

INSPECTION REPORT

Long Wittenham CE Primary School
Abingdon

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique Reference Number: 123153

Headteacher: Neil King

Reporting inspector: John Lilly
12487

Dates of inspection : 19 – 21 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707723

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Infant and Junior |
| Type of control: | Voluntary Controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 5-11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Long Wittenham CE School, Main Street Long Wittenham Oxfordshire OX14 4QJ |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Richard Parsons |
| Date of previous inspection: | January 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| John Lilly, Rgl | English Religious education Equal opportunities | Attainment and progress Teaching Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Leadership and management |
| John Edmond, Lay Inspector | | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupil's welfare Partnership with parents and the community Curriculum and assessment Efficiency |
| John Burt | Science Art Design and technology Information technology Music | |
| Norma Myers | Mathematics History Geography Physical education Under-fives Special educational needs | Staffing, accommodation and learning resources |

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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- There is a very good ethos for learning and personal development.
- All teaching is at least satisfactory, and 60 per cent is good, very good or excellent.
- Standards of attainment overall are good in English, mathematics, art, geography and religious education at both key stages.
- Results in national tests (1998) at the end of Key Stage 2 were above the national average in English, mathematics and science. There has been further significant improvement in English and mathematics in national tests for 1999.
- Provision for children under-five and in reception is very good.
- Provision for moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils have a good attitude to their work, and relationships are very positive
- Parents, the local community and the school share aims and values, and work in partnership. The involvement of parents in the pupils' learning is very good, and the enrichment of the pupils' learning through the local community is excellent.
- The buildings and grounds provide a stimulating place in which to learn.
- Resources for learning are good; teachers use them effectively.
- Financial management is good, and financial control and administration very good.
- Provision for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils is very good.
- With the exception of certain statutory elements, the information given to parents about the school is of a very high standard.
- The planning, commitment and determination of governors and staff drives a continuous improvement in standards.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

I. The school does not provide sufficiently coherent management of the curriculum as a whole. Consequently, there is a lack of a clear overview of the pupils' learning and how the teaching as a whole supports high standards. One aspect is the lack of key policies for curriculum and teaching. Another is the use of teaching time not used to cover the National Curriculum or religious education.

II. The balance of responsibilities for subject co-ordination requires revision.

III. There is insufficient continuous assessment and recording of pupils' progress. This leads to variability in the effectiveness of teaching and imprecise feedback to pupils, for example marking that does not make clear areas for improvement.

IV. There is insufficient monitoring of teaching to identify what does or does not help the pupils to progress.

V. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs do not provide sufficiently clear guidance for teachers.

VI. In some lessons and subjects, teachers provide insufficient challenge for the highest attaining pupils.

VII. Attainment in science by the end of Key Stage 2 is significantly lower than in English and mathematics.

VIII. The time allowed for teaching at Key Stage 2 is lower than recommended.

IX. The school's prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents do not meet statutory requirements in full.

Long Wittenham Primary School is a good school. Governors and staff have raised standards significantly since the last OFSTED inspection. Strengths heavily outweigh weaknesses which will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to

all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

· HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Governors and staff have worked hard and with determination to improve standards since the last inspection in 1996. There has been very significant improvement and a continuing upward trend in standards. Governors are now closely and strongly involved with the work and development of the school. Well-considered staff training supports improved teaching. Provision for information technology is now good and standards sound. Provision for religious education is now good and standards of attainment are good at both key stages. Subjects now have helpful policies and schemes of work, but some essential policies are still needed, for example for setting clear standards for teaching. Provision for multi-cultural education is now good. The strong sense of determined teamwork between governors and staff means the school is well placed to build upon its many strengths, address weaknesses and improve further.

· STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

| Performance in | Compared with all schools | Compared with similar schools | Key | |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | <i>well above average</i> | A |
| | | | <i>above average</i> | B |
| | | | <i>average</i> | C |
| | | | <i>below average</i> | D |
| | | | <i>well below average</i> | E |
| English | B | D | | |
| Mathematics | B | C | | |
| Science | B | D | | |

When comparing Long Wittenham with similar schools the only factor taken into account is the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, and in this school the impact of the higher than average proportion of pupils with special education needs tends overall to depress the grade. There was improvement in attainment in national tests for 1999. Attainment in English and mathematics was well above the 1999 national average, and well above attainment in similar schools. However, attainment in science was only in line with the national average and below attainment in similar schools.

· QUALITY OF TEACHING

| Teaching in: | Under 5 | 5 – 7 years | 7 – 11 years |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| English | Very good | Good | Satisfactory |
| Mathematics | Very good | Good | Satisfactory |
| Science | | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Information technology | | Good | Good |
| Religious education | | Good | Good |
| Other subjects | Very good | Good | Satisfactory |

Teaching overall is effective and a strength of the school. However, inconsistency within the teaching as between classes and as between different lessons taught by the same teacher, reduces its value. This inconsistency relates to a lack of clear policy for teaching, insufficient monitoring of teaching and too little use by teachers of continuous assessment of what the pupils do and do not know.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good;

satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses

· OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| Behaviour | Behaviour is very good throughout the school. Pupils try hard and take pride in their achievements. Their relationships with teachers and each other are very positive. |
| Attendance | Attendance is better than the national average. |
| Ethos* | The ethos is very good. There is a very strong community partnership with secure aims and values. There is a strong expectation of high standards. This creates a very caring atmosphere and a definite sense of purpose. As an older pupil said, 'Our school is like another family'. |
| Leadership and management | The governors and headteacher provide effective and supportive team and community leadership. However, insufficient systematic monitoring means that the management of the school does not have a sufficiently clear view of what needs to be improved. |
| Curriculum | The school provides a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. There are productive links between subjects and a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, better overall management is needed in order to bring these parts together as a fully effective whole. Recent improvements in homework are enhancing the depth and breadth of the pupils' learning. |
| Pupils with special educational needs | These pupils receive caring support, but weaknesses in their individual education plans hold back their progress. |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Provision for moral and social development is very good, and for cultural development good. Provisional for spiritual development is satisfactory, but needs to be improved. |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation | Staff know the subjects they teach well, and work as a close-knit, very hard-working and determined team. Resources are good, and the accommodation has been developed to provide an efficient and stimulating place in which to learn. |
| Value for money | The school provides good value for money. |

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

• THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school

- X. The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.
- XI. Parents find the school approachable.
- XII. The school deals with complaints well.
- XIII. The school gives clear information about what the pupils are learning.
- XIV. The school keeps parents informed about the progress of their children.
- XV. The pupils attain good standards of work.
- XVI. The school encourages pupils to get involved in more than just daily lessons.
- XVII. The work set for pupils to do at home is useful.
- XVIII. The values of the school have a positive effect on the pupils.
- XIX. Behaviour in the school is good.
- XX. The pupils like school.

• What some parents are not happy about

- XXI. Some complaints are not dealt with
- XXII. A significant number of parents do progress and feel some reports are too bland.
- XXIII. Some parents are not satisfied with These views divide between those who think ; too little.

The inspection team endorses the positive views of the parents, but also agrees that the negative views highlight areas for improvement, but only in isolated instances. The inspection team followed up rigorously other points raised by letter or within the parents' meeting; in most cases they identified instances in which the school failed to maintain its usual high standards of communication and relationships. The school is making sensible improvements in the way reports are written and recognises that some previous reports did not meet the needs of parents well. Effective homework is set regularly for all pupils; this homework is appropriate both as to nature of task and amount of time needed to complete the activity.

· KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To build upon the strengths of the school and improve standards, the governors and staff should:

XXIV. Improve the effectiveness of the management of the school by:

- i. Ensuring that there are agreed policies and procedures that set standards to be achieved in all essential areas of the school's work, for example and in particular for teaching, staff development and the use of teaching time not used to cover the National Curriculum or religious education. (paragraphs 24, 26, 28, 35, 38, 50, 52, 53, 81, 108, 116.)
 - ii. Monitoring teaching systematically so as to provide teachers with a clearer understanding of what does and does not work in lessons and how they can improve their teaching. (paragraphs 23, 51, 56, 81, 98.)
 - iii. Designing simple but coherent systems that give all staff an improved understanding of how the various areas of their work contribute to the learning of the pupils. Teachers need a clearer view as to how work in one subject supports learning in another, for example information technology, and a clearer view as to how different policies support each other, for example assessment and teaching. (paragraphs 26, 33, 56, 116.)
 - iv. Reviewing the present arrangements for subject co-ordination so that teachers share responsibility more effectively, for example by ensuring that one person does not carry responsibility for two core subjects. (paragraphs. 51, 116)
- Improve standards in all subjects, but in science in particular by:
- i. Reducing the variability in the quality of teaching by designing and implementing an agreed policy for the continuous collecting and recording of assessment information. This information should be used to improve the teachers' day-by-day awareness of the progress achieved by each pupil, and the necessary and next focus for teaching. (paragraphs 22, 30, 52, 90, 93-98, 122.)
 - ii. Improving continuity in teaching and progress of the pupils by improved monitoring

of the curriculum as a whole. (paragraphs 52, 57, 133.)

- iii. Ensuring that all pupils are given a more detailed understanding of why and how they succeed, where and why they meet problems, and what they need to learn next so as to improve. (paragraphs 23,30,31.)
 - iv. Increasing the challenge for the highest attaining pupils. (paragraphs 23, 74, 77, 105, 120-21.)
- Improve provision for pupils with special education needs by:
 - i. Ensuring that precise assessment identifies and gives priority to key areas of their learning. (paragraphs 23, 28, 105.)
 - ii. Using this information to design improved education plans that highlight targeted and defined programmes of teaching and learning to guide class teachers and learning support assistants. (paragraphs 23, 120)
 - iii. Providing relevant and attainable targets to be achieved within a given time. (paragraph 88)
 - iv. Ensuring these targets are measurable, so that progress can be accurately monitored and evaluated. (paragraph 88)

In addition to these key issues, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Review the length of the teaching day, considering the fact that the present time for Key Stage 2 is less than recommended. (paragraph 25)
- Implement, as soon as possible, present planning for teaching time that is not used to cover the National Curriculum and religious education, and specifically plans for education for personal, social and health education. (paragraph 38)
- Ensure that the school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements in full. (paragraph 25)
- Review health and safety considerations as regards the pond in the millennium garden, the use of fire doors, and vehicular access when pupils are arriving at or leaving school. (paragraph 41)

- **INTRODUCTION**

- **Characteristics of the school**

1. Long Wittenham Church of England Voluntary Controlled School serves a rural village a short distance from Didcot; there is a wide variety of housing. The school still maintains a sense of being the centre of the community, even though some pupils come to school from further afield. The pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds, but judging by indicators such as housing and employment, their background reflects the national expectation. When children join the school before their fifth birthday their achievements are in line with the national average, although the range is very wide. Children enter the school in the term before their fifth birthday, spending a half-day in a Reception and Year 1 class. The small number of pupils in each year leads to all pupils being taught in dual-age classes. Class 1 includes Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, Class 2 Years 2 and 3 pupils, Class 3 Years 4 and 5 pupils and Class 4 Years 5 and 6 pupils. Pupils transfer at 11 to a variety of secondary schools.
2. There are 94 girls and boys on roll between the ages of 4 and 11 years. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is very low. Twenty-five per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational need, with six pupils on stages 3-5, two of whom have Statements of Special Educational Need. This is an above average proportion for a school of this type. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very small compared with schools nationally.
1. The headteacher and staff have a balance of experience. The roll is fairly stable but small variations have a significant impact on the revenue of the school and the way it is managed. Most pupils remain at the school once they have joined, but over recent years the proportion of pupils who move in and out of the area has increased.
2. Standards of attainment as measured by national tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 have fluctuated, but there is an upward trend. The school has set targets for achievement in national tests in English, mathematics and science, and the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy are present priorities in planning. Further priorities include information technology, development of the school's grounds and continuing priorities such as religious education and multi-cultural education since the last inspection. The school philosophy has as a central aim, 'We believe children learn best in an environment where they can develop a sense of responsibility enabling them to take pride in their achievements. Endeavour is prized and children are encouraged to have a positive attitude towards life and learning'.

4. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| for latest reporting year: | 1998 | 8 | 12 | 20 |

| | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| 4. National Curriculum | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
| Test/Task Results | | | | |
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 7 | 7 | 6 |
| | Girls | 10 | 10 | 11 |
| | Total | 17 | 17 | 17 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 85(75) | 85(60) | 85(70) |
| | National | 80(78) | 81(79) | 84(82) |

| | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| 4. Teacher Assessments | | Reading | Mathematics | Science |
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | Girls | 10 | 11 | 10 |
| | Total | 17 | 18 | 17 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 85(70) | 90(70) | 85(70) |
| | National | 81(79) | 85(82) | 86(84) |

.....

1

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of
Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year.

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1998 | 7 | 9 | 16 |

4. National Curriculum Test

Results

| | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | Boys | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| | Girls | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| | Total | 12 | 14 | 13 |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | 71(93) | 82(93) | 76(86) |
| | National | 65(63) | 59(62) | 69(68) |

4. Teacher Assessments

| | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | Boys | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| | Girls | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| | Total | 14 | 15 | 14 |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | 82(93) | 88(93) | 82(96) |
| | National | 65(63) | 65(64) | 72(69) |

4. Attendance

Percentage of half days
(sessions) missed through
absence for the
latest reporting year:

| | | % |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Authorised | School | 5.0 |
| Absence | National comparative data | 5.7 |
| Unauthorised | School | 0.1 |
| Absence | National comparative data | 0.5 |

4.

4. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school
age) during the previous year:

| | Number |
|--------------|--------|
| Fixed period | 0 |
| Permanent | 0 |

4. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

| | % |
|------------------------|-----|
| Very good or better | 29 |
| Satisfactory or better | 100 |
| Less than satisfactory | 0 |

4. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

4. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

4. **Attainment and progress**

1. When children join the school before their fifth birthday their average achievements are in line with standards expected at that age, but the range between the highest and lowest attainers is very wide. They make a good start and by their fifth birthday many exceed the attainment expected at that age. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reach the level of attainment expected in each subject and many exceed that standard. The attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 maintains this positive picture.
2. Attainment in national tests and teachers' assessments has shown an improving trend over recent years, and there has been significant improvement at both key stages between 1998 results and those for 1999. Over the last four years, there have been fluctuations, but these usually reflect the range of capabilities in each year. In tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, attainment matched the national average in writing and mathematics and exceeded it in reading. In teachers' assessments, attainment in speaking and listening was below the national average. In most areas attainment was below that in similar schools, and this was particularly true as to the proportion exceeding the expected level. There was significant improvement in 1999. Attainment in reading, mathematics and science was well above the 1999 national average, although in writing it remained in line. However, except for reading, the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level was too low. In national tests in 1998 at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was above the national average in English, mathematics and science, but below average attainment in English and science in similar schools. In 1999, attainment in English and mathematics was well above the national average, but only in line in science. In English and mathematics this attainment was well above that in similar schools, but in science it was below. Except for mathematics, these overall judgements hide the fact that too few pupils exceed the expected level in the core subjects. Attainment of present pupils shows that improvement has been consolidated and to some extent has continued.
3. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in English and mathematics is good, and in science satisfactory. Attainment is satisfactory in information technology, and in religious education it exceeds the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. It is good in art and geography, and satisfactory in design and technology, history, music and physical education. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English and mathematics is good, and in science satisfactory. In information technology it is satisfactory, and in religious education it exceeds the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. In art and geography it is good, and it is sound in design and technology, history, music and physical education.
4. Standards in literacy and numeracy are good at both key stages. These support productive learning across the curriculum. At levels appropriate to their age and attainment, pupils listen for meaning with good attention, and speak in a clear and considered way. They write using competent spelling and

punctuation, and by the time they leave school use a well-defined personal script. Reading is particularly good, whether for pleasure or to gain information. Pupils gain a good understanding of the importance and uses of numeracy, and use calculation and knowledge of shape with confidence. They present data in ways that show clearly what this tells people, often using information technology to help. Standards in information technology have improved significantly, but have yet to be used sufficiently to improve progress across all the curriculum subjects.

5. Progress at Key Stage 1 is good overall. In English and mathematics it is good and in science it is satisfactory. In information technology and religious education it is good. It is good in art and geography, and sound in design and technology, history, music and physical education. At Key Stage 2, progress is good in English and mathematics, and satisfactory in science. In information technology and religious education it is good. In art and geography it is good, and in physical education very good. In design and technology, history and music it is sound.
6. Across the school, progress is very good in Reception and Year 1, slows slightly after that but speeds up as the pupils progress up the school. This relates not to individual teachers but to characteristics of the teaching overall. The main factor is the variation in the teaching; there is an important sense in which satisfactory teaching is not good enough. The best progress is seen in lessons where the teacher uses their good subject knowledge to assess and record continuously the progress of each pupil. The subsequent teaching is highly focused on the needs of each pupil, and no time is wasted repeating what is already known or struggling with work that is too difficult. In these lessons teachers do not dominate the learning but use language that forces the pupils to think for themselves. This goes some way to explain the fact that pupils of average and lower attainment tend to make good progress, and the least and highest attainers only sound progress. The pupils with special education needs are caringly supported, but their individual education plans do not zoom in on their critical learning problems, nor set targets that focus simple but challenging teaching. For these reasons they too often flounder until help arrives. Similarly, because the attainment of the highest attainers is not always known precisely, the teaching does not give them sufficient challenge and the tasks they are given provide too little scope. There are no significant differences in the progress of girls or boys, or pupils of different cultural backgrounds, from that of the majority of pupils.
7. The improvement in standards over recent years has been driven by the commitment and determination of governors and staff. This has led to much improved planning and policy, but has yet to home in on the way systematic monitoring and evaluation highlight to what extent those plans and procedures are effective.

11. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

8. Throughout the school, pupils have a positive attitude to learning. They concentrate well in class, are attentive and show interest in their work. They work independently with confidence to solve problems. They persevere and settle well to completing the task in hand. They are particularly good as

independent learners and show considerable initiative. They have a strong desire to improve their work and take pride in the finished product, as shown in the Class 4 history folders, which include high quality computer work. Even at a very young age pupils select and use appropriate resources with confidence.

9. The school has very high expectations for good behaviour. To implement these it has co-operated with the 15 other schools in the Didcot Partnership to develop a group behaviour policy that emphasises the importance of discipline and self-discipline. This policy is backed up by class rules individually negotiated with each class, and by an effective schedule of sanctions and rewards.
10. Pupils are courteous, trustworthy and have respect for each other and staff. The school is a very orderly community. Pupils are well mannered in the dining hall and their behaviour at the end of lessons is very good. They are consistently courteous to staff and visitors, and react with natural politeness when addressed. There are no graffiti or litter.
11. There were no exclusions last year and there have been none in the current year to date. This good record is the result of clear expectations and a positive partnership with parents; problems are solved through the joint efforts of home and school.
12. Though the school has not developed a formal anti-bullying policy, it deals swiftly with any incident of bullying; such incidents are rare. The atmosphere in lessons is pleasant and teachers treat pupils with the respect they expect in return. Pupils relate very well to one another in lessons and around the school, and there is no hint of racial tension between the majority and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic communities.
13. The school actively encourages initiative and opportunities for personal development. All pupils can help around the school, for example in tidying the library, and the school has developed a 'buddy' system whereby older pupils help younger ones at dinner time and with games. Older pupils also help supervise younger ones at football, and many contribute to running the frequent after-school cake stalls. The staff listen willingly to sensible suggestions from pupils for other new activities.
14. The last inspection report noted that 'very good standards of behaviour contribute to the caring, welcoming atmosphere of the school'. These very high standards have been maintained

18. **Attendance**

15. Pupils' attendance is good. In 1998/99 it was 95.4. per cent. In 1997/98 it was 95.6 per cent, which was above the national average. Most authorised absence arises from sickness. Unauthorised absence, at 0.2 per cent, was less than half the national average in 1997/98 and improved to 0.1 per cent in 1998/99. Good attendance has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. The legal requirements for recording and reporting attendance are met. Pupils are punctual at the start of the day and when returning from breaks. The overall rate of attendance was also good at the time of the last

inspection.

19. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

19. **Teaching**

16. Teaching is good and a strength of the school. All teaching is at least sound, and in 60 per cent of lessons it is good or better. Overall, nearly a third of teaching is very good or excellent. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching for children under-five is consistently very good or excellent. At Key Stage 1, teaching is always at least sound, and it is good or better in three quarters of lessons. At Key Stage 2, teaching is always at least sound, and it is good or better in half of lessons. That teaching is slightly less effective at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1 relates to characteristics detailed below.
17. In almost all the teaching, good class management underpins the clear plans and focuses objectives. This creates an ethos of hard and purposeful work, enlivened by the good relationships between pupils and teachers and pupils and pupils; pupils are co-operative and often work collaboratively. Teachers know their pupils well, and use this to move the learning forward and build the pupils' confidence. Teachers use language that is clear, and that highlights important items in the teaching. They make effective use of resources such as books, artefacts and well-designed worksheets to illustrate and support the learning. They ask questions that make the pupils think before and when answering, and encourage and help pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers waste very little time and lessons have a good pace. Expectations are high and teachers hold pupils responsible for meeting them. There is usually productive teamwork between class teachers and learning support assistants. This effective teaching is built upon the secure subject knowledge and understanding of the teachers and at least sound whole school subject management. This allows teachers to forge effective links between one subject and another. These strengths are particularly evident in the effective teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school.
18. The reasons for the difference between the most and least effective lessons are clear. In the most effective lessons, teachers both assess and record what the pupils have learned successfully and what areas still pose problems. They use this information to plan very precise and focused teaching. As a result, the teachers relate very tightly their teaching in each lesson to the needs of each level of attainment. Through marking and spoken feedback, they ensure the pupils have a very clear idea of where they succeed and why, where and why they have met problems, and what they need to learn next. In these effective lessons there is a very good balance between the teaching and the independent learning of the pupils. However, in the quarter of lessons where teaching is satisfactory but less effective because assessment is not continuous or used sufficiently to guide teaching, tasks do not always meet the needs of the pupils well and the teacher over-dominates the learning. In these less effective lessons, the teacher asks questions that allow only short answers, rather than leading the pupils to expand and try out their understanding. Thus, even though the planning is well structured, the progress of pupils is not good enough, especially for the lowest and highest attaining pupils.

