

INSPECTION REPORT

LEWKNOR CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lewknor, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123128

Headteacher: Mrs C Hague

Reporting inspector: Mr C R Phillips
15941

Dates of inspection: 31 January – 2 February 2000

Inspection number: 189342

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Lewknor Oxon
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr M Hammond
Date of previous inspection:	30 September – 4 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr C R Phillips	Registered inspector	Science Geography History Religious education Equal opportunities	Characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
Mrs J Butler	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs M E Phillips	Team inspector	English Mathematics Art Design and technology Information technology Music Physical education Under fives Special educational needs	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is a small voluntary controlled Church of England primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven. It has 71 full-time pupils, two of whom were under five at the time of the inspection. Although there are considerable variations in the ability levels of the various year groups, overall levels of attainment on entry are generally above the average found nationally. However, 24 pupils are currently identified as having special educational needs, which is higher than the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Although it has been through considerable change and uncertainty in recent years, the school is now becoming very effective. Standards in national tests have varied considerably year on year, largely because of the nature of the year groups, but the school is now putting in place systems to ensure that individual pupils achieve their full potential. Standards of attainment currently are at least in line with national expectations and in some areas, such as English, are clearly above that level. The quality of teaching is high and the pupils respond very well to this. They display very good attitudes to their work and the quality of relationships across the school is excellent. The headteacher, governors and staff work together well to improve the school and are striving for high standards. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and the support provided by learning assistants are very good.
- Literacy and numeracy are well emphasised within a well-planned, stimulating and lively curriculum, which provides appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils.
- The pupils respond very well to the learning opportunities provided, and their behaviour and attitudes are very good.
- There are excellent relationships between pupils of all ages and between pupils and staff.
- The school has a clear educational direction because of the headteacher's leadership and the excellent support of the governing body.
- The pupils' personal development is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards of written work in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and in some other aspects of work across the school are not always high enough.
- Records of pupils' progress do not include all elements of the subjects, particularly in mathematics.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in October 1996, it was found to be a good school and standards of pupils' attainment were at least in line with those expected in all subjects. The overall quality of teaching was satisfactory, though in some lessons it was better and in some it was less than satisfactory. Key issues identified in the report have largely been addressed. Standards of attainment in the meantime have fluctuated, but the school is now more clearly focused on improving individual achievement. It is maintaining more careful records of pupils' progress, and is beginning to target ways in which individuals can improve. Teachers' expectations about presentation have improved, and weekly handwriting sessions are held, but there is still scope for improvement in the general presentation of the work of older pupils. Time for writing and mathematics is now carefully allocated because of the introduction of literacy and numeracy

requirements. Attendance records are now more carefully maintained, although there are still occasional lapses. The quality of teaching is now high.

STANDARDS

The small size of the year group in 1999 and in the preceding years means that it is not possible to draw the usual comparisons between the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in this school in the National Curriculum tests with those achieved nationally or in schools of similar intake. However, it is clear that results in English at this age continued to be high, whereas results in mathematics particularly, but also in science, were considerably lower than both the English results and the comparable results for 1998. Variations in the ability range of the various year groups mean that it is also not possible to identify any significant trends in results over time for such a small sample. The results achieved by seven-year-olds in 1999, with a slightly larger cohort, indicated standards that were in line with the national average for reading and above average in writing and mathematics. When compared with schools of broadly similar intake, reading results were below average, and the results for writing and mathematics were in line with the average. Based on its judgement of the ability levels of the groups to be assessed in 2000, the school has set generally realistic targets, which are regularly reviewed. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are currently at least in line with national expectations in each of the three core subjects, with English and science at the end of Key Stage 2 above average. Attainment in their other subjects is also at least in line with and often above expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils are keen to attend, and show very good attitudes in all aspects of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Their behaviour is very good, and pupils of all ages work and play well together.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is very good, and the quality of relationships throughout the school is excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is very good, and there is no unauthorised absence.

The quality of relationships, the personal development of the pupils and their attitudes to all areas of school life are particular strengths 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	Very good	Very good	Very 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.

The quality of teaching in all subjects, including English and mathematics, is high. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught, and very good provision is made in each of the classes for the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, 62 per cent were very good or excellent, 31 per cent were good, and all were at least satisfactory.

These are exceptional figures and, because of the high standards of teaching, the quality of pupils' learning is also very good. Pupils of all ages respond at a high level to the experiences offered. They are keen to do well, show good understanding of what they are doing, and are able to talk in an increasingly mature fashion about what they are learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, relevant and stimulating curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and they make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils.

The school generally works well with its parents. Uncertainties over a lengthy period, following the secondment of the previous headteacher and the appointment of a new headteacher, led to a loss of confidence in the school by a few parents. However, a substantial majority of parents now believe the school is doing a good job in encouraging their children to do well and to develop well personally and socially, and that they are informed appropriately about the work their children are doing and the progress they are making. The school's intentions about homework are not always clear. The school offers a broad and stimulating range of learning experiences for all pupils, within and beyond the school, although the provision of activities such as clubs is limited at some times of the year. The residential experiences provided for all pupils are of great value. All pupils are known well and are well cared for. They are treated with respect and feel valued.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and all subject co-ordinators manage their responsibilities well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities.	The governors undertake their responsibilities very well, are thoroughly committed to the continuing development of the school, and have an excellent awareness of its needs.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, governors and staff constantly review the school's performance and look for ways to improve it.
The strategic use of resources	All resources are used very efficiently for the benefit of the pupils in the school.

The school is appropriately staffed with teachers and is well supported by its learning support assistants. The accommodation, which has recently been improved considerably by the addition of a further classroom, is still limited in various ways. Learning resources are generally good, and in some areas are very good. The school has a clear educational direction, and, under the leadership of the new headteacher, is becoming very effective. The governors and headteacher regularly review all development priorities and evaluate all spending decisions to ensure best value in the deployment of resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress • Behaviour is good, pupils are expected to work hard, and they are helped to become mature and responsible • They know how their child is getting on, and feel able to approach the school with questions • The teaching and management are good • Their children receive appropriate work to do at home, and most feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant proportion of parents felt that more extracurricular activities could be provided • A few parents expressed concerns about homework • A small number felt that the school was not well led and managed, that behaviour was not good, that their children were not encouraged to be mature, and that they would not feel able to approach the school with problems

The inspection team found that there is scope for further out-of-class activity in the form of clubs or interest groups, which could be supported by parents. It believes that arrangements for homework are generally satisfactory, but that the school has not always made its policy clear to parents or involved them in it. The inspectors support the very positive view of the school provided by the substantial majority of parents, who believe that the school is well managed, that behaviour is exemplary, that children are mature and responsible, and that the school is working hard to be open to all parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In view of the small number of pupils in each year group and the considerable variations there are between the ability ranges of the various year groups, it is difficult to make generalised judgements about the pupils' levels of attainment on entry to or on leaving the school. However, baseline and other assessments indicate that, when they enter the school as they approach the age of five, the children's standards of attainment are generally above average overall, particularly in their language skills, although a significant proportion in some year groups are identified as having special educational needs. By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, inspection findings indicate that the number of pupils attaining the national standard is usually above average for English and science and at least in line with the average in mathematics.
2. Most of the children in the reception group have experience of pre-school education. During their time in reception, the children make good progress in all areas of learning, and begin to work and play well together in a variety of situations. They become increasingly confident in their relationships with each other, with older children, and with their teachers. Before they reach the age of five, most children attain the desirable learning outcomes (DLOs¹) for language and literacy, mathematical awareness, creative skills, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development and in their physical skills, which is above average. (¹DLOs - 'Desirable learning outcomes' are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five.)
3. The results of the National Curriculum tests and assessments for Key Stage 1 in 1999 were in line with the national average overall for reading, and were above average for writing and mathematics. When compared with results for schools of broadly similar intake, reading was below average and writing and mathematics were average. The number of pupils attaining Level 3 was well above the national average in mathematics and science, but below average in reading and writing. Results for pupils of this age have shown clear improvement in mathematics in recent years, a decline in reading over the previous three years but an improvement in 1999; also an improvement in writing over the same period but a decline in 1999.
4. As there were only six pupils in the 1999 cohort at the end of Key Stage 2, it is not possible to draw dependable comparisons between the results achieved in this school and national figures. However, it is clear that, when compared with their own results in English, in which the school's usual high standard was maintained, some pupils underperformed in mathematics and, to a lesser extent, in science. The school has undertaken a careful examination of these results and has concluded that, as with the results for Key Stage 1, the small size of the year group makes it particularly susceptible to the influence of personal factors that affect the performance of individuals. Before the 1999 results, it was already putting in place a system for the more careful identification of individual progress, which is enabling it to focus on areas of underperformance and to raise standards. The further refinement of this system to include the detailed identification of the progress being made by each pupil against all National Curriculum attainment targets should make it even more effective. With the exception of results for English in Key Stage 2, where they have been broadly similar, the results achieved by boys have generally exceeded those of girls in both key stages. The school's monitoring of these results indicates that this is largely attributable to the ability profile of the year groups rather than to any identifiable difference in the opportunities offered to girls and boys.

5. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 is currently in line with national expectations for pupils of similar age in English, mathematics and science. For pupils presently nearing the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above average in English and science, and average in mathematics, with an appropriate proportion of pupils attaining at higher levels. The pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is a little above average in reading, average in writing, and above average in speaking and listening. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above average in all aspects of English. The pupils' standards of literacy are also above average. In mathematics, the pupils become increasingly confident in handling numbers as they go through the school, and are now showing improving skills in the other areas of the subject, such as in mental mathematics. Their standards of numeracy overall are average. In science, pupils show a good grasp of scientific vocabulary, and, by the end of Key Stage 2, show good knowledge of other aspects of the subject and appropriate understanding of scientific method. There are significant variations in levels of attainment between year groups, because of the considerable differences in their overall standards on entry to the school.
6. Standards of attainment in information technology are at least in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils show, for example, developing ability to generate and amend text, and are becoming more confident in handling data, although they are less familiar with the control element. In religious education, attainment is currently at least in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. The pupils are developing good awareness of themselves and sensitivity to the needs and beliefs of others, and their knowledge of Christianity and the other traditions they encounter is generally satisfactory.
7. In their other subjects, the pupils generally learn well as they progress through the school. In art and design and technology, the pupils generally make good progress, becoming confident, for instance, in a wide range of media and techniques. In their topic work in geography and history, they develop a lively interest in and detailed knowledge of the topics they study. In all subjects, they are encouraged to use correct terminology, and good opportunities are provided for the development of independent study skills. All pupils enjoy the opportunity to participate in informed discussion. In music, they make satisfactory progress, sing tunefully and show an appropriate sense of rhythm. In physical education, the pupils make at least satisfactory progress overall in the development of their games skills and in gymnastics, swimming and dance.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. This aspect is a real strength of the school, and pupils' attitudes are very good. They are keen to attend school, eager to learn and their very good behaviour creates an environment where all pupils can work to the best of their ability. Attendance is very good and has been well above the national average in the last two years. Pupils are punctual for school and there is no unauthorised absence.
9. In lessons, pupils respond very well to the challenges put before them. They listen attentively, try hard and contribute well to class discussions. They clearly enjoy the learning opportunities provided, especially when they can use their imagination to recreate scenes from history, like the Victorian classroom experienced by the first class. They are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning, as when researching for the half-termly topics, and when completing their homework projects in the Key Stage 2 class. The pupils generally take pride in their work, but would benefit from a greater emphasis on improving presentation in some subjects. Children who are under five enjoy their learning, and show enthusiasm, applying themselves well to their activities.

10. Behaviour, both in lessons and at playtimes, is consistently very good. A notable feature is the way classroom rules are followed, with immediate response to the teacher's request 'speaking'. Pupils play together harmoniously across the age range, and also work together well in mixed age groupings, for example in paired reading. The older pupils are sensitive and encouraging in their support for younger readers. Pupils of all ages are self-controlled, polite, tolerant, and show considerable understanding of those with special needs.
11. Relationships throughout the school, between pupils and adults and between the pupils, are excellent. There is an ethos of care and concern for all, in which everyone is well known and respected. The pupils learn from and imitate the excellent, quiet and friendly role models provided by all the adults in the school. There is no evidence of any anti-social or oppressive behaviour.
12. Overall, the personal development of the pupils is very good. They demonstrate the positive effects of the residential activities in which they all participate. They are independent and confident from a very early age and as they grow through the school they become increasingly so. They are open, honest and trustworthy as well as always mindful of the feelings and values of others. They are encouraged to share their own feelings and emotions in activities such as circle time and writing in their pink books. When given the opportunity, they show initiative and creativity, which they are happy to use for the good of the community. At the last Christmas bazaar, for example, they collaborated very well in mixed age groups in the designing and making of games and stalls, and taking some responsibility for the finances. They have a mature and sensible outlook.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good, and is a major strength. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, 62 per cent were either very good or excellent, 31 per cent were good, and all were at least satisfactory. These are very high figures. All of the teachers bring particular strengths to their work, so that all pupils participate in an interesting, varied and challenging range of experiences as they go through the school. There has been substantial improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
14. The teaching of children who are under five is very good. The teaching and support staff have a very good understanding of the needs of the children, and time and resources are used well. They have high expectations of the children and this is reflected in the general quality of the work and the progress made. Planning for the under fives is very good in all of the areas of learning. The detailed and careful organisation of work provides a broad and stimulating curriculum. Good use is made of the information gained from the children's entry assessment to inform planning. Staff use a range of assessment procedures well in the classrooms to ensure that children have access to a balanced range of activities and to monitor their attainment and progress in the acquisition of a range of skills.
15. The teachers throughout the school are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the various subjects of the curriculum, and as a staff team they share considerable subject expertise and experience. All teachers work hard in preparing their lessons within the overall planning scheme for the school, and the teachers are clear about the purpose of each lesson. The quality of planning is very good. The teachers generally provide good explanations of the tasks required of the pupils, and their planning always takes account of the range of ages and capabilities in each class. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, are all appropriately challenged by the work provided. There is a good pace to most lessons, which is achieved often by the planning of short, timed tasks, the regular completion of which provides pupils with a sense of achievement as well as ensuring a brisk pace. The teachers use a good

range of questioning skills and also reinforce learning when they review work with the pupils. The teachers know and manage their pupils very well.

16. Throughout the school, a good range of approaches to classroom organisation is employed, and class, group and individual working are used appropriately to suit different tasks. All pupils are encouraged to become increasingly independent in their learning, and all respond well to opportunities to organise the necessary resources for their work. As they move through the school, they respond well to the opportunities provided for them to engage in individual and group research tasks. The teachers communicate well with the learning support assistants and voluntary helpers, who make a valuable contribution to learning. The available resources are used effectively to support the pupils' learning.
17. In the most effective lessons, such as a literacy session in the oldest class, a numeracy session in the middle class, and a history lesson for the youngest pupils, the teachers' organisation and subject knowledge are excellent, and they engage the pupils' interest fully, providing very high expectations for work and behaviour for pupils of all attainment levels. The teachers' clear knowledge and understanding give them confidence to teach imaginatively and to inspire the pupils to respond at a high level to the experiences offered. In these and other lessons, the teachers assess their pupils continually, monitoring them carefully as they work. They know when to intervene and challenge the pupils by asking carefully considered questions to develop their understanding and knowledge. As a result, the pupils in each of the classes are keen to learn. Because they are encouraged to think and to justify the answers they give, pupils of all attainment levels, by the time they leave the school, have a clear understanding of what they are learning and can talk about it in a mature way. No examples were seen of teaching which was less than satisfactory.
18. The literacy hour and the numeracy strategy have been well introduced. Throughout the school, the teachers have a good knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum, and this is evident in their planning. They also encourage and teach well the development of basic skills. They undertake regular informal assessment of the pupils' work. Work is marked regularly, usually with the pupil, and often indicates how improvement can be made. Useful targets for learning in all curriculum areas are identified and are shared helpfully with the pupils and their parents.
19. Homework is set regularly, and parents are generally satisfied with the provision, although opinions among parents differ as to whether sufficient homework is provided. All pupils take home reading books on a regular basis and many have spellings and tables to learn. Older pupils are given further work to do, such as research and other activities, and all teachers value the work pupils have done at home. The school recognises the need to be clear about its policy for homework, to share it with parents, and to encourage their involvement in this through, for instance, the consistent use of reading diaries.

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

20. The school provides a broad, relevant, stimulating and challenging curriculum, which is well balanced to meet all requirements of the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the aims of the school. The areas of English and mathematics are given considerable importance, with literacy and numeracy having particular prominence. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school has ensured that all subjects, as well as those that form the core of the National Curriculum, remain an important part of the curriculum, and carefully linked cross-curricular topics provide an enjoyable educational experience for the pupils.

