

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CHARLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wantage

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123069

Headteacher: Mr E Ashford

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis  
20893

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> January 2000

Inspection number: 189156

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Charlton Village Road  
Wantage  
Oxon

Postcode: OX12 7HG

Telephone number: 01235 762861

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Chris Williams

Date of previous inspection: September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D J Curtis Registered inspector	Mathematics, Information technology, Physical education, Special educational needs, English as an additional language, Traveller children.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (results and achievements). How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs J Gallichan Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Pupils' attitudes, values, personal development, attendance). How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr I Hancock Team inspector	Science, Design and technology, Geography, History, Equal opportunities.	How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs S Teacher Team inspector	English, Art, Music, Religious education, Under fives.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? (Assessment).

The inspection contractor was:

MSB Education Ltd

Ambleside  
Broomhill  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 7AR

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Charlton Primary School is situated on the outskirts of the town of Wantage in Oxfordshire and takes pupils from the ages of four to eleven. There are 224 pupils on roll in eight classes, with 112 boys and 112 girls. The majority of pupils are white (UK heritage), with three pupils coming from other ethnic groups. Two pupils come from homes where English is not the first language and two pupils receive support as traveller children. There are 39 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, but no pupils with statements of special educational need. Children enter school with levels of attainment which are average for the local education authority. Three pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals which is well below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Taking into consideration average levels of attainment on entry, and that pupils make good progress in attaining above average standards by the time they leave the school, Charlton Primary School is a good school. The outstanding strength of the school is pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The good quality of teaching and the high quality of relationships between staff and pupils contribute to this particular strength. In addition, good quality teaching enables pupils to be very positive in their learning and allows them to make good progress as they move up through the school. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology, music and physical education are good.
- The quality of teaching is good and has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and their personal development and relationships are very good.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The provision for the under fives is good.

#### **What could be improved**

- In Key Stage 2, standards in religious education do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- The under fives have insufficient opportunities for regular outdoor play as part of their physical development within the under-fives curriculum.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently well developed in all curriculum areas.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was previously inspected in September 1996. Standards in design and technology in Key Stage 2 have improved and now meet expectations for pupils of this age. The school now has effective strategies for monitoring the planning and quality of provision throughout, particularly in relation to the systematic development of pupils' learning as they move up through the school. In addition, tasks are suitably challenging for higher attaining pupils. However, the role of subject co-ordinators is still not sufficiently well developed. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved, as has the quality of teaching.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A	B	C
Mathematics	A*	A	A	C
Science	A	A	A	B

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average    E

This table shows the average points score achieved by pupils and includes those who achieved the expected Level 4 or above in the National Curriculum assessments and those achieving the higher Level 5. In addition, it includes those who achieved Level 3 or below. Comparisons with similar schools are made on the basis of eligibility for free school meals.

Inspection findings are that for the current group of Year 6 pupils, standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. Any variation between inspection findings and National Curriculum assessments are explained by differences within individual year groups, particularly in relation to the numbers on the school's register of special educational needs.

Standards in information technology are above national expectations. In religious education, standards do not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus as pupils have insufficient time for the subject and do not have a full enough understanding of religions other than Christianity.

Standards in music and physical education are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age. In art, design and technology, geography and history, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy school and show very positive attitudes to their learning which contribute to the good standards achieved.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils behave well in lessons, when moving around the school, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults are very good; they contribute well to pupils' learning.
Attendance	Very good.

Pupils' attitudes to school and work are a strength of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

During the inspection the quality of teaching was good overall. It was excellent in three per cent of lessons observed, very good in eighteen per cent, good in thirty-five per cent, satisfactory in forty-two per cent and unsatisfactory in two per cent. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in a numeracy lesson in Key Stage 2, where one group of pupils was not sufficiently challenged, with the result that they made little progress in the lesson.

Examples of excellent teaching were observed in numeracy in reception and Year 1, and in Years 3 and 4. Very good teaching was observed in Key Stage 1 in literacy, numeracy, design and technology, history, music and physical education, and in Key Stage 2 in literacy, numeracy and music. Examples of good teaching were observed across the school.

The teaching of literacy is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The teaching of numeracy is very good.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and traveller children is good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils of statutory school age. The under fives have insufficient opportunities for regular outdoor play.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and classroom assistants provide effective support which contributes well to the good progress made.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; pupils receive effective support from staff within the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good for social and moral development, good for cultural and satisfactory for spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils extremely well.

The school has a very strong and effective partnership with its parents. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school.

The quality of extracurricular activities for pupils is excellent, particularly in music and sport.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher and key staff provide a stimulating environment in which pupils develop good academic and personal skills.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall, governors are very supportive of the school. However, the school is not meeting requirements for a daily act of collective worship
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall; the school has identified targets particularly through the effective analysis of the results of National Curriculum tests.
The strategic use of resources	Good, the school makes effective use of its resources to support pupils' learning.

The school has adequate staffing, accommodation and learning resources to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. However, for the under-fives there is no secure outdoor play area and insufficient outdoor play equipment.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are not well informed about how their child is getting on.</li> </ul>

Twenty parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and 70 questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings confirm the positive views of parents. In relation to information about how well pupils are getting on, inspection findings judge that the quality of information provided to parents is very good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Children are assessed on entry to the school using the local education authority's scheme and the results show attainment on entry to be average. Children achieve well in the reception class and by the age of five exceed the expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes<sup>1</sup>. Children settle quickly into the day-to-day life of the school and become confident learners. Their behaviour is very good. Children develop an interest in books and enjoy stories and songs. Many write their names unaided and write simple sentences. Speaking and listening skills are good. Children read, write and order numbers to ten and they identify and name accurately two-dimensional shapes, including square, triangle and circle.

2. Results of 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were well above the national average for the proportion achieving the expected Level 2<sup>2</sup> and above, but close to the national average for the proportion achieving the higher Level 3. In reading, the proportion achieving Level 2 and above, and Level 3 was close to the national average. In mathematics, the proportion achieving Level 2 and above was close to the national average, with the proportion achieving Level 3 above average. In comparison with similar schools nationally<sup>3</sup>, results in writing were above average at Level 2 and above, but below average at Level 3. In reading, results were well below average for Level 2 and above, and for Level 3. In mathematics, results were average at Level 2 and above, but well below average at Level 3. In teacher assessments for science, results were well above average for the proportion achieving Level 2 and above, but well below average for Level 3. In comparison with similar schools, results were average at Level 2 and above, but well below average at Level 3.

3. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999, the trend is that standards in reading and writing are well above average and above average in mathematics. Boys consistently perform at above average levels, with girls consistently performing at well above average levels. Inspection findings are that for the current group of Year 2 pupils, standards in reading and writing are average, but above average in mathematics and science.

4. Pupils enjoy reading and are confident in using their knowledge of phonics and picture clues to read unfamiliar words. They talk confidently about the characters in stories and show good skills in predicting what will happen next in a story. In writing, pupils use punctuation correctly and structure sentences accurately: for example when writing a recipe. Pupils apply literacy skills well in other subjects: for example when recording the results of investigations in science. They read with confidence information about musical instruments from a CD Rom. Numeracy skills are good; pupils read, write and order numbers to 100 and solve problems well, particularly when using money. They show a good knowledge of telling time to the quarter hour. In science, pupils show a good understanding of how sounds are made. They successfully investigate how sounds can be muffled.

5. In information technology, standards exceed national expectations. Pupils apply literacy skills well when word processing stories. They have a good command of the mouse

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<sup>1</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education'. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social development.

<sup>2</sup> The national expectation is that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils should achieve Level 2.

<sup>3</sup> Schools with up to 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

and keyboard. Standards in music and physical education are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art, design and technology, geography and history, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age.

6. Results of 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were well above average in mathematics and science for the proportion achieving the expected Level 4<sup>4</sup> or above. In English, results were above average. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average in science, and above average in English and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools nationally, results were above average in mathematics and science for the proportion achieving Level 4 and above. In English, results were average. The proportion achieving Level 5 was above average in science, but average in English and mathematics.

7. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999, the trend is that standards are well above average and there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection findings are that for the current group of Year 6 pupils, standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. Any variation in inspection findings and the results of the National Curriculum assessments are explained by differences within individual year groups, particularly in relation to the numbers on the school's register of special educational needs.

8. Pupils discuss features of their reading, including characters and plot, with good expression and attention to detail. They read fluently and with confidence. Pupils show good reference skills, particularly in locating information in the library and from the Internet. Writing skills are good. Pupils use words imaginatively and adventurously: for example in the biographies of their families. Literacy skills are used effectively across the curriculum, particularly in science, geography and history. Pupils read for information successfully and present their information in a wide variety of forms, including notes, factual descriptions and newspapers.

9. Numeracy skills are very good and pupils apply these successfully across the curriculum, including science, geography and history. Mental arithmetic skills are good and pupils show good mental recall of number bonds. Knowledge and application of multiplication skills is good and pupils use mental recall well to find, for example, three eighths of fifty-six. Pupils use spreadsheets successfully in mathematical investigations and show a good understanding of how to interrogate a database.

