

INSPECTION REPORT

COOKHAM RISE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cookham, Berkshire

LEA area: Royal Borough of Windsor and
Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 109856

Headteacher: Mrs C J Littlefield

Reporting inspector: Bryan Clasby
17831

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 July 2000

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Road Cookham Berkshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sheila Jay
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Bryan Clasby	Registered inspector	Art Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Clare Lorenz	Lay inspector	English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mick Michell	Team inspector	Science Information technology Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
Angela Cale	Team inspector	English Geography History	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Margaret Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cookham Rise Primary School is located in the Cookham Rise area of this Berkshire village. There are 196 full time pupils. These figures are average for a primary school. The pupils are organised into seven classes. Overall there are approximately the same numbers of boys as girls, but there is an imbalance in Years 3 and 4. In Year 3 there are nearly twice as many boys as girls, whereas in Year 4 the proportions are reversed. The school is in an area of mixed housing and draws pupils from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. A substantial number of pupils journey to the school from the surrounding area, and many come from nearby Maidenhead. About 7% of pupils are from an ethnic minority origin which is high when compared nationally. The majority of these pupils are of European origin and include Spanish, Italian and French speakers. There are 31 pupils (approximately 16%) on the register for special educational needs. This is broadly in line with the national average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, and again this is about average. The school admits pupils in the term after they have become five years of age. Before this the pupils have had a variety of pre-school experiences including attendance at nursery schools and playgroups, as well as being at home with their parents or carers. Pupils enter the school with variable attainment but overall this is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cookham Rise is a good school with the capacity to become better. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school to achieve high standards, especially in English, mathematics, science, religious education, physical education and music. In these subjects pupils achieve above, or well above the national average. Provision for the personal and social development of pupils is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, and behaviour in and around the school is very good. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. The curriculum is broad and balanced though there is a weakness in that not all classes receive all parts of the National Curriculum for information and communications technology. The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher and the governing body ensures that the school's key aims are well met. Improvements are needed to ensure greater rigour in the monitoring and evaluation processes. The school provides satisfactory value for money as its pupils enter and leave the school with above average levels of attainment.

What the school does well

- On entry to the school the pupils are given a very good start to their education and very quickly develop positive attitudes to their learning.
- It provides a very good environment in which the pupils learn well and the school secures very high standards of behaviour.
- All teaching is satisfactory and much of it is good and some very good.
- It has a very good ethos in which respect and care for others is paramount for both pupils and adults.
- It provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school has been very successful in bidding for funding to improve the accommodation and facilities for learning as well as gaining improved playing space for the pupils.
- Through very good teaching pupils make very good progress in music, and physical education.
- The contribution of parents and other members of the community significantly enhances the learning opportunities for pupils.

What could be improved

- All parts of the National Curriculum for information and communications technology are not fully covered.
- The headteacher and governing body do not have a sufficiently rigorous approach to applying what they know about the school to raise standards further.
- The school does not have a consistent approach to assessing what pupils know, understand and can do to ensure pupils achieve the highest possible standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in November 1996 the standards attained by the pupils by the time they leave the school have remained above the national average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching has improved in that there is no unsatisfactory teaching. Standards of communication with the parents have risen, and sex education now meets statutory requirements. The governing body is involved in strategic decisions about the curriculum through the workings of the appropriate committee. Although steps have been taken to improve the assessment procedures there are still weaknesses and there has been a slow rate of progress in this aspect. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	A	C
mathematics	C	A	B	C
science	A	B	B	C

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

Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, but it is generally above average. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school to achieve well above average attainment in English, and above average in mathematics and science. During the inspection, however, the standards in English were above average, not well above, due to some weaknesses in spelling at Key Stage 2. The school has set targets for the existing Year 6 pupils which are appropriately challenging, and the unconfirmed results of the National Curriculum tests for 2000 suggest that these are likely to have been achieved. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are at least good throughout the school, with higher attainment being achieved in speaking and listening in English and across the curriculum.

The standards in Key Stage 1 are similarly high with performance in mathematics being particularly strong. In mathematics standards are well above the national average when compared with all schools and above the national average when compared with similar schools.

Standards in music, physical education and religious education are very good. They are at least satisfactory and often good in all other subjects.

The trend in results for English, mathematics and science since 1996 is broadly in line with the national improvements.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good throughout the school. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who concentrate and work very well as individuals, in groups and with adults.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in all circumstances and towards each other.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils understand very well the impact of their actions on others and show respect for others' feeling, values and beliefs.
Attendance	This is very good and there are procedures in place to ensure that it remains so.

The pupils, from the time they start school, settle quickly and become confident learners. They express real delight in their learning of new skills. They relate comfortably and well to each other. They offer support and encouragement when engaged in collaborative activities. They are spontaneously helpful to each other and show a concern for the safety and well being of their peers. They behave very sensibly around the school, and no unpleasant behaviour was seen during the inspection.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good

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

Teaching is good across both key stages. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The percentage of teaching that is very good or better is 24%.

The quality of teaching in English is good at both key stages, as is the case for mathematics. Literacy skills are well taught throughout the school, but there is a need to improve the teaching of spelling at Key Stage 2. Numeracy skills are well taught at Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily taught at Key Stage 2. The school meets the needs of its pupils well including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. There is scope for more accurate identification of gifted and talented pupils, and for provision to respond to their particular needs. Pupils apply new knowledge well, and work mostly with undivided attention throughout lessons. They work together successfully when the requirements demand to develop good levels of understanding through purposeful discussion and joint exploration of the topic.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall but there are weaknesses in the provision of information and communications technology and opportunities for investigation in science at Key Stage 1. It is enriched by extra-curricular activities and educational visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' needs are well known and they are well supported in making good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are enabled to feel secure in their learning of English as an additional language, are well taught, and their good progress is a source of justifiable pride for the pupils and the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for moral and social development is very good. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Procedures for assessing and targeting pupil performance are inconsistent.

Overall the curriculum is good. Music is a significant strength. Parents and other adults from the community, contribute very well to their pupils' learning. They support a full range of activities from cycling proficiency to reading, and from needlework to netball. Parents support homework conscientiously. The school communicates effectively with parents and the reporting of pupil progress satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school successfully achieves its key aim and values. A more systematic approach to planning improvement, and clearer arrangements for delegation of responsibility are required.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors know the school well, and they contribute their areas of considerable expertise to the school's advantage. They need to develop a fuller understanding of their role as a 'critical friend' so they can more effectively hold the school to account for the standards it achieves.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is satisfactory knowledge overall and of individual pupil performance. The school's targets are appropriately challenging. The good quality data about individual pupils is insufficiently shared with the teachers who need it.
The strategic use of resources	The school's priorities for improvement are appropriate and satisfactorily supported by its financial planning.

The headteacher and staff have a shared commitment to raising standards. The strategies to achieve this are being refined and developed. The governing body makes significant contributions to the school's development and is now well placed to extend this involvement by adopting a more rigorous approach to holding the school to account. Staffing, the recently much improved accommodation, and learning resources are generally good and effectively deployed. The additional numbers of learning support assistants would benefit from a thorough induction programme. The school is seeking to provide best value when selecting and acquiring resources, in posing challenging targets for pupil performance, and in beginning to examine its performance in relation to other schools.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like coming to school.• Children are making good progress.• Teachers are welcoming and approachable.• The school ethos encourages hard work.• Music is of a high standard.• Behaviour in the school is very good.• The school places importance on the personal development of pupils.• Communications with parents have improved and parents now feel more knowledgeable about what goes on.• Standards in English and mathematics are good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater challenge for the most able pupils through more appropriate homework.• Fuller range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspectors agree with the very positive views about the school which were expressed at the parents' meeting and in the questionnaires. The inspection findings confirm that improvements in the arrangements for homework are needed in terms of consistency and appropriateness. The range of extra-curricular activities, however, is considered good for a primary school of this size. It is acknowledged that parents contribute significantly to this provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On admission to the school pupils make a very good start to their education. At the end of Key Stage 1, in 1999, the school's results in reading and mathematics were well above the national average. In writing they were above the national average. Compared with schools in similar social circumstances the results in mathematics were above average and those for reading and writing were average. The percentages of pupils reaching level 3, which is higher than the expected level, were well above average for writing and mathematics and above average for reading.
2. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, results in English were well above the national average. Results in mathematics and science were above the national average. There were no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. In English, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 of attainment was well above average, as was the proportion gaining the higher Level 5. In mathematics and science the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was above average. These results represent high attainment compared with the national picture, and they are an improvement on the results reported at the time of the last inspection in 1996. Compared with schools in similar social circumstances, the 1999 results were average in English, mathematics and science, indicating that pupils achieve at least the standards of which they are capable. Over the past four years, the school's results have improved in line with the national trend of improvement.
3. Evidence gathered during the inspection largely confirms the picture of high attainment painted by the national test results. In the current Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, attainment is above national expectations. In English, mathematics and science, attainment in the current Year 6 is above national expectations, with a significant proportion of pupils on track to achieve the higher Level 5 in this year's national tests.
4. Attainment in English is above national expectations. By Year 2 pupils can read confidently to an audience and show a good understanding of a range of punctuation. By Year 6 they can contribute to discussions in an articulate and relevant way, listen to the opinions of others and respond appropriately. Throughout the school pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening skills and good progress in writing and reading. Spelling is however a weakness in Key Stage 2.
5. In mathematics attainment is above national expectations. At the end of Year 2 pupils can use mathematical language appropriately, have rapid recall of number facts to ten and higher and can use this to solve problems. At the end of Year 6 they can use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and numbers to two decimal places. They can identify operations correctly to solve more complex problems though they need more practice to gain further confidence in this area.
6. In science attainment is slightly above the national average by the end of both key stages. At the end of Year 2 pupils can compare objects and know about the difference between living and non-living things. At the end of Year 6 they can make predictions, work out how to test them appropriately and then review their predictions in the light of evidence.