21. Provision for the under fives, in the class for the youngest children, is good. They experience a well-structured and well-organised curriculum. A clear planning system is based on the desirable learning outcomes and on the approaching National Curriculum requirements when applicable. The children make an efficient and smooth transition, according to their individual needs. The planning structure ensures continuity and progression in learning in the early years, and all levels of planning are exemplary, with specific learning outcomes identified and assessed. Details from the baseline assessment, made on entry to the school, are used well to ensure the needs of individual children are met.
22. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, fulfilling the requirements of the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are used to inform planning and ensure that class work is appropriate to the pupils' needs and attainment levels. Appropriately identified and specific targets are reviewed regularly, and parents are fully involved in the process. There is a challenging curriculum for higher-attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science, and all of the pupils are challenged, in each curriculum area, by work which is well matched to their levels of attainment.
23. The school uses a thorough and established system of planning, which builds well on first-hand experiences that are relevant to the pupils. The teachers plan the work for the coming half term collectively and decide upon clear targets for learning in all subjects, which they share with parents and which are carefully assessed at the end of the period.
24. The positive impact of the partnership between the primary and secondary schools in the area can be seen in extended subject expertise. Excellent use is made of visits and visitors, and in particular of the regular residential visits. One of these involves the whole school, and each of the experiences develops learning strongly in many subject areas. Throughout the year, there are different clubs and other activities, held after school or at lunch-times. In the term of the inspection, one club was in action and arrangements were being made for parents to assist in the setting up of a second. At the parents' meeting, parents differed about whether further opportunities were needed. A broad range of extracurricular activities is undertaken during the residential opportunities provided for all pupils.
25. The school is at the centre of the village and links with the community are very good. A pre-school group meets at the school during the week, and after school the buildings are used for several village activities. There have been significant improvements in the links the school has with the local church, and these are appreciated by parents. The school has some useful links with local business concerns, and a joint topic with English Nature is planned.
26. Very good planned provision is made for personal and social education, including drugs awareness and sex education. Personal and social skills are developed very well through the general ethos of the school and by the use of circle time. The pupils' awareness of right and wrong is well developed in lessons and at other times, and particularly because of the role models provided by all adults who work within the school. All of the pupils are able to take some kind of responsibility during their time in school. At all times they take responsibility for their own actions and are diligent in looking after each other, particularly those younger than themselves.
27. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Many opportunities are provided within and beyond the curriculum for them to develop very well in terms of their awareness of values and beliefs and in their ability to reflect on what they are learning about the world around them. They are encouraged very well to be aware of themselves, but also to be

sensitive to others. Their ideas of right and wrong are reinforced constantly in all aspects of school life, and pupils of all ages are encouraged to take increasing responsibility in the life of the school and in their own learning. Provision for their cultural development is good. They are given many opportunities to develop an appreciation of their own culture through a wide range of school activities, including the many visits they make. They are also encouraged to be aware of other major world cultures through, for instance, their work in religious education, their topics, the weekly French lessons and the annual international week, but this aspect of provision is not quite as well developed as the other areas.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The school has maintained the caring family atmosphere that was reported in the last inspection and makes very good provision for the welfare of its pupils. It has responded well to the key issues within this aspect, but there is still a little room for improvement.
29. When last inspected, the academic guidance provided for pupils was in some ways hampered by a lack of precision in the assessment procedures, resulting in some uncertainty as to exactly what level pupils had achieved, and thus making predictions and expectations difficult to target. There are now more accurate procedures for assessing pupils' work, based on a team approach to judging standards achieved, and a very thorough monitoring of academic progress through the setting and working through of half-termly targets in English, mathematics and most other subjects. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets and measuring their progress, and this information is shared with parents. Awards for reaching these targets are a popular feature of celebration assemblies. Although now very good, the assessment procedures require the further refinement of a system for recording and tracking each pupil's attainment in the various aspects of a subject, especially mathematics, to ensure a clear measurement of progress and appropriate targets for improvement.
30. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are excellent. There is a sensitive and flexible approach to introducing children into the reception class. All pupils are very well known by their teachers and other staff in the school, and they receive appropriate and discreet guidance to assist their development. There is an effective policy for rewarding good behaviour and effort, and imaginative strategies to reinforce the need to keep class rules. The school ethos successfully discourages any anti-social behaviour.
31. Arrangements for personal, social and health education are very good. They cover a range of important topics sensitively, and are highlighted by the weekly session in which pupils write to a member of staff in confidence about anything which concerns them. Their private replies from staff help to build the excellent relationships that reflect respect and concern for all individuals. The pupils are encouraged to become increasingly confident and responsible in preparation for their secondary school education.
32. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has very good systems for monitoring the progress and personal development of pupils with special educational needs, and identifies need early in the pupil's school career. The records for pupils are kept well and provide a good range of evidence, which teachers can call upon when determining the support required for each pupil. The learning support assistants are well deployed in providing the appropriate support.
33. Procedures for promoting good attendance and monitoring absences are generally good, the school having responded to an issue in the last inspection by adopting a computerised attendance record. This has given a higher profile to attendance requirements and has resulted in no unauthorised

absence. However, the teachers are not always rigorous in maintaining the class attendance registers during the day in order to comply with statutory and fire regulations.

34. Overall provision for the health and safety of children is very good, within a culture which encourages all members of the school community to consider safety at all times. The health and safety policy is monitored effectively, there is good first aid provision and all child protection procedures are in place.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The headteacher, governors and staff work hard to develop and nurture an effective partnership with parents based on mutual support and good communications. In the last year, a series of initiatives, including the introduction of weekly parents' forums and the invitation to parents and other members of the local community to attend Friday celebration assemblies, has been well received.
36. Most parents are very supportive of the school and its values. After a period of some uncertainty about the future direction of the school, a few parents were left with some concerns, which the headteacher and governors have been addressing successfully in most cases. Some parents were not clear about the complaints procedure and are anxious to receive the policy recently adopted by the governors.
37. The majority of parents support their children well in their learning and appreciate the information provided by the school in support of homework tasks. However, there is still some uncertainty about the exact requirements of the homework policy and parents are not always clear about their involvement. For example, there is insufficient opportunity for a home-school dialogue in support of reading through the school.
38. Overall, the effectiveness of the partnership with parents is good. Parents are kept informed through weekly newsletters and receive regular learning targets for their children. The annual pupils' progress reports are good. They describe clearly attainment, progress and the next stage for improvement in most subjects. Parents have daily opportunities to talk to class teachers as well as the formal progress meetings. Most parents have very high expectations of the school and support it generously through fund-raising activities. All have the opportunity to be involved in the life of the school. Some parents volunteer to help with school activities, although others feel that the range of activities outside lessons is rather limited.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. The school has a very positive ethos, which stems from its firm commitment to providing opportunity for all pupils to succeed within a caring community. It has a very clear sense of educational direction. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the other staff and the governors. All staff carry responsibility for areas of the curriculum, and they discharge these responsibilities well. The school's aims, values and policies are implemented consistently. Systems and practices are effective in ensuring that the school's day-to-day life is well-ordered and provides a very good context for learning.
40. Classroom provision and pupils' work are monitored on a systematic basis. All planning is undertaken jointly and is very effective in supporting the high quality of teaching and learning the school provides. Careful records of pupils' progress in many areas are maintained, and all pupils are well known individually. The school promotes equal opportunities for all its pupils, so that, for

instance, all activities make appropriate provision for both girls and boys. It undertakes careful monitoring of the pupils' progress in many areas and addresses any variations between boys and girls in the results achieved in National Curriculum tests. It has set targets for pupils' attainment that are based clearly on knowledge of the individual pupils, and are reviewed and updated regularly.

41. The members of the governing body have an excellent knowledge of the school and are strongly committed to its support and development. They discharge their duties very effectively through an appropriate structure of committees, the members of which are very well informed about the relevant aspects of school life. Responsibility for monitoring and supporting the provision for pupils with special educational needs and of literacy and numeracy has been allocated appropriately to individual governors. They and other governors have regular contact with the daily life of the school. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and other aspects of school life are met.
42. The quality of financial planning is very good. The school manages its budget very efficiently, and all spending is clearly related to the raising of educational standards. Careful records of all expenditure are maintained, and the governors monitor the school's financial position closely, as well as evaluating the cost effectiveness of all spending decisions. There are efficient and very effective procedures in place for routine financial control. All specific grants given to the school, including those for the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for the support and training of teachers, are spent appropriately.
43. The school development plan is a practical document, which is properly focused on the improvement of standards in the curriculum, whilst also including matters related to areas such as staffing and premises. It provides useful detail about the priorities agreed, and its progress is regularly reviewed. Responsibility for the approval of the plan and its subsequent evaluation lies clearly with the governing body, and governors are well informed about its progress.
44. The teaching and non-teaching staff support each other well and have a clear sense of common purpose. Relationships between the staff and the pupils are excellent. The management of special educational needs provision at the school is very good. The special needs co-ordinator ensures that the Code of Practice for special needs provision is fully implemented. The governing body, through its nominated governor, supports and monitors the provision effectively, and has made it a priority that the special educational needs of individuals will be identified and targeted as early as possible.
45. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education effectively and to meet the needs of all pupils. The teachers have a good balance of expertise and experience. One more recently qualified teacher benefited from the arrangements the school has in place for helping new members of staff take up their roles quickly and effectively and assisting in their further development. The qualifications and experience of the support staff are well matched to the demands of the curriculum. Teachers and classroom support staff work very well together to provide a good level of support to pupils throughout the school, and particularly for pupils with special educational needs. This partnership has a positive impact on learning, is contributing to improvement in standards at the school and ensures that all pupils make good progress in their learning. The administration of the school runs smoothly, and all the adults involved in the life of the school work very well together as a supportive team for the pupils.
46. The school has good arrangements for meeting the professional development needs of staff. The headteacher and teaching staff make good use of opportunities during professional discussions to

identify how teaching may be strengthened. The training undertaken is clearly focused to support the priorities of the school development plan and improve the quality of teaching and provision. For example, the school has made effective use of training opportunities to prepare staff for the current national initiatives in literacy and numeracy, which are helping to raise standards in these areas.

