

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST FRANCIS CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST
SCHOOL**

Cowley, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123172

Headteacher: Mrs J Gordon

Reporting inspector: Dr J N Thorp
6327

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th March 2000

Inspection number: 192091

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Francis CE First School Horspath Road Cowley Oxford
Postcode:	OX4 2QT
Telephone number:	01865 468190
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father J Tomlinson
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
J N Thorp	Registered inspector	English Information technology Art History	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning
Y R S Salasnik	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
S Gatehouse	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music Children under five Special educational needs English as an additional language	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
R W Hardaker	Team inspector	Science Religious education Geography Physical education	Leadership and management

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Francis CE First School is broadly average in size, with 159 pupils aged four to nine, organised into five classes. A further 50 children attend part-time in the Nursery. Children are admitted into the school full-time at the beginning of the term in which they become five; prior to this they may attend part-time in either the Nursery or Reception classes. Attainment on entry to school is below average. Planned reorganisation of schools in this local authority is likely to result in the school catering for pupils aged four to eleven in the near future. Around 20 per cent of the school's pupils come from minority group families; 27 pupils come from families in which English is not their first language, which is higher than in most schools. Around 18 per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is broadly in line with the national average. At present there are four pupils with a statement of special educational need and 61 in total on the school's special educational needs register, which is above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Francis CE First School is an effective school. The headteacher has successfully led the school out of a recent period of instability. There is now a purposeful and positive atmosphere in the school; both standards of attainment and the quality of teaching have improved significantly. The quality of education provided in the Nursery is a real strength of the school. The school currently provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory; it is frequently good or very good.
- Teaching and learning in the Nursery are consistently very good.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in religious education throughout the school.
- The school is well led by the headteacher and governors.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good; relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is good, enabling these pupils to make good progress.
- Learning support assistants are particularly effective in contributing to pupils' progress.

What could be improved

- Standards of pupils' attainment are below average in information technology across the school.
- Provision for the youngest children in the Reception and Year 1 class does not fully meet their needs.
- The role of individual subject co-ordinators is not yet fully developed; there are insufficient opportunities taken to monitor teaching and learning.
- The curriculum is unbalanced, with too little time made available for learning in subjects like music, art, design and technology.
- There is insufficient use made of assessment information to inform teachers' planning.
- There is no agreed marking policy; teachers' marking is sometimes ineffective in providing pupils with information about how well they are doing and how they might improve their work.
- There are some shortages in resources for learning, including a limited range of non-fiction books, too few computers and insufficient apparatus for young children to learn through play.
- Space available in the school is not used as effectively as it could be, especially in Key Stage 1.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in January 1997. Overall, satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the key issues for action identified in the previous report. The school has made good improvements to the teaching of science and this has contributed positively to the higher standards pupils now achieve. While teaching in information and communications technology has improved, opportunities for pupils to make more progress in this subject are restricted by inadequate resources. The school's development plan is much more effective; governors are now fully involved, planned initiatives are supported by detailed planning and costings and outcomes are reviewed regularly. All National Curriculum subjects are included in the school's long-term curriculum planning. However, the time available for teaching and learning in some subjects restricts what pupils can do. The school has developed a portfolio of annotated and assessed samples of pupils' work to more effectively inform teachers' assessments.

In response to other areas of weakness identified in the last report, the school has made variable progress. The quality of teaching, for example, which is now good, has improved considerably since the last inspection when around a fifth was unsatisfactory. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has expanded to include monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work, but as yet there is not time available for monitoring teaching and learning in lessons. While systems and procedures are in place for assessment, insufficient systematic use is made at present of assessment information to inform teachers' planning. There is still no marking policy and as a result, teachers' marking is not as effective as it could be in helping pupils improve their work.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	D	E	C	D
Writing	E	E	B	B
Mathematics	E	E	C	C

Key

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

The information in the table above indicates that the standard of pupils' attainment has varied considerably over the past three years. The results of the most recent tests indicate that standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have improved considerably. When compared with similar schools however, the standard of pupils' reading is still below average. Inspection evidence shows that these national standards are being sustained throughout the school, so that by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 4, standards in English, mathematics and science are all in line with those expected of pupils of their age. In both key stages, the standards of pupils' attainment in information technology are currently below the level expected nationally. Attainment in religious

education is above the expected standard.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in every lesson seen during the inspection. Forty-one lessons were observed; in 15 per cent the quality of teaching was very good, in 54 per cent it was good and in 31 per cent it was satisfactory. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when around a fifth of all teaching was unsatisfactory.