7. In information and communications technology attainment is above the national expectations for some aspects, but below the national expectation in others. In Year 2 pupils know about simple word processing and can cut and paste shapes. The pupils' capacities to sort and classify information is, however, limited through too few opportunities. By the end of Year 6 their word processing skills have advanced and many can undertake complex tasks such as linking pages in a web site. Adding, amending and interrogating stored information is a weakness. The shortcomings, however, indicate insufficient and inconsistent coverage of the National Curriculum.
8. By the end of both key stages attainment in religious education is above average. In Year 2 pupils have appropriate knowledge of the places of worship of different religions. In Year 6 they have a wide knowledge of the key world religions and can discuss the beliefs and values that are important in their own lives and within the school community.
9. In art pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and standards are in line with national expectations. Progress across Key Stage 2, though uneven, is good overall such that pupils attain standards which are above the national expectation by the end of Year 6. In design and technology pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily in Key Stage 2. In geography standards are in line with national averages and progress is satisfactory. In history standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but progress is good in Key Stage 2 such that standards are above national expectations at the end of Year 6. In music and physical education standards are well above average in both key stages and in both subjects pupils' progress is good.
10. The school has set suitably challenging targets for English and mathematics for 2000 and 2001. These targets appropriately reflect the individual composition of the respective year groups, and have been agreed by the local education authority.
11. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Some exceed challenging expectations to advance, for example, three National Curriculum levels over the period of a key stage instead of the expected two levels.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to school and very eager to learn. They show very good attitudes towards their work as they did at the time of the last inspection. In the lessons observed their response overall was very good. They are interested in their work and concentrate well when working individually or in groups. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils from Years 1 and 2 were very keen to demonstrate lines of symmetry and sometimes pleasantly surprised by what they found. Pupils show considerable maturity and play an active role in the daily running of the school. They are keen to take part in out of school activities and clubs, such as Wycombe Wanderers football club and the science club, and to go away on the residential trip offered to pupils in Year 6.
13. The behaviour of pupils is very good. Pupils of different ages mix freely in the classroom and playground and learn from each other in an atmosphere of friendliness and tolerance. There have been no exclusions during the last year. No bullying or

other forms of unpleasant behaviour were seen. Pupils showed a very pleasant openness in their manner to visitors. They were polite to each other and all staff. Pupils were courteous and very responsive to the mild admonishments very occasionally given by class teachers or playground staff. It is clear that staff and pupils like and respect each other. Pupils take care of their own property and respect that belonging to other people and the school. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy learning and respond well to the praise and encouragement they receive from staff, with whom they have good relationships. They are properly and fully integrated into school life.

14. The school is very good at enabling pupils to understand the impact of their actions on others and through assemblies gives pupils an opportunity to reflect on issues which relate to personal development. Young pupils were seen being asked to consider the effect of unkind actions in an assembly which encouraged them to think of unkind or nasty things which should be returned to Pandora's box. They listened thoughtfully and responded carefully to the story drawing on their own experiences and showing a very good understanding for the need to be kind and considerate.
15. There is a real sense of a school community where everyone is valued. The very good relationship between adults and children and between pupils of all ages is a great strength of the school. Year 6 pupils who wished to play football arranged babysitting services with other pupils for their "flour babies". Pupils' personal initiative and development of a wider sense of responsibility and team working are developed through the greatly enjoyed extra curricular clubs, everyday school duties and the Year 6 residential trip.
16. The level of attendance of pupils is well above the national average for primary schools, and there are procedures in place to ensure that remains so. This is very good. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average and the great majority of pupils start the day punctually.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The elimination of unsatisfactory teaching, and improvements in the quality of the good or better lessons, represent a good improvement since the last inspection. Of the lessons observed during the inspection 83% were good or better at Key Stage 1, and 65% good or better at Key Stage 2. Literacy and numeracy are both taught well, as are science, religious education, history geography and design and technology. Music and physical education are taught very well. Information and communications technology when taught by teachers with confidence and expertise is similarly taught very well. This is, however, not uniformly so throughout the school with the result that the requirements of the National Curriculum for information and communications technology are not fully taught.
18. The improvements have had a successful impact on both key stages where examples of lively, and sometimes inspired teaching thoroughly engages the interest of the pupils and motivates them to produce work of a high standard. An example of this in Key Stage 1 is a music lesson for the youngest pupils in the school where pupils were exploring the texture of sound through the story 'Peace at Last'. Expert questioning of the pupils enabled them to assess sensitively the quality of sounds for different sections of the story, and the playing of pitched and unpitched percussion instruments

in response to a conductor using simple dynamics. The pupils were able to self-evaluate critically the quality of their performance, recognise the need for further practice and to re-perform the piece with improved polish to gain a sense of real joy and accomplishment. At Key Stage 2 a physical education lesson for the oldest pupils demanded and achieved very high standards of performance well above national expectations. The process of putting together the elements of a triple jump, after fun warm-up activities, were carefully and logically developed. The teachers showed a keen understanding of the range of attainment within the group, and with sensitivity posed exacting and appropriate expectations. The pupils demonstrated a very good capacity to analyse their own performance as they tried to develop a co-ordinated and fluid action. They make helpful and constructive comments to each other as they try to perfect their movements.

19. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Good quality individual education plans are reviewed regularly and are adjusted to reflect individual emerging needs. As a result of conscientious and effective monitoring pupils progress well. The same is true for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Some of these pupils have made rapid and considerable progress to achieve beyond reasonable expectation, for example, three levels of improvement during Key Stage 2 instead of the expected two levels. Learning support assistants are dedicated to providing individual and small group support for learning. The absence of a thorough induction programme and subsequent training, however, limits their effectiveness.
20. Teachers' short-term planning is very detailed in most cases. They specify the key learning objectives which help pupils to develop a good understanding of the point of the lessons, what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson, and a means for the teachers and the pupils to assess how successful the learning has been. A good feature of a number of lessons observed in Key Stage 2 particularly was the teacher's invitation to pupils to evaluate their own progress at the close of a lesson. Pupils do this responsibly and sufficiently self-critically to indicate genuine reflection. Higher-attaining pupils in a Year 3 numeracy session, for example, can consider the relative success of different strategies to solve number problems when selecting two and three digit numbers from a given matrix of numbers. Additionally, such activities offer appropriate opportunities for joint exploration of the problem between pupils, set up thoughtful debate so pupils consider the merits of different approaches, and extend thinking skills. Such practices, although not yet consistently employed, represent an improvement since the previous inspection as they display a practical concern to respond to the needs of the higher attaining pupils.
21. Teaching of basic skills is mostly good or better throughout the school. Teachers plan and sequence their work carefully to enable pupils to develop skills which are appropriately challenging and motivating. In literacy sessions the development of writing skills at Key Stage 1 is well supported by pupils' growing understanding of word patterns and sounds and the increasing vocabulary they use. By the end of the key stage most pupils are confident in letter formation and writing is joined and legible. Whilst the teaching of spelling at Key Stage 1 is effective and the methods well understood and applied by pupils, in Key Stage 2 the absence of an acknowledged and consistent approach is a weakness. In Key Stage 2 pupils' comprehension skills are well developed as they acquire inference and deduction skills to enable the study and enjoyment of more challenging texts such as "Disastrous Family Picnic". In numeracy at Key Stage 1 pupils have a rapid recall of appropriate number facts, and use mathematical language to describe the differences between shapes and describe their properties. At Key Stage 2 pupils use their understanding of place value to

multiply and divide whole numbers and numbers to two decimal places very proficiently due to systematic and well structured teaching. Too few opportunities for pupils to experience more complex problem solving in money and measures situations are provided at Key Stage 2.