10. In science, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the importance of a fair test and draw conclusions from their experiments. They record their findings accurately and know that materials can be classified into gases, liquids and solids and know that temperature affects this. Pupils understand and explain the best conditions for condensation and evaporation of water and know that different liquids evaporate at different rates.

11. In Key Stage 2, standards in information technology exceed national expectations. Pupils apply their literacy skills particularly well in word processing showing a strong command of grammar and punctuation. They combine text and clip-art well in producing a school magazine. Standards in music and physical education are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age. In religious education, standards do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have insufficient time on the subject and do not have a good enough understanding of religions other than Christianity. In art, design and technology, geography and history, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age.

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<sup>4</sup> The national expectation is that at the end of Key Stage 2 pupils should achieve Level 4.  
Charlton Primary School - 11

12. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and they make good progress as measured against the targets in their individual education plans. They receive good support from the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and classroom assistants. Relationships are good and work is suitably matched to their individual needs which raises self esteem and gives them confidence in their own learning.

13. Pupils with English as an additional language, and those from traveller families receive similar effective support which enables them to make good progress in their learning. Pupils from traveller families are supported by a visiting teacher who liaises effectively with the headteacher, special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers.

14. The previous inspection judged standards in Key Stage 1 to be 'good' in English, 'average' in mathematics and science, 'above those expected nationally' in physical education and 'in line with national expectations' in all other subjects. At Key Stage 2, standards were 'average' in English, mathematics and science. In physical education and music, they were 'above those found nationally' and 'in line with national expectations' in other subjects, with the exception of design and technology which were 'below average'. Raising standards in design and technology was a key issue for the school to address.

15. Inspection findings are that standards in design and technology now meet expectations for pupils of this age. In all other subjects, with the exception of religious education at Key Stage 2, the school has maintained or improved standards. Standards have improved as the result of improvements in the quality of teaching which are linked to the school's commitment to achieving and maintaining high standards.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

16. This aspect of the school was reported on favourably at the time of the last inspection. The school has maintained good standards of behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal development are very good. These very positive features have a major impact on the quality of learning and, therefore standards achieved.

17. Children under five have very good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and listen to their teacher carefully. In a lesson when they were learning about different types of fastenings, they confidently offered their suggestions as the teacher made a list of all their ideas. Children move around the classroom purposefully and follow instructions well. During assembly times, they sit and listen carefully. Their behaviour is very good.

18. Attitudes to learning throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 are very good. Ninety-six per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire feel their children enjoy coming to school. Pupils are well motivated and they concentrate for sustained periods. They listen carefully to teachers and to each other. Pupils are interested in their work and happy to talk about it to others. During the lower juniors' activity hour, pupils were keen to participate in the activities offered and worked hard to produce good work, which they were proud of. On only two occasions were attitudes less positive and this was from the oldest pupils when there were low expectations and a slow pace to lessons.

19. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and with respect for other people. They look after their own classrooms and take responsibility for keeping them tidy. They respond well to class rules which they have usually devised themselves. Ninety-four per cent of parents feel the school achieves good standards of behaviour. There have been no exclusions. Pupils are not concerned about bullying and no aggressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. Pupils are confident to approach adults if they have concerns.

20. Very good relationships permeate the whole school. Pupils work in pairs and small groups co-operatively and play together happily. There is mutual respect between pupils and all adults in the school. During the lower junior activity hour, when a large number of volunteers help with activities, 'mums and grans' were treated with the same respect pupils give teachers. Pupils are sensitive to others' views. This was illustrated well during a personal and social education lesson about friendship when pupils empathised with each other when friends had argued. During an infant assembly, pupils could relate the actions of characters in the story to their own experiences.

21. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for organising their own work and their tables. They do this well. There is an atmosphere where everyone does their part on their own initiative, class routines are not organised by lists of monitors for jobs. Older pupils do help with lunchtime routines and volunteer to look after the animals in the animal care centre. This is a good opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for a whole week and pupils seen during the inspection did take this responsibility very seriously. Pupils' personal development is very good.

22. Attendance remains very high and well above average when compared with national figures. There are very few unauthorised absences. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to start the day's activities. Punctuality is very good. Pupils' regular attendance and good punctuality contributes positively to their learning.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

23. The previous inspection report judged the quality of teaching to be 'sound or better in 9 out of 10 lessons' and 'good in one third observed'. Teaching was good in music and physical education, but unsatisfactory in design and technology. Strengths were identified in 'good relationships, classroom organisation, clear instructions, effective questions and answers, pupils understanding the purpose of lessons, and the use of support staff'. Weaknesses were identified in 'learning outcomes not being clearly defined and insufficient challenge for more able pupils'. Inspection findings are that teaching is now a strength of the school and that it has a positive effect on the standards achieved and the quality of learning. The strengths have been maintained and the weaknesses addressed.

24. During the inspection the quality of teaching was good overall. It was excellent in three per cent of lessons observed, very good in eighteen per cent, good in thirty-five per cent, satisfactory in forty-two per cent and unsatisfactory in two per cent. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in a numeracy lesson in Key Stage 2 where one group of pupils was not sufficiently challenged, with the result that they made little progress in the lesson.

25. Examples of excellent teaching were observed in numeracy in reception and Year 1 and in Years 3 and 4. Very good teaching was observed in Key Stage 1 in literacy, numeracy, design and technology, history, music and physical education, and in Key Stage 2 in literacy, numeracy and music. Examples of good teaching were observed across the school.

26. The teaching of literacy is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good understanding of the structure of the literacy hour. Lessons are planned effectively and pupils have a clear understanding of the targets for each lesson. This contributes to their learning, and the progress made. However, teachers, particularly in Key Stage 2, are not sufficiently rigorous in reinforcing their expectations as to how pupils should present their work.

27. The teaching of numeracy is very good and makes a positive contribution to the high standards achieved. In mental arithmetic sessions, pupils are challenged to think and

use their recall of number with rapid responses. They enjoy this and respond well, especially in sessions where the teacher tries to catch them out with 'wrong' answers. Lessons are well planned, with work matched effectively to the differing learning needs of each group. For example, in Years 5 and 6, higher attaining pupils are expected to apply their knowledge of decimals to problem solving, whilst other pupils consolidate their understanding of fractions.

28. The teaching of the under-fives is very good. They are taught in a mixed class with five year olds and pupils from Year 1. Teachers plan effectively to the Desirable Learning Outcomes and show an in depth understanding of the needs of under-fives. When available, support staff are used effectively to support groups allowing, for example in a numeracy lesson, the teacher to work with the under fives on reinforcing their understanding of number, with particular focus on 'one more than'. This in depth knowledge allows children to settle quickly into school and to make significant progress in their learning. However, lack of full time support staff and a secure outdoor play area means that pupils miss out on a valuable part of the development of physical skills.

29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, and pupils from traveller families is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator, headteacher and classroom assistants make a significant contribution in supporting these pupils both in lessons and through small group or individual support. Teachers write clear, detailed individual education plans, with achievable targets. Effective support means that these pupils feel secure in school and confident in their own learning, with the result that they make good progress.

30. In the best lessons, teachers show secure and confident subject knowledge which they pass on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm: for example in the excellent teaching of numeracy, with the result that pupils were so absorbed in their work that they did not want the lesson to end. Teachers use demonstration and explanations well to teach new knowledge and skills, including whiteboards, flip charts and information technology. Staff hold pupils' attention well through effective use of their voices or demonstrating their personal skills: for example in table tennis. Pupils value teachers as good role models and respond accordingly.

31. Lessons are well planned and take into account the differing learning needs within each class. The management and organisation of group work is good. Teachers make good use of resources, ensuring that they are readily available: for example in a Year 2 science lesson where pupils were investigating how to muffle sound. The quality and range of resources meant that pupils became totally absorbed in their work and sustained their investigations well. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning and pupils respond well to the support offered. Relationships are good and this has a positive impact on pupils' positive attitudes to work.

32. In lessons, pupils respond well to challenges: for example in Years 5 and 6 pupils found an answer to a mathematics investigation to be 'The Spirit of St Louis'. They rose to the challenge of finding out where St Louis is by using their reference and atlas skills successfully. They show good concentration and perseverance when work is well matched to their abilities. In Years 5 and 6, a group of pupils with special educational needs worked with total confidence when supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator in a mental arithmetic session.

33. Teachers' marking is satisfactory overall. There are good examples of teachers writing comments in exercise books to guide pupils with their learning. However, particularly in Key Stage 2, teachers are inconsistent in reinforcing their expectations of how pupils should present their work. There are examples of exercise books covered in 'doodles', work

crossed out untidily and pupils 'chopping and changing' pens, biros and pencils as their writing tools. Teachers use homework well to support and extend pupils' learning.

34. Inspection findings support the very positive views of parents that teaching in the school is good.

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

35. The curriculum for under-fives meets the requirements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes and prepares children successfully for the National Curriculum when they reach the age of five, with the exception of the physical development of children. At present, there is no secure outdoor play area with large and mobile play equipment and there is insufficient use of existing equipment and space. The curriculum appropriately puts a high priority on personal and social education, language, literacy and numeracy. This is reflected in the provision, which is good, and a noteworthy feature. Planning is effective for all areas of the curriculum, with the exception of physical education, and there a good balance between focused activities with the teacher and children having free choice in their learning.

36. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced and there are clear schemes of work in place for sex education, health and drugs awareness. These are implemented well throughout the school and support pupils' personal development effectively. The use of educational visits: for example to Sulgrave Manor; regular swimming; and visitors, such as the grandmother cellist; raises the attainments of pupils. The core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information and communications technology have appropriate priority in the curriculum and basic statutory requirements are met in all subjects. However, insufficient time is spent on teaching the required skills in religious education and this has a detrimental impact on attainment and learning in this subject.

37. The structure and organisation of the curriculum is appropriate to the age and increasing maturity of pupils. The use of specialist teachers, support staff and ability groupings has an impact on improving the quality of both teaching and learning. The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. It makes a good contribution to the educational standards achieved by boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds. The school provides equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum, enabling all pupils to make good progress. The curriculum provides the oldest pupils with a firm foundation in the required concepts and skills necessary to cope with their next stage of education.

38. The school closely follows the planning for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Both strategies have been implemented successfully. Homework effectively links the curriculum between home and school. Reading and research are set regularly and checked by all teachers.

39. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school complies fully with the requirements of the Code of Practice<sup>5</sup>. Individual education plans contain clear and detailed targets. The special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and classroom assistants know and understand the needs of these pupils well. There are effective links with outside agencies

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

40. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for traveller children is good. Pupils receive good support from within the school.

41. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extracurricular activities in sport and in music. In sport these include football, for boys and girls, netball and gymnastics. In music, the curriculum offers a range of instrumental tuition plus the choir and orchestra. There are educational visits both to museums, around the local environment and residential journeys to Sutton Courtenay and Derbyshire. This extra provision enhances pupils' learning and is a strength of the school.

42. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Personal development is a priority and is supported with caring leadership from the headteacher, and dedicated staff. The school seeks to develop a range of beliefs and values, particularly those of care and respect; distinguishing between right and wrong, which result in a well ordered and supportive community. These beliefs are shown both materially inside the building, through the decor, the use of flowers and plants, displays, artefacts, fabrics; and intrinsically through the very good relationships between adults and pupils and their peer groups. Discussions about thoughts and feelings permeate through the use of circle time<sup>6</sup>.

43. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education gives pupils opportunities to reflect on the beliefs and practices of some of the major world faiths. Pupils are inspired to write imaginative poetry in English. The school environment and its use encourage pupils to develop an awareness of beauty. They experience awe and wonder when they see shoots appearing from the seeds they have planted, or when they listen to the school orchestra or choir perform a range of musical accomplishments. Classes gather together for daily assemblies and meetings. The theme for the week of the inspection was 'Care and respect for others'. Stories were told to reinforce this idea, and there was a very short time for meditation. The school is not always fulfilling the statutory requirements for collective worship. Opportunities are missed to enable them to reflect on their experiences in a way which develops their spiritual awareness and self knowledge. The time spent on reflection is very brief. The assemblies are used to build up pupils' confidence and self esteem through the celebration of birthdays, achievements, praise and good work.

44. Provision for moral development is very good. Moral themes, for example the importance of helping others and participation in regular fund raising for charitable causes, helps pupils to recognise the needs of other people. These are emphasised in assemblies. On occasion, moral issues are considered in subjects: for example, in science and geography lessons as part of a study on pollution and other environmental issues. In particular, in religious education, moral issues are discussed such as looking after God's world and his creatures, or respect and friendship, where pupils discuss the qualities of a special person in their class, and study aspects of citizenship.

45. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school is successful in fostering the social development of its pupils and has succeeded in creating a sense of community. The governors of the school are very conscious of the school's local reputation for good behaviour. They strive hard to promote the conditions in which a caring environment can be fostered and maintained and work hard to develop trust between themselves and the staff. Pupils relate well to each other in different contexts around the school. They work well together in lessons when properly supervised and in this context demonstrate good levels of co-operation. Children play well together at breaks and take part enthusiastically in organised social activities such as the music concerts and carol singing.

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<sup>6</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues, which touch them all.



46. An excellent range of extracurricular activities, particularly in sport and music, provide opportunities for pupils to develop their personal interests. Parents are welcomed and integrated into the life of the school. They offer their support, especially with school fairs, and annual shows. The school arranges visits of educational interest within the local area, to museums and residential visits. They enjoy visits from theatre groups. These resources add an extra dimension to pupils' learning. There are fewer links with religious organisations. The police, fire and other social services provide valued support.

47. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Pupils are made aware of their own culture: for example through their work in dance, local history and geography. They learn about Tudors and Romans. Provision for multicultural education is less well developed. There are opportunities to experience music and dance of different cultures: for example the Chinese New Year or the Hindu festival of Diwali.

48. The contribution of other cultures to work in art, literature, through the study of poetry and Shakespeare, history, through the study of mediaeval times, and a wide range of music from other countries, all add to pupils' knowledge and experiences. A greater awareness is needed of the rich diversity of other ethnic minority groups.

49. The school has a positive ethos which is reflected in all aspects of its life. Social relationships are very good. High priority is given to personal development. Pupils learn to understand each other and the world in which they live. The result is a happy and thriving school community.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

50. The school provides very good care and support for all pupils. Strong, positive relationships pervade the school. Pupils feel valued and safe in the school environment. Teachers know pupils well and work hard to meet the needs of each individual. This positive picture has been maintained since the last inspection. This very good provision ensures pupils take every opportunity to make good progress in their learning.

51. The school's attention to matters of health and safety is good overall. Regular checks are made of the school premises, electrical and physical education equipment. All governors' committees consider health and safety issues. During lessons teachers make appropriate reminders about safety if necessary and refer to particular concerns in their planning. Arrangements for first aid are good and staff have recently attended refresher sessions. All staff are qualified in life saving. Child protection procedures are secure and the staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. The school's procedures meet statutory requirements.

52. The school is successful in achieving good standards of behaviour. Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are low key but very effective. Pupils receive much praise and encouragement to work hard and behave well. The overall calm, respectful atmosphere of the school discourages inappropriate behaviour, bullying or harassment.

53. Procedures for monitoring and promoting high attendance are good. The school emphasises the need for good attendance in order to maximise learning in communications to parents. The school expects parents to notify them of reasons for absence and most parents do keep the school informed.

54. Monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is very good. Teachers keep comprehensive records which are maintained throughout the child's stay at the school. Records on both academic and personal development are used well to report to parents during consultation meetings and on written reports.

55. Staff know pupils well and give good support and guidance to them all. They provide very good opportunities for their personal development. Aspects of health education, including drugs awareness and sex education, are taught as part of the science curriculum. Circle time and class discussions are used to discuss moral and social themes. Although there is no whole school personal and social education programme matched to pupils' maturity and stage of development, there are a number of visitors and other activities organised which promote healthy living and encourage pupils to keep themselves safe from danger. For example, the police visit and talk about 'Stranger, Danger', a dental hygienist visits to encourage good oral hygiene and Year 6 pupils attend a 'Junior Citizens' course which teaches them about keeping safe and aspects of first aid. Cycling proficiency training is organised by two volunteers at the school. Year 6 pupils take part in 'Imps' (Injury Minimisation Programme) which teaches them first aid.

56. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainments are very good and meet statutory requirements. The information gathered from the assessment carried out as pupils enter the school is used effectively to make sound judgements in relation to national standards. Clear assessments are made and records kept in English, mathematics, and science. These are passed on as pupils move through the school and there is a consistent whole school approach to keeping a regular and frequent record of individual progress. Teachers complete termly evaluations of time spent and programmes of study covered, although these are not always sufficiently linked to the National Curriculum level descriptors. The results of national tests are analysed with particular reference to equality of opportunity and the differences between the performances of boys and girls. The analysis, together with evidence from the monitoring folders of pupils' work, is used to set targets: for example to improve reading and writing, particularly for boys in Key Stage 2 during the current year.

57. The intention is that monitoring will be more closely tied into assessment practice to ensure that individuals are on track in making the expected progress in learning and thus the targets will be realised. However, apart from literacy and numeracy, the samples of work are not annotated against a whole school set of criteria. This limits their usefulness to teachers. Currently, there is not an overall effective system used across the whole school in all subjects which enables teachers to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses amongst individuals throughout the year and adjust the curriculum planning accordingly.

58. The quality of marking is satisfactory. Some teachers take the time to write detailed comments which are both encouraging and evaluative, but this is not consistent. Marking is used effectively as a way of raising standards and shows pupils how they can improve their work. However, it does not deal with the issue of pupils' presentation which is often unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2.

59. Annual reports sent home to parents give a clear account of the work that pupils have covered. Target setting and National Curriculum levels for future development are shared with both pupils and parents.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

60. Parental support for the school is very strong and parents recognise the improvements made by the school over the last few years. There was only one issue which arose from the parents' questionnaire concerning information about their child's progress. A number of parents did not agree that they were kept well informed. Inspectors feel that the school works extremely hard to keep parents informed and there are good opportunities to find out about any aspect of the school.