47. The school makes very efficient use of the resources available to it, as, for example, in the way in which the classrooms are used by the local playgroup on particular days when the pupils are elsewhere for physical education. The adequacy of the accommodation has been immensely improved since the beginning of the present school year, with the addition of a large and pleasant new room for the youngest class. This has made it possible to set up a third class and has improved overall provision considerably. The quality of displayed pupils' work enhances the learning environment throughout the school, and the buildings are kept well. The pupils take pride in and look after them, and take care of the resources available. However, conditions in the other two classes are still cramped, particularly for the oldest pupils, making it difficult sometimes for the pupils to engage in practical, investigative and creative activities. Imaginative use is made of the space available, but the storage of resources is still a problem. The small library is well stocked, and is due to be refurbished, and the school has recently created a useful computer suite. The lack of a hall means that classrooms are used for a wide range of purposes, including lunch and assemblies. Since completion of the local community hall has been delayed, the physical education curriculum can be delivered only by using the gymnasium of a local secondary school. The outdoor area is adequate for the numbers and age of the pupils, although there is no designated area for children who are under five. There is a good range of challenging climbing equipment.
48. The school's resources for learning are good overall, and for many areas of the curriculum are very good. The book and other resources used for supporting literacy are very good and for numeracy are good. Further resources are needed to support outdoor play for the under fives. Each class has at least two computers, and has access to the computer suite. The computers available are adequate at present, but are to be augmented as a result of specific funding newly received by the school. Very good use is made of visits and of visitors to extend the pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher and staff should:
- a. ensure higher standards in the presentation of written work in mathematics in Key Stage 2, so that the pupils' thinking and strategies are clear, and in the use in all areas of work of the handwriting skills learned (see paragraphs 60, 66, 69); and
 - b. ensure the careful identification and recording of the pupils' progress against all elements of subjects, particularly in mathematics (paragraphs 29, 67, 73).

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- The clarification to parents of the school policy on homework, and seeking further ways to involve parents in this, such as in the consistent use of a home-school reading diary (paragraph 37).
- The provision of further lunch-time or after-school activities, and involving parents in their organisation (paragraph 24).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

29

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
23	38	31	8	-	-	-

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		71
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		24

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.9
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	8	7	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	6	7
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	13	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (80)	80 (90)	87 (90)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (80)	87 (90)	87 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	3	3	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	2	3
	Girls	3	0	1
	Total	6	2	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (100)	33 (80)	67 (100)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	2	3
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	5	5	6
Percentage of pupils	School	83 (80)	83 (80)	100 (80)

at NC level 4 or above	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)
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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	71
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.3
Average class size	23.0

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130

FTE means full-time equivalent

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	1998/99
	£
Total income	129604
Total expenditure	122544
Expenditure per pupil	1776
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	7060

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	69
Number of questionnaires returned	38

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68.4	26.3	5.3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47.4	47.4	2.7	0	2.7
Behaviour in the school is good.	57.9	28.9	13.2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36.9	42.1	13.2	0	7.9
The teaching is good.	52.7	42.1	5.3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55.3	34.2	7.9	2.7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76.3	13.2	7.9	2.7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54.1	32.4	8.1	5.4	0
The school works closely with parents.	55.3	34.2	7.9	2.7	0
The school is well led and managed.	42.1	39.5	7.9	7.9	2.7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65.8	15.8	7.9	7.9	2.7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28.9	44.7	5.3	15.8	5.3

Other issues raised by parents

All matters raised related to the items above. Areas of concern from a few parents, which are noted in the relevant sections of the report, were outweighed by the positive response from a substantial majority. The inspectors' judgement confirms this positive view of the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

50. Almost all children entering the reception classes have experience of pre-school education. They have a gradual entry into school, providing them and their parents with time to make the important transition from home to school effectively. The school makes good provision for children under five in one class. Their learning is based around first-hand experiences of high quality and there is a strong ethos for learning in the class, with enthusiasm and commitment shown by all those involved. Provision overall in all areas of learning is good, with many areas having very good provision, but the outdoor curriculum is less well developed. The levels of attainment of all the children are assessed within the first few weeks of entry to the school and, although these vary from year to year, at the time of the inspection they indicated above the expected levels of competency and confidence with language and mathematics for their age. The children develop their skills well in all areas of learning and make good progress. By the time they are five, most achieve beyond the desirable learning outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development and in all other areas of learning, before making a smooth transition to the National Curriculum programmes of study.
51. The high quality of learning has been sustained since the previous inspection with the previous high quality teaching improved further.

Personal and Social Development

52. By the time they are five, the personal and social development of most children is above national expectations. All of them respond very well to teaching and non-teaching staff, who have established effective relationships with both them and their parents. Relationships between the children are excellent. They enjoy being together, and share equipment and take turns well. They settle to tasks quickly, concentrate on their work and are happy to seek help when they need it. Most are confident to give answers. The children are given guided choices in much of their work and are given the opportunity to plan some of their own activities by the use of the class activity pot. Behaviour is very good and the children, from a very early age, develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and show respect for their environment. The teacher encourages the children to express their feelings openly, as when shaking one another's hands in a circle, before giving a positive reason for doing so. They discuss feelings they may have of anger, and play a game that helps them to do the right thing and to explain how they feel. Teaching and provision in this area of learning are very good, because of the lively, stimulating and well-matched curriculum, which is delivered with enthusiasm and humour by the team of the teacher and the support assistants. This leads to the creation of a happy and secure atmosphere, where the staff know their children well, and in which learning is fun and achievement can flourish. Relationships between the adults and the children and between the children themselves are of a consistently high quality.

Language and Literacy

53. By the time they are five, most children are likely to achieve above what is expected nationally in this area of learning, with a few well above. They all make good progress. They listen carefully to the person who is speaking and follow instructions well. The children are confident to talk clearly about their experiences and to reflect upon and explain their thinking. All respond well to stories, such as those in their own books or when looking together at a big book called 'Over in the Meadow'. They appreciate the story, can recognise familiar words in the text and identify the names and sounds of familiar letters in them. Most read simple texts accurately and express what they like about them and

are developing a range of strategies, including phonic cues, to decode words. Children also share books during group sessions and with older children. By the time they are five, many can write a sentence unaided, with recognisable words. Most recognise some letters of the alphabet and a few know all of them. Their letters are well formed and they can write their names. They have good resources available to support them when writing and in their phonic work, but the writing table available to the pupils for their independent use needs further resources. Facilities for role play are satisfactory overall, but there are insufficient clothes for dressing-up at present. The provision made for the children to develop their skills is generally very good and is regarded by staff as of crucial importance. The quality of teaching is always very good, because of the excellent planning, knowledgeable teaching, delivered clearly and with perceptive questioning, and the strategies reinforced with the children, for instance for word-building.