22. Teachers' use of assessment is aided by the lesson evaluations which are sometimes used to become a starting point for the succeeding lesson. An example of this was in a Year 3 class when the teacher began the day by asking her class to recall the main learning points from the science activity they had completed on the previous afternoon. This is good practice and enables pupils to connect their learning in seamless ways as they progress various knowledge, skills and understanding, and as in the illustration above, from one subject to another. Information about pupils' academic attainment is known by teachers, and they plan lessons and tasks to match the differing needs of groups of pupils. However, the effectiveness of this is inconsistent as there is no overall monitoring system in place. Similarly approaches to set learning targets for individuals, or groups of pupils is inconsistent. This reduces the potential to ensure that all pupils achieve the highest possible standards.
23. The expectations for the setting and completion of homework are inconsistent, and little homework was actually set during the inspection. That which was set was appropriate and successful in both consolidating and extending new knowledge and understanding. The homework task presented to Year 1/2 pupils on the life cycle of human beings and the characteristics associated with various stages, was pertinent and provided opportunities for good follow-up at home. Parents expressed the need for improvements in this area, and the school recognises that its practice lacks the necessary coherence and linkage to core curriculum subjects for a greater majority of each term's work. More could be done to prepare the pupils for the expectations to do homework which they will meet on joining their secondary schools.

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

24. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for the pupils in a broad and balanced curriculum. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, including religious education, are fully met in all subjects except information and communications technology which is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for practical science in Key Stage 1 are inappropriately limited. The school has reviewed and updated the sex education policy since the last inspection and this now meets the requirement of the Education Act. The draft policy for personal, social and health education combines existing programmes in the school and new elements due for implementation in September 2000. It is very comprehensive and includes emphasis on a healthy lifestyle and drug misuse. A feature of this policy was the close involvement of parents through a specially organised series of workshops. The school is in the process of adopting the new local education authority's curriculum policy statement.
25. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. The school makes good use of information passed from nursery schools and playgroups, and the results of the baseline screening, to identify pupils with special educational needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans for these pupils are good and are reviewed on a regular

basis involving parents in discussion and target-setting. The special needs co-ordinator monitors the progress of pupils on the special needs register. These pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school reports that it is extremely difficult to get speech and language therapy and advice for pupils who require it. However, resources have been purchased to provide some support in this area.

26. There are policies and detailed plans of work for all subjects although many of the policies are due for review and do not always reflect current procedure. The school is effective in its teaching of literacy and numeracy through the national strategies and standards are above average in both English and mathematics in both key stages.
27. Pupils benefit from a number of visitors to the school and by visits to places of interest. These have included visits by music groups and individual musicians, the local parish worker and nurse. The 'Artist in Residence' week during June was a conspicuously successful event. It added considerably to pupils' opportunities and extended experiences in a very valuable way. Links with the community add an important dimension to the curriculum, and this is a strength of the school. The contributions made, for example, by people from the community to design and technology lessons in developing the skills of sawing and stitching were significant. The school frequently uses the local church to enhance religious education and also for a mathematics trail. There are good links with pre-school groups and the local secondary school, ensuring a smooth transition at each stage of transfer. Pupils take part in sporting, music, poetry, science and design and technology events with other schools in the locality. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good. There are opportunities to take part in a variety of activities, including sporting, instrumental music lessons, cycling proficiency and science club.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect on our place in the world and to explore the values and beliefs of others through religious education. Collective worship is provided daily in different forms and groupings of pupils and makes a valuable contribution to their spiritual awareness. Pupils enter the hall in a calm, quiet way and there is a sense of this being a special time. Pupils listen attentively and respond appropriately. Collective worship is well planned and in keeping with the spirit of the law. It is regularly led by parish workers from the local church. Opportunities for spiritual development are also evident in music and art.
29. Moral and social development are strongly supported by the ethos of the school and both are very good. There is an expectation of respect for one another and for pupils to be well mannered and courteous. Attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good throughout the school. Well chosen stories emphasise the differences between right and wrong and pupils are given opportunities to reflect on these. Pupils in the reception class take responsibility for befriending new pupils as they join the class and this attitude is continued up the school. Older pupils entertain groups of elderly folk once a year and also take responsibility for tasks and younger pupils around the school. The quality of relationships between pupil and pupil, and pupil and adult are very good. The personal, social and health education policy describes many planned opportunities for moral and social development.
30. There is good provision for pupils' cultural development through the curriculum. In music lessons pupils listen to and sing a wide range of music from different cultures. Geography work involves the study of a different locality and pupils have studied the

work of artists from abroad. There is a wide variety of books available to pupils to broaden their knowledge of other cultures and there are many opportunities in religious education including, for example, a visit to the mosque in Maidenhead. The visit by Year 6 pupils to the Sir Stanley Spencer exhibition is a good example of cultural development, as is the Year 5 work on the Aboriginal story sticks which depict life journeys.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. As identified in the previous inspection, the school cares well for all its pupils. There are effective procedures in place to ensure their safety and well-being and appropriate liaison is maintained with other agencies providing support for their welfare. Child protection procedures adopted by the school comply fully with the locally agreed procedures.
32. Healthy and safe living are promoted through all aspects of school life supported by the recently-introduced personal, social and health education policy which ensures a systematic approach. As they progress through the school, pupils increasingly develop the skills of independence and responsible citizenship. This is well supported by the opportunities that the school provides. For example, part of the induction programme for reception pupils is that they learn their own telephone numbers and addresses and know where key locations, such as the office, are in the school. Older pupils become involved in community projects such as the Senior Citizens' 'Good Companions' Club and through links with the local church, carry out fund-raising projects to help people less fortunate than themselves. There are thorough systems in place for checking health and safety in the school and a regular programme of monitoring is undertaken and recorded by the personnel defined in the policy.
33. Teachers know their pupils well. Very good relations exist between adults and pupils and pupils and their peers. This is apparent in the positive ethos that exists in the school where mutual respect and trust for each other are well established. All special needs pupils and those who have English as an additional language are fully integrated into the life of the school, and processes for identifying and meeting their needs are good. However, the school has no systems in place for identifying or tracking the specific needs of high-attaining pupils. The outcome of this is that these pupils are not always provided with sufficiently challenging work. This was evident in some English lessons observed during the inspection where high attaining pupils' progress was limited by the tasks they were set.
34. Effective procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and very high standards of behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection. A new home/school agreement clearly defines school, pupil and parental responsibilities. The promotion of pupil ownership for the management of their own actions is appropriately a key element of this.
35. Good procedures are in place to ensure regular attendance and punctual arrival at the school. During the inspection the team noted and commended pupils' prompt arrival at, and teachers' brisk start to, lessons. Procedures for dealing with any elements of bullying or racial aggression are thorough and effective. Reward systems recognise and celebrate pupils' efforts both academically and socially and outcomes are frequently shared in assembly and displayed in classrooms.

36. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is good because teachers know their pupils well. Information about pupils' academic achievements is also known by individual teachers and this information is used well by most teachers to plan lessons appropriate to pupils' needs. However, the effectiveness of this varies as there is no overall monitoring system in place to ensure a consistent approach. Whilst planning of the core subjects is monitored by the headteacher, extended and systematic monitoring of, for example, pupils' work, coverage of the National Curriculum, homework and marking is not comprehensively undertaken. The school process for the analysis and use of data to support the setting of individual and class targets is under-developed and the setting of pupils' individual curricular targets is insufficiently rigorous. The school agrees that sharper individual learning targets for pupils need to be introduced and these need to be negotiated and agreed with pupils to improve the effectiveness and ownership of the practice. There are no systematic processes in place across year groups or key stages to confirm staff judgements of national curriculum levels or share standards of achievement. The absence of these reduces the opportunities for setting appropriately high expectations and the further improvement of standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The school has good links with parents who give the school very good support and contribute very well to their children's learning. Parents are pleased with the school and the education it offers pupils. A significant minority were concerned that there were insufficient extra curricular activities but inspectors did not find this to be the case. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents and in the returns made on the parents' questionnaire a minority of parents thought that the school could give them clearer information about their child's progress and communicate with them more clearly. Inspection findings found these areas to be satisfactory and a considerable improvement on the last inspection.
38. Induction procedures for parents and children when they start school are good. Children from local nurseries and playgroups are invited to school events and reception class children are gradually eased in to school life over a week. Members of the Parent Teacher Association run induction afternoons for groups of parents as their children enter the school. This is a good feature and valued by new parents. Parents are expected to read with their children and ensure that homework is completed. Many do so. Homework is set across the school although little was seen set during the week of inspection and the practices are inconsistent. The inspection team agrees with some parental misgivings about homework.
39. Parents were surveyed and asked to contribute to the content of the home-school agreement. This has now been signed by the majority of parents. The Parent Teacher Association meets regularly and is a very useful and effective link between parents and the school. It has raised considerable funds for the school which has enabled it to re-equip school classrooms. The considerable volunteer help in the school is much appreciated but teachers have not always given parents clear guidance to enable them to support pupils learning more effectively.
40. Appropriate liaison is maintained with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are kept fully informed about progress and, as is required, are asked to attend review meetings and contribute to individual education plans.

41. Parents are invited to open evenings twice a year to discuss their children's progress but are free to talk to teachers at other times during the school year. They have been consulted about the purpose behind the mixed year classes and asked to contribute to the draft personal, health and social education policy. The end of year written reports adequately record the progress made by pupils, but they do not, as would be useful, inform parents what level of attainment within the National Curriculum has been reached. They do not indicate clearly what pupils can and cannot do in all subjects. Targets are in some cases set and shared with parents but they are usually very general and do not give a clear focus for future learning. Reports do not give parents sufficiently clear information about whether what their children are doing is good enough nor what they need to do to improve.
42. Regular newsletters are issued to keep parents informed about activities and developments as well as seeking opinions. The most recent communication, for example, invites parents to contact the headteacher about their views over a proposal to allow girls to wear trousers. Teachers inform parents about the term's curriculum and provide helpful ideas and advice on how parents can assist with their child's learning. The governing body's written annual report to parents and the school prospectus conform to requirements.
43. The school encourages and receives a very high level of parental participation in the life of the school. It is a conspicuous feature. During the inspection parental involvement included training of netball teams, bringing areas of expertise into the classroom, hearing pupils need, organising cycling proficiency training and accompanying visits. The school has sensibly and profitably worked with parents on the development of the new personal, social and health education programme and in doing so availed itself of informed consultation and guidance.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership and management of the school are successful in directing the school to achieve the key aims and values that are expressed in the mission statement, 'Shine at the Rise'. There is a distinctive feel to the school which illustrates that mutual trust, respect, consideration and courtesy between staff and children is the order of the day. Similarly the overall good quality of teaching ensures that the school's key objectives to develop in pupils a love of learning, good working habits, enquiring minds and self-discipline are reflected effectively in the day-to-day running of the school.
45. The headteacher and members of the governing body have been very successful in securing the additional funding that has resulted in the provision of much improved accommodation and playing space. Such endeavours require a substantial commitment of time, but the rewards in terms of enhanced learning opportunities provided by the information and communications technology suite, for example, are significant.
46. The existing school development plan is weak. There is no formal evaluation of the earlier plan, neither is there an explanation of why the school's planning cycle had lost momentum with there being a gap between the existing plan and the previous one. The plan is poorly constructed, and inconsistencies in the presentation of the various targets do not make it user friendly. Additionally, some targets for action do not include information about, for example, who is to be responsible, when they are to start

and end, what arrangements there will be for monitoring and evaluation, and related costings. The absence of success criteria for some targets makes it difficult for an informed view to be taken about the effectiveness of the spending decisions that are associated with the plan. In its present form it is not an effective management tool for driving the work of the school forward. The plan does, however, include a focus on the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and improvements in the provision for information and communications technology. In these respects appropriate emphasis is given to the proper deployment of associated funding.

47. The recent engagement of three additional learning support assistants similarly demonstrates a lack of adequate systematic forward planning. For good reasons this initiative was not part of the school development plan as the funding for such posts only became available later in the year. The assistants have been recruited, however, without clear planning for their induction, a detailed understanding of precisely how they are to be employed, and how best to ensure that they are briefed on a daily basis about their roles in the classrooms. Such practices minimise their potential effectiveness in supporting pupils' learning, and make it difficult to determine whether the financial investment is a good one. Although lesson observations during the inspection confirm that they have made a satisfactory start, a proper induction and early training would improve their impact on pupils' learning.
48. The school's programme for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and work sampling has not gone according to plan. The headteacher accepts that this is an area where a more systematic approach is required. The absence of an overall plan which is known in advance by staff and governors, how and when the outcomes are going to be reported, and the failure to attach a pre-determined budget to support the work are examples of the lack of rigour. The proposals contained in the school development plan to develop the role of the subject managers are timely. They recognise the need for subject managers to exercise fuller responsibility for some aspects of monitoring and evaluation. Planning for observations by subject managers of teaching, however, is subject to budgetary constraints rather than being accorded high priority. Additionally the absence of a system to moderate pupils' work is a shortcoming that impacts adversely on the monitoring and evaluation of work. This reduces the potential benefits of establishing where pupils are with their learning, and what needs to be done to effect improvements to raise standards further.
49. Although the existing school development plan goes some way to addressing the role of the school's middle managers with subject and key stage responsibilities, the current absence of an effective system for delegation limits the influence that teachers can make on whole school development. With arrangements for appraisal having been suspended, job profiles are out-dated and the school is without procedures to determine individual targets for teachers on an annual basis. This is an ineffective and inefficient way of deploying the school's most expensive resource. With the exception of training for the implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies, opportunities to develop the practice of teachers largely rests with individual teachers. There is not a whole-school procedure or expectation that the continuing professional development of teachers will be handled in a systematic way. The school is, however, preparing for the introduction of a more coherent performance management policy, and the school welcomes these national requirements as a positive way forward.
50. The employment of a newly-qualified teacher has been properly addressed. The headteacher and the mentor have provided good levels of support and the entitlement to receive some non-teaching time to meet the demands of the role and continuing

professional development have been well met. The deployment of the teaching staff is appropriate to meet the needs of the National Curriculum, as are their qualifications.

51. The considerable expertise of the governing body is deployed to the school's advantage. Members of the governing body have used their business and commercial skills to assist the school very positively. The acquisition of additional playing space, the provision of computers for the new suite and marketing skills are three examples of their strong and highly valued participation.
52. The governing body knows the school well and it meets its statutory responsibilities. It has, however, adopted a school development plan that is participated in and falls short of reasonable expectation. The lack of precision and uneven quality of the plan makes both the monitoring and evaluation, and subsequent holding the school to account, difficult.
53. The recently improved accommodation is good. It provides classrooms of a size to meet the numbers of pupils in classes, together with a new and well equipped information and communications technology suite. The planned refurbishment of the Key Stage 1 areas, which is due for completion before the start of the next term, demonstrates the headteacher's and the governing body's commitment to progressively upgrade the quality of the building and the creation of a positive learning environment. The playground is attractive and well provided with equipment, markings, and a quiet area. The recently extended field now meets the needs of physical education, and the wild area is used to attract wild life into the school grounds.
54. Learning resources are good. The school has appropriately invested in materials to support the introduction of literacy and numeracy and these are well used by teachers. The currently being installed information and communications technology equipment, some of which was provided by a local company and will provide a valuable additional facility to promote pupils' understanding and learning. Teachers generally make good use of learning resources. This is evident in the more practical subjects, such as in art, design and technology, and music where pupils progress their learning well and often better. Equipment is managed and stored well and pupils encouraged to care for resources.
55. The school's financial affairs are methodically managed by the administrative officer, and a recent audit report endorses the high standards of the practice. The governing body's finance committee oversees the budget position with appropriate regularity, and monitors the budget plan and spending carefully. The school is beginning to embrace the principles of best value. For example, there are procedures to seek competitive estimates for work in and around the school, it is setting appropriately challenging whole school targets for improvements in pupils' performance, and is considering its performance in relation to schools of a similar kind. In questionnaires to parents and in seeking views from parents about school uniform it is showing a willingness to consult others and take account of their opinions.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. There is much that is good and very good about Cookham Rise. The school offers a learning environment that enables pupils to develop very strong personal, social and moral attitudes and understanding. The behaviour is very good. The pupils make a

very good start to their schooling on admission to the reception class, and by the time they leave the school they attain standards that are above national standards in English, mathematics and science. They also achieve highly in music. In order that the progress achieved since the last inspection can be maintained and extended the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Ensure that all parts of the National Curriculum for information and communications technology are fully covered in all classes by:

- teaching a curriculum that meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum;
- ensuring that pupils use and develop their information and communications technology skills whilst working in other areas of the curriculum;
- ensuring that guidelines for the subject are implemented consistently through a systematic programme of monitoring and evaluation;
- improving teachers' subject knowledge.