19. The school does not have a policy for teaching that sets out what makes teaching effective, and how it may be supported in becoming more effective. The school does not monitor and evaluate teaching systematically and, therefore, misses opportunities to give teachers feedback on their teaching and identify areas for staff development. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs too often lack a clear focus on priority learning needs and the planning for teaching that will meet them. Information technology is taught effectively but has yet to play a full part in all learning. Together these deficits hold back the effectiveness of the work of teachers and learning support assistants. Overall, teachers use homework effectively to expand and consolidate the learning. This makes a positive contribution to the generally effective teaching of literacy and numeracy.

23. **The curriculum and assessment**

20. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad, balanced and relevant. It meets the statutory requirement of the National Curriculum including information technology and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education; it reflects effectively the stated aims and values of the school. It provides an interesting programme for pupils, some of which is based on first hand experiences, and this promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development. The school's curriculum takes account of the 20 per cent non-National Curriculum time in an appropriate way. The use of this time is not made explicit in any policy statement, and there are no systems for monitoring whether the time is used effectively or whether areas are missed. The curriculum is organised effectively and contributes to the quality of learning. However, there is insufficiently rigorous and systematic monitoring of curriculum delivery and effectiveness to bring a clear understanding as to where it supports learning fully, and where improvement is required. Detailed reports keep the governing body well informed, but they are not sufficiently evaluative so as to help governors focus on areas for improvement. Governors are very supportive of all aspects of curriculum development at the school, but the lack of a simple overview backed by systematic monitoring information means their interest remains general rather than specific.

21. Staff place particular emphasis on English and mathematics. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Staff have implemented both strategies to good effect and these initiatives are having a direct and positive impact on standards. All other subjects have reduced but suitable time allocations. The governors' policy for sex education states that it is taught as part of science and health education. Staff cover health and drug education appropriately as part of the school's science programme and through especially planned health promotions. The length of the teaching week at Key Stage 1 is in line with the Department for Education and Employment's recommended time but it is more than an hour below the recommendation for Key Stage 2. Inspection findings show that although this shortfall does not have a significant impact on standards, it does restrict the time available for areas such as personal and social education.

22. Teachers plan their teaching and the pupils' learning as separate subjects and in many but not all areas effectively link one subject with another within a topic theme;

an example of where links are not sufficiently developed is information technology. This aside, the majority of the planning adds a strong sense of meaning and purpose to the programme of work, as for example with the study of Egypt in Class 2 and India in Class 3. Within subjects there is generally an appropriate balance of the necessary areas of learning, including those for multi-cultural education. Teachers use their planning to draw out moral and social issues, but tend to miss opportunities to build spiritual development. In all classes, teachers often group pupils according to their prior attainment, and this is particularly the case for English and mathematics. Most of the work is well matched to pupils' capabilities, and pupils have equal access to the curriculum; where this is not the case, it is the challenge for the highest attaining pupils and the precise learning targets for the lowest attaining pupils that are unsatisfactory. The curriculum is equally relevant to girls and boys.

23. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is insecure. The school has a policy that fully meets the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Staff supportively integrate pupils with special needs into classes and these pupils have the same curriculum entitlement as all other pupils. However, not all individual education plans contain specific and relevant targets, securely based on rigorous assessment of pupils' priority needs; they often lack specific programmes of learning to guide teachers. There is only limited evidence that teachers address these targets and programmes of learning in lessons plans. Most, but not all, of the higher attaining pupils receive work that is challenging and commensurate with their capabilities. The curriculum for some of the highest attaining pupils is insufficiently challenging.
24. All subjects have supportive policy statements and schemes of work; in the main teachers use them effectively. These planning documents are helpful in assisting day-to-day planning and provide a framework for ensuring progression and continuity in teaching and learning. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teachers design medium-term plans that give a clear outline of subject coverage. The short-term plans are helpful; they list learning objectives, assessment opportunities and evaluation. Subject co-ordinators provide positive support and guidance and check planning. However, most have a very limited role in direct in-class monitoring of their subjects throughout the school.
25. A good range of extra-curricular activities and visits supports the curriculum. These include sports and the pupils take part in internal and external school sporting competitions. Such well-supported activities enhance and extend the curriculum and give pupils the opportunity to develop their social skills and other interests. Musicians, artists, actors and other visitors regularly come into school; they extend and enrich the curriculum. Staff improve the quality of the curriculum by the use of the local environment and outside visits to a wide range of places and events. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in residential visits and this makes an important contribution to the life of the school. All these have a positive and beneficial effect on the quality of the curriculum provided. The school gives pupils the opportunity to learn a range of musical instruments. Recent improvement in the use of homework is making an increasing contribution to pupils' learning. All pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education.

26. There is an adequate assessment policy, which makes explicit requirements of each teacher. These are manageable and appropriate. Teachers' short-term plans refer to assessment opportunities but overall the day-to-day assessment of what pupils know and can do does not sufficiently guide future teaching. Teachers within the partnership of schools compare samples of pupils' work to establish a common understanding of levels of attainment. Samples of individual pupils' work are kept in all subjects and are shared with pupils and their parents; these demonstrate progress and achievement. Staff maintain a pupil profile file in the form of a basic record of achievement. Staff follow well the established procedure for record keeping. The school fulfils the national requirements for assessment at the ends of Key Stages 1 and 2. Good use is made of data gained from assessment tests and all other sources to inform and influence longer term planning, including targeting of particular subjects, school organisation, financial priorities and the deployment and development of staff. However, overall there is insufficient continuous assessment and recording of pupils' progress, and insufficient use of this information to target teaching. This leads to teaching in at least a quarter of lessons that does not match individual needs sufficiently well.
27. Teachers mark work regularly, but the quality of the marking of work is inconsistent; too often it focuses mainly on praise of effort and presentation. Only a small proportion of marking is highly effective; this is when it offers direct advice leading to improvement in performance. In this effective marking, good assessment underpins the advice. During lessons, teachers offer effective encouragement, advice and recognition of effort and good work. The school meets the legal requirement for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need.

31.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

28. The overall provision for the balanced personal development of the pupils is good, and a strength of the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Consequently, in discussion, pupils show that they take responsibility for their own actions, are aware how they are developing as people and understand how this prepares them for their future lives.
29. Provision for spiritual development is sound, and has a clear presence throughout the life and work of the school. Assemblies play a daily and significant part in this provision, introducing pupils to the idea of meaning and purpose in life and the responsibility they should take for their own lives. Assemblies have a strong Christian theme, but also celebrate and recognise other faiths and traditions; they meet statutory requirements for collective worship in full. The improved provision for religious education helps pupils understand the important part faith, belief and shared practices play in human lives. In science, pupils have opportunities to respond to the pattern and beauty of nature with a sense of wonder, and in English, creative writing enables pupils to explore these ideas. Art and music enrich these opportunities. However, even though there is a good policy for this aspect of the school's provision, a policy enhanced by other policies such as that for worship, staff do not give pupils sufficient opportunities for quiet reflection in silence nor sufficient opportunities to express their developing beliefs through art, music and expressive writing that involves the writer in exploring their inner feelings and responses to life.

30. Provision for moral development is very good. Teachers give clear guidance as to right and wrong. They help pupils work out why behaviour is right or wrong, and their own behaviour towards the pupils and each other provides a very fine example for pupils to follow. Staff generate many opportunities for pupils to make moral decisions, for example by taking responsibility for others and themselves. When problems arise, teachers talk them through with the individuals involved so that pupils learn that problems do not always have simple solutions. A clear policy for rewards and sanctions backs up the clear messages given in other ways.
31. Provision for social development is very good. In the main this good quality comes from the community aims of the school. Through the daily life and work of the school, and the events shared by the school and the village, staff help pupils learn how these enrich through partnership endeavour the quality of life for all. The millennium garden project is one example among many of the opportunities pupils are given to work this out in practice. Visitors to the school and the annual residential visit broaden the understanding of the pupils. As pupils grow older, staff give them increasing opportunities to take full responsibility for tasks, and for caring for younger pupils. Staff help pupils understand how communities need laws and rules, for example through discussion of the life of the school. Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding through subjects such as history, geography and physical education; this was very evident on a visit to a local sports centre when pupils learned to take advantage of the many facilities on offer. The school does not have separate provision for personal and social education, and misses opportunities to bring this good learning together. There is a very useful policy for equal opportunities, and the way this colours the life of the school introduces pupils to the central significance of justice and equity for human quality of life.
- 1 Provision for cultural development is good, and this good quality represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Through English, art and music pupils have a good introduction to the cultural heritage of this country and Europe. History introduces pupils to cultural traditions from the past, and religious education provides an effective introduction to Christian culture. Staff enrich this development through visits to such places as the Ashmolean Museum and Tudor houses and by arranging for visitors such as an artist to come to the school. However, the most significant improvement has been in the provision that allows pupils to learn about and appreciate other cultures. The improved provision for religious education introduces pupils effectively to different faiths and, in geography, pupils gain a deep understanding of culture in other places such as south India. The school is now alive with displays from various cultures and there are many books that broaden the pupils' awareness. Assemblies bring all these ideas together. Within this richness, the school also recognises and celebrates pupils' achievements within their own communities, including the family's achievements of the pupils who have faiths and cultures other than Christian.

36. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

1. The school supports and guides pupils very effectively and makes very good provision for their welfare. This makes a very positive contribution to educational

standards and helps pupils to feel happy and secure. The school has a very welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Class teachers know their pupils very well and pupils confidently turn to them for help. Parents appreciate the school's close liaison with the secondary schools and the arrangements for transferring pupils at the end of Key Stage 2.

2. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development are good. The school keeps a detailed track of pupils' progress through the profile folder and pupils are well supported in their learning and personal development. The current personal, social, and health education provision is restricted to items within the scheme of work for other subjects and makes only a limited contribution to pupils' personal development and awareness of the world around them. However, the school is currently developing a policy and programme of study in this area in conjunction with the Didcot Partnership of schools. The policy for sex education meets statutory requirements. The school co-operates actively with parents and the other schools in the Partnership in the prevention of drug abuse. Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from a range of musical and sporting extra-curricular activities, and many take them up enthusiastically. The school encourages pupils to give of themselves by collecting for charities, for example helping farmers in Africa, and visiting the local old people's home.
3. The school's very good procedures for monitoring attendance succeed in maintaining unauthorised absence at one fifth of the national level and in ensuring a high level of pupil punctuality. The school works effectively with the education welfare service.
4. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very effective. Staff expect high standards of good behaviour and promote an orderly and cheerful atmosphere throughout the school. There is no formal anti-bullying policy, but bullying is rare and pupils and parents are happy that any threatening behaviour is dealt with rapidly and effectively. Appropriate arrangements are in place for child protection; they conform to the relevant statutory requirements and staff are well aware of the issues involved. Staff teach pupils to work and play safely and supervise them well in class and around the school.
5. The school generally complies with legal requirements for health and safety procedures. Provision for medical care and first aid are good and the school looks after sick pupils well. Liaison with outside agencies is very effective when supporting pupils with special educational needs or health worries. The layout of the school site is such that it does not always ensure that pedestrians are kept separate from vehicular traffic, and the main gate is open when pupils arrive or leave school. However, the high quality of supervision minimizes the problem. There are insufficient safeguards concerning the millennium pond. Two doors marked as fire exits were locked during the inspection, although it was possible to leave the school by other means. Pupils are required to wear indoor shoes whilst at school. If they forget these they sometimes wear socks. This practice is unsatisfactory, especially when using the assembly hall that has a shiny floor and when pupils need to leave the school quickly as when there is a fire drill.

41. **Partnership with parents and the community**

6. The school's very good partnership with parents and the community is mutually beneficial. The encouraging and welcoming tone of the school's documentation reflects this. Parents find the school easy to approach and support its aims, as does the local community as a whole.
7. The information to parents about the school is of a very high standard. Even though neither the prospectus nor the governors' report to parents meets statutory requirements in full, both documents are very informative and reader-friendly. There is a comprehensive induction pack for new parents and a two-weekly newsletter keeps parents and the community closely in touch with its activities. Some of the school's written communications, such as the '*Ouch! I bumped my head*' note, demonstrate a pleasant and effective sense of humour.
8. The school organises a formal annual parents' meeting with teachers and encourages informal contact from parents at any time. The homework diary, which parents are expected to sign, provides a continuous opportunity for two-way written communication. The annual written reports on pupils meet statutory requirements. They tell parents what their children know, understand and can do and set targets for the core subjects. Most reports helpfully evaluate pupils' progress, though some parents see some as too bland. In the case of one class, the reports are indeed insufficiently precise. The school maintains an excellent record-of-achievement file for each pupil; it contains personal and sporting achievements as well as samples of the best academic work. Parents have an annual opportunity to see this file. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved with the review of their children's progress.
9. The school invites parents to a wide range of music and drama performances and sporting events, as well as cultural events, such as music assemblies and book fairs. The School Association arranges a large number of well-attended social and fund-raising events, generating a substantial income for the benefit of their children. A major parental and community contribution to the school over the past year has been the millennium garden at the back of the school. This was designed by a parent and has attracted massive support from parents and the village, as well as contributions from a significant number of local businesses. The village community supports the school as a major local resource, and villagers not directly connected with the school are happy to provide artefacts, such as photographs and foreign clothing, to assist pupils' education.
10. The school provides extensive opportunities for pupils to benefit from contacts with the outside world, for example regular visits by trainee priests. A wide variety of speakers and helpers from the community visit the school and there is a very good range of outside visits to local nature and cultural locations and a five day residential visit to Devon for Year 6 pupils; this is always a great success. A recent highlight that really made history come alive for Class 4 was a visit to Sulgrave Manor to see how people lived in the 16th century. Pupils have many opportunities to give of themselves, notably by contributions to a number of charities and visits to a local old people's home. The school encourages them to raise money for their fellow pupils and to make

appropriate contact with the civic authorities. The school benefits from donations in kind by local industry and commerce, and visits to a nearby waste treatment works and garden centre give pupils valuable experience of environmental issues and the world of work in operation.

11. The Didcot Area Partnership of schools has forged close links between all members in the surrounding area, and there is even a sub-group of rural members. Long Wittenham pupils benefit from this co-operation, especially where induction and curriculum development are concerned. The links with the local community are a major strength of the school.

12. The last inspection report indicated that links with parents and the community were strong. The school has continued to build on its earlier achievement. As shown in the generally positive responses to the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, parents welcome the improvements and continue to hold the school in high regard.

48. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

48. **Leadership and management**

48.

13. The governors and headteacher lead the school effectively with commitment and determination. This gives both staff and pupils a clear idea of the kind of school they work to become, a determination to achieve and improve, and a belief that success depends upon trust, teamwork and partnership. Staff ensure their subject co-ordination roles define and support present standards and future required improvement although, at present, this area of leadership is not fully effective as responsibilities are not shared equally; this places too great demand on the teacher who carries responsibility for two subjects plus many other duties. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good, and there are a strategy and secure foundations for future improvement; the aims and values of the school enliven the everyday and long-term life and work of the school and, consequently, the school meets its aims well.
14. Governors work effectively, efficiently and in close partnership with the headteacher and staff. They meet their statutory responsibilities well, even though they miss some required details in the school's published documents. Their improved involvement with the life and work of the school makes certain they are well informed. Consequently the school development plan and budget is a whole school action and resource plan, understood and owned by all working in the school. These plans have targets and objectives that are attainable yet stretching. As a specific example, governors with staff have assured that the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented. Central to this success is the way the headteacher creates and nurtures the team spirit of teachers, learning support assistants and community volunteers, and the way the school works in partnership with other schools and advisors. As a result, relevant and effective staff development underpins the school's growing success, even though the school does not have a staff development policy that would assure this remains the case.
15. Management is satisfactory. However, although governors and staff are well informed as to work in their individual areas of responsibility, for example by checking planning, the school does not monitor sufficiently implementation. The headteacher does not monitor teaching sufficiently systematically, and therefore opportunities are missed to give feedback to teachers and share with others best practice and solutions to problems. Staff manage subject areas at least soundly and often well. However, a factor when subjects are not managed with full effect is that in some areas one person carries too many responsibilities, for example two core subjects; this causes not all areas to be covered equally well.
16. There are now policies and procedures for most areas of the school's work, and these are clear and useful. However, the school does not have key policies that set out what needs to be done in such crucial areas as teaching, staff development and the way day-to-day assessment leads continually to teaching that is focused upon improved progress by pupils. Although these remain a full school issue, the deficit is particularly evident in the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs, including the needs of the highest attaining pupils. The school has moved a long way

since the last inspection in developing a set of policies and procedures, but has yet to draw these together in simple documents that give staff an overall understanding how the various parts of the curriculum form a whole, and how various policies, for example equal opportunities and assessment, contribute to each other. What is lacking is overall management, rather than just concentration on the parts, and the overall monitoring and evaluation that identifies that policy does not always match practice, for example the policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. That being said, the ethos of the school for both staff and pupils is very positive; it is a very committed, determined and 'achieving' community in which to work and learn.

52. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

17. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. A coherent programme of planned work benefits all pupils, across each year group and through each key stage. This leads to the careful allocation of staff, resources and accommodation. The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching staff meet the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education. Careful management deploys staff effectively to maximize their strengths throughout the school. Good arrangements are in place for the induction of staff but there is no induction policy. The school has sound arrangements for the appraisal of staff and implements them well. There is good provision for staff training but no staff development policy. Courses attended by staff have led to significant improvements in curriculum provision, for example in information technology. Staff benefit from good links they have established with other schools through the Didcot Partnership. Staff successfully completed training for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and as a result achieved full and effective introduction of the literacy hour. Learning support assistants for pupils with special educational needs are well qualified and effective. Staff completed preparations for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, and implemented this effectively within appropriate daily lessons. Administrative staff make a very positive contribution to the smooth running of the school day. The team spirit apparent throughout the school has a positive impact on standards achieved by pupils.

18. As at the time of the last inspection, staff continue to use all available space in the school effectively. The school library is in a corridor and is easily accessible to all pupils. All specialist areas are appropriately timetabled for maximum use. The hall is of adequate size and is well used for assemblies, school dinners, physical education and as a secure area for the under-fives. The school has no outside secure area for these pupils. The school's internal accommodation is of good standard. The present standards of cleanliness and hygiene are very good, thanks to the efforts of the school caretaker and staff. Staff appropriately and imaginatively balance high quality displays of pupils' work with commercial and photographic material. These provide many triggers for pupils' learning and appreciation of peoples of other cultures. External accommodation includes hard and grassed areas, and safe and well-constructed play equipment; these are well maintained and attractively laid out. The developing millennium garden is a most impressive scheme, professionally planned to include a pond and outdoor teaching areas and being constructed largely by volunteers. From its inception two years ago, this valuable initiative has involved the whole school community, including pupils, staff, parents, governors, employers and the wider village population. The impact upon pupils' learning about citizenship is already

very significant.

19. With the exception of some resources for design and technology, learning resources are satisfactory to meet well the needs of all pupils and of the curriculum. There is now a wide range of good quality, readily accessible resources available for all subject areas. During the last inspection resources for religious education were inadequate but they are now satisfactory. The school has a good range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, most of which are in classrooms. Pupils can gain easy access to books, including many texts that enrich their awareness of living in a multi-cultural society. Resources for information and communication technology are good. Through very forward-looking planning, staff use a wide range of outside facilities to supplement resources in school, for example sharing the cost of more expensive resources with other small schools. The school mini-bus is properly maintained. The school uses resources available in the wider community fully and effectively to support pupils' learning; for example, pupils regularly use local swimming and gymnastic facilities.

55. The efficiency of the school

20. The governing body, the headteacher and the finance officer manage the school budget very efficiently. The financial administration and management is of a good standard. There are well-developed procedures for budget setting and approval. Effective arrangements also exist for budget monitoring and devolution. The finance officer supplies regular updates and a commentary to the finance committee of the governing body; this group meets at least once a term. A useful and practical financial procedures document provides clear guidance as to roles and responsibilities regarding all financial matters. Governors now plan carefully in accord with the agreed priorities for improving the attainment of pupils. The school development plan is carefully costed and is beginning to take a more central position in the budget setting exercise. Methods of evaluating the impact of the investment decisions taken are insufficiently developed, and this remains a weakness since the last inspection report. However, the problem is not the commitment to evaluation, but the lack of sufficient monitoring information, in particular on teaching, on which to base the evaluation. For this reason, the way governors and headteacher monitor and then evaluate and seek answers remains an overall weakness. School accounts are efficiently administered, and they have recently been audited; the school has addressed any necessary improvements noted. Administrative support is very good and results in efficient and effective day-to-day organisation of the school.
21. Deployment of staff is good and makes effective use of their various and many skills and interests. The use of accommodation and resources is good, and effective use is made of learning opportunities offered by the attractive school grounds. The school uses the local community sports centre and swimming pool to good effect and this use enhances curricular provision. Staff are developing the use of information technology equipment to better effect to support the wider curriculum; this shows a significant improvement since the last inspection report although staff realise they still have some way to go. The limited funding allocation for the curriculum and internal school maintenance has not adversely affected the quality of provision; fund-raising and donations make a significant contribution. The funding directed to support pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately and contributes to their progress.
22. The school is well aware of the possible shortfall in its next year's budget that may result from possible reduced pupil numbers. Governors are actively working on contingency plans.
23. The expenditure per pupil is in line with national averages for schools of this type. In the light of this, the standard of pupils on entry, the use the school makes of all its resources, the quality of education provided and the standards of achievement at the end of the key stages, Long Wittenham Primary school provides good value for money. This value for money compares favourably with the last inspection report.

59. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

59. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

24. Children start school as part-time pupils at the beginning of the term in which they are five. The school has three intakes annually, in line with the policy of the local education authority. At present the school has three pupils under the age of five; they attend for mornings only.
25. Children show a broadly average range of attainment on entry to the school but when considering all the children who join during one year, the range of achievement is very wide. Children follow a broad and balanced curriculum that covers all the recommended areas of learning. By the age of five the majority of children are exceeding the nationally recommended targets (the desirable learning outcomes) in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. The majority of children make good progress and are well prepared for entry to the National Curriculum.

Personal and social development.

26. The quality of provision for children's personal and social development is very good. Children enter the school with above the expected levels in their personal and social development. Staff build very successfully on this and ensure children's all round good progress. Consequently, by the age of five they attain standards well above what is expected of children of this age. Under-fives respond positively to school rules and their behaviour is very good. They are confident in their approach to learning tasks and when talking to other children or adults; for example, one pupil explains clearly why fruit made with play-dough is not real. Relationships are very supportive and children learn to share equipment, co-operate in their play and show concern and respect for each other. The secure and stimulating environment in the school fosters their curiosity and sense of wonder. The children demonstrate a well-developed sense of fair play and take turns without fuss. They show respect for materials and property. Staff identify children with special educational needs quickly and include them in all activities. Their needs are understood and met and activities are well matched to their prior attainment.

62. *Language and literacy*

27. Children enter the school with standards in the skills necessary to begin to read and write that are in line with expected levels for children of this age. Progress is very good so that by five, standards are above expectation in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children recite rhymes clearly and the majority speak confidently to the whole class. They talk and role play confidently in small group activities, for example when shopping in a fruit shop they have constructed. They listen attentively to a well-linked story about a visit to a supermarket and speak up confidently, expressing clear opinions about the wisdom of the behaviour of characters.
28. Children make a flying start in reading and make very good progress. By five, children know how books work and know that print conveys meaning, with most able to read many simple words. Children develop good early phonic skills and can match letter names and letter sounds, with higher attainers using their

early phonic knowledge when trying to read unfamiliar words. When singing their action rhymes, children identify a wide range of rhyming words correctly. Staff provide the under-fives with a wide range of good quality, well-organized books. As a result the children thoroughly enjoy their many opportunities to read to adults and to each other. Staff encourage all children to look at books on their own, in small groups and as a class. They regularly take books home to share with their families.

29. Writing standards are above expectation by five and children make good progress in their independent writing skills. They recognise the difference between capital and lower case letters and they remember some of the reasons for using them. By five, almost all children are able to write their own names competently, using a mixture of upper and lower case letters, and can communicate their ideas in writing, using pictures and symbols, letters and some words. Higher attainers write very well, using words they already know or by finding words around the classrooms or in simple dictionaries. Constant access to adult help strongly supports progress in vocabulary and verbal reasoning skills; children practise these when using role-play areas, for example their fruit shop.

Mathematics

30. Children start school with a sense of number that is in line with expectations for children of this age. By the age of five, children's attainment in mathematics is above expectation, with a significant number reaching the early levels of the National Curriculum. Children make very good progress, and by five they can count to ten and many can go beyond, to very high numbers. They recognize number names and most write numbers accurately. Some begin to understand simple number operations such as adding and subtracting. For example, they explore the practical implications of speckled frogs jumping on and off speckled logs, reinforcing their understanding of number through well-linked action rhymes. Children undertake investigative work and solve problems practically. They organize sets of objects, for example play-dough fruit, and give reasons for their choices for each particular set. They show great perseverance in completing these tasks, which often involve numbers much greater than ten. They sort shapes according to size, colour and shape. They construct a parking area of the right size and shape for small cars. Higher attaining children recognize that cars and fruit are not to the same scale. Progress in numeracy is good, with a strong daily focus on the acquisition of number skills. Early morning work and the taking of registers reinforce mental agility in counting forwards and backwards accurately.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

31. By the age of five, children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is good and they reach the desirable learning outcomes. They talk about where they live and the people in their families. They are beginning to understand the pattern of the days of the week, months of the year and seasons. Higher attainers have a very clear understanding of the way supermarket shopping is undertaken nowadays and know that long ago people did not travel by car. Children use information technology confidently and enjoy using suitable computer software programs.

Physical development

32. Children make good progress in their physical development and by five they attain the desirable learning outcomes for this area of learning. Through skilled teaching they learn to make sensible use of the hall space or the cloakroom adapted imaginatively to provide an extra learning area, to address their particular needs. They work hard to improve their climbing, balancing, running and jumping. They change for physical education lessons independently and the majority take great care to fold clothes properly. They are confident in their use of space in the hall and construct a dance sequence, making very good progress in controlling large movements. There is no access to a secure outdoor area during teaching sessions, but staff make very effective use of what space is available. Children develop skills in handling simple tools, malleable materials and construction kits. Such activities support the children's well-developed eye and hand co-ordination. In lessons, under-fives can follow simple safety rules and use equipment sensibly.

68. *Creative development*

33. By five, children have made good progress and attain the desirable learning outcomes in their creative development. Children use paint boldly and have a very independent approach, well supported by established routines for the care of resources. They join in confidently when singing in assemblies and perform number and nursery rhymes in their classrooms. They enjoy singing, which they do with considerable knowledge and a lot of enthusiasm. Provision for imaginative play is good and under-fives co-operate well in their use of the fruit shop. Children have good opportunities to use well-arranged role-play areas. They move confidently, play agreeably and respond very positively to the interest and attention of adults.

69. *The quality of teaching*

34. The quality of teaching of under-fives ranges from good to excellent, and is predominately very good. The teacher and learning support staff work closely as a united team to provide the best possible start for children. Provision for the under-fives is a strength of the school. These high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

35. A well-designed induction programme supports curriculum planning when pupils enter the school. Staff establish very supportive relationships with all their children and know them well as individuals. They provide a high quality learning environment and demonstrate a secure understanding of the intellectual and pastoral needs of young children. Planning is soundly based on the areas of learning for the under-fives but there are clear links to the National Curriculum and to the literacy and numeracy strategies. Staff carry out and record detailed assessments rigorously and continually, including checklists of skills and knowledge for each area of learning. They use very effectively these regular observations to inform weekly plans. They plan tasks that are lively, interesting and well matched to the age and ability range of children.

36. Resources for learning are of good quality, easily accessible and well used. Staff are particularly successful at improving further on children's already good social skills and providing rich opportunities for under-fives to acquire self-discipline,

autonomy and independence.

72. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

72. English

37. Attainment by the end of each key stage is good and above national expectations overall. In the main, pupils make good progress throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment as shown by national tests shows an improving trend that is broadly in line with the national improvement rate. In 1998, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected Level 2 or above in reading was in line with the national average and similar to the average for similar schools. Standards in writing were above the national average but well below those in similar schools. Standards in speaking and listening as shown by teachers' assessments were below the national average. There was a marked improvement in 1999 when attainment in reading was well above the 1999 national average, although only average for similar schools. This improvement reflects a similar improvement in speaking and listening. However, standards in writing remained static, and were well below those in similar schools. Present attainment reflects this improving trend, and there has been a significant improvement in writing and speaking and listening overall. However, at both key stages, the highest attaining pupils tend not to achieve levels in line with their considerable capabilities.
38. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment as shown by national tests shows an improving trend, with a marked improvement in 1999. Standards in 1998 were above the national average but below those in similar schools. In 1999, standards were well above 1999 national averages and matched the average for similar schools. However, this hides the fact that the proportion of pupils who exceed the expected Level 4 was below the national average and well below that for similar schools. Present attainment continues to improve, and is now above national expectations, with better attainment by the higher attaining pupils. However, there is still room for improvement with the highest attaining pupils.
39. Progress at Key Stage 1 is good. Children enter the school with achievements that are broadly average and make a very good start in the reception class. By the end of the key stage, standards of speaking and listening are sound. Pupils listen with good attention and actively search for the meaning in what they hear. Consequently, their questions are sensible, and answers are carefully thought through and given with clarity and confidence. The higher attaining pupils can justify their answers and often give interesting examples to help others understand. Pupils make good progress in their reading. They enjoy books and read familiar texts with confidence and accuracy. Secure phonic awareness allows them to read new words, and they search for their meaning using various techniques. They have a good understanding of story, and predict the way a story might go and can talk about the characters. They make similar good progress in their writing. By the end of the key stage, most can write in extended way using punctuation correctly to set out well-constructed sentences. Many are beginning to think about using the best word, rather than first that comes to mind. They form their letters well but only a few have begun to use joined up writing.

40. Progress at Key Stage 2 is good. By the end of the key stage pupils listen with intense concentration. It is clear they think about what they hear and search for meaning. Their answers to questions are considered and rich in detail, and they can offer well-selected reasons when trying to persuade others. They also make good progress in their reading. By the end of the key stage most are avid readers, reading both for pleasure and for information. They read out loud with good expression and a keen appreciation of the type of writing. They read a fair range of literature, and have sufficient confidence to try out texts that may be difficult. They can use indexes and contents to find information quickly, but are better at reading quickly to find what they need rather than scanning a page. Most make sound progress in their writing. By the end of the key stage, most write in an interesting or purposeful way. Spelling is fairly accurate and punctuation is good. Most use paragraphs appropriately and their writing has a sensible structure. They use their writing for description and report, and also expressively to tell a story or help the reader to feel what it was like to be there. Most use word-processing to improve their writing, with confidence and a good understanding that computers help the creative process and are not just a way of printing neatly.
41. In the main, pupils of different levels of attainment make equally good progress at both key stages. However, in a small school, this overall judgement hides slight weaknesses that can have significant impact on results when compared with national averages and those in similar schools. Pupils of average and lower attainment make good progress, but those of higher attainment, and especially the highest attainers, make only sound progress. This less good progress by high attaining pupils results from variability in the teaching and insufficient challenge and scope in the teaching for pupils of this capability; there are pupils capable of extremely high attainment but, at present, their attainment is just high. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in the main. Teachers and learning assistants give caring and proactive support, but too often these pupils' individual education plans lack sufficient precision both as to the key to their learning difficulty and the targeted teaching that would put it right. There are no significant differences in the progress of girls and boys.
42. The pupils' response to this subject is very good at both key stages. Behaviour and relationships are very good. Pupils concentrate well and remain on task even when they find the work difficult; they try to learn on their own and only ask for help when really necessary. They take care and pride in their work, and contribute with confidence and willingness. They work together collaboratively, and value the views and help of others. Above all, they treat literacy in all its forms as an important and serious skill they need to gain, and one that brings much enjoyment and satisfaction.
43. Teaching is good. At Key Stage 1, all teaching is at least satisfactory, and more than half is good or very good. At Key Stage 2, half of teaching is very good and half is satisfactory. This last judgement shows clearly the variation in quality. It is this type of variation at both key stages that lies at the heart of the next stage in improvement. The school voices this as some disappointment that standards are not rising as quickly as they wish, even though they work so hard. To achieve their targets, all teaching needs to be good or better and so achieve the best progress for pupils at all levels of attainment. All teaching is well planned with clear objectives and a sensible range of learning tasks. Teachers manage classes very well and group pupils of similar attainment so they can give focused support. They use resources

imaginatively and creatively, and productively link learning in literacy with work in other subjects. Homework is an effective part of learning throughout the school. Teachers use the lessons to support moral and social development, but miss opportunities to allow deeply expressive or responsive writing that would support spiritual development. They introduce pupils to a good range of quality literature. The variability lies in the precise expectations of each pupil.