Mathematics

54. Attainment in mathematics by five years of age is above what is expected nationally and the children make good progress. They enjoy number rhymes and most can count forwards and backwards to ten or more, and a few enjoyed counting to fifty with their class-mates, raising their hands with enjoyment as each fifth number was reached. They know simple two-dimensional shapes. Good links were made between counting and the shopping activity in 'The Lewknor Store', where the children learned to use words like 'total' and 'change' and were able to use the appropriate coins to make their purchases, some with an awareness of whether change was required. They have a growing awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction, and can use the appropriate language, and most write numbers to ten. Well-planned teaching is matched carefully to the children's needs. Number skills, including mental agility, are taught enthusiastically and effectively, and good work habits are developed. Teaching is of high quality, with some excellent teaching seen, where new ideas are carefully planned and are explained in ways children can understand. High quality activities are used, such as that for shopping, where effective strategies for learning in mathematics were provided. A good supply of well-matched and interesting resources, including mathematical games, are used well to practise and consolidate number skills and understanding.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

55. Learning is very good and standards are above what is expected nationally. Children learn well about their environment as they investigate, for instance, different sources of light, and draw and label items such as the sun, a space rocket, a bonfire and a light bulb. They talk confidently about their experiences of being in a Victorian classroom, where they show excitement and wonder in their learning. The children ask questions to gain information about the old-fashioned dresses worn by the teacher and assistant and have a good awareness of the past, able to see the differences between old and new. They are stimulated in their topic to think about clothes, toys and schools before the advent of the telephone. The study of items worn or brought in by their teacher leads to good progress in the children's understanding of the concept of time. They are also able to make simple maps and recognise some famous buildings. Children choose a Christmas decoration and use silver and gold pens to decorate, then glaze them with glue, before discussing their likes and dislikes. All see how important the mouse is to start the computer, to select programs and in playing, for instance, their 'Fish who could Wish' game. They show developing control in their use of the mouse and know how to use the space bar as they draw and paint pictures. Some can use the arrow keys for direction. The children have regular opportunities to use a computer, and their class news sheets about the Loch Ness Monster and the plague are impressive. Teaching is consistently very good in this area of learning. It is lively, interesting, motivating and often inspirational. It challenges the children. The children are introduced to a world of meaningful experiences, which they enjoy immensely and from which they learn greatly. They are encouraged to use their imagination, pose their own questions and

often to predict what might happen next. At present, outdoor provision is insufficient to give regular opportunities to monitor the growth of plants, for instance, and to have regular opportunities for sand and water to be available. Provision overall is good.

Physical Development

56. The overall standard of attainment is at least in line with what is expected and sometimes above, and the children make good progress. They are encouraged to think about their movements and to control them as they walk and stop, and run and stop, in lessons. They show a good awareness of their body and a growing awareness of space, as they explore different ways of using hoops and skipping ropes; they co-operate well with other children, as seen, for example during a reconstruction of a Victorian play-time. Construction kits and jigsaws are used with increasing confidence and tools such as scissors, pencils and glue brushes are handled appropriately. There is no indoor large hall facility, but the outdoor accommodation is used regularly for physical education and very good use is made of facilities for swimming and gymnastics elsewhere. There is access to outdoor play facilities, but these do not provide crawling activities, and the range of wheeled vehicles to develop other skills is limited. There is now direct access to an outside area and facilities for growing plants, but this area is not fenced at present. Provision overall in this area of learning is satisfactory and the teaching seen was good, because it was firmly linked to the children's physical needs in a structured and knowledgeable way.

Creative Development

57. Attainment in creative skills is at least in line with what is expected nationally and generally a little above average. The children make good progress in expressing their feelings and ideas through a range of experiences in art, craft, music and in some imaginative play. They work in a range of media, including painting on glass jars to make lanterns, and use their imagination, as, for instance, when drawing a house as a flying machine. They are learning how to mix colours to make light and dark shades and use this skill to paint. The children showed accuracy in observation when sketching gargoyles on their Oxford trail, or their own toothbrush and toothpaste, when looking at ways of keeping healthy. They enjoy singing songs such as 'Hickory Dickory Dock' and action rhymes, such as 'Five Currant Buns', where they sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. Good use is made of role play in the classroom. A well set up home corner had provided opportunities for shadow play during a topic on light, and was being changed into a toy shop for role play and shopping practice. However, there are insufficient resources provided at present to extend the children's imaginative play with dressing up clothes. Little direct teaching was seen during the inspection but, from the planning and from talking to the children, it is clear that teaching is at least good.

ENGLISH

58. Standards of attainment in the National Curriculum tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 maintained the high level of previous years, with all pupils achieving at least Level 4 and a third of the group achieving Level 5. In view of the small size of the group, however, it is not possible to compare these figures realistically with national averages or with the results of similar schools. Since the group of pupils undertaking the tests at the end of Key Stage 1 was larger, it means that some comparisons with such figures can be made. Pupils at this stage in 1999 achieved overall levels in reading that were in line with the national average and were above average in writing. When compared with schools of broadly similar intake, they were below average in reading and average in writing. A fifth of the pupils achieved Level 3 in writing, but none did in reading, which is below average. However, because this was still a relatively small group, these results were unduly influenced by the results of a few pupils whose underperformance on the day of the test was related

to personal problems. In Key Stage 1, boys have tended to do better than girls in recent years, reflecting the nature of the year groups, while results in Key Stage 2 similar for both groups.

59. The pupils currently nearing the end of Key Stage 2 are working at levels which would lead to above national expectations overall, with a significant number of pupils attaining a higher level. The pupils nearing the end of Key Stage 1 are working at levels a little above those expected nationally overall, with some pupils attaining at a higher level. Present progress throughout the school appears to be good, although this is difficult to assess because of the small cohorts and the fact that the ability range varies considerably from year to year.
60. Since the previous inspection, the attainment of individual pupils has been raised by improving the quality of skills in their written work. However, the presentation of written work in both key stages, but particularly in Key Stage 2, still requires attention. There are now regular handwriting lessons, which provide practice in the skills gained, but these skills are often not transferred to writing in daily lessons. At the last inspection, punctuation, grammar and planning and drafting were not seen to be an organised part of work in English. They now form an important part of the work completed in each class. The quality of teaching is much improved, and is now very good, and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen.
61. Standards at the end of both key stages are good in speaking and listening, with many pupils in Year 2 talking confidently and listening well in a range of situations. The Year 6 pupils listen attentively to other pupils and their questions develop ideas, as when in a literacy lesson they discussed the effectiveness of alliteration in their writing. All of the teachers encourage their pupils to express themselves with clarity and confidence, and there are many opportunities for them to do so, although at present there are no speaking and listening guidelines to ensure continuity through the school.
62. The standard of reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is a little above national expectations, with some pupils well above, and at the end of Key Stage 2 is clearly above national expectations, with most pupils in Year 6 able to identify key points in stories and use books well for research. All of the pupils throughout the school regard reading as important. They are enthusiastic and find great enjoyment in it. They read many fiction and non-fiction texts with increasing expression, and use well a range of strategies for identifying words, including phonics. Most, from an early age, talk about books and the people who write them with interest and explain what they like about the authors. Reading in groups is well established and a well-organised system of reading in pairs provides regular opportunities for younger pupils to read with older ones. Greater involvement of parents in their children's reading could be encouraged by the re-introduction of the home-school diary, which is presently not used consistently.
63. Standards of writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations, with a few pupils in Year 2 beginning to show originality and thoughtfulness in their use of words. Many pupils are beginning to write interesting stories, in a sequence of sentences, with simple words spelled correctly, as when writing about a sunflower. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average; in Year 6, most pupils are gaining a powerful vocabulary and using a range of writing, in which they show skills of empathy and description in extended prose and in poetry, as when describing 'a painting of trust', or describing something as 'blacker than Queen Victoria'. They can explain clearly and provide useable instructions in science and design technology work, and pupils' literacy skills are developed well in other subjects. Throughout the school, there is a rigorous application of the system used for spelling, and pupils spell well and use dictionaries as an integral part of their work.
64. The pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in all classes by the learning support assistants and by regular additional support, and make very good progress. All of the support

given is targeted specifically for their needs and assists them well in their development of literacy. Higher-attaining pupils are working at an appropriate level because of the commitment to match work carefully to the needs of different groups of pupils within each class and because of the high expectations in almost all areas of the subject.

65. The teaching of English is of a consistently high quality, with all lessons at least good and most very good or excellent. An enthusiastic teaching approach, using an expressive voice and appropriate humour, makes learning fun, and provides considerable challenge for pupils of all ages. There is a high level of response from pupils because of the commitment and enjoyment teachers have in the subject, and learning is of equally high quality. The pupils show equal enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning, are well motivated and totally involved in the work they do. Their behaviour is always at least very good and often excellent. The teachers' expectations are high and are met in a positive atmosphere, in which pupils work hard. For instance, Year 1 pupils, when looking at a big book about a meadow, read the text clearly, showed appreciation of the story and learned the difference between two similar letters. The teaching methods follow the very well established national framework for literacy and are effective. They provide a good balance of clearly explained class teaching, group activities which are well supported by learning support assistants, and short sessions which focus effectively on what has been learnt. The pupils practise and consolidate work in well organised groups. For instance, games were helping pupils of different attainment in Years 2 and 3 to learn and remember the spellings they needed. A group of pupils were reading Roald Dahl's 'The Twits' using a tape and earphones and were totally engrossed, and pupils, in pairs, were being supported in their writing and punctuation by using computers.
66. The teachers' knowledge and understanding are very good, and in one excellent lesson in Key Stage 2, for example, the use of a subject specific vocabulary helped to emphasise the use of alliteration and enabled the pupils to show full understanding. In this lesson about Beowulf, perceptive and positive feedback to pupils about their work was crucial in developing their use of a lively and imaginative style of writing. In all lessons, the teachers explain their ideas well, so that they make sense to the pupils, and the variety of methods they use helps the pupils to learn effectively. For instance, the use of the overhead projector in a lesson with the older pupils enabled them to see clearly the spelling rule they were being taught. Marking of work is completed regularly, usually with the pupils, and in all lessons the pupils are assessed constantly, with the knowledge gained being used to help them overcome any difficulties. The pupils show a general pride in their work in English, but not always in its presentation, particularly in Key Stage 2.
67. The management of the subject is good and it is monitored well by the co-ordinator and by the headteacher and governors. The results of national tests are now being analysed carefully and an improvement in progress is evident. The literacy hour is well established in the school and the planning system used is very good. Resources are very good and the wealth of group readers, fiction and non-fiction, has a positive impact. All resources are used extremely well. There is a small, comfortable and well-stocked library. This is to be refurbished very soon to improve access to new bookshelves and ensure an easier grouping system for the books. Learning targets for each pupil are assessed each half-term and levels of progress are carefully tracked, with record books signed by parents. The extension of this information to include an overall record detailing each attainment target would help the school to see progress even more clearly.