Increase the rigour of their monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance by:

- improving the quality of the school development plan;
- introducing a clear monitoring policy which sets out the varying responsibilities of, for example, the headteacher and members of the senior management team, subject co-ordinators and members of the governing body;
- ensuring that the resulting programme of monitoring and evaluation is properly funded.

Adopt consistent procedures for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do so that pupils will achieve the highest possible standards by:

- developing a system for moderating levels of work so that staff become fully aware of requirements;
- ensuring that the policy and guidelines are consistently implemented through a programme of monitoring and evaluation;
- ensuring that the accumulated performance data on each pupil is shared with appropriate members of staff;
- ensuring that individual targets arising from a consideration of pupil data are sufficiently challenging;
- ensuring that the marking of pupils' work is undertaken consistently across the school and that the emphasis for this is formative to enable pupils to develop a fuller understanding of what needs to be done to improve.

In addition to the key issues the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the plan. Each weakness is followed by references to the paragraph(s) in which it is mentioned.

- Improve opportunities for practical science activities at Key Stage 1 (paragraph 78).
- Improve the teaching of spelling at Key Stage 2 (paragraphs 21, 58, 60, 63).
- Improve opportunities for problem solving in mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 2 (paragraphs 5, 21, 69).

- Provide an induction programme for the learning support assistants (paragraphs 19, 47).
- Homework in Key Stage 2 (paragraphs 23, 38).
- Out of date subject policies and guidance (paragraph 26).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	24	49	27	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		196
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		31

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	15

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	11	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	21
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	30	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (96)	88 (96)	94 (96)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	20
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	30	31	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (96)	94 (96)	91 (96)
	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	20	12	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	19
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	27	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (70)	78 (78)	91 (87)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	18
	Girls	11	9	10
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (69)	84 (83)	88 (87)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	183
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118

Financial information

Financial year	99-00
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	£
Total income	339767.00
Total expenditure	316165.00
Expenditure per pupil	1638.16
Balance brought forward from previous year	18429.00
Balance carried forward to next year	43031.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	196
Number of questionnaires returned	46

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	30	13	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	27	18	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	19	27	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	24	6	1	1
The teaching is good.	27	16	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	17	4	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	28	11	5	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	24	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	17	21	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	13	31	1	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	23	21	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	16	13	3	2

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

With the exception of expressions of some limited concern about the range of activities outside lessons, parents express a strong degree of support for the school.

Other issues raised by parents

A very small number of parents consider that the school could give clearer information about their child's(ren's) progress, and communicate this more clearly.

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

ENGLISH

57. Overall standards in English are good at both key stages.
58. In the National Curriculum tests and tasks at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, attainment in reading was well above the national average; in writing it was above the national average. In both reading and writing the numbers of pupils who achieved the more demanding Level 3 was above and well above respectively, the national average. When compared with the results in similar schools the standards of attainment in Key Stage 1 are average. At Key Stage 2 attainment in both reading and writing was well above the national average, and again average when compared with similar schools. There has been a significant rise in standards since the previous inspection in 1996. The standards seen during the inspection broadly reflect the picture suggested by these results. However the weaknesses in spelling at Key Stage 2 account for the standards being judged overall as above average, rather than well above average.
59. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils contribute their own ideas and opinions to discussion and listen carefully and attentively to adults and peers. They can read confidently to an audience. Most read with fluency and expression and use these skills to take on the role of a character. They know about the key features of a book such as title, author and illustrator and can make use of an index and the contents list. In writing, pupils show a good understanding of a range of punctuation and are able to use this correctly in their work. Most are developing well as independent writers and the higher attaining pupils produce thoughtful and descriptive writing, which takes the reader into account.
60. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can contribute to discussions in an articulate and relevant way, listen to others' opinions and respond appropriately. They read confidently in a range of situations. They can select key points from text and use them to inform their own writing and present a persuasive argument. For example, Year 6 pupils used a text on global warming to produce a poster warning of the consequences of this. They use their high level reading skills to support their writing in the use of creative, imaginative and sensitive language. For example, they are able to write with feeling in the role of a character from the past such as a Jewish refugee or an evacuee from World War II. Spelling is a weakness, with many pupils unsure of the correct spelling of simple words.
61. Throughout the school, pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening skills and good progress in reading. Overall they make good progress in writing. From entry into school, pupils are encouraged to build on their letter and word knowledge and use language appropriately. The secure and welcoming environment of the reception class enables pupils to make very good progress in gaining the confidence to take part in class question and answer sessions, to join in whole class reading sessions and to read aloud in front of their peers. Pupils' progress is supported and enhanced by the positive and caring attitudes of the staff. They value pupils' contributions and

significantly raise their self-esteem. Pupils are clear about what they have to do and this ensures they make good progress in lessons. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in reading. This is helped by the well-structured group guided reading sessions where pupils are given opportunities to recall events, recap on stories and predict endings. The development of writing skills is supported through pupils' growing understanding of word patterns and sounds and the increasing range of vocabulary they can use. Progress in handwriting is very good. By the end of year 2 most pupils are confident in letter formation and writing is joined and legible.

62. In Key Stage 2 pupils' progress in speaking and listening continues through increasing opportunities to take part in whole-class and group discussions and to present to a range of audiences. This includes participating in drama sessions, assemblies and school productions. Pupils make good progress in developing a deeper understanding of text. They acquire inference and deduction skills through their teachers giving them access to a wide range of reading material and then ensuring that opportunities are planned to study these in depth. For example, Year 3 pupils fully enjoy the humour of the poem 'Disastrous Family Picnic'. Progress in most aspects of writing is good and pupils apply the skills gained to other subject areas. A particularly good example of this was seen in Year 6 science books where pupils of all abilities had successfully used accurate information, humour and presentation skills to write high quality reports on pollination by bees. A lack of clear guidance on the marking of spellings limits the progress pupils make in this aspect. Mistakes are not always followed up and pupils lack the strategies for self-correction. Because of this, progress in spelling in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory.
63. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Expectations are high, lessons are well planned and prepared and in most cases tasks set meet the different needs of pupils. Teachers have made effective use of the National Literacy Strategy to enhance their knowledge of language and widen their approaches to teaching. They use questions skilfully to draw responses from pupils and assess their learning and progress. The use of 'Big Books' for whole class work sessions is effective in stimulating pupils' interest, maintaining their concentration and ensuring that the learning objectives for the lesson are met. Most lessons move at a brisk pace and there are examples of challenging, open-ended tasks set for the higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2. However, on occasions teachers do not maintain a sufficient overview of all pupils involved in independent group activities and the tasks they set are insufficiently demanding particularly for the more able. This leads to pupils losing interest and work is not completed in the time allowed. Teachers at both key stages make good use of the end of lessons to check whether their teaching points have been understood and if pupils have gained new skills and knowledge. The teaching of spelling at Key Stage 1 is thorough and consistent in approach. However, in some cases pupils are not given the opportunities to correct errors. At Key Stage 2, teachers' knowledge, confidence and explicit teaching of spelling varies. The limited policy and guidance available in the school further exacerbate this. In some classes marking is evaluative and clearly relates to what has been taught. This enables pupils to make good progress because they are aware of what they need to do next to improve. Again, clear guidance through a well-defined policy is lacking and this leads to an inconsistent approach across the school.
64. In both key stages pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are enthusiastic, eager to participate and enjoy their lessons. On nearly all occasions pupils settle immediately to the tasks they are given and maintain a high level of concentration. Most take care in the presentation of their work and are keen to improve. Behaviour is

very good.

65. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. They are well-integrated into lessons and receive appropriately targeted support from teaching and support staff. They make good progress.
66. The English co-ordinator has managed the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy well. Most aspects are firmly embedded into the current staff's teaching of English and this has had a direct impact on standards. However, the school's English policy has not been updated to reflect the current methods adopted by the school. Therefore there is a lack of clear guidance of what is expected and this has led to the inconsistencies in teaching and approaches to marking and assessment identified during the inspection. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is good.

MATHEMATICS

67. Standards of attainment in mathematics are above the national average by the end of each key stage. The number of pupils achieving the more demanding Level 3 by the end of Key Stage 1 is well above the national average. The number of higher attaining pupils achieving Level 5, the correspondingly more demanding level at the end of Key Stage 2, is also above average. When comparing the results with similar schools the standards of attainment at Key Stage 1 are above average, whilst at Key Stage 2 they are average. Attainment at Key Stage 1 has risen over the past 4 years at a similar rate to the national trend whereas attainment at Key Stage 2 has risen slightly faster than the national trend.
68. At Key Stage 1 pupils have rapid recall of the number facts to 10 and higher and can use this and their knowledge of doubling and counting in twos, fives and tens to solve problems. They can use mathematical language to articulate differences between shapes and describe their properties. Pupils can collect data and organise it into a simple bar chart and can recognise and use a right angle.
69. Key Stage 2 pupils can use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and numbers to two decimal places. They can use a calculator when appropriate to check their results. Pupils can use protractors accurately to measure and draw angles, and can use, read and write standard metric units. Higher attaining pupils are able to represent data in a variety of charts and diagrams. They can identify the operation required to solve more complex problems involving money and measures although they require more practice in order to gain further confidence in this area.
70. All teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and over half is good or better. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented across the school and is being used effectively. In both key stages the oral work and mental calculation with which lessons start is usually used effectively, enabling pupils to benefit from the quick practice sessions of numeracy skills. Teachers employ good questioning in the majority of lessons giving pupils the opportunity to explain the strategy they have used. In a small minority of classes the starting session lacks pace and the plenary which rounds off the lesson is unfocused. Lesson planning is good and is closely matched to the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines. Pupils can use their numeracy skills satisfactorily across the curriculum for example in geography, science and design and technology.

71. The main teaching activities have clear learning objectives which are always communicated to the pupils and the use of correct mathematical vocabulary is encouraged. Resources and activities are well prepared, easily accessible and used effectively. Teachers in Key Stage 1 have good subject knowledge and this is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Group work is suitably differentiated with challenges for higher attaining pupils particularly in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress overall. Older pupils are encouraged to make their own individual assessment of how much progress they have made towards achieving the learning objective. Learning support assistants are used, particularly at Key Stage 1, to record achievement as assessed by the teacher during the lessons. Individual target-setting with pupils is at an early stage and development is required to include specifying when the target is expected to be achieved and success criteria to make the procedure more rigorous.
72. Attitudes to learning in mathematics are always satisfactory or good and sometimes very good. Pupils have good concentration and are able to work both collaboratively and independently. They are keen to answer questions and to demonstrate what they know and are able to explain their findings to the class.
73. The high standards in mathematics found during the previous inspection continue to be maintained. Teachers are working from the long term planning in the National Numeracy Strategy which is improving the consistency of teaching and progress between classes, though there is still some inconsistency across the school. This is in part due to the fact that the mathematics policy does not currently include the National Numeracy Strategy. At present the monitoring and evaluation of mathematics is insufficiently rigorous and this is limiting the school's capacity to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

74. Attainment in science at Key Stage 1 is slightly above national averages as judged in lessons. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Although in 1999 the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in science was at the national average, the unconfirmed results in 2000 suggest that improvements have been achieved. However, the percentage of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 was well above the national average in both years and the school's performance is well above the average for similar schools. Pupils have the ability to compare objects and living things and say how they are similar or different. For example, they have a good knowledge of the difference between living and non-living things and can accurately describe the five senses. They are beginning to become aware of how to approach problems scientifically and some are developing an understanding of what constitutes a fair test. Across the key stage they make good progress and by the end are increasingly able to record their observations in suitable written form. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in science at Key Stage 1.
75. Attainment at Key Stage 2 in 1999 was above the national average both in terms of those pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and those reaching the higher Level 5. These standards are consistent with those observed in lessons during the inspection; and illustrate that the standards achieved in the previous inspection have been maintained. Over the 4 years 1996-9 pupils' performance was well above the national average and this was the case for both girls and boys. In science the attainment is

also close to the average for similar schools. Pupils can make predictions, work out how to test them appropriately and then review their predictions in the light of evidence. They can present their observations in the form of tables. They understand the need to repeat measurements and, across the key stage, increasingly understand how to make their measurements more accurate. They have good and in some cases well above average understanding of scientific concepts. For example some pupils showed well above average understanding for their ages of the process of insect pollination and know how to relate the properties of a variety of materials to their uses. Progress across the key stage is good and pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.

76. Pupils learn science well. Their responses to the tasks they are set are almost always very good and their attitudes to the subject are very positive. The work in their books shows pride and the way in which they work with each other shows respect.
77. The quality of teaching in science is good overall at both key stages. It is never less than satisfactory, about 75% of it is good and this represents stronger overall teaching than during the previous inspection. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and explain scientific concepts well. They ensure that pupils understand what they have to do, though this can be at the expense of some of the time which pupils need to carry out their tasks. They manage pupils well and achieve high standards of behaviour. For example in a Year 4 lesson where pupils had to measure their resting pulse rates and then compare them with rates after a period of activity, they did this very responsibly and achieved a number of accurate measurements as a result.
78. The management of science is good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths of science in the school and has accurately identified the areas for development which include some overlap in what teachers cover, the need to include more investigation work in Key Stage 1 and a need to ensure full coverage of all areas of the National Curriculum in all classes. There are sensible plans in place to develop these aspects of science, which are being linked with the National Curriculum changes required of all schools from September 2000. Resources for science are adequate and well organised so that teachers have ready access to them. Budgeting for their renewal and for the purchase of new equipment is done well.
79. There is a good programme of extra curricular activities including a science club which supports the curriculum well and allows some higher-attaining pupils the opportunity to experience more challenging work.

ART

80. Although very few opportunities to see art actually going on in classrooms were available during the days of the inspection displays around the school, collections of work and discussions with pupils demonstrate that the standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained. At Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress to attain standards in line with the national average, and at Key Stage 2, although there is some unevenness in the progress through the key stage, by the end of key stage the pupils attain standards that are above the national average. The previously reported shortcomings over the lack of opportunities for three dimensional work have been properly addressed and there is much evidence in the school to support this.

81. One of the key events in the art calendar for the year was the engagement of an Artist in Residence for a week during June of this year. This was a very successful and motivating event. The completed art work, which was presented in the form of an exhibition to the pupils, parents and members of the local community, confirms the importance of art in the curriculum and the standards achieved. The exhibition provided examples of pupils working in a wide variety of media in two and three dimensional work. Observational drawings, self portraits employing the styles of Picasso and David Hockney and some beautiful representations of creatures such as dragonflies by pupils in the reception class constructed from natural materials formed the centre point of the Key Stage 1 exhibits. At Key Stage 2 the exhibits ranged from very striking sculptures made from Somerset withies, inspired by the observation of plants during a visit to Kew Gardens and collages based upon rivers and connected to the Year 4 geography topic, to paintings of waterfalls inspired by the work of the Japanese artist, Hokusai. The work depicted on the 'story sticks' created by pupils in Year 5 was clearly immensely challenging and motivating for pupils. The use of Aboriginal symbolism to decorate the sticks, so that each stick told the story of a journey produced representations using strong designs and use of colour. The associated stories were similarly powerful with, for example, two pupils choosing a design that depicted the journey of their friendship over the previous seven or eight years. The school makes very good use of the village's associations with the local artist Sir Stanley Spencer. The pupils of Year 6 chose a vivid re-interpretation of his famous painting 'Christ Preaching to Cookham Regatta'. It is expected that the four-metres long fabric wall-hanging that shows the pupils in place of the original characters, with their teacher doing the preaching, will become an exhibit in the village's Millennium Exhibition.
82. The co-ordinator leads the subject with enthusiasm and a determination to ensure that art remains integral to the experience of all pupils. The long-term plans fully set out expectations associated with coverage of the National Curriculum to ensure that elements such as painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and three-dimensional work as well as textiles and collage are fully included along with the development of the associated skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. Relatively little teaching of design and technology was observed but evidence from work seen, displays and photographs indicate that progress is good in Key Stage 1 and standards are above national expectations. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. At Key Stage 2 progress is satisfactory and standards are in line with national expectations at the end of the key stage. This maintains the position reported in the 1996 inspection of the school.
84. The available evidence shows that pupils early in Key Stage 1 have many opportunities to stick materials using a variety of glues and media, to use scissors and decorate their models. By the end of the key stage they have experience working with clay to make house bricks, whilst on an educational visit to the Didcot Cart Shed, make thumb pots and develop the use of slab techniques in creating containers and decorative tiles. The displays of 'Moving Pictures' in both the upper key stage classes show the inventive and imaginative use of pulley systems in the creation of moving pictures. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have experienced opportunities that include generating ideas, applying appropriate skills and making objects that are planned and well finished such as the tea pot cosies, and identifying particular features

that work and what could be done to improve them. The rockets constructed by the Year 6 pupils show pertinent criteria that the construction would, for example, enable at least two flights. The recorded evaluations showed a desire to analyse the functioning of the finished product. Amongst the conclusions were that the choice of three or four body fins had little or no impact on the flight patterns, and that techniques chosen to fix the fins needed changes to improve the durability of the constructions.

