and give well reasoned arguments in favour of their choices. In choosing a character, they clearly demonstrate understanding of the social conditions of the time. One pupil, for example, would have preferred to be a man rather than a woman in Victorian times because women were beaten and men were respected. They know that the Egyptians first used the tally system and Greeks invented prime numbers, making good links with mathematics. Pupils compare and contrast the lifestyles of the rich and poor in Victorian times and write a diary of a serving girl, which contributes effectively to pupils' literacy skills. They show good levels of knowledge and understanding. Pupils know the difference between fact and fiction and can talk about the reliability of different sources of historical evidence, such as archaeology, fossils, books, diaries and artefacts. When researching information about the Egyptians, pupils predict the ownership and life styles of artefacts such as items of jewellery. Pupils in Year 4 carry out research of different aspects of Tudor life and present information about sea travel, education and Henry VIII and his wives in an interesting variety of ways.
105. Although no lessons were seen, the quality of teaching is judged to be good, as pupils are obviously given good opportunities to talk about the past and to empathise with characters from a variety of periods. As a result, they are well motivated to carry out high levels of independent enquiry. They show positive interest in and enthusiasm for different periods of history and can identify with characters, showing a depth of knowledge and understanding beyond that usually found at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' learning is well presented in a variety of forms including independent writing, diagrams and work sheets, in well-organised files.
106. The provision of resources has improved considerably since the last inspection and has made a significant impact on the standards reached. There has been an increased use of software to enable pupils to carry out independent research. A good programme of visits, such as those to Gloucester Folk Museum for Year 4 and the Black Country Museum for Year 6, makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They provide first-hand experiences to enrich pupils' learning. In addition, the co-ordinator makes discriminating use of museum loan services to provide good support for teachers most efficiently.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards are good and exceed national expectations. Standards have improved since the last inspection, particularly through the successful introduction and use of the school's 'ICT suite'. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning as the result of good teaching and high expectations of what they can achieve.
108. Pupils have good opportunities to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, they successfully use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects. For example, in religious education, pupils in Year 5 make good use of the Internet to research information on the Islamic Faith, with pupils in Year 6 carrying out equally good research into Judaism.
109. Pupils achieve very high standards in word-processing and in the use of a desk-top publishing program. In Year 3, pupils are skilled in importing 'clip-art' and writing

captions, for example 'This is Finny the shark. He likes to swim'. In Year 4, pupils use fonts imaginatively to produce bold, eye-catching newspaper headlines. In Year 6, pupils create imaginative front pages of newspapers in which the events of the 'Gunpowder Plot' are the main feature. They make very good use of layout, pictures, borders and fonts.

110. Throughout the school, pupils apply their literacy skills successfully when word-processing. They write for a range of purposes and apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills well. Pupils know how to use the grammar and spell-checking facility. In one lesson observed, pupils in Year 6 were writing parodies on the poem 'If' by Rudyard Kipling. The results were imaginative and creative; for example, one pupil wrote:

'If you can sit calmly through a test without nervously biting a single nail,
If you can sing three energetic songs in assembly, without going out of tune,
If you can play marbles nicely, throughout the term without a marble lost,
If you can wear your PE kit through a whole lesson, without splitting the end of your shorts,
If you can eat your lunch sensibly in the hall, without ever spilling your drink,
If you can do your work quickly, without making a single mistake all week,
Then you will be a genius my friend.'

111. In numeracy, pupils show good knowledge and understanding of how to use spreadsheets. In Year 6, they know how to use 'cells' and to write formula accurately. For example, in a task where they had to take a 15 per cent 'tax' from their pocket money, they used the correct formula, '= (C7/100)*15'. Other pupils used a spreadsheet successfully to spend 60 pounds on buying a range of items for wet playtimes. The challenge was to spend exactly 60 pounds; two girls achieved this and other pairs fell short of the target by 40p and 60p respectively.
112. In Year 4, pupils correctly enter instructions into a programmable toy in order for it to follow a planned route, for example in 'writing' their initials. They are confident in applying these skills to enter commands into the computer in order for a 'screen turtle' to draw shapes. In Year 6, pupils successfully link numeracy, scientific and computer skills when they present high quality results of their investigation into 'Dissolving Liquids'.
113. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on the good standards achieved. Teachers are confident and show good subject knowledge when using the 'ICT Suite'. Work set for pupils is interesting and challenging and gives them the opportunity to apply computer skills to subjects that they are currently studying in class. As a result, they are motivated and interested to learn. They work successfully in pairs, with good examples of boys and girls working together. In lessons, teachers set clear targets for what pupils are to achieve, with the result that no time is wasted. Teachers support individual pupils well in lessons by moving around and ensuring that all are confident in their learning.
114. The subject is managed effectively, with a very good three-year development plan in place aimed at securing all available funding to support pupils' learning. Resources are good and the school is placing a strong emphasis on using computers to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Throughout the school, great importance is placed on pupils having good opportunities to apply information and communication technology skills to their learning in all subjects.