MATHEMATICS

68. The standards of attainment of pupils in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were very low when compared with those achieved by the same pupils in English. This represented considerable underperformance by the small number of pupils concerned, which has been accounted for by the school as in part attributable to personal factors but also to a lack of preparedness for the mathematics tests. This was partly due to the mathematics programme then being followed, in which important elements of learning were not sufficiently reinforced, but meant that the pupils did not achieve the levels expected by their teachers. These shortcomings have been addressed by the provision of more opportunities for pupils to re-visit topics previously covered in order to reinforce the necessary skills, and, by following the guidance of the national numeracy project, increasing their facility with mental mathematics. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieved levels that were above average overall when compared with national figures, and were well above average for pupils attaining Level 3. When compared with similar schools, results at this stage were average overall, but still above average for the higher grade. In line with the national picture, boys have tended to do better than girls, but there is no significant difference in their respective performance. Results for Key Stage 1 have shown steady improvement over recent years. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 have fluctuated, but the small size of the year groups concerned makes it difficult to identify a clear trend for pupils of this age.
69. The pupils currently nearing the end of Key Stage 2 are working at levels which are broadly in line with national expectations overall, with an appropriate number of pupils attaining at a higher level. Many pupils are developing their own strategies for solving problems, as when calculating the percentage reduction in the sale price of a television. They can explain their thinking and working with some confidence orally, although they have, in the past, had less practice in showing this in their books in a clear, organised way. The higher-attaining pupils can multiply confidently and divide numbers, showing their knowledge of decimal places. The pupils nearing the end of Key Stage 1 are working at levels a little above national expectations, with an appropriate number of pupils attaining at a higher level. Most pupils count in tens from different starting points with confidence and can add two numbers. The higher-attaining pupils can recall mentally addition facts and some tables with ease, and can explain the strategies they use to add tens and units. The sample of work for this key stage included clearly organised and presented explanations of money problems. Present progress throughout the school is always at least good and often better; however, current attainment, particularly in Key Stage 2, is less than it might be because of slower progress in previous years.
70. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has improved. Much of this is due to the introduction of the numeracy strategy, which has greatly increased the provision for pupils to improve their mental agility and quickened the pace of lessons considerably. The plan of work followed in line with this strategy provides a more systematic coverage of the necessary elements, particularly at Key Stage 2, and ensures the necessary consolidation of concepts. All of the pupils now show considerable pride in their mathematical achievements, although the presentation and setting out of work still sometimes lacks appropriate attention in Key Stage 2.
71. The teaching of mathematics seen in each class during the inspection was of a consistently high quality, encouraging and often inspiring the pupils, because of the lively approach, good knowledge and challenging questioning. Most teaching is very good or better and there is always a high level of response from the pupils because of the high level of expectation and commitment shown by the teachers. The pace throughout the whole of each lesson is usually very good. In one lesson with the older pupils, however, there was a slight lessening of pace in the eagerness to encourage the pupils to explain their thinking further, when it was necessary to move on to consolidate, in written form, what they had learnt. The teachers retained the pupils' total interest and motivation when practising mental

strategies, in class and group teaching and in discussion of work completed. The progress in lessons is always at least good and often better. The pupils all show enjoyment and enthusiasm, persevere in their work, and show good application, because of the enthusiastic and well-prepared approach of the teachers, who set work carefully at the level of each group.

72. The teachers provide the pupils with strategies for working successfully in mathematics, as when the older pupils recalled the appropriate rules taught when rounding numbers up and down. The teaching at Key Stage 2 uses good explanations and skilful questioning to help pupils understand and to extend their problem-solving skills. These lessons with the older pupils have a consistent focus on the pupils' explanation of their own thinking, which helps them greatly. In a very challenging lesson, the Years 2 and 3 pupils learned an easy way to add nine, with the higher attainers also doing so for 19 and 29. The explanations given by the teacher were clear, a number square was used effectively to enable the pupils to see the necessary patterns, and all pupils were encouraged to make progress by the use of specific questions posed to each of them. In Key Stage 1, concepts are consolidated well with the careful and regular use of games played in groups, usually with an adult. These are well matched to the mathematical needs of the pupils and provide good reinforcement of their conceptual understanding. In an excellent lesson at Key Stage 1, pupils became fascinated with numbers because of the enthusiastically and dramatically delivered mental mathematics session, followed by the challenge of practising and consolidating their knowledge of tables and number bonds. They were able to use previously learned patterns in order to generalise about adding on nine or ten. Because of the positive atmosphere, the pupils gained confidence, achieved well and evaluated their progress at the end of the lesson.
73. The contribution made by learning support assistants to the teaching and learning of mathematics, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, is strong and positive, and the teaching is conducted in a sensitive and effective way. The lower attaining pupils retain motivation as they work very hard to acquire the necessary skills and concepts. They make very good progress in class or in small groups, sometimes taught outside the classroom. Overall, resources are good. The numeracy strategy has been introduced very well, with additional resources used effectively. These are used well to explain, practise and consolidate learning, particularly in Key Stage 1, and their use is developing well with the older pupils. English and topic work make particularly good contributions to numeracy, in developing the language necessary to explain mathematical thinking and in the presentation of information such as time lines. Science and design technology tasks include opportunities for measurement and the presentation of data in table form. More planned opportunities could usefully be included in the other subjects of the curriculum. Samples of pupils' work are usefully kept as indications of progress. Targets for learning, which have been planned jointly by the teachers, are carefully assessed each half term in each class, and levels of progress are now tracked carefully. The progress made against these targets is shared with parents twice a year. The extension of these records, to include an overall record detailing each attainment target, would help identify progress more clearly. The low targets set for mathematics are being reconsidered in the light of the additional progress now being made. The management of the subject is now developing well, with increased monitoring of teaching and effective analysis of the previous underperformance in the subject.

SCIENCE

74. As indicated elsewhere, the small size of the year group means that it is not possible to make a reasonable comparison between the results obtained in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 and either national figures or those for schools of broadly similar intake. However, the overall results of the pupils concerned compared unfavourably with the results they achieved in English, although the higher attainers did as well in science as in English. Teachers' assessments at

the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 indicated standards that were average overall and well above average for the number of pupils attaining Level 3. Comparisons with the results of schools of broadly similar intake showed well below average performance overall, but well above average numbers of pupils achieving Level 3 at this age. Inspection findings indicate that most of the pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are attaining at levels that are broadly in line with national expectations, with an appropriate proportion above that level. Those nearing the end of Key Stage 2 are almost all currently working at levels that are at least in line with the national average, and a significant proportion are attaining at a higher level. Boys have generally done better than girls overall, reflecting both the national picture and the ability profile of the year groups. Since the previous inspection, results at the end of both key stages have fluctuated, which is indicative of the considerable variation between the ability ranges of the various year groups.

75. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the school. As part of their work on living processes, the oldest pupils conducted a careful investigation of the conditions that influence the development of mould. They recorded their observations carefully, and most showed a reasonable understanding of how to conduct a scientific investigation and ensure that their testing is fair. Their language skills and normal ways of working mean that they enjoy discussing their findings with others and drawing conclusions based on the evidence they have gathered, although some find it difficult to make predictions about the possible outcomes of what they are doing. Work completed previously indicates that at this stage they have a good understanding overall of the other elements of the science curriculum. Younger pupils are encouraged to explore the world around them and to ask questions about how it is made. They are able to identify practical ways in which they can be careful about personal hygiene, for example, and show sound awareness of how plants grow. Year 2 pupils offered thoughtful ideas about how to take care with medicines and then presented them well in their posters, while Year 3 pupils in the same class were able to apply their thinking also to the caution needed with household chemicals.
76. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. The teachers plan interesting learning activities, in which the objectives are clear. There is a good match between the activities provided and the various levels of ability within each class. The teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and all make good use of questioning to challenge the pupils to think. They usually check their pupils' existing understanding before moving further into a topic and make good use of summary sessions to reinforce learning.
77. Since the teachers make science an interesting and challenging activity, the pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. Consequently, pupils of all attainment levels, including pupils with special educational needs and the more able, make good progress in their learning. This progress is seen clearly in the way in which the teachers plan carefully the science topics, which are followed throughout the school, with pupils in each class being challenged at the appropriate level in their learning. In this way, for example, pupils of differing ages learn to identify the parts of the human skeleton or the organs of the body with increasing levels of sophistication. The pupils enjoy the work they are doing and make the most of the interesting opportunities provided for them. They work well together and share resources sensibly. They record work in a variety of ways, sometimes using information technology to do so. They also use CD-ROMs to gather information about the topics they are studying. All pupils are encouraged to develop lively questioning skills, which are a basis for good investigative work. They make good gains in their observational and language skills. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development as they explore the world and delight in discovery. It also provides a useful vehicle for the development of appropriate vocabulary, the writing of reports, and the recording, analysis and presentation of information.

78. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of the development needs of the subject and these are already identified as a priority for the school. Little formal monitoring of teaching or of pupils' work has yet taken place, but the way in which teachers collaborate in their planning means that progress across the school is evident. The subject is satisfactorily equipped at present and resources are used efficiently, although limitations of space in the two original classrooms place some constraints on practical and investigative work. Very good use is made of the school's immediate environment, as when the youngest pupils scour the adjacent churchyard for mini-beasts, and of residential and other visits to places further afield. Health and safety issues are addressed well.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79. Although it was possible to see only one art lesson and no lessons in design technology, it is clear from talking to pupils, looking at work completed previously and teachers' planning, that the work completed in both subjects is of good quality and the pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils. By the time they leave school, the oldest pupils have a good awareness of shades of colour, as seen in their colour-mixing, which they use in large pictures. Using pencils and crayons they show increasing attention to detail in their carefully executed mural of a Victorian street. Their batik work representing a doorway is imaginative and colourful, as are the Picasso portraits they have produced. In Year 6, the pupils show good design skills and originality in their work-sheet holders, created from cereal boxes and decorated imaginatively. By the time they are seven, most pupils use colour well to paint fish in shades of blue, and sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. Year 2 pupils make colourful and individually designed fireworks from cardboard for their millennium display, and use careful pencil work in their illuminated writing and intricate decoration. Since the previous inspection the high standards have been upheld.
80. Carefully taught skills mean that Year 6 pupils study how to fasten their holder, use buttons, locks and chains successfully to do so, and are guided to look at front and rear views. The design-and-make process is taught well and pupils give careful thought to how their product will look, sharing ideas about textures, such as a sand effect on an underwater design. They are encouraged to work carefully, and they follow their individual designs and choose their own materials to produce the desired effect, as when blue jewels were used to give the effect of bubbles. Their response is consistently very good in both subjects.
81. From the information available, it is clear that teaching is good in both subjects. The teachers have very good subject knowledge. The effect of this was shown, for instance, in a Year 2 lesson, when the teacher gave an inspirational introduction of illuminated manuscripts to the pupils, using a Rembrandt picture of a woman studying a manuscript. The overall planning, which is of high quality, provided a lesson full of imaginative challenge. The pupils listened attentively to the interesting explanations and were encouraged to work silently, listening to music, as they developed their ideas carefully to illustrate their initial letter. They were enthusiastic and careful in their decorations. The Year 3 pupils use the design process well to make accurate representations of three-dimensional buildings for their millennium topic. They are taught to use resources, such as cardboard, to give the desired effect when making models of the Eiffel Tower and the Sydney Opera House. Skills are taught progressively through the school and the pupils are introduced to a range of different materials such as plaster in Year 1 and glass for painting designs in Years 2 and 3.
82. The subjects are well managed. Skills and techniques are taught well and learned effectively, and the pupils have a balance of opportunities to explore and apply their skills in both subjects in interesting half-termly topics. Information technology is used well in art in each class and supports the evaluation process in design and technology. The whole-school residential visit provides wonderful opportunities to develop these areas. The pupils make bird sculptures and also design kites, which

they test before flying. The school uses local experts in art and design to work with the pupils and this has a positive impact on standards and on motivation. Visits to museums, such as the Ashmolean, where pupils study work of the Impressionists, enhance the subject. The school exhibits the pupils' work in various places, including the church, the local secondary school and elsewhere, and good links are forged with the community. Provision for the subjects is monitored through the joint planning and assessment of work. Sketchbooks, which would also provide a useful picture of pupils' progress in the development of skills and techniques, are not used systematically.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

83. The two subjects are delivered in parallel as part of the school's well-planned and carefully structured scheme for topic work. Within that scheme, equivalent time is allocated and appropriately matching development takes place in each subject, though within a fully integrated approach to the topics being studied.
84. It was possible to see only limited direct teaching of history during the inspection, and no teaching of geography. However, other evidence indicates that the pupils' levels of attainment by the end of both key stages are at least in line with and often above the levels to be expected nationally in these subjects. In the course of their topic work, they develop a good awareness of the world in which they live and of their immediate surroundings. In the course of their topic on Oxford, for instance, older pupils identified how a familiar street might have appeared at significant points in its history, encouraging their awareness of both an urban environment which contrasted with their own and of change over time. This required considerable research, and the presentation of their findings also provided a stimulus for work in art. The development of the Oxford Trail, similarly, encouraged their research skills and their use of information technology. This is where the strength of the school's approach to topic work lies, in that it provides a vehicle for a broad approach to learning, which is stimulating and exciting, whilst clearly developing the specific skills of geography and history. At the same time, it is providing the stimulus for pupils' work in English, religious education, art, information technology and other subjects, and is developing very well their personal and social awareness.
85. The quality of teaching is very good. Since the same broad topic is pursued by pupils of all ages, a great deal of joint planning is undertaken by the teachers to ensure that all pupils are being challenged in the work they are doing and are developing systematically the full range of historical and geographical skills appropriate to their age. All of the teachers show very good knowledge of the subjects and convey well to the pupils their own enthusiasm for the topics being studied. They adopt creative approaches, providing a range of imaginative and challenging learning experiences. The youngest pupils, for instance, as part of their consideration of significant periods and people during the past millennium, experienced a carefully prepared Victorian schoolroom and a teacher who was so unlike their own. Their previous work on the plague had been equally stimulating, resulting in the production of a newsletter made up of their creative writing about the experience of a plague village and produced on the computer.
86. As a direct result of the quality of the teaching and the range of experiences offered, the pupils respond very well to their work and the quality of their learning is high. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, make good progress throughout the school. They acquire quite detailed knowledge of periods or themes they study, and enjoy the opportunity to be detectives when considering, for instance, a range of historical sources. Pupils in the Year 2 and 3 class, for example, have a clear grasp of details of the life of Elizabeth I, but also show good awareness of the information they could gain from the picture sources provided. In each of the classes, the pupils relate their work constantly to a time-line displayed in the room, to encourage their sense of chronology. They develop a good awareness of the wider world, as when

they are following the journeys of the 'Vizzy Teds', which have become a feature of the local community as well as world travellers. The pupils share discussion opportunities well, listening to each other's ideas and working constructively together. Pupils of all levels of ability respond well to the opportunities provided for them to pursue individual research, and show much appreciation of the work produced by others.

87. Geography and history are exciting subjects at Lewknor. They are clearly valued, imaginatively planned and well co-ordinated. The pleasure with which each of the oldest pupils greets the new 'doorway' into the topic for the week is indicative of a high level of provision for the subjects throughout the school, as is the enthusiasm with which these pupils pursue the research tasks of their 'History Challenge'. The subjects are well resourced and are complemented well by the use of the museum and of visits and visitors. The residential experiences that all pupils share are of particular value, as they are able then to undertake extensive studies of different localities.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