85. Although little teaching was observed, that which was seen was of good quality. A particular feature of these lessons was the voluntary involvement of members of the school community to share their expertise in aiding the development of skills to be acquired by the pupils. In a Year 1/2 class the pupils were assisted in their learning through adult help with fine measuring and saw-cutting skills whilst constructing 'Jinx' frames for their self-portraits. The level of concentration and a determination to develop a new skill was intense, and the pupils rewarded with end-products of which they were obviously and justifiably proud. In a Year 5 class the designing and making of tea pot cosies was being progressed within a series of lessons. Designs for stencilling on fabric were being shaped, applications tested, and the suitability of various types of stitching considered. Not only was the teacher very skilful in her questioning of pupils, encouraging them to explore and investigate the consequences of their decisions as well as emphasising safety considerations, she was very ably supported by adult helpers. One of these was demonstrating the art of stitching techniques. The joy experienced by a pupil at learning a new skill through an adult who was three generations removed from the pupil and who was painstaking in her approach was a delight and a rich experience for both parties.
86. The new subject co-ordinator has made a good start at moving the subject forward in a very short period of time. Helpful revisions and additions have been made to the supporting documentation to meet emerging national expectations. New primary school food guidelines have been produced which highlight the potential sources of danger and emphasise the need for personal hygiene. The subject is well resourced and the accessibility of resources has been improved since the previous inspection. Planning, process and design sheets are included in a standard support pack for teaching at Key Stage 2 which reinforce the expectations and the developmental stages in presenting the subject to pupils. This is a useful improvement since the last inspection. It will help to focus on the key skills and processes to enable the good attainment at Key Stage 1 to be uniformly achieved throughout Key Stage 2.

GEOGRAPHY

87. Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. This is consistent with the standards reported at the previous inspection.
88. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can use simple geographical vocabulary correctly, such as sea, river mouth, waterfall, rocks and cliffs to describe areas they have studied. They can identify geographical features on simple maps and interpret simple diagrams; for example symbols on a weather map. They recognise features from their locality on aerial photographs and then can find them on a map and describe them to their teacher. They use reference books to research information on aspects that they are studying.
89. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make appropriate use of secondary sources to research information. For example Year 6 pupils use information and communications

technology skills to find out about comparative data on European countries and investigate trade links. They can describe the physical and human features of places they have studied and hypothesise in geographical terms the reasons for people living in a particular place. In a local study on Cookham Year 4 pupils were able to explain why the improved transport links had a direct impact on the size of the local population.

90. Progress is satisfactory at both key stages. During Key Stage 1 pupils gain experience in asking and answering simple questions to help them with their geographical enquiries; for example in discussing the best route to follow between home and school. They make progress in their use of appropriate vocabulary to describe human and physical features, for example, when talking about buildings near their school or writing about different types of weather. By the end of Key Stage 1 they have developed their skills of map reading and can draw up a route to follow for a walk round the village.
91. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to build on the geographical enquiry skills they gained in the previous key stage. This is supported by their participation in a good range of field trips, for example a river study, where they have the opportunity to carry out both planned and independent investigations. Pupils have a growing awareness of the impact of physical and human features on the environment. Through their studies of a conservation area, Year 3 pupils were able to draw up threats caused by humans visiting the site and consider how they could be resolved. This also brought about a good discussion on social and moral issues. By Year 6, pupils are able to use the skills they have developed over the key stage to describe the geographical features of places they have studied and consider the effect they have on people, places and the environment; for example through their topic on the River Rhine.
92. The quality of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and learning objectives are set out clearly in planning. However, work samples show that at Key Stage 1 there is an over-dependence on worksheets and little evidence of work being planned to match pupils' different abilities. In the lessons observed during the inspection, teachers made good use of questioning skills to assess pupils' understanding and previous knowledge of the topic being studied and to develop geographical enquiry. Teachers make appropriate use of geographical resources and provide access to a range of materials for reference. However, they make insufficient use of world maps and atlases to develop pupils' understanding of where places are in relation to others and pupils' overview of the world is limited. Field trips and visits are an integral part of the teaching programme. Teachers use these occasions well to enrich and enhance pupils' investigative skills. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
93. Systems for recording pupils' achievement are inconsistent and there is no overview of how they progress through the school. The co-ordinator has produced helpful long-term plans for the teaching of the subject throughout the school, but as yet the implementation of these is not monitored on a regular basis. Neither is the appropriateness of the match of the work to the differing abilities of pupils. This is reflected in the fact that usually all pupils in the same class are given the same work and the expectation is that pupils of higher ability will produce more.
94. There are opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils used measuring skills to find out the width and depth of a river, timed the flow of the water and then carried out some analysis of the data collated. Pupils studying

conservation were developing the skills of persuasive argument. However, there is no whole-school approach to this so opportunities tend to be co-incidental. Information and communications technology is used insufficiently to improve research skills.

HISTORY

95. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2 they are above national expectations. Standards at Key Stage 2 have improved since the previous inspection, whilst standards at Key Stage 1 have been maintained.
96. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can recall simple facts about past events such as the Fire of London, and know about famous people from history, for example Guy Fawkes. They are able to identify similarities and differences between now and in the past and are gaining an understanding of chronology. For example, in their topic about Homes and Families they can put into the correct date sequence objects used in everyday life. They are developing the skills of historical enquiry through the use of reference books and artefacts and by participating in field visits.
97. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to describe features of past societies such as the Aztecs and explain how and why their life style is different to today. Through their studies of crime and punishment in Tudor times, pupils gain an understanding of why people in the past acted as they did. Through a very thorough study of Britain since World War II, all Year 6 pupils are able to demonstrate a very good grasp of a wide range of historical skills, knowledge and understanding. They are able to empathise with the feelings of characters from the past. Throughout the key stage they make good use of artefacts and other resources to help them with their studies.
98. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2 in developing a range of historical skills. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make particularly good progress in how they organise and present their work. In Year 6 this is of a high quality.
99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned and staff make good use of historical resources, including artefacts, to enhance their teaching and bring the past alive. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 class where the teacher had assembled an unusually wide range of equipment to reproduce sounds and music. Items ranging from a 1930s radiogram, to a Dansette automatic record-changer, to a ghetto-blaster and the very last MG16 gave pupils fascinating glimpses of the changes over the years and the advances and advantages of new technologies. Teachers also make good use of the expertise available in the local community by inviting people in to talk to the pupils. Well-prepared and organised visits to places of historical interest and field trips enrich the curriculum on offer. At Key Stage 1, teachers tend to rely too much on worksheets which limits the opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their own organisational skills.
100. Assessment procedures outlined in the history policy are vague and the co-ordinator does not have an overview of pupils' progress and achievement through the school. Marking is not sufficiently evaluative to enable pupils to know how to improve their work. Comments in pupils' annual reports describe what pupils have done rather than what they have achieved.

101. There are opportunities for pupils to develop literacy skills through drama, discussion, research and, particularly at Key Stage 2, through the organisation and presentation of their work. However, there is no whole-school approach to this. The use of information and communications technology to support historical enquiry and research skills is limited.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

102. During the inspection the teaching of this subject was observed on three occasions covering Years 2, 4 and 6 and the opportunity was also taken to review pupils' work both on paper and stored on the school's network. Judgements are also supported by discussions with staff and pupils and the inspection of the school's documentation.