61. Overall communication with parents is very good. Frequent newsletters are used well to inform parents about school events and activities. The prospectus is very good, giving detailed information about the curriculum and school procedures. On going

information about what is taught is good. Reports are very good giving detailed accounts of attainment and progress in English and mathematics and setting targets for future improvements. They meet statutory requirements. Parents refer to their child's reading record book to check progress in reading. Parents of new children to the school receive good information which includes useful advice about hearing children read and letter formation. There are opportunities each term for parents to meet formally with teachers to discuss their child's progress. The governors send out information to parents, their reports are detailed and they often seek the views of parents on matters which effect their child's education.

62. The school recognises the importance of working in partnership with its parents. Many parents regularly help in classes. A team of volunteers, including 'mums and grans', come in to support the regular Tuesday afternoon activities for the lower juniors. Their support makes a very positive contribution to the success of this session which provides pupils with opportunities beyond the normal curriculum. Other parents help in practical ways, such as with redecoration of areas of the school and some are trained in life saving to enable use of the school swimming pool during the summer holidays. The parent teacher association is very active and money raised is used to enhance facilities for pupils. Parents support the school's home/school agreement by regularly hearing their children read, helping with spellings and tables, and other homework tasks. Parents' support of the school and their involvement in their child's learning makes an excellent contribution to the standards achieved.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

63. The caring headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school, which focuses on providing equal opportunities for all its pupils to develop as individuals and to continue to raise standards. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher who is forward thinking and provides a good role model for effective teaching and learning. Subject co-ordinators are involved with the whole staff in preparing policies and schemes of work and have insight into teachers' plans to monitor subject provision across the school. However, as in the previous report, the co-ordinators' roles are underdeveloped due to the lack of opportunity to monitor and evaluate pupils' attainment and progress in learning, which limits their effectiveness in raising standards in teaching and learning. Job descriptions do not contain sufficient detail of their specific responsibilities for each subject, although the development of this is linked to the school's action plan for the 'Investors in People' award. Co-ordinators are not given sufficient opportunity to share their expertise with colleagues and develop their management skills.

64. The governors are very supportive of the school and provide good support to the headteacher and staff. They have appointed a nominated governor for each curriculum area and hold regular presentations by staff on different aspects of the curriculum. The governors have set up a number of sub committees to help them discharge their duties more effectively but have no clear written terms of reference. However, they have no effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their initiatives on the standards achieved. Statutory requirements are not fully met in collective worship.

65. The headteacher and governors have appropriately identified priorities in the school development plan for raising achievement. However, they contain insufficient detail on costings and no success criteria are identified to judge effectiveness. The school makes good use of specific grants and additional funding provided for school improvement and special educational needs pupils and appropriately links decisions on spending to educational priorities. The school secretary is pleasant and efficient and appropriately uses new technology for financial control and school administrative work. The parent teacher association works hard to provide valuable extra funds to support the school budget.

66. The teaching staff are well qualified with sufficient number and experience to meet the needs of the curriculum. They work very well together as a dedicated team with a shared commitment to improving standards throughout the school. Newly qualified teachers receive good support from a trained induction tutor and the school's appraisal procedures appropriately identify teachers' training needs and further professional development. The support staff are highly valued and work in effective partnership with teachers. However, there is an insufficient allocation of support time which restricts activities such as outdoor play for the under-fives and an inadequate number of lunchtime supervisors to ensure pupils' safety. Accommodation, although cramped, is adequate for the needs of curriculum to be taught effectively, but the library does not offer a stimulating comfortable environment that encourages pupils' love of books. However, there are well resourced book corners in each classroom. The school grounds are spacious and attractive and greatly enhance the environment. They are used well to support pupils' learning in sporting activities and the nature reserve greatly supports their learning in science and geography. There is no secure outdoor play area for the under-fives. The school has an appropriate quantity and range of learning resources except for the under-fives where the lack of large mobile equipment such as bikes and tricycles has an adverse affect on their learning.

67. The school effectively applies best value principles. Test results are carefully analysed and teachers regularly monitor the standards achieved by all pupils. Staff and parents give their time freely to enhance the National Curriculum by providing an excellent range of sporting and musical extracurricular activities, which are well supported by all pupils from Year 1. Parents are consulted and their views valued by such recent initiatives as the home/school agreement. The headteacher and governors successfully attempt to achieve best value on expenditure by taking appropriate advice regarding contractors and suppliers, and gaining tenders on larger items of expenditure. The school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. To improve the quality of education and raise standards the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **Raise** standards in religious education at Key Stage 2 by:
  - o Ensuring the curriculum meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus;
  - o Providing sufficient allocation of time to the teaching of the subject;Providing pupils with more regular teaching of religions other than Christianity.  
(Paragraphs: 11, 36, 153, 155)
  
- **Develop** the role of subject co-ordinators by enabling them to:
  - o Reconsider taking responsibility for their own budgets;
  - o Write their own action plans;
  - o Monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' work;
  - o Provide in-service training for colleagues.(Paragraphs: 63, 93, 111, 123, 128, 133)
  
- **Ensure** that the under-fives have opportunities for regular outdoor play as part of their entitlement to the early years' curriculum by:
  - o Providing a secure outdoor play area;
  - o Providing sufficient resources for children's play.(Paragraphs: 28, 35, 66, 76)

In addition the governing body may wish to consider including the following for inclusion in its action plan:

- Increasing the number and provision of lunchtime supervisors.  
(Paragraph: 66)
- Increasing the provision of classroom support time for the under-fives.  
(Paragraphs: 28, 66)
- Improving the consistency of the quality of pupils' presentation of work.  
(Paragraphs: 33, 58, 92, 103)
- Ensuring that there is a daily act of collective worship which meets statutory requirements.  
(Paragraphs: 43, 64)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	76

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	18	35	42	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	224
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	34
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	23	13	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	21	20
	Girls	12	13	12
	Total	30	34	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (89)	94 (98)	89 (95)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	22
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	31	33	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (96)	92 (100)	97 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	20	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	10
	Girls	18	17	20
	Total	26	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (89)	87 (86)	97 (89)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	18	17	20
	Total	27	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (92)	87 (92)	97 (92)
	National	69 (72)	69 (66)	76 (72)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

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

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.46
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	98/99
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	£
Total income	336,240
Total expenditure	321,873
Expenditure per pupil	1,518
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,963
Balance carried forward to next year	40,330



## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

224

Number of questionnaires returned

70

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	44	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	60	3	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	60	6	3	3
The teaching is good.	54	43	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	41	17	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	3	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	48	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	33	54	7	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	41	0	4	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	51	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	37	7	0	0

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

69. The early years' phase consists of children in the reception class who attend both part and full-time. On entry, attainment is average. Some of the children have already spent quality time in playgroups and have been provided with good educational experiences at home. Their language skills are well developed and they have basic literacy, numeracy and good social skills. A broad and balanced curriculum is followed which addresses all the recommended areas of learning, with the exception of children's physical development, and leads smoothly into the National Curriculum. This enables all children to make good progress. This planning needs to be clearly documented in an early years policy and scheme of work.

70. Procedures for assessment are clear and detailed. There is early identification of pupils with special educational needs and good support is provided for these children. The quality of teaching and learning in the early years is good. Co-operation between teaching staff and classroom assistants is very good. All adults use constructive praise effectively. All the teaching staff work as a team and help to raise the standards of attainment.

71. By the age of five, the majority of children will exceed the targets set within the Desirable Learning Outcomes.

#### Personal and social development:

72. There is good provision for this area of learning. Under-fives respond positively to school rules and their behaviour is very good. They gain confidence quickly in their approach to learning tasks and when expressing themselves to other children and adults. Relationships are very supportive and children learn to share equipment, co-operate in their play and show concern and respect for each other. They take advantage of the wide range of activities, demonstrating a growing sense of fairness and taking turns without fuss. Their sense of curiosity and wonder are fostered by the secure and stimulating environment, which the school provides. Children take increasing responsibility for a range of duties including tidying away at the end of sessions.

#### Language and literacy:

73. Children under five show above average attainment in the acquisition of English skills and are being very well prepared to start the National Curriculum. Learning is always good and very good progress is being made in the acquisition of listening skills. Levels of fluency are good. Children are encouraged to learn to read and write new words as they experience a wide range of early learning activities including story telling, which encompasses their project on the alphabet, and related practical tasks which are integrated into all areas of the curriculum. Children enjoy handling and looking at books. They are developing and extending their vocabulary and most show confidence in explaining activities. They are improving their listening skills by listening attentively to stories and songs. Children have begun to develop emergent writing skills. Almost all write their names and the most able write simple sentences unaided. They take pride in their work.

#### Mathematics:

74. Children make a good start in mathematics and achieve standards above those expected. The quality of learning is good. Through preparing and cooking food, children learn to weigh, measure and count and through water play, number games and other planned activities, such as sandwich shapes. They develop recognition and understanding

of numbers. Recording skills are introduced with the practice of writing numbers. Through a range of activities, children use and extend their knowledge and skills. They are learning to sort, match and order and use appropriate language: for example bigger and smaller. Children are learning to recognise numbers and to count to five and some to ten. They recognise shapes, such as circle, triangle and square. However, planning for mathematics does not include sufficient problem solving activities.