88. Although little direct teaching was observed during the inspection, ample other evidence indicates that standards of attainment are at least in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, with many pupils attaining above that level. The progress made by the Key Stage 1 pupils, from work seen and analysis of planning and assessment, is at least satisfactory, with some of the youngest pupils making good progress in the acquisition of skills and in their application. In Key Stage 2, progress is often good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
89. The Year 6 pupils have had experience of using a digital camera when taking photographs of a memorial on their Oxford trail. In their work on doorways, they enjoyed worked in pairs, using visual graphics produced with the digital camera. They imported their photographs carefully, using the Photo Suite program, and concentrated hard to edit their digital images by manipulating them in the variety of ways provided by the editing program. Their final stage was to print and save the warped image of a flower into a collage or greeting card. Throughout the process, they were critical of their images, which they evaluated and improved as they worked. The Year 4 and 5 pupils inserted photographs into their text in their Oxford Trail work and showed a good awareness of audience when combining the different forms, with some of the pupils organising and improving the information.
90. Pupils in Year 2 use their word-processing skills to write holiday news and 'Light' poems for display. They wrote their own Queen Victoria stories in pairs, using correct spacing, and some inserted punctuation. They were able to find and save their work. They use the computer independently to make several types of graphs about the colours they like best. Year 1 pupils produced some remarkable work in their newsletter on the plague. They use the mouse well, as when selecting an item in their 'The Fish who could Wish' game, or when painting pictures. They are able to use different painting tools and brush sizes and enjoy experimenting with these, creating shapes successfully with each brush.
91. Teaching is very good in Key Stage 1, although the need for further training has already been identified. In Key Stage 2, although no direct teaching was seen, from talking to pupils and the analysis of pupils' work and teachers' records, indications are that it is also very good. The knowledgeable and systematic teaching at Key Stage 2 enables the pupils to extend their skills and to make good progress in a confident way. In each class, the teachers plan weekly teaching sessions in alternate half terms, to develop specific skills and techniques. They explore and apply these to the communication and handling of information and to support problem-solving. Wherever appropriate, information technology is part of a main topic for controlling, monitoring and modelling. The use of

information technology in art in each class is good. Impressive use is made of the medium in topic work, when, for example, the youngest pupils produce their 'Lewknor News' detailing the hardship of living in a plague village or indicating their enjoyment of the experience of being in a Victorian classroom. The interactive program about the Civil War created by the older pupils is also of a high standard. The pupils in each class are very enthusiastic about their work and enjoy the challenges provided in using the technology appropriately and in solving problems. They concentrate hard and work well together, taking turns on the computer, and persevering with their tasks. They enjoy computers, and use them naturally as a normal part of their learning.

92. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and its needs, and is well placed to continue its development in line with the school's priorities and to provide the training to raise staff confidence further. The control element of the subject is currently less well developed. Resources are adequate at present and are regularly used, although for the older pupils the useful computer suite is not easily accessible. Funding has very recently been received to enhance this provision greatly, in conjunction with partnership schools, and more regular opportunities will then be possible for pupils to practise their skills on more up-to-date equipment. There is no opportunity at present for monitoring teaching, but planning and assessments are developed co-operatively and these are both of high quality, enabling systematic progress of individual pupils to be made and monitored effectively.

MUSIC

93. The pupils in all classes listen appreciatively to music in assemblies and at other times and enjoy a wide range of musical experiences. They are confident to take part in music festivals with other schools in the area. They enjoy singing songs and hymns and performing in school productions and celebrations, such as those on May Day, when the pupils sang in French and played recorders. By the time they leave school, the oldest pupils are used to listening carefully to music from different traditions and expressing their views about it. It was not possible to observe any end of Key Stage 2 lessons during the inspection.
94. In the middle class, the younger pupils listen excellently, in total absorption, to mediaeval music linked with their history topic. All of the pupils, including those of high attainment and those with special educational needs, show, by their mature oral contributions, a very well developed appreciation of music. They are able to explain with clarity and imagination the pictures in their mind conveyed by the music. The pupils show a good knowledge of the sounds different musical instruments make and how each helps to develop the ideas in the piece of music.
95. Since the previous inspection, the use of music in assemblies has been introduced and further development in school music has taken place, with more emphasis on the wider use of instruments and the regular use of singing and instrumental performance in the Friday assemblies. The established group teaching of recorders has been extended to the teaching of woodwind and piano, and is soon to cover the teaching of violins.
96. Although it was only possible to see one lesson, it is clear that pupils are taught very well and make good progress. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and the pupils learn much about mediaeval music in Years 2 and 3. Lessons are planned well and the teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn, preparing them well, for instance, to sit quietly and reflect on the music. Their introductions build carefully on what the pupils already know about, for example Gregorian chants, and link effectively with other subjects. The teachers use a variety of listening and playing resources carefully, as when excerpts of mediaeval music were played and the pupils were asked for their response. They pass on their love of music to the pupils because of their enthusiastic approach. The questions posed to the pupils are challenging and perceptive and make each of them think deeply

and understand more. The replies, by both higher-attaining and special educational needs pupils, show an equally deep and thoughtful response to the music. The responses pupils make are dealt with very sensitively, encouraging them to be confident and prepared to share openly their feelings about the music they encounter. The teaching is highly stimulating; it encourages the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills and their imaginative writing, and also inspires their musical appreciation.

97. The curriculum is developed around cultural and seasonal events in an interesting and enjoyable way. It provides good opportunities for performance as skills are acquired and developed. Good links are made with parents and the wider community. The well-informed co-ordinator monitors the coverage and assessment of the music curriculum, ensures progress and has clear ideas about the development needs of the subject and the extra resources needed to improve the presently adequate supply.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

98. Since it was possible to observe only one lesson of physical education, it is not possible to make a clear judgement about either the standards attained by pupils or the quality of teaching. Other evidence available indicates that pupils generally make appropriate progress in the subject and gain much enjoyment.
99. The school has a very good policy and planning for the subject is very good. All elements of the curriculum are well covered in an organised and systematic way, and skills are assessed. The various residential visits also provide very good opportunities for all pupils to develop confidence and competence physically, in outdoor and adventurous activities. There is an effective balance of teaching of the necessary skills and participation in games, with useful focus on extension activities to support the higher-attaining pupils. Resources are good. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate support. Although the school has no hall, this does not seriously restrict the development of physical education skills. Swimming is a regular weekly activity for all pupils in the school and has a positive impact on the confidence and competence of all children, with almost all becoming able swimmers. Each class has a term where they develop games skills and practise athletics using the outdoor facilities of the school, which provide both hard-standing and grassed areas, and a nearby playing field. The neighbouring secondary school is used well for regular gymnastics and dance lessons for all classes, on a termly basis. Pupils do very well in local gymnastics competitions, and participate annually in rounders, football and netball tournaments with partnership schools.
100. The school regularly holds events that celebrate cultural occasions and the pupils join in and practise their skills of country dancing and maypole dancing. Their co-operative skills are developed, and the activities are enjoyed by all.
101. The well-informed co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and sees a need to extend the very good opportunities already provided to enable the pupils to take part in further competitive sports.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

102. It was possible to observe only one religious education lesson during the inspection, but other evidence suggests that standards of pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages are at least in line with the levels expected by the local authority's current agreed syllabus.

103. By the time they leave the school, many pupils are beginning to understand what it means to take a religion seriously. They acquire an appreciation of the practices and beliefs of Christianity, as well as those of traditions such as Judaism and Islam. The work they do is carefully planned by the teachers to relate to the whole-school topic currently being studied. Pupils in the oldest class, for instance, in studying this term their different doorways and the historical periods to which they relate, are encouraged at the start of the year to think about important themes such as new beginnings and repentance. Pupils throughout the school, following the same broad topic, wrote their prayers for the future, those read in assembly by Year 6 pupils showing considerable awareness of the world as well as a good understanding of the nature of prayer. Similarly, pupils of all ages had written thoughtfully about their experience of visiting the Faith Zone of the Millennium Dome. In all of their work, the pupils are encouraged to relate what they are learning to their own feelings and experiences. They are introduced to a range of stories and practices from Christianity, the knowledge of which they build on as they go through the school. They show satisfactory levels of knowledge, for instance, of some of the stories in the Bible about Jesus and other people. They also encounter festivals and other aspects of religions other than Christianity, as when the youngest pupils thought about the Chinese New Year. They develop a good awareness of themselves and the world around them, and show sensitivity to the needs and beliefs of others.
104. Although little direct teaching of religious education was seen in the course of the inspection, it is clear that the subject is taught as well as the other elements of the topic work undertaken. The teachers are confident in what they are teaching and their subject knowledge is good. All handle the pupils' questions with sensitivity and use imaginative approaches and interesting activities in the topics being studied. Stories are used well to develop the pupils' religious understanding, and the use of circle time and the quality of the teachers' questioning encourage the pupils to reflect. All pupils are developing the ability to share important feelings with their teachers and other members of the class, and they all treat each other's views with great respect. The pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They respond well to the interesting learning opportunities provided, and enjoy the opportunity to discuss issues that arise in their work. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are higher attainers are equally challenged by the lively and stimulating approach to learning throughout the school.
105. The teachers are well supported by the co-ordinator, who has a good overview of the subject and its needs. Further development will be needed this year in, for instance, the use of assessment, as the new locally agreed syllabus is introduced. At present, the subject is adequately resourced, but the school intends to extend its range of artefacts to aid the study of the various religions which feature in its programme of study. Very good use is made of visits and visitors, and the neighbouring church is used well as a resource for learning. The subject has clearly continued to develop well since the previous inspection.