MUSIC

115. Satisfactory teaching of music means that most pupils attain standards similar to national expectations in singing and creating and developing musical ideas. This is consistent with the standards at the time of the last inspection. However, teachers have high expectations

of pupils' listening and appraising skills. Consequently, in this aspect of the subject most pupils attain well. In this respect there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils as well as two lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils clearly listen to music closely and thoughtfully and, as a result, older pupils are beginning to form opinions about what they like and dislike.

116. In Year 3 pupils recognise that speed, volume and the sequence of sounds all affect the mood the music creates. They willingly use the pentatonic scale to try to produce sounds that represent autumn, winter, spring or summer. Pupils in Year 4 develop these ideas and skills further when they create sounds alongside artwork to evoke an emotion. For example, they associate jazz with happy moods, the Celtic harp with sadness and soul music from a film score with energy and aggression. By Year 5, pupils recognise the significance of lyrics in addition to instruments. They use analytical skills that support their increasing understanding of literature when they discuss the meaning of chosen songs. Pupils in Year 6 listen to parts of the black opera 'Porgy and Bess' before trying to compose a blues melody to accompany blues lyrics. They are developing their taste in music and beginning to justify their choices.
117. The subject has a high profile in the school. Several pupils benefit from the school's commitment to provide opportunities for creating sounds and playing instruments outside timetabled lessons. About 50 pupils volunteer to join the choir and at any one time there are about 35 pupils in the school orchestra. However, the standard of singing in the school is satisfactory. This is in part because staff have reasonable but not high expectations of pupils when they sing as a whole school, for example, in assemblies.
118. The school places a suitably high emphasis upon the importance of pupils performing both in school and outside school. More than half of the pupils in the school recently participated in a school production of 'Joseph and the Techni-colour Dreamcoat'. Several pupils who receive tuition for an instrument, recently visited the neighbouring family centre to entertain the children there. During the inspection pupils who discussed music with an inspector did so with impressive maturity and a tolerance of views that differ from their own. In lessons, the youngest pupils behave sensibly. However, the behaviour of a minority of older pupils, some of whom have special educational needs, is immature when they are working in a small group sharing an instrument. On these occasions other pupils demonstrate impressive patience and care in helping them.
119. The subject is led with considerable enthusiasm and expertise. This is part of the very good contribution the subject makes to pupils' social development and the good contribution it makes to their cultural development. The subject is well resourced.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Standards are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age. The good standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. Pupils have good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills when they evaluate the performance of their classmates. By the end of Year 6, 90 per cent of pupils meet the national expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided.
121. Pupils know the importance of regular exercise in keeping their bodies fit and healthy and they know the reasons why it is important to warm-up and cool-down at the start and end of lessons. In addition, they know the importance for their health and safety of dressing correctly for lessons and in knowing why it is important to respond immediately to the teacher's 'stop' command in lessons.