103. The attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 meets national expectations overall though in some aspects of the curriculum it is above that and in some aspects below. Pupils can write simple sentences using a wordprocessor and can create pictures using the computer. They have experience of the control of a device using simple instructions, though their capacity to use information and communications technology to sort and classify information is below that expected, mainly because of insufficient opportunities. At the end of Key Stage 2 coverage of the National Curriculum requirements is uneven and incomplete. By Year 6 the attainment of pupils meets some aspects of national expectations, and again in some aspects it is above them. Whilst standards in Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the previous inspection, in Key Stage 2 standards have deteriorated in the intervening period. Pupils can combine different types of information, such as pictures and words in a newspaper page, using the computer. They are able to use simulations to help them make decisions, such as using a drawing package to study room layout. Their capacity to add to, amend and interrogate information which has been stored is weaker mainly due to a lack of experience. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs also meets expectations.

104. On balance, however, the shortcomings identified above provide an incomplete experience for pupils as they progress through the school, and insufficient coverage of the National Curriculum. The absence of a programme of monitoring and evaluation, whereby the informed co-ordinator is enabled to assess coverage of the National Curriculum and pupil progress, is a weakness. Added to this the inspection team observed very limited use of information and communications technology in subjects across the curriculum. It was an under-used resource.

105. All teaching of information and communications technology which was seen during the inspection is satisfactory or better and much of it is very good. Teachers with sufficient subject knowledge have the confidence to coach pupils towards higher skill levels and to be able to use information and communications technology as a tool to support learning across the curriculum. Classroom management is good, though too little systematic use is made of pupils with higher information and communications technology skills to support the work of others. Pupils respond very well to the information and communications technology lessons. Behaviour is very good and there is a purposeful working atmosphere in the information and communications technology suite. Progress with activities set by the teachers is very good; the pupils show interest and determination to get the job done and many achieve pleasing results. Support staff are very well used to help the pupils. Teachers' subject

knowledge varies from excellent to poor and the main reason for the variable attainment in information and communications technology is the limited experience that some pupils receive in some classes. This uneven profile of the quality of teaching approximately equates to the overall good judgements made during the previous inspection. The school acknowledges that the further training of the staff in information and communications technology is essential and this features in the staff development plan and in the information and communications technology development plan, both of which set out realistic and appropriate priorities for the development of the subject and in particular the development of teachers' expertise.

106. The school provides a computer in every classroom though some computers are becoming a little outdated. A recent development is the opening and equipping of the information and communications technology suite which contains 15 powerful networked computers. This provides a suitable resource for the continuing development of the subject, both in terms of raising the standards of pupils' attainment and as a facility to raise teachers' expertise. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and has created a good development plan for information and communications technology though at present she lacks any non-contact time in which she might support her colleagues. The co-ordinator's undoubted expertise is insufficiently used.

MUSIC

107. The school has maintained the high standards which were found at the time of the previous inspection in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is well above the national expectation and pupils make good progress. They can sing songs from memory and show real enjoyment in employing a range of dynamics and tempo. Pupils are actively involved as they listen with concentration to a range of recorded music and use good vocabulary to describe what they hear. They demonstrate a good sense of rhythm as they move to music and can identify some of the instruments they can hear. Pupils are able to play pitched and unpitched percussion correctly. They are able to evaluate the quality of the sound from different groups of instruments and identify what can be improved with practice.

108. Key Stage 2 pupils also make good progress and attainment is above average. The result of this is accurate and expressive singing of two part and unison songs often from other cultures. Ensemble playing at the end of the key stage is of a high quality with scores created by the pupils and inspired by a variety of stimuli. Listening skills are well developed enabling older pupils to relate descriptive language to a range of recorded music and understand how that can influence their own performance. All pupils learn the recorder providing them with the knowledge of simple notation which is put to good use when playing pitched percussion and the electronic keyboard. A number of pupils take advantage of the range of extra-curricular instrumental lessons available.

109. The teaching of music is always good and often very good. The school makes it possible for the specialist music teacher to teach reduced sized classes throughout the school enabling every child to learn to play an instrument. Excellent subject knowledge, detailed planning at every level and high expectations of every pupil lead to a desire to learn and performances of a high standard. Pupils regularly take part in public performances including a Millennium concert at the Royal Albert Hall and Christmas concerts within school. Arrangements are made for a range of groups and

individual musicians to visit the school and these enhance the pupils' musical experiences.

110. The music co-ordinator brings specialist expertise and a very strong commitment to high expectations in her leadership and management of this subject. The high numbers of pupils who participate in choir and instrumental lessons is an indication of the co-ordinator's capacity to motivate and inspire pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. It was possible during the inspection to observe physical education in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. On the basis of this evidence attainment is well above the national expectation at both key stages. Pupils experience a good range of activities including competitive games, gymnastics, dance and athletics. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a good understanding of the need to warm up and how to do it. They embark upon physical education sessions suitably dressed and have a good appreciation of the need to be watchful for their own health and safety and that of others. They show the ability to match movement to music and the precision of their movement improves over the key stage thus demonstrating good progress. By the end of the key stage they are beginning to appreciate their capacity to support other pupils by evaluating and commenting on their work.

112. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment as observed in lessons ranges from the national expectation to well above it and is thus well above average overall. Pupils' skills at planning what they are to do, working in pairs or groups to evaluate the work of others and commenting positively or setting targets for improvement are considerably enhanced. This was shown in a joint Year 5 and Year 6 physical education lesson. In this, thorough planning, good relationships and enthusiasm for the subject and pupils' evaluation skills combined to ensure very good progress over the session. The session concerned the acquisition of a very difficult skill, that of the triple jump. By the end of the lesson even less talented pupils were combining the three phases such that they were bringing them together successfully. More talented pupils were able to increase the length of their jumps by more appropriate arm movements or improving body position during the jump phase. Thus both during this lesson and over the key stage the pupils have made very good progress.

113. The teaching of physical education is very good. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and succeed well in communicating this to their pupils. Planning is thorough and, especially in Key Stage 2, has built-in assessment of pupils' progress in the various activities such that pupils can have targets for improvement which they understand and can work towards. They have high expectations. In a class of younger Year 1 pupils high levels of ball skills were expected and, for many pupils, achieved. In Year 3 pupils developed a very strong sequence based on 8-beat movement and in Year 6 all pupils were expected to master the very difficult skill of triple jumping. Teachers manage pupils very well and have sufficient subject knowledge to enable them to analyse the stage pupils have reached and coach them effectively towards improving performance. Evaluation by the pupils has a place in physical education lessons but there is scope to raise standards further by strengthening pupils' experience in this skill. As a result of the very good teaching and pupils' response and enthusiasm, very good learning takes place in this subject.

114. Currently the school lacks a specific subject co-ordinator, with the headteacher acting

as co-ordinator on a temporary basis. This has not as yet affected standards and the position of physical education within the school is strong with good plans for further development. Resources for physical education are plentiful and of good quality and are used well by the teachers to support learning. They are well respected by the pupils. Though the hall is a small area for physical education, especially for older children, the school field is well used and is a good resource. Physical education within the curriculum is very well complemented by a wide range of extra-curricular activities including training under the Wycombe Wanderers community football scheme and a thriving netball club where the game is played with much enjoyment to a high standard. Overall the quality of physical education within the school has improved well since the last inspection from an already good basis.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. By the end of both key stages pupils' attainment in religious education is above average. This sustains the strong position of the subject reported during the last inspection. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are able to compare places of worship such as a Christian church and a Muslim mosque as they are used by different religions. They can talk about objects used in worship such as the prayer mat put down in the family room in a Muslim home and explore their own special places and the significance they hold for them. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a wide knowledge of the key world religions and the birth and death ceremonies associated with them. They can discuss the beliefs and values that are important in their own lives and within the school community.
116. Whole-school and individual planning for religious education is good and pupils make good progress. Teaching is at least satisfactory and often good with clear learning objectives and questioning which enables pupils to share their experiences. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are conducted in a calm and sensitive manner creating an atmosphere of 'something special' that is important to people. Attitudes and behaviour of pupils towards religious education are very good. Pupils listen attentively, reflect on the information given and respond appropriately.
117. Religious education lessons contribute very effectively to the personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils. Resources are satisfactory and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met. Artefacts contribute appropriately to stimulate interest and understanding enabling pupils to reach high standards.
118. The subject co-ordinator leads the subject with an informal and enthusiastic commitment to its importance in the curriculum. The standards achieved, and pupils' response extends beyond lessons to impact significantly on the tone and ethos of the school.