Teaching of literacy is satisfactory and of numeracy it is good throughout the school. Organising single age classes could reduce the difficulties of selecting appropriate texts for work with the whole class in literacy lessons with mixed age groups of pupils. Teaching in numeracy lessons is well organised and teachers provide a good range of practical activities to build on the successful oral work; sometimes there is insufficient oral/mental work as teachers rush their pupils on to formal recording. Teaching in the Nursery is consistently very good. Teaching of the youngest children in the Reception class provides insufficient opportunities for them to learn through practical activity or structured play. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work with the computers in all subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad but not appropriately balanced, with a heavy emphasis on those subjects tested nationally and too little time allocated to some other subjects, including information technology. The youngest children in the Reception and Year 1 class have too few opportunities to learn through play and practical activity. The Nursery, however, provides a very good range of high quality learning experiences. The school's science curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection. Although assessment systems have been improved, their use is under-developed and inconsistent throughout the school. This means that planning the work is less precise than it could be.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision to meet pupils' special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual educational plans contain detailed but manageable targets that are reviewed on a regular basis. These plans contribute effectively to the good progress pupils make in lessons. Good support in some lessons is provided by the school's experienced and well-trained learning support assistants. The provision for those pupils who speak English as an additional language is very effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, although more opportunities for reflection could usefully be provided during other lessons. Provision for pupils' moral development is good, effectively securing pupils' understanding of right and wrong as well as fostering attitudes of respect and tolerance and values of fairness, truth and honesty. Provision for pupils' social development is very good, with routines successfully established to ensure that pupils share and work together well. Pupils have valuable opportunities to take appropriate responsibility around the school. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory, although more could be made of opportunities for pupils to listen to music or to visit museums and galleries to support their work in school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for the care of pupils are good. The school provides a very caring environment and the arrangements for child protection are good. Teachers have good knowledge of all their pupils and provide them with good support. The monitoring of academic performance is sound, although the use of such information is less effective. An adequate number of staff have first-aid training.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led. The headteacher provides clear direction and purpose. She has successfully led the school out of a period of some instability and uncertainty. The school's aims are well focused and wholly appropriate; values taught and promoted have a positive impact on the pupils' achievement. There is a purposeful and caring ethos in which all pupils are valued. The headteacher monitors planning and undertakes some monitoring of teaching, but the monitoring role of the curriculum co-ordinators is not yet fully developed. Teachers work effectively as a team and there is a commitment to improve the school further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are fully committed to the school and provide effective support. They have a clear view of how to develop the school and are now appropriately involved in decision making; they fulfil their statutory duties effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has begun to develop procedures for evaluating its own performance, with some effective monitoring by the headteacher and governors, including analysis of statutory assessment results. The outcomes of the school development plan are reviewed annually. However, other strategies for evaluating its performance are underdeveloped.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of some of its available resources. Financial planning is good; there is a clear relationship between the priorities identified in the school's development plan and the available resources. Specific grants and funds are used well to provide good levels of support to pupils in classes. The accommodation is not used as effectively as it could be. The lack of sufficient computers inhibits the progress pupils can make in information technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress their children make. • The recent improvement in test results. • The high quality of staff in the Nursery. • The school is very supportive of pupils with special educational needs. • The school's multicultural approach, so that pupils get a broad look at other cultures. • The good behaviour in the school and the fact that children get on well together. • Parents have no complaints about bullying. • Children get enough homework – they value the opportunity to comment in their children's reading diary. • The half-termly newsletter and the curriculum information posted in the classrooms. • Teachers are always available after school if parents want to raise any issues. • Parents consider that the school is improving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents find it difficult to know what their children should be able to do and find it difficult to get help from the school to enable them to know what they should expect them to do. • While they are generally happy, some parents are somewhat concerned about having mixed age classes in the school. • Some parents expressed a concern about the building – the open plan design with four classes separated only by curtains, which was felt not to be conducive to sustained concentration.