122. By the age of 11, pupils show good gymnastic skills. In the warm-up, they show a very good awareness of space and change of direction and they sustain activity well. In floor-work, they plan, perform and refine sequences involving a run, jump (with an emphasis on height) and landing. Sequences are refined and improved successfully by adding a 'turn' to the sequence and ensuring that on landing there is a 'moment of stillness', with the final position held. Pupils successfully transfer these skills to apparatus work where they plan, perform and improve exciting sequences involving a 'run', 'jump', 'twist' and 'stretch'. Pupils are very sensible and safe when getting the apparatus out and putting it away.
123. In dance, pupils in Year 6 show good skills in planning, performing and refining a sequence of movements to show how they would get ready to go out. They move well to the music to the count of 'four' or 'eight', showing how they 'brush their hair', 'clean their teeth' and 'put their socks on'. They work particularly well in pairs, for example, when performing a 'mirror sequence' in which they dance to their own reflection. Pupils are confident and supportive in commenting on each other's performance; for example, 'I liked She was keeping a good rhythm'. In Year 5, pupils make good progress in country dancing, for example in learning the steps for the 'Lucky Seven' dance. They learn the steps successfully and enjoy performing and collapse exhausted after having completed the full dance.
124. Pupils enjoy lessons and work exceptionally hard as the result of good teaching. During the inspection, teaching was good in six lessons, very good in one lesson and satisfactory in the remaining two. Good teaching has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Teachers show good subject knowledge and concentrate hard in lessons on improving the skills and technique of individual pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher reminded pupils, 'Control your roll' and 'Remember your finish'. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace, with a strong emphasis on activity and, as a result, pupils are fully involved and make good progress in their learning. Teachers manage pupils well and behaviour in lessons is exemplary.
125. The subject is managed effectively by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. Resources are very good and contribute to the good standards achieved. Pupils benefit from an excellent range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities. There are clubs for football, netball, rugby, dance, gymnastics, girls soccer, tennis and athletics. Pupils have many good opportunities to participate in competitive matches against other schools. The school is currently the champions in the Gloucester City indoors five-a-side league. Pupils benefit from specialist coaching, for example, in rugby and outdoors bowls. Parents and pupils enjoy the annual sports day and pupils and teachers enjoy the annual 'Sports Dinner' for which they have to wear 'formal dress'.
126. During the inspection, staff and pupils using the hall as a thoroughfare interrupted many lessons; this is disruptive to teachers and pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. Pupils' attainment in religious education is above standards expected for the age group. The subject is well planned to fully meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
128. Through a well-structured programme of work, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a secure knowledge of the main features of Christianity and have a good understanding of the importance of other world faiths. They learn about the Holy Trinity from Bible stories such as 'Moses and the Burning Bush' and the 'Conversion of Paul' and consider the qualities that make a person a Christian. They go on to discuss their own names and have good opportunities to think about what they would like to change about themselves, adding a reflective dimension to their learning. Pupils learn suitable facts about the role of prayer in religion, including the Catholic rosary beads, and then are encouraged to

express their own feelings and reflections in some thoughtful, well-presented prayers. Pupils know that the church and the mosque are special places, through visits in Years 3 and 4, and then consider their own special places. They learn accurate facts about Christian Baptism and the Jewish ceremony of Bar Mitzvah. This prepares pupils well for considering the important milestones in their own lives. The most able pupils present work of a high quality, recording significant past and future events on a road from birth to death. The programme makes a good contribution to multi-cultural learning when pupils examine the important features of Judaism and Islam. Pupils make comparisons between the religions, looking at their similarities and differences. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning.

129. The teaching of religious education is good. There is a good balance between facts and reflection, enabling pupils to learn both about and from religion to a good extent. Although much of the work is very teacher-directed, with facts being presented in a rather formal way, there are good opportunities within lessons for pupils to take part in discussion and reflect upon the importance of religion in their lives and in the lives of others. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and develop their thinking to a good extent. Teachers adopt a sensitive, respectful approach to the subject.
130. As a result, pupils have mature and sensible attitudes towards the subject. They show interest in religion and respect and tolerance towards faiths and cultures other than their own. The recording of their work is of a high standard and they take good care to present their writing and illustrations well.
131. Resources for the subject are good. Teachers make effective use of good quality artefacts such as the Jewish Kippah, for example. A programme of visits to local Christian churches, a mosque and a synagogue enhance pupils' learning, providing interest, relevance and meaning.
132. Guidelines for teachers are clear and detailed, ensuring suitable progress in learning across and between the year groups. Teachers sometimes use good questioning skills to establish pupils' understanding or misconceptions of a topic. There are still no established procedures for assessment, but the school has suitable plans to incorporate these into planning in the near future. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the learning of religious beliefs, values and customs.