44. In the most effective lessons, the teachers base their teaching on continuous assessment that clearly records what pupils can and cannot do, and this leads to a very definite awareness of what they need to learn or practise next. These teachers use very open questions that force the pupils to think before answering, and they give the pupils time to consider their answers. These teachers do not dominate the lessons but divide strictly between their teaching input and when the pupils need to learn on their own. Marking is not simple correction, but writes down how the pupil has succeeded, why they have met problems, and how they can improve. This written feedback is then reinforced orally in class. All these skills join together to help each pupil learn at the maximum level of which they are capable.

45. The subject is soundly led and managed. The school prepared well for the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and, together, the teachers have implemented it effectively. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met in full, and the effective implementation of the Literacy Strategy has already led to improvement in standards; this has improved learning across the curriculum. Long and medium-term planning is good. However, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and the pupils' work. Therefore, opportunities are missed to reflect on how teaching can be improved, and where too many pupils are meeting problems. Assessment over time is good, and careful analysis leads to changes in planning and teaching. However, there is no common practice for the continuous assessment and evaluation of progress in English. There is a dynamic subject policy that gives an inspiring vision of what the subject should be and achieve, but this does not give a clear idea of what needs to be done to achieve the vision. There is a useful policy on writing. However, the school does not have policies on the other literacy skills, nor a clear specification of what skills effective teaching of literacy employs.

81. Mathematics

46. The results of the 1998 national tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, show that pupils' attainment was in line with the national average, when compared to all schools. The number of higher attainers was close to the national average. When compared with schools with a similar socio-economic profile, results were below average. Results in these tests for 1999 are improved slightly but the position remains the same when compared with other schools nationally and similar schools. However, inspection findings are that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is now above the national average.
47. Results in national tests in 1998 at the end of Key Stage 2, show that pupils attained well above the national average, when compared to all schools and by comparison with similar schools. In national tests for 1999, all pupils reached the expected level and half of the pupils exceeded this level. These results were well above those in schools nationally in 1999, and those in similar schools. Inspection findings confirm these results.
48. Since 1996, the results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards are being maintained at a level close to the national average. There has been a significant statistical difference in the performance of girls and boys over the past three years; boys' performance was below average whilst girls' performance was above expectations. However, this relates to the various capabilities of pupils in these years, rather than weaknesses in the teaching. The trend in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 over four years shows that attainment is well above average. The performance of boys was well above the national average, whilst girls achieved above average results.
49. Present attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above the national expectations overall but there are some weaknesses. Pupils in Year 2 carry out simple number problems using addition, subtraction and multiplication. Higher attaining pupils show a good understanding of place value to three digits, and are able to order numbers to 1000. They investigate problems, for example estimating lengths of chosen items and then choosing units of length to check their estimates. Pupils use simple fractions such as halves and quarters. Higher attainers apply these concepts competently, using numbers to 20 confidently. Investigation and problem-solving work is well developed and pupils use and apply mathematics in practical everyday tasks. For example, they work out correctly how much change they have from £1.00 when shopping. Attainment in mental mathematics, at the end of the key stage, is in line with expectations for most pupils but there are a significant number of pupils who do not attain national standards. Even so, most pupils carry out mental additions and subtractions competently, with numbers to twenty.
50. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average. Pupils have well developed numeracy skills. Most know their multiplication tables and use their knowledge to solve a variety of problems. They successfully develop their own strategies for using data, such as comparing prices to be charged for a bicycle in terms of percentage profit. Pupils present their data accurately in graphs and charts and understand the importance of title, correct scale and labels of axes. They interpret their results and know what a 'constant' means and why it is important in a mathematical investigation. Their skills when

using information technology to support investigations are sound. Their ability to carry out mental calculations is good. Most pupils are confident mental performers, accurately solving problems with numbers to 1000. Higher attainers are becoming increasingly skilled at explaining the methods used to solve problems. The provision made by the school to introduce the numeracy hour has had a positive impact on standards at both key stages.

51. The progress of pupils at Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils on entry have mathematical skills that are in line with average expectations for pupils of that age. They make very good progress with numbers, quickly learning to count successfully. For example, Year 1 pupils count forwards and backwards to 20 with confidence. Higher attainers identify missing numbers or numbers out of sequence. Pupils make good progress in becoming familiar with a range of shapes and are able to carry out simple investigations, for example deciding that it would take a long time to walk to Didcot but only a short time to pick a flower.
52. The progress of pupils in Key Stage 2 is at least sound and often good. Pupils develop their competencies with numbers systematically, well supported by regular use of a published scheme. Investigative work successfully employs numerical skills and data handling across the key stage. For example, Year 4 pupils investigate patterns of odd and even numbers, successfully using a range of methods to present their findings. Progress in understanding the properties of a wide variety of shapes and measures is most effectively supported by selective use of published texts. Pupils make rapid progress during the later years of the key stage. Challenging mental work effectively supports progress in all aspects of the curriculum. The progress of pupils with special educational needs in relation to their previous attainment is satisfactory at both key stages, but is not always securely linked to targets in their individual education plans. Some of the plans lack sufficient precision.
53. Pupils' attitudes at Key Stage 1 are very good and they look forward to their lessons. They understand classroom routines and follow them. Pupils' attitudes at Key Stage 2 are also very good. All pupils are keen to answer questions and they co-operate and work well together in group activities. Most pupils are able to work independently and persevere with difficult tasks. Their very good behaviour has a positive impact on the progress they make.
54. The quality of teaching in both key stages is very sound. Nine lessons were seen; six were satisfactory and three were good or very good lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Subject knowledge is good. Teachers have a positive approach to the new numeracy strategy. Termly and weekly planning is sound but some daily planning for the mental session of the numeracy hour lacks a clear focus. In the good and very good lessons, teachers plan pupils' activities meticulously and keep up a brisk pace so that no learning time is wasted. In these lessons, expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. These effective lessons begin with a clear explanation to the whole class of what is to be learned, supported by a quick recap of past learning. For example, in a year 4 class there was a good review of the meaning of the word 'predict', as a result of good assessment of pupils' problems. Teachers relate full-class sessions well to planned learning objectives. However, some less effective lessons lack pace at the start and not all teachers make the lesson focus clear to pupils. Assessment procedures are firmly established at both key stages and teachers use these to establish well-targeted ability related groups. However, a lack of recorded

continuous assessment is sometimes the cause of a lack of focus; pupils are given tasks that are too easy or too difficult. Nevertheless, in the main, assessment and the teachers' knowledge of each pupil's attainment have a positive impact on standards achieved. Teachers help teaching assistants to support groups effectively, particularly of lower attainers. Nevertheless, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to use learning support assistants during the mental and plenary session. Teachers set homework regularly and this complements work in the classroom.

55. Mathematics is soundly led and managed throughout the school. The subject co-ordinator's interest, expertise and enthusiasm for the subject have driven the school's effective and good start to the Numeracy Strategy and use of the numeracy hour. His analysis and use of information from statutory tests is sound. It has had a positive impact on standards attained by pupils. Staff and pupils have the support of a good range of mathematical resources that are well organized for ease of access. Teachers make effective use of display to support mathematics within the school.
56. In the school's previous inspection, standards in mathematics were judged to be at least satisfactory and frequently good. The school has made a significant improvement in mathematics in both key stages. The subject meets National Curriculum requirements.

92. **Science**

92.

57. Overall attainment in science is good at Reception and satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. At both key stages most pupils are broadly achieving national expectations with a small number achieving above this standard. The school's results in the Key Stages 1 and 2 National Curriculum Assessments in 1998 were in line with the national average. In comparison to schools of a similar type, test and assessment results for both key stages are below this average. Test results for 1999 show an improvement. In teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 attainment was well above the 1999 national average and the average for similar schools. However, no pupils exceeded the expected level. At the end of Key Stage 2, results in these 1999 national tests, whilst slightly improved, were still only in line with the national average, and below the average for similar schools. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in science is significantly lower than in English and mathematics.

58. Progress is satisfactory overall and throughout the school. It is, however, not as yet good enough when compared with progress in the other core subjects. In all classes pupils actively and meaningfully involve themselves in practical investigations. The majority of pupils understand the basic principles of experimentation. Pupils make careful observations and are developing the ability to evaluate scientific evidence and make predictions. Pupils record carefully in a variety of ways depending on the age and ability of the pupil. Class 1 look at healthy eating and pupils gain a sound understanding of food value. This work has been linked to art and resulted in some high quality work. The written recording by Key Stage 2 pupils was often of a lower standard than their oral presentations. At both stages most pupils are developing appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding about life and the living processes, materials and properties and physical processes. Older

pupils understand the need for fair testing. Sufficient time is allocated for the subject and the planned work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

59. Progress is generally very good in Reception, sound at Key Stage 1 and generally satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Any unsatisfactory progress relates mainly to the higher attaining pupils being insufficiently challenged and extended, and this limits their eventual attainment. Most pupils draw well on previous knowledge and experience to develop skills and understanding in new situations. Some of the older pupils make perceptive links between science and other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress. The pupils have good standards of literacy and numeracy and this makes a positive contribution to their progress, but information technology has yet to be used to similar good effect.
60. Pupils are highly motivated, mainly behave well, show curiosity, generally listen attentively and are interested in their work. Throughout the school pupils cooperate well with each other and contribute confidently to class discussions. They use apparatus safely and are aware of health and safety issues. All pupils show a natural and productive curiosity for science.
61. At Reception the quality of teaching is always satisfactory and usually very good, and at Key Stages 1 and 2 the quality of teaching is generally satisfactory with a number of good features. In the most effective lessons, expectations of all the pupils are high, the pace of the lesson is brisk, clear learning objectives are set and understood by all and teachers advance learning by the skilful use of questioning. Teachers take all opportunities to involve pupils successfully in practical investigations; this was seen in Class 4 with the work on forces. All teachers establish good relationships with pupils and this promotes positive attitudes to the subject. Teachers plan and prepare individual lessons well and make effective use of a suitable range of resources, including visiting local places of scientific interest.
62. A whole school policy statement, long-term plan and scheme of work for science are useful and well designed; they help teachers plan for continuity, balance, coverage and progression within the subject. The subject is soundly led and managed; planning is checked but there is too little monitoring of teaching. The use of assessment over time is sound, but has yet to be used as effectively as in English and mathematics. There is insufficient day-by-day assessment and recording of what the pupils can and cannot do. This leads to some unfocused teaching, and marking that does not sufficiently clarify for the pupils the reasons for success or failure, and what they need to learn next so as to improve. These areas where practice is not sufficiently developed contribute to attainment and progress that is not yet good enough. Consequently, although standards have been maintained since the last inspection, they have not improved.

98. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

98. **Information technology**

63. At the ends of both key stages, attainment in information technology is satisfactory and occasionally good. This is a vast improvement since the previous inspection report. Governors, headteacher and all staff, ably led by the subject co-ordinator, have put in a massive effort and commitment of time and money to improve standards in the subject. At Key Stage 1 pupils are confident users of computers, and most show good ability. They are able to use many of the functions and use the keyboard competently. At Key Stage 2 many pupils are able to operate successfully the range of programs available to them and can use information technology to good effect when given the opportunity. Teachers and pupils make extensive use of word processing at both key stages. Teachers give pupils experience of work that involves use of databases and graphic forms. Some good work in this area happens in Reception, Year 1 and Years 5 and 6 to support art and mathematics. Key Stage 2 pupils are able to use CD-ROMs to develop research and retrieval skills and some apply this skill in their history work. There is some use of control, monitoring and modelling technology and other forms of information gathering and transmitting. A number of older pupils show higher attainment and they are able to use spreadsheets, interrogate data banks and select relevant information. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were beginning to use e-mail. Most pupils are able to use their previously acquired skills on a variety of programs and readily respond to advice.
64. Progress is good at both key stages and the pace of work is generally satisfactory. Teachers make only limited use of information technology to support and enhance other subjects, but this is developing. There is a well-developed long-term plan for the subject to help progression and coverage of the curriculum. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make equally positive progress. There are no significant differences in the progress of girls and boys.
65. Pupils respond very well to the subject. They show a positive attitude and interest in the use of computers. Most are able to discuss their work and explain the work they are doing. When working at machines they work collaboratively.
66. The quality of teaching is generally good and teachers use the programs sensibly to match the needs of the pupils. Planning for other subjects does not take sufficient account of the contribution of information technology. Teachers are developing their expertise and confidence in the subject and in the use of equipment. Teachers produce many of their labels and display captions on the computers; this shows a good example to the pupils. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for computer programs to support work in other subjects of the National Curriculum. Pupils are encouraged in their efforts and supported appropriately. There is sufficient ongoing record keeping, and teachers use these records to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. The school now has a good range of resources for information technology, both hardware and software. The school meets National Curriculum requirements for information technology.

102.

102. **Religious education**

67. Standards of attainment in religious education are good, and exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Provision is much improved since the last inspection and is now good.

68. By the end of each key stage, standards of attainment are good. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure understanding of the main outlines of Christianity. They understand how parables and stories not only express ideas, but force the listener to consider how this meaning applies to their own lives. They understand how different people have different beliefs and have some knowledge as to what this means in terms of the religious practice. They know that festivals mark different stages in life, and by Year 3 understand how events such as a Shabbat meal play important parts in the life of religious communities. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a secure understanding and knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, and compare and contrast these faiths with considerable insight. They have a fairly broad knowledge of these religions, including a very deep understanding of the difference between and function of sign and symbol.
69. At Key Stage 1 progress is good. Even very young pupils soon gain an understanding of the religious side of their lives and the lives of others, for example when studying ancient Egypt. They learn to remember and discuss with increasing insight simple stories and extend their understanding of what happens in special places such as churches, and how religion has special people and objects. At Key Stage 2 progress is good. Pupils extend their knowledge of religions significantly, and discuss Christianity, Judaism and Islam with increasing depth, applying that knowledge with developing precision to other subjects such as history or geography. However, although progress in knowledge and understanding is good, it is only satisfactory in the expressive and responsive elements of religious education. There is no significant difference in the progress of girls and boys. The teaching at times does not allow the highest attaining pupils to extend sufficiently the depth of their response, and similarly the lowest attaining and those with special educational needs at times find the work too difficult and, therefore, their written work becomes ill-understood copying.
70. Pupils respond well to religious education at both key stages. They view the topics they study as being important and requiring serious thought. They approach faiths and practices other than their own with open and unprejudiced curiosity, appreciating that we can learn from difference. They value the views of others, and are confident to question their own developing beliefs.
71. Teaching is good at both key stages. Subject knowledge and understanding is sound, and this helps teachers plan effectively. Teachers manage lessons effectively with pace and challenge, and make good use of resources. They use open questions to help pupils think for themselves, and value the different contributions they make. However, in the main, teachers tend to place too much emphasis upon the knowledge and understanding aspect of this subject, and fail to understand that even very young pupils can respond in ways that have real depth. As a result, much of the teaching and tasks tend to focus on the broad average range of attainment, and miss opportunities that highly reflective and expressive work can offer to both the very mature pupil and to the lower attaining pupil who can respond deeply but finds the knowledge elements more difficult.
72. The subject is well managed and strongly led with enthusiasm and commitment. There is a useful subject policy and a developing scheme of work that works closely to the locally agreed policy for religious education. The school meets

statutory requirements for religious education. The co-ordinator checks planning, and uses her knowledge to support other teachers. The range of learning resources is satisfactory, although the range of videos, tapes and posters is rather limited. Good use is made of visits to the local church and a synagogue further away, and the local vicar adds a very effective personal touch to the learning. The recent improvement in provision has been founded upon appropriate staff training, but this tends to have focused on knowledge and understanding, rather than the teaching skills that in some respects are unique to religious education, for example the use of quiet reflection, and the kinds of learning task that encourage and enable expressive and responsive spiritual enquiry. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the cultural and moral development of the pupils, but improvements are necessary in the way it helps spiritual development.

108.

108. **Art**

73. Standards of attainment in art are generally good throughout the school with some very good features. Even though no art lessons were seen during the inspection, there is abundant evidence of good standards of attainment at both key stages; the art displays of pupils' work are a feature of the school in and out of classrooms and this good impression is reinforced by the pupils' portfolios of previous work, especially when linked to the school's and teachers' planning documentation. All pupils make suitable use of observation, memory and imagination. Throughout the school they use a wide range of art techniques to good effect. Pupils of all ages are able to talk about the work of named artists, explaining why they appreciate and recognise their work. Year 5 and 6 pupils readily link paintings to their work in history. Pupils effectively relate much of their work in art to the topics they study, as seen in Year 2 with the printing of Egyptian designs. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 use pastels very effectively to produce some high quality close observation work of fruit. There is less evidence of three-dimensional work including clay work. Pupils work imaginatively with textiles and successfully use computer-generated art, for example with some very effective pattern work in Years 3 and 4. All pupils from Year 2 onwards use sketchbooks, but in other classes the quality of work within them and the way pupils use them varies, and is not always satisfactory.
74. Progress throughout the school is good overall. Pupils build on previous knowledge and experience and are able to amend and improve their work. There is a good balance between the expressive, creative and making attainment targets and the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. The quality of learning is good. Pupils are able to make effective use of all the resources available to them. Most pupils show a noticeable interest in their art activities and demonstrate a sense of pride in their work. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make equally good progress.
75. The quality of teaching is generally good. Aims are clearly stated and good quality resources made available. Good use is made of the work of acclaimed artists to illustrate and explore ideas and link these to ongoing themes and topics. Productive use is made of visiting art experts and pupils have produced some exciting work based on ethnic art during one such visit. Art makes a significant contribution to the cultural development of the pupils, but at times teachers miss opportunities to support spiritual development. The portfolios of pupils' work keep a useful record of progress. There is a noticeable improvement in the provision, quality and standard of art since the last inspection, and this is one result of the good management of the subject. The provision for art meets requirements of the

111. Design and technology

76. Standards of attainment in design and technology are generally satisfactory throughout the school. Only one class lesson was seen but evidence from the scrutiny of previous work and planning informed the judgement. Work covers the National Curriculum satisfactorily, and relates relevantly to attainment targets and often links effectively at both key stages to the topic studied. Pupils, when given the opportunity, achieve satisfactory levels in the complete design process.
77. Progress is satisfactory at both key stages. Most pupils develop a satisfactory range of basic skills appropriate to their level of attainment, and pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, build on previously practised skills and develop new approaches. There are no significant differences in the progress of girls and boys.
78. Pupils work with great interest, purpose and concentration, and are able to suggest improvements with thoughtful confidence. They carry out basic skills of cutting and assembly safely and with care and accuracy. Most pupils talk confidently and clearly about their work and show an understanding of the nature and demands of the subject.
79. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with some good practice at Key Stage 1. Teachers manage pupils well, and arrange and organise lessons effectively. They plan most lessons well, prepare carefully, and make suitable materials available. They manage the practical work safely and efficiently. They give instructions clearly and give pupils positive support and encouragement; this helps pupils complete their work successfully. The teachers have a sound understanding of the subject, and appropriately link design and technology work to the general topic being studied.
80. The curriculum meets statutory requirements overall, but some areas, for example learning of electrical and mechanical aspects, are covered in insufficient depth. Assessment is underdeveloped and there is little systematic recording of attainment in the subject. The school's level of resources including tools and materials is barely adequate. Both are inadequate to support good progress, especially at Key Stage 2; there are insufficient electrical and mechanical components to meet National Curriculum requirements in full. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, but there is still some way to go.

116.

116. Geography

81. At the end of each key stage, standards of attainment in geography are good.
82. At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. In Reception and Year 1 they talk appropriately about their families and where they live. Expectations of pupils' progress are very high in this class. By the time they are seven, pupils use correct geographical terms when comparing farming near Long Wittenham

with farming in Bangladesh. They explain clearly the purpose for which the local farmer uses a combine harvester and compare using a scythe when harvesting. Knowledge about farming in Bangladesh is good, for example that rice grows in paddy fields and needs a lot of water. Staff enhance progress greatly by providing an opportunity to visit a local farm. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach standards that are above expectations for pupils of their age.