#### Knowledge and understanding of the world:

75. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through topic work and first hand experience. They achieve well above average standards and progress well as they are encouraged to develop an awareness of their environment and the people in it. They go on frequent walks to local parks and outings around the locality. They plant flowers and fruit and observe changes in the seasons. They explore materials, selecting what they need and using their skills of cutting and sticking well to make model vehicles. At times, lessons are too structured and greater emphasis should be placed on learning through children's own play experiences. They begin to explore the functions of the keyboard and the mouse in simulations.

#### Physical development:

76. In physical education lessons in the hall, and in dance, children work with confidence and a sense of direction and use a range of fine motor skills. They work with partners or as a team. Children are encouraged to develop other skills by using a variety of tools, including scissors and pencils. However, the lack of a secure outdoor play area with suitable large play equipment restricts their full development in this area.

#### Creative development:

77. Creative opportunities are well planned particularly in art. They allow children to achieve good standards and make good progress in this area. Children paint and draw when they choose, as well as being guided, through learning experiences, such as painting circles in the style of Kandinsky or other artists. They use a range of media appropriately and with confidence as they paint, assemble and draw. They sing, play instruments and enjoy creative play. There are multicultural resources particularly in the imaginative play area. This gives opportunities for children to experience and play with artefacts or clothing from other cultures.

### **ENGLISH**

78. During the last inspection standards achieved in English at Key Stage 1 were good and at Key Stage 2, they were average. The school has made good progress from this position, at Key Stage 2, and is working hard to improve Key Stage 1 results. In 1999, the results of national tests for seven-year-olds were well below the national average compared with similar schools. For eleven-year-olds, they were in line with those achieved by comparable schools. There is no significant difference in the attainment level of boys and girls in either key stage. This trend in high attainment in English, with only a slight dip last year, is a strength of the school and has had an impact on raising the attainment in other subject areas.

79. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the purchase of a range of appropriate resources, detailed lesson planning and grouping pupils by ability, are all having a positive impacts on pupils' learning. At present, the literacy strategy is taught to the mixed aged year groups on a two year cycle. This will now be reviewed to ensure a closer match for both age and ability.

80. The high priority given to the development of literacy skills, the good start pupils are given in the reception class, enables all pupils to make good progress throughout the school. Carefully targeted teaching results in a significant majority of pupils with special educational needs attaining average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefit from the support provided through the additional literacy strategy. More able pupils make good progress in response to the high level of challenge provided in some lessons. Inspection findings show that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English will be satisfactory and by the end of Key Stage 2, above the national average.

81. At the end of both key stages standards attained in speaking and listening are high. At Key Stage 1, pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations and respond very well to instructions. The youngest pupils effectively develop their speaking and listening skills through the use of role play. Pupils listen considerately to each other when sharing work: for example Year 2 pupils read their 'sun and moon' stories to the rest of the class. Pupils speak confidently to large audiences when reading in assemblies.

82. At Key Stage 2 pupils are eager to answer teachers' questions and enjoy participating in class discussions. Pupils articulate their opinions and argue with conviction. Years 5 and 6 discuss the use of conditional sentences to help create a feeling of suspense. By the end of the key stage, they justify their answers by referring to the text being studied: for example when recognising alliteration in a poetry lesson.

83. Progress in speaking and listening is good at both key stages as a result of the many opportunities provided for pupils to practise their skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the carefully structured activities planned by their teachers. For example, pupils learn to speak in turn when reading different parts in a play.

84. Reading standards are average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain at least average standards. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels is above the national average and the same as similar schools at Key Stage 2. The youngest pupils recognise many simple words and talk about their favourite parts of stories read. They enjoy reading and benefit from taking books home daily to read with their families. All pupils use a range of strategies, such as picture and phonic cues, to read unfamiliar words. Systematic teaching of phonics enables pupils, including those with special educational needs, to tackle new material with confidence. In reception and Year 1, pupils have fun reading different versions of 'The Gingerbread Man'. They easily recognise repetitive words. They discuss the characters in the story and predict the plot.

85. Almost all pupils become confident and fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 2. Older pupils discuss features of their reading, such as character and plot development, with good understanding. During literacy lessons they learn to deduce the meanings of words by carefully reading the text: for example in Years 3 and 4 pupils learn new terminology connected with newspapers such as text, caption and headlines. They enjoy reading a range of books, including traditional and modern literature, Dickens as compared with Dahl, as well as information texts. Older pupils show a good knowledge of how to locate books in the library. Good teaching in literacy hours has enabled these pupils to understand the use of glossaries and contents pages when studying information texts. Pupils' information retrieval skills develop steadily through Key Stage 2 so that almost all Year 6 pupils skim and scan non-fiction texts effectively.

86. Pupils in Key Stage 1 do not regularly use the main school library and this restricts their ability to learn some of these important library skills.

87. Reading is good throughout the school because of the variety of opportunities provided to practise and consolidate skills, both during literacy hours and at other times. More able pupils make good progress as a result of challenging texts selected to extend their reading.

88. Writing standards are in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1. The youngest pupils are taught to hold writing implements correctly and to join letters. Regular teaching and handwriting sessions have a positive impact on the standards of handwriting, which is neat and well formed by the end of the key stage. Almost all pupils write imaginatively and extend their ideas logically. A significant majority use punctuation correctly and structure sentences accurately without needing reminders: for example writing a recipe in the correct sequence. More able pupils enjoy thinking of varied adjectives to add interest to their writing.

89. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in writing is just above average. The school is aware of pupils having difficulties with the skills of writing, particularly boys. Staff have targeted this area for improvement with some recent success. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 correct grammatical errors in a text, drawing on their knowledge of parts of speech. Pupils understand the importance of correct spelling and use dictionaries effectively. They identify the persuasive language used in advertising and apply this when constructing their own written arguments. Older pupils write appropriately for a variety of audiences: for example pupils in Years 5 and 6 used words adventurously and imaginatively when writing biographies of their families, sequencing events chronologically and turning notes into eloquent prose. Skills of story planning are emphasised and by the end of the key stage, pupils plan effectively and write to a good standard. However, handwriting is not always neat and legible and work is not always well presented.

90. Pupils consolidate and acquire literacy skills in many other areas of the curriculum: for example during a geography lesson pupils act as weather forecasters. Years 3 and 4 wrote the "Wantage News" describing sport and fashion items. They selected information from a text and wrote about a Roman sword buried in the garden. Pupils write about their experiences on trips around the local area or to museums. Lessons such as this make a significant contribution to pupils' use and application of literacy skills across the curriculum.

91. Pupils' attitudes to work are good throughout the school. In literacy lessons, pupils usually respond very well and show interest. They sustain concentration and persevere when challenging tasks are set. Good relationships are formed between pupils and adults in the classroom. As a result, the atmosphere in literacy lessons encourages hard work and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

92. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2 including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and traveller children. Literacy hour planning is thorough and effective with clearly defined learning objectives for pupils. Teachers use correct terminology, providing pupils with the appropriate vocabulary to discuss the English language. There is imaginative use of poetry to stimulate pupils. This is having a positive impact on standards attained. A strength of teaching is that pupils are given targets which are pasted inside their exercise books, including homework targets. However, not all teachers make good use of day-to-day assessment, including detailed marking of pupils' work. They do not always correct spellings or write encouraging and helpful remarks which help pupils to improve. Teachers are inconsistent in their comments on poorly presented work.

93. Since the last inspection the school has made some important improvements to the English provision. However, a key issue in the previous report was the role of the co-ordinator. Whilst she has had release time in the past year, the expertise and experience of

the co-ordinator should be used to monitor both teaching and learning in order to raise standards even further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. Results of 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were close to the national average for the proportion achieving the expected Level 2 or above, but above average for the proportion achieving the higher Level 3. In comparison with similar schools nationally, results were close to the average for the proportion achieving Level 2 or above, but well below average for the proportion achieving Level 3. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999, the trend shows standards to be above average. Inspection findings show that for the current group of Year 2 pupils, standards are above average. Improvement over the school's results in 1999 is the result of good teaching linked to effective implementation of numeracy hour.

95. Results of 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were well above average for the proportion achieving the expected Level 4 or above and above average for the proportion achieving the higher Level 5. In comparison with similar schools nationally, results were above average for the proportion achieving Level 4 or above and close to the average for those achieving Level 5. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999, standards in mathematics are well above average. Inspection findings show that for the current group of Year 6 pupils, standards are well above average and that the school is sustaining high levels of achievement.

96. Pupils use numeracy skills successfully across the curriculum, particularly in design and technology, geography, history and science. In history, for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate data from the 1891 census of the village and present their findings in well labelled and accurately drawn graphs. Mental arithmetic skills are good, with pupils showing good mental recall of number facts. Pupils use and apply their knowledge of multiplication facts successfully in numeracy work. Information technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning, particularly in the use of spreadsheets and data handling. However, the use of information technology to support pupils' learning in the numeracy hour is not a secure feature of teachers' planning.

97. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well in the use and application of mathematics into problem solving and investigations. They show good knowledge and understanding of money when they investigate costs of buying items from a menu. By Year 4, pupils investigate and explain well patterns they find when adding three consecutive numbers. By Year 6, pupils carry out a very good investigation when they have to find ways of making 100 by using the digits 1 to 9 and the four rules of number.

98. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of number. By the end of Year 2, pupils read, write and order numbers to 100, with higher attaining pupils accurate in writing and ordering to 1000. They understand hundreds, tens and units. By Year 4, pupils use multiplication tables to 10 successfully and they add and subtract accurately using thousands, hundreds, tens and units. They understand fractions, including thirds, eighths and twelfths. By Year 6, most pupils multiply and divide accurately by 10, 100 and 1000. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.

99. In work on shape, space and measures, most pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils tell the time accurately to 'quarter past' and 'quarter to'. They measure in grams and kilograms, and estimate which is 'lighter' or 'heavier'. Pupils recognise and name common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. By Year 4, pupils estimate and measure accurately the areas of rectangles, with higher attaining pupils using decimals. Pupils measure carefully using standard units of measurement including millimetres and litres. Pupils show a good understanding of the units of time: for example

that 1hr 55 minutes is 115 minutes'. By Year 6, most pupils recognise and name the properties of isosceles triangles, kites, trapeziums and scalene triangles. They find the circumference and diameter of circles through accurate measurement.

100. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well in work on data handling. By Year 4, pupils use tally charts well to collect data and then present their findings in well constructed frequency charts to show, for example, the weather patterns in November. Pupils use spreadsheets successfully and show a good understanding of how cells function: for example when adding consecutive numbers. In Year 6, pupils draw accurate and correctly labelled graphs for the square roots of numbers. They are successful in interrogating a database to find, for example, how many boys or girls are taller than 130 centimetres.

101. The teaching of mathematics is very good and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved and to the quality of learning. During the inspection 50 per cent of lessons were very good, including 25 per cent which were excellent. The remaining lessons were good, with one lesson being satisfactory and one unsatisfactory. In the unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 2, one group of pupils was not sufficiently challenged with the result that they made little progress in the lesson.

102. Where teaching is of high quality, teachers show excellent subject knowledge. Lessons are exciting and challenging, with the result that pupils are interested and motivated and do not want the lesson to end. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons begin with a challenging mental arithmetic session in which pupils have to think rapidly and provide quick responses. Questions are set which challenge pupils of all abilities. Pupils respond particularly well to mental sessions where the teacher gives an equation and pupils have to say whether the answer is right or wrong. In the introduction to the main lesson, teachers explain and demonstrate teaching points well. For example in Years 5 and 6, the teacher used a metre ruler to reinforce pupils understanding of decimals and fractions of a metre. Pupils are challenged well: for example "Who can tell me what is the answer to what fraction of 100 centimetres is 70 centimetres?". Pupils are challenged further by questions, such as, "Who can find three-sevenths of 49?" Group work is managed effectively, with work well matched to each ability group. Classroom assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Pupils concentrate well and make determined efforts to complete their work. Plenary sessions are used effectively to consolidate key teaching points.

103. A strength of teaching is that pupils are given targets which are pasted inside their exercise books, including homework targets: for example 'Count in 4s to 48'. Targets are set individually and based on pupils' ability levels. Most work is accurately and carefully marked and reinforces teachers' expectations of how pupils should present their work. However, there is some inconsistency in Key Stage 2 and older pupils do not always present their work to a high enough standard. Teachers make good use of marking and day-to-day assessment to plan future lessons.

104. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively. She has produced a detailed action plan, which includes planned opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in lessons taught by colleagues. This is linked to the school's priority within the school development plan to implement successfully the National Numeracy Strategy during the current academic year. Thorough and detailed analysis is made of results of National Curriculum assessments which are used to set individual, class and year group targets for improvement.

105. The previous inspection judged standards to be 'in line with the national expectation'. Standards have improved as the result of very good teaching and the school's

commitment to high standards, linked to target setting based on the analysis of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.

## **SCIENCE**

106. In 1999 national tests for pupils aged eleven, pupils achieved well above the national average at Level 4 and Level 5. Test results when compared with similar schools were above average at both levels. During the last four years 1996 to 1999 there has been a significant improvement in test results in science each year. Inspection findings are that attainment in the current Year 6 is above average. 1999 teacher assessment for pupils aged seven indicated that the proportion of those pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was well above the national average but was well below the national average for the higher Level 3. In comparison with similar schools, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels was close to the average, but well below average for the higher levels. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is above average. Inspection findings and test results show no significant gender differences in attainment. Standards have risen since the previous inspection where pupils' ability to carry out their own investigations, interpret evidence and present results was considered to be underdeveloped. Experimental and investigative science is now a major strength and contributes greatly to pupils' standards of attainment throughout the school.

107. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know the parts of a plant and what it needs to germinate and grow. They explore, recognise and know the names of common materials and list their similarities and differences. As part of a topic on sound they know how sounds are made by shaking, hitting, blowing and strumming, and predict how sounds can be changed to a high and low pitch.

108. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils label parts of the body and describe the function of bones and muscles and explain how diet affects health. They sort materials accurately into man-made and natural materials and know which objects when heated will turn back into their natural form when cooled. In their experiments and investigations pupils explore friction and air resistance as a forces which slow objects down. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils know the importance of a fair test and draw conclusions from their experiments. They record accurately their findings and know that materials can be classified into gases, liquids and solids and that temperature affects this. Pupils understand and explain the best conditions for condensation and evaporation of water and know that different liquids evaporate at different rates. Pupils plan, predict and carry out their own experiments as seen during the inspection where Years 5 and 6 pupils were able to use their knowledge successfully of materials that conduct or insulate electricity, to devise their own pressure switch in an electrical circuit. Higher attaining pupils are given the opportunity to devise a two way switch into the circuit.

109. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. They treat equipment and apparatus with respect. They show enthusiasm when designing experiments, clearly enjoy practical work, and delight in their discoveries. This was well demonstrated by a less able pupil seeing a bulb light when testing materials, which conduct electricity, and gaining a real sense of awe and wonder. Pupils are conscious of safety factors. They sustain concentration, share resources and co-operate well. However, standards of presentation are variable, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and often good.

110. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages and has improved since the last inspection. All pupils including traveller children, those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. The best lessons have tasks, which provide high levels of challenge for all pupils and a brisk



pace. Where this is linked to confident class management and good subject knowledge, learning is at its best. This was well exemplified in Years 3 and 4 with pupils investigating conductors in an electrical circuit where the teacher set demanding tasks and challenging questions that extended pupils' thinking. The rapid pace of the lesson, high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and the consistent use of subject specific language, enabled pupils of all attainment levels to make rapid gains in their understanding of which materials are good and poor conductors of electricity. Successful teaching and learning is characterised by good relationships with pupils who are encouraged to evaluate their findings and extend their studies with homework. Support staff provide valuable help, often working closely with less able pupils.

111. The science co-ordinator is very committed and enthusiastic and is in the process of revising the scheme of work with the staff. This provides good guidance for teachers in planning work that builds continuously and progressively on pupils' previous learning. The new scheme of work has achieved greater consistency in the school's approach to the teaching of science at the appropriate levels and gives good opportunities for experimental and investigative science. Although teachers' planning is monitored there is no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. Good assessment procedures are used well and appropriate targets are set for individual pupils. However, there is no portfolio of work for teachers to use, to help them assess pupils' attainment. There are good cross curricular links with literacy, mathematics, information technology, geography and music and the nature reserve and grounds offer good opportunities to extend pupils' learning in science.

## **ART**

112. Pupils of all levels of attainment including those with special educational needs, traveller children and those for whom English is an additional language, reach satisfactory levels of attainment in art. Teachers provide a range of experiences of methods and materials, which pupils use with increasing confidence. Art is well integrated into all subjects of the curriculum and used to enhance learning.

113. Over time, pupils develop observational skills very well. They draw portraits of themselves and others. They draw a 'View of the Downs', plants and flowers. They mix paints to create tone and shadow to paint their drawings. They use collage technique to create a map of Old Charlton. A broad range of painting was seen and the skills of colour mixing and brushwork were sufficiently developed in paintings in the style of Rene Magritte. Pupils show satisfactory learning in the use and control of pencils, crayons and pastels in line drawing, and in skills of observation. Evidence from lessons and displays indicates that pupils have some knowledge of famous artists such as Picasso and Van Gogh. Pupils develop individuality and independence in their designs. However, their ability to modify their work is limited. They are not confident at recognising different kinds of art, and many are unable to identify some of the ways in which art has changed, and distinguish between work in the past and present.

114. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils draw figures showing good body proportions and recognisable features. They use computers competently to draw figures and faces. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are careful and neat in painting. Collage work, sewing skills, selection and application of materials are well presented in pictures. Throughout most of the school there is an emphasis on tonal drawings and paintings, and this is used effectively in pupils' observational work of natural objects, such as shaded sketches of fruit and flowers. Pupils have produced colourful tiles, masks and artefacts in clay related to history projects. They show careful attention to detail.

115. Pupils develop their expertise in the use of a limited range of art media, but too often, skills, knowledge and understanding are not developed systematically. Little three-

dimensional work was seen except for clay modelling. Pupils use careful observation to draw artefacts, flowers and to enlarge pictures. They discuss their methods. They explore the use of different resources, such as the use of textured materials in collage work, relief printing or using pastels and charcoal in differing designs. However, the learning of older and higher attaining pupils is hampered because there is little difference in work set between different classes.

116. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning in art, and show a positive attitude to their work. They show independence in organising resources. They take pride in their work on display. When given the opportunity, pupils talk about and reflect on their achievements, but there are few examples of pupils modifying their work as a result of these discussions.

117. The teaching of art is satisfactory throughout the school. Where planning is focused, pupils are beginning to learn about well known artists such as Bridget Riley and some vocabulary related to art. Pupils are required to work practically with a variety of materials. The most common activities are drawing and painting from observation and memory. Pupils' written work is expressively illustrated. Good use of descriptive vocabulary contributes to literacy skills. However, opportunities are lost during these drawing sessions to teach skills and techniques. In addition, where work is linked to topics, teaching does not emphasise new skills to be learned using a range of different media.

118. Resources are satisfactory, although an increase in the stock of materials, books, prints and slides would enhance the learning of three-dimensional work in particular. There are insufficient reference books and resources available for pupils to learn about non-Western art. The use of information technology and graphics is underdeveloped throughout the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

119. Standards of attainment in design and technology have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The subject has been given higher priority and focus since the last inspection. These include the purchase of additional resources and workshop sessions led by the local adviser, which have a positive impact on standards. The co-ordinator and staff have worked hard to implement a new scheme of work which gives teachers good quality guidance in their planning and is having a positive impact on standards of attainment, which was not the case in the previous report.

120. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to manipulate simple tools, such as glue spreaders and scissors and to use pictures, materials and words to communicate their designs. They learn to join things and discover different ways to fasten shoes and clothes using bows, buttons, laces, velcro and zips. They design and make their own puppets of animals using different materials and paper inspired by the novel 'Handa's Surprise' by Eileen Browne. Older pupils successfully find the best way to attach fabric strips for Joseph's coat and evaluate different methods used.

121. Pupils' skills knowledge and understanding are developed appropriately as they move into Key Stage 2. This was well demonstrated in a display to show how simple mechanisms can be used to produce different types of movement from simple vehicles, using recycled materials with wheels and axles, to move complicated turning movements such as a water feature. Pupils use design and making skills well to make replica houses of Charlton village as part of a geography and history topic. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have a sound understanding of how crank and cam mechanisms work on bicycles. They design, make and evaluate different types of bridges using cardboard and commercially produced construction kits. These include cantilever, stone arch and suspension bridges, where pupils devise tests to determine their durability.

122. Pupils' attitudes to work in design and technology are good. Pupils of all ages and abilities sustain good concentration during lessons, enjoy tasks and behave well. They listen attentively to instructions and follow step by step plans well. They generate ideas successfully, using their knowledge of materials and tools well. They are keen and well motivated and work co-operatively in groups.

123. The quality of teaching in the limited number of lessons seen is good and has improved since the last inspection. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge of the subject, and planning ensures that previously learnt skills are built on and extended to support pupils' learning. There is a good balance between independent and teacher led work, and teachers give pupils constructive feedback about how they are progressing. The pace of lessons is brisk and pupils are challenged to think about, and consider their responses. The co-ordinator has had no recent opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school and there is no portfolio of pupils' work to help to assess attainment and progress. There are good cross curricular links particularly in mathematics, science, art and history where planning is effectively linked to topics and everyday activities. Parent and grandparent volunteers give good support to pupils in Years 3 and 4 in activity afternoons. They effectively support small groups using a variety of materials to develop pupils' design and technology skills successfully.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

124. Standards of attainment in geography are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and have been maintained since the last inspection. During this inspection it was only possible to see a limited amount of geography teaching. Observations are based on information from other sources including policy documents, discussions with staff and pupils, examination of work and displays.

125. Infant pupils associate which countries on a world map their dolls wearing different clothes come from, which gives good opportunities for multicultural development. They group clothes for different types of weather and begin to understand the effects of weather on people and surroundings. Older pupils have a sound understanding of their immediate environment of Charlton. They identify local features on an aerial photograph such as the school, swimming pool, playground, church and other local features. They have good opportunities to compare Charlton with other local rural villages such as Brightwalton and Fawley, by field trips and use photographs to compare differences including multicultural ones with a school in Brentford.

126. Junior pupils use their mathematical skills to record temperature, rainfall, wind strength and direction in the form of block graphs, line graphs and frequency tables. They use maps, aerial photographs and an information technology program to determine land use in their environment as part of a topic on Charlton past and present. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils understand the formation of rivers, the effects on the landscape and describe the main features of a river. They have good opportunities to look at the source of a river by a local field trip to Humber Ditch and follow its course to Letcombe Brook, onto the River Thames by using their map work skills. Higher attaining pupils use information technology effectively to create a fieldwork database.

127. Across the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they show curiosity and perseverance in the subject. Older pupils work with sustained concentration and are beginning to develop good work habits. Many have a real interest in geography. Most pupils work co-operatively in groups sharing resources, enjoying practical activities.

128. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with some examples of good or very good teaching at both key stages. This has a positive impact on all pupils' learning including those with special educational needs, traveller children and those with English as an additional language. The use of fieldwork in both key stages is a motivating factor and this practical approach greatly enhances pupils' learning. Teachers manage their pupils well, plan effectively, have sound subject knowledge and use time, support staff and resources well to support pupils' learning. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good support to teachers, but has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning across the school, except through teachers' planning. Assessment procedures are not well developed and there is no portfolio of work as a record of pupils' achievement and progress in geography. The school has made an encouraging start in using literacy, numeracy and information technology in the teaching of geography and there are good cross curricular links with history and science.

## **HISTORY**

129. Standards of attainment in history are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and have been maintained since the last inspection. It was only possible to observe two lessons in history at Key Stage 1 and no lessons at Key Stage 2 due to timetabling arrangements. Additional information was gained by speaking with pupils and staff, looking at teachers' plans and a scrutiny of pupils' work and displays.

130. Infant pupils have an appropriate sense of chronology and an awareness of the past and the present, which was well demonstrated by comparing clothes from the past and the present day. Many pupils sequence photographs and notice the difference in clothing, where they make good use of their speaking and listening skills. Higher attainers speak confidently and use a good choice of vocabulary, including sepia and black and white when describing old photographs. They find clues in the photographs about the lifestyles of different people from the clothes they wear. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils begin to understand the concept of change over time, and identify and describe some of the key differences between the present and the past. This was clearly evident in a lesson on life before electricity where pupils appreciate that candles and lanterns were used for lighting by having the opportunity to see and handle artefacts from the past. Pupils learn about Michael Faraday and have the opportunity to find more information by using the CD Rom with the help of teachers. Pupils benefit from a very good CD Rom which shows the history of the village.

131. Junior pupils look carefully at the features of old houses in Charlton and make their own models of these houses a part of their topic. They take a trip to the old school to compare differences from the past. By studying the 1891 census and old maps, pupils compare similarities and differences in Charlton with present times, including buildings built more than one hundred years ago and the site of the present school. Older pupils researched the Tudors last term and produced some impressive work on life in Tudor times. They have a good understanding of life for Tudor servants by participating in role play as part of a trip to Sulgrave Manor and seeing artefacts and furniture at first hand. Older pupils make good use of literacy and information technology skills by producing their own biography based on friends and family.

132. Pupils' attitudes to history are good. All pupils including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and traveller children appreciate the opportunities provided by teachers and clearly enjoy history lessons. They have positive attitudes to learning, listen attentively and show a lively interest in history. Pupils respond well to role play, handling artefacts and visits to gain first hand experiences of the past. Pupils can be trusted to work well together and handle resources and artefacts with care without close supervision.

133. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was at least satisfactory and one was very good. Teachers are knowledgeable, provide pupils with good quality experiences, have high expectations and use strategies, which make the subject meaningful and relevant. This has a positive impact on all pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs. Teachers manage pupils well and use resources effectively to support their learning. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is very supportive of teachers, but has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school, except through teachers' planning. Assessment procedures are not well developed and there is no portfolio of pupils' work as a record of achievement and progress in history. The school has made an encouraging start in using literacy and information technology in the teaching of history and there are good cross curricular links with geography.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

134. By the end of both key stages, standards exceed national expectations. Pupils use literacy skills particularly well in word processing. They show good application of grammar and punctuation: for example in the biographies of their parents. Correct use of paragraphs, punctuation and spelling is a strong feature of their work. Pupils' numeracy skills are used effectively, for example in database work. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities within the numeracy hour to use information technology to support their learning.

135. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident in the use of the mouse and keyboard. They know how to load and save their work. Pupils use a concept keyboard successfully in writing up the results of their science investigations into how sounds can be muffled. They show good skills in using a CD Rom to find information on particular instruments of the orchestra. Great delight was shown in pressing the icon that makes the instrument play a tune. Word processing skills are used well in writing stories and factual accounts. Pupils successfully enter commands into a programmable toy in order for it to follow a planned route.

136. By the end of Year 6, pupils are very confident in word processing. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 write clear instructions for making a model house in work linked to design and technology. Year 6 pupils produce a school newspaper, in which they show good knowledge of desktop publishing, including combining text with clip-art. They know how to organise the layout of a newspaper and change the size and type of fonts to give the effects they desire. Pupils know how to 'bend' and 'shadow' text to create imaginative layouts. In work linked to the study of the Tudors, pupils show good evidence of using the Internet and CD Roms to gather historical evidence before presenting their findings in 'Tudor' newspapers. In story writing, for example 'The Ghost Twins', pupils show good application of literacy skills, including the accurate use of speech marks and paragraphs. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use a graphics program well to create imaginative pictures on the theme 'Under the Sea'. Pupils use spreadsheets well to reinforce their numeracy skills: for example in adding pairs of consecutive numbers and reinforcing their understanding of patterns in multiplication tables. In Years 5 and 6, pupils develop these skills by using spreadsheets, including the use of formulae, to find costs of a party: for example 20 'Party Poppers' at £1.99 each.

137. During the inspection no whole class teaching of information technology was observed. However, inspection evidence is consistent with the quality of teaching being good, as pupils are clearly being taught key information technology skills well. Information technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning across the curriculum, although it is not a secure feature of teachers' planning for the numeracy hour. In lessons, pupils work well in pairs, often supporting each other effectively. Teachers and support staff make good interventions when necessary to keep pupils on task and to check their understanding. Pupils are confident in explaining what they are doing: for example in Years 5 and 6 where

pupils were using a CD Rom to deepen their understanding of rivers as part of their geographical studies.

138. The subject is managed effectively by the co-ordinator who makes a strong impact on standards. There is very good monitoring and assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding. There is a clear emphasis on the development of pupils' skills, which is monitored through a 'skills development tracking sheet'. The subject is monitored effectively through looking at teachers' planning and by discussion with colleagues.

139. The previous inspection judged standards to be 'in line with national expectations'. Standards have improved as the result of good planning, better resources, especially in the deployment of new machines and opportunities for pupils to use information technology across the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

140. Standards in music are good throughout the school, and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Music has a high profile and the range of opportunities provided for pupils enhances both their personal and spiritual development.

141. The quality of singing, from both boys and girls, is good throughout the school. They sing enthusiastically in music lessons and in assemblies. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good singing range, pitching higher notes with accuracy and producing a well-rounded vocal tone. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils successfully hold an independent vocal line when singing in two-part harmony. The regular opportunities provided by class teachers for singing during lessons, further develops pupils' musical confidence. For instance, pupils in reception were heard learning the letters of the alphabet through singing a catchy song, and all pupils sing hymns in a weekly assembly. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils successfully integrate musical accompaniments into songs. They improve rhythmic and melodic ideas that effectively match given moods. Pupils successfully understand concepts such as pitch, duration and texture, although they do not use these words with confidence when discussing music. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop well-controlled playing and listening skills. Pupils in Year 6 reproduce the underlying rhythmic beat contained in Ravel's 'Bolero'. They play correctly a range of pitched and non pitched instruments. Higher attainers are successfully challenged through being given harder melodic parts on recorders and pitched percussion, whilst other pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given simpler, but none the less taxing parts, using non pitched instruments.

142. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy lessons, contribute very well to practical sessions, where they play and sing, and listen attentively to the music that is played. They confidently express views and opinions about the music they hear. They use equipment safely and sensibly, and return items to their proper place at the end of lessons. Pupils work well in small groups as they prepare compositions and performances, such as the musical 'Bugsy Malone'.

143. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make good use of a commercial scheme, which involves pupils in a range of activities drawn from the National Curriculum programmes of study. Pupils learn about the differences in music from other cultures such as African, Indian and Chinese music. Good use of available instruments, such as the 'mbira', provides practical learning opportunities that are informative and fun. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, encouraging a discriminating response to recorded music, and a thoughtful use of available resources in composition and performance work. There are good relationships with pupils and a positive ethos in lessons that promote good progress.

144. There is a good range of extracurricular activities and visiting instrumental teachers, such as a cellist and violinist. Pupils are involved in the community through the choir and orchestra. Musically ambitious pupils have very good opportunities to extend their potential.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

145. By the end of both key stages, standards are good and pupils perform at levels that exceed expectations for their age. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils meet the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres unaided.

146. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the importance of exercise in keeping their bodies fit and healthy. They understand the importance of why they warm up and cool down at the start and end of lessons. In gymnastics, they show good awareness of working in space, changing direction and using different levels when performing sequences on the floor. They are confident in working on apparatus, particularly high off the ground on the climbing frame. They adapt their floor sequences well to apparatus work. Pupils show good control and balance in their movements, with sequences having a clear starting and finishing position.

147. In Key Stage 2, pupils build successfully on their skills and techniques. In dance, pupils in Years 5 and 6 use their awareness of space and working at different levels when they plan, perform and refine their performances based on the theme of 'swimming'. In gymnastics, pupils in Years 3 and 4 plan and perform sequences in which they change from straight to curled shapes on the floor before transferring to low level apparatus. In games, pupils in Years 5 and 6, show good table tennis skills, particularly in standing in the correct stance and the use of forehand and backhand strokes. They show good control when bouncing the ball on the bat. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show good skills in hockey, including holding the stick correctly and in passing and receiving.

148. Pupils, including those in reception, are confident and safe when putting apparatus out and away. They understand the importance of carrying equipment safely: for example one at each corner of a mat. In lessons, pupils know the reasons why they should respond immediately to teachers' 'stop' command. Pupils dress appropriately for all lessons. They are confident in evaluating the performance of each other, which contributes well to the development of speaking and listening.

149. The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on the standards achieved and on pupils' learning. Teachers show secure and confident subject knowledge that is passed on to pupils with enthusiasm. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of skills, particularly in supporting individual pupils to improve. Lessons begin with a rigorous warm-up and a good pace is maintained, with a strong emphasis on activity. Pupils are expected and encouraged to perform well. Teachers place strong emphasis on pupils' safety especially when apparatus is used. Pupils respond well and sustain activity well. They show interest and enthusiasm in practising and developing their skills.

150. Pupils benefit from a very good range of extracurricular activities. They have the opportunity to take part in football, netball, badminton, basketball, gymnastics, table tennis, hockey, rounders, cricket and judo. Competitive matches are organised against other schools in netball, football and athletics, and pupils participate in a swimming gala. Pupils and parents enjoy an annual 'Activities Evening' which replaces the traditional sports day.

151. The co-ordinator monitors the development of the subject effectively through monitoring of teachers' planning. There is a good scheme of work, which places a strong emphasis on the progressive development of skills and its success is measured by the standards achieved.

152. The previous inspection report judged standards to be 'at least in line with national expectations and often higher'. Inspection evidence confirms that the school has improved standards as the result of good teaching and the successful implementation of the scheme of work.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

153. Pupils' attainment in religious education does not meet the expectations of the local agreed syllabus by the end of Key Stage 2. Since September 1999, the status of religious education has been raised to that of a core subject. The school has not taken this curriculum issue into account and spends insufficient time on coverage of the locally agreed syllabus to ensure sufficiently high standards by the end of Key Stage 2. There is good integration between religious education and personal, social and health education. However, attainment is hampered by the lack of visits to places of religious interest, other than the local church, Litchfield Cathedral and the synagogue, and there are few visitors from other faith communities.

154. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to explore and respond to human experiences. They draw and write about things that are special to them: for example their first day at school, and their birthday. They know that other people have special times. Pupils talk and write about how they feel. Older pupils imagine how other people feel: for example when they imagine how people felt at the time of the flood in the story of Noah, or how Joseph's brothers were jealous of him. Pupils think and reflect and they express their opinions about different people in class in a positive way to help build up confidence and self esteem. They recognise that there are religious symbols: for example the lit candle, the Cross and the Star of David.

155. When they investigate religious traditions, pupils know that Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and understand the importance of Easter. They know that Jesus told a number of stories. They understand the meaning of the word parable and act out stories, such as 'The Good Samaritan'. Pupils know the moral messages these parables contain. Their knowledge and understanding of other world religions, such as the Moslem or Hindu faiths, is more limited, particularly by the end of Key Stage 2, although the festivals of Diwali and Holi and the Chinese New Year have been celebrated at the school. Pupils understand that there are celebrations on the journey of life, including birth and marriage.

156. Religious education makes a positive contribution to pupils' literacy development. Pupils read and write about the stories they are told. For example, in Years 5 and 6 they compare the views of Catholics and Protestants at the time of the Reformation. Speaking and listening skills are developing in class discussions. There are opportunities for spiritual and moral development when pupils learn about special books, places and people. They discuss moral issues such as caring for the environment and pollution. There are opportunities to work together and listen and respect the views of others.

157. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Good features include teachers who are secure in their subject knowledge, plan effectively and relate the moral issues to a religious base.

158. At times, 'carpet sessions' are too long and have an over emphasis on oral work. Teachers do not assess pupils against the attainment targets of the locally agreed syllabus. This leads staff to planning work that is not always precisely matched to pupils' current needs. For example, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to make the good progress they are capable of. Teachers do not pay sufficient attention to pupils recording their work to a satisfactory standard and this leads to unsatisfactory achievement by the end of Key Stage 2.