83. The pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2. In Years 3 and 4 pupils compare their daily life effectively with that of a child in Chembakolli. They apply both numeracy and literacy skills as they create time-lines and graphs to highlight the main differences. In Years 5 and 6, the teachers extend suitably the pupils' geographical vocabulary. Pupils attach an extensive glossary to their project on rivers and water, demonstrating good understanding of terms such as 'meander' and 'erosion'. Teachers help pupils to make very good links with design and technology and with science, for example when pupils study forces applied to bridges. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils of low, average and higher attainment reach standards that are above expectations, although those of the highest attainment could achieve even better standards.
84. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and usually make appropriate progress. When this is not the case, these pupils' individual education plans do not identify their fundamental learning needs with sufficient precision, for example reading of resource sheets; therefore, they find the work too difficult. Challenge in the teaching matches the various levels of attainment well although, at times, the potential of very highest attaining pupils is not fully stretched. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.
85. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school. They are eager to contribute their opinions and find both interesting and motivating the way teachers highlight links between subjects, the range of visits they make and the visitors welcomed to school in support of the subject.
86. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. With the termly rotation of subjects, it was only possible to observe two lessons. One was good and one very good. Work scrutiny shows that pupils are almost always set interesting tasks, that teachers link imaginatively to other curriculum areas. There is good emphasis on developing the appropriate subject vocabulary. Sound planning and assessment procedures are in place, but these tend to mark the end of units rather than record progress continuously.
87. Geography is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is outward looking and flexible in ensuring that mixed-age classes receive equal opportunities. She monitors planning carefully, and this ensures continuity and progression of learning for all pupils. Long-term planning shows that teachers make good use of the local area for investigative work, for example on traffic issues. National Curriculum requirements are met. There has been an improvement in standards since the last inspection.

123. **History**

88. Standards of attainment by the end of each key stage are in line with national expectations.
89. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. In Year 1 they construct interesting time-lines, using a series of photographs of themselves from babyhood. Higher attainers add comments that show they clearly understand changes occurring as time passes. Pupils develop a good sense of chronology. They visit a farm and compare the machinery used now to milk cows with the way cows were milked by hand long ago. They decide that they would prefer to use a machine. By the time they reach Year 2, a visit to the Ashmolean Museum has improved their progress significantly. They carry out simple research projects, focusing on areas of interest that support their topic on Ancient Egypt. One pupil finds out, 'that cats were their friends and wore necklaces'. They reach standards that are in line with those expected of pupils of their age.
90. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Pupils build on their knowledge of the past and apply it successfully to topics on Ancient Egypt in Year 3, Victorian Britain in Year 4 and Tudor life in Years 5 and 6. For instance, when behaving as historians, pupils from Year 3 carefully record their findings about farming in Ancient Egypt, and note that there were only three seasons. Older pupils make very good progress as a result of their visit to Sulgrave Manor. They enjoy the practical opportunities to learn about life in Tudor times. One young historian writes, 'I had the most important job in the Great Hall. I was the rat catcher'. Pupils make very good use of information technology skills as they record facts and findings from this primary source of evidence. They reach standards that are in line with expectations for their age, and that are appropriate to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and work is usually matched to their prior attainment. Good attention is given to the introduction of appropriate vocabulary related to the passing of time and this is helpful to their progress in literacy.
91. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their opportunities to behave as historians. They handle materials and artefacts with appropriate respect and care, and are keen to share their knowledge with visitors. They show enthusiasm for the topics they study and the activities undertaken. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good; most show mature, sensible and adult behaviour. Boys and girls collaborate well in pairs and in group discussions.
92. The quality of teaching is good. Three lessons were seen and all were well taught. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and ensure that their lessons are interesting and challenging. They are skilful in the way they use artefacts and other resources to bring historical facts to life. Wall displays demand a response from the viewer, and are informative and of value to the work of pupils. Visits out as well as visitors to the school make a significant impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Staff have revised planning carefully to ensure that pupils do not repeat work in mixed-age classes.
93. The subject is soundly led and managed. All staff work as a team to ensure that resources are of good quality and are available to support pupils' learning. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

129. **Music**

94. Standards of attainment are good at both key stages. Although only a limited number of music lessons were observed during the inspection, there is a great deal of evidence that this is a musical school, and that music plays a significant part in the school's life. This evidence includes discussion with pupils, club activities and observation of pupils creating and responding to music in assemblies. Most pupils show good control of pitch and rhythm and know how to play a number of musical instruments. The quality of singing is good, pupils can recall words of songs, follow the contours of a melody and show good breath control. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to play the recorder and they make good progress. All pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their musical knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress.
95. The response of pupils is good or very good. Pupils are generally enthusiastic, well motivated and enjoy taking part in a range of musical activities. They work hard in practices to improve the quality of the singing. Pupils co-operate well together and advise and support each other, for example in Class 4 during a composing session using a wide range of instruments. Pupils talk with understanding about their musical activities and most use the correct terminology. Pupils take a pride in their musical achievements.
96. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons well and prepare an appropriate range of activities. Teachers show a confidence in the subject and have high expectations of the pupils. The pace of work is good and good management of the lessons creates interest for the pupils.
97. The subject is well led and managed, and meets the expectations of the National Curriculum. There is a range of music clubs including bell-ringing and pupils enjoy attending. Approximately a third of the school from youngest to oldest take part in the after-school choir. The staff involve the pupils in music performance with other schools through music festivals, and a large number of pupils are soon to visit the Festival Hall in London for a musical event. The school has an appropriate range of instruments, which are respectfully handled by pupils. The instrumental tuition by visiting specialist teachers helps raise the general standard of music in the school. Music makes a significant contribution to the cultural development of the pupils and this includes music from cultures other than European. However, staff do not use music sufficiently to build spiritual development, for example in assemblies. Good progress in the development of music has been made since the last inspection.

133. **Physical education**

98. Standards of attainment by the end of key stage are satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are good.
99. Pupils make good progress pupils in key stage 1. In Year 1 pupils use space very effectively as they run and jump, using a wide variety of turning and twisting movements. They develop control and poise successfully and link this to a

dance sequence representing a scarecrow. Good cross-curricular links with their farm topic motivates their performance. By the time they reach Year 2 pupils move simple apparatus safely and correctly. They travel across a mat using a well-rehearsed series of curling and stretching movements. They reach standards that are in line with those expected of pupils of their age.

100. Pupils make very good progress pupils in key stage 2. They make rapid and well recorded progress in swimming. In Years 4 and 5 they make good progress in gymnastics and games skills, progress that results from the regular and well planned use of local sports facilities. Pupils develop sound throwing and catching skills, effectively evaluating their own performance. In Year 6 pupils make impressive progress in all areas of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. In gymnastics they work co-operatively in well-constructed groups. They make very good progress when developing and investigating movement using a range of fixed and moveable apparatus. They show confidence and expertise in working at different heights. Pupils are extremely innovative and controlled in the way they develop a sequence of movements, for example they climb a rope ladder from the side to lessen the amount of sway. There is extensive evidence that a wide range of games activities and forms of dance are a regular part of the planned curriculum. Standards reached are above those expected for pupils of their age. Pupils with special physical difficulties receive caring and perceptive support. The challenge in teaching matches the wide range of capabilities well.

101. Pupils' attitudes are good, and sometimes very good, throughout the school. All pupils change properly into appropriate clothing, with absolutely no time wasted at all. They thoroughly enjoy the many activities in which they take part. They listen well to instructions and are caring and co-operative in the performance of tasks. They treat seriously the need to warm up, take exercise safely and understand why and how this exercise is essential to good health.

102. The quality of teaching is good. Six lessons were seen; three were good, one was very good and one was satisfactory. Teachers present good role models to pupils by changing into appropriate clothing and footwear, and sometimes participating in activities with pupils. They use resources effectively and there is due attention to safety issues such as warming up and use of apparatus. In much of the good teaching, teachers show expert knowledge of curriculum requirements well linked to enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers clearly communicate their high expectations for behaviour and performance, and pupils' respond appropriately. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into class lessons and make satisfactory progress.

103. Physical education makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. The ethos in which the majority of lessons are conducted is impressive. Extra-curricular provision is good with a wide range of activities including a number of competitive games and athletic fixtures with other schools. Pupils have an opportunity to experience outdoor and adventurous activities during the annual residential trip for older pupils. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. The emphasis and commitment made by this small school, in enabling pupils to use the local sports facilities regularly, has a first-class impact on standards achieved. These good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

139. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

139. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

104. A team of four inspectors carried out the inspection over a total of ten inspection days in the week beginning the 18th of October 1999. They observed forty-five lessons or parts of lessons and spent further time observing assemblies, registration sessions in all classes, and listening to three pupils from each class read.
105. They scrutinised the work of three pupils from each year whom the staff considered were representative of the range of attainment; they did this in conjunction with the planning and records of their teachers and the reports to parents. The team further scrutinized this work to test for progress in each subject from Reception to Year 6. Inspectors scrutinized the work of pupils on stages 2-5 of the special educational needs register in conjunction with the pupils' individual education plans.
106. Inspectors interviewed groups of younger and older pupils. They interviewed all subject co-ordinators and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, in addition to the headteacher and teachers in their other roles. Further time was spent in discussion with non-teaching and administrative staff, governors individually and as a group, and parents.
107. Inspectors observed a range of extra-curricular activities and pupils' behaviour before school, at daytime, lunchtime and after school.
108. The pre-inspection parents' meeting was held and the views of parents of the school discussed. The team received, collated and analysed responses from the questionnaire sent to all parents. Some of these responses included notes from parents. Inspectors read these and investigated any concerns rigorously.
109. The inspection team reviewed attainment and progress data, school documents and resources, and checked whether all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. This review included a full range of documentation provided by the school and included a tour of the buildings and grounds to consider provision, maintenance and health and safety features. In a meeting arranged by the school, inspectors had informal discussion with a number of members of the local community who support the school.
110. The inspection worked in conjunction with diocesan inspection of denominational worship and provision.

146. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

146. **Pupil data**

| | Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent) | Number of pupils with Statements of SEN | Number of pupils on school's register of SEN | Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals |
|--------|---|---|--|---|
| YR- Y6 | 94 | 2 | 24 | 11 |

146. **Teachers and classes**

146. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): | 4.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher: | 21.3 |

146. **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of education support staff: | 3.0 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week: | 70.2 |

146.

Financial data

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year: | 1998-9 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 184,334 |
| Total expenditure | 183,275 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,713 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 11,436 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 12,495 |

146. PARENTAL SURVEY

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out: | 94 |
| Number of questionnaires returned: | 33 |

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

| | Stron gly agree | Agr ee | Neit her | Disag ree | Stron gly disagr ee |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school | 18 | 79 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 33 | 55 | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 10 | 37 | 43 | 7 | 3 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 12 | 67 | 15 | 6 | 0 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 21 | 52 | 12 | 15 | 0 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 19 | 66 | 12 | 3 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 3 | 75 | 16 | 6 | 0 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 12 | 52 | 21 | 6 | 9 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 27 | 52 | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 18 | 49 | 30 | 3 | 0 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 50 | 47 | 3 | 0 | 0 |

146. Other issues raised by parents

A few parents raised concerns over the use of indoor shoes in school. This is the policy of the school. The inspection found only isolated occasions when this policy was applied inappropriately.