Inspectors agree with the many positive comments made by parents about the school. Statutory test results have improved recently; pupils are now making appropriate progress in all subjects other than information technology. The school is very supportive of pupils with special educational needs. Behaviour in the school is good. Inspectors also share the parents' view that the Nursery is a real strength of the school. Inspectors found that reports to parents satisfactorily informed them about pupils' attainment and that teachers are readily available to discuss parents' individual concerns. Inspectors share some of the parents' concerns about the mixed age classes where this is making teaching and learning unnecessarily difficult and they noted the problem of noise distracting attention in the three classes sharing the open plan area of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. A significant proportion of children's attainment is below average as they enter the school. However, the majority are on course to reach the expected standards by the time they are five in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social development. This is an outcome of the consistently good teaching they receive in the Nursery.
2. The most recent National Curriculum test results in 1999 show that pupils achieved a standard above the national average in writing when compared to all other schools, and standards in line with the national average in reading and mathematics. Comparisons of pupils' attainment in reading with those in similar schools are not as favourable, indicating that they are below the average of pupils in these schools. In writing and mathematics, however, standards of attainment are in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools.
3. The school's results have varied greatly from year to year. There has been considerable improvement in the most recent results, following on from the previous two years when pupils' attainment was consistently well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. This is due to the very real effort made by everyone at the school to improve standards of pupils' attainment, in particular the improved quality of teaching now found throughout the school.
4. The pattern of attainment in the results of statutory assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 is reflected in the judgements made during this inspection. These indicate that the recent improvement in standards of attainment is being sustained and that again this year, pupils are likely to achieve standards in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read satisfactorily, with increasing fluency and appropriate levels of comprehension. Writing is often accurate and conveys meaning to the reader, but the wider development of the range of pupils' writing skills is somewhat limited by the too few opportunities provided for them to practice in pieces of extended writing. Pupils are satisfactorily developing a smooth style of joined handwriting and most pay attention to detail in their punctuation. The presentation of their work is not always as careful as it could be however. Pupils in this key stage are developing good skills in speaking and listening, which is the result of the teachers' effective management of discussions, particularly at the beginnings of lessons. In mathematics, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding effectively and they are reasonably quick to solve simple problems. Across the curriculum, pupils have too few opportunities to work with the computers and this inhibits their achievement in this subject and the progress they can make in developing their information and communications technology skills in all subjects.
5. By the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school, judgements about pupils' attainment indicate that standards are in line with those expected nationally of pupils at this age in English, mathematics and science. More specifically in English, pupils continue to develop their reading skills appropriately, becoming increasingly confident, expressive and fluent; the standard of their reading is in line with that expected at this stage. In writing, they also become increasingly confident and at times, bold in

expressing their own ideas, but they have too few opportunities to use the computers and this inhibits their acquisition of drafting skills. In mathematics, pupils at this key stage are confident in arithmetic and increasingly speedy in working out questions mentally; they also get too few opportunities to use computers in this subject, particularly when handling data and making graphs. This slows their progress in these aspects of mathematics. Significant improvements in science have been made since the last inspection when standards of attainment were below average. Many pupils have now acquired a satisfactory level of scientific knowledge and the much improved range of opportunities for investigations has ensured they have now acquired appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill in this aspect of their work in science. As in Key Stage 1, pupils have too few opportunities to work with the computers and consequently, they make slow progress in developing their skills in information and communications technology and their attainment is below average.

6. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies satisfactorily and this has contributed positively to the improvement in the standards of pupils' attainment in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There is good overall planning for the work undertaken in both literacy and numeracy and the use of these strategies to guide teaching methods has contributed positively to the improvement in standards in both English and mathematics.
7. Pupils in both key stages attain standards which are above average in religious education. In other subjects at Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with the national expectation in art and history. There was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about pupils' attainment in design and technology, geography, music and physical education. By the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school, the standard of their attainment is in line with that expected nationally in art, geography, history and physical education. There was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about their attainment in design and technology and music at this key stage.
8. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported by learning support assistants and this enables them to make good progress in most lessons. The extra help that these pupils receive when they are withdrawn to work with a specialist teacher also contributes to the good progress they make.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour throughout the school is good. They are well motivated towards their work. Their personal development is good and the relationships amongst themselves and with adults are very good. The majority of parents are right to believe that the school is successful in achieving good standards of behaviour. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.
10. The previous inspection report considered pupils' consistently positive attitudes to learning to be a real strength of the school. This has remained consistent and pupils clearly continue to enjoy school. They are very enthusiastic, work hard and enjoy the challenges provided in their learning. Many display high levels of maturity, especially evident amongst the oldest pupils in Year 4, and they have good social skills, which are well developed during their time in the school. During lessons, most pupils join in activities and contribute enthusiastically and, where they are given the opportunity, they are able to work both independently and co-operatively. Pupils display good self-discipline.

11. The previous inspection report indicated that behaviour was good and that pupils related well to all adults and to each other. This high standard has continued. Pupils' positive approach to their peers was well demonstrated in one assembly observed, when pupils enthusiastically applauded those whose academic achievements and positive behaviour were recognised. This positive attitude to others was also noted in the way youngest children listened to each other in the Nursery. Parents consistently indicated in their responses to the questionnaire, at the pre-inspection meeting and in discussions during the inspection, that they are aware of and pleased with this good behaviour and its effect on pupils' learning and development. During the inspection, very few examples of unsatisfactory behaviour and no bullying or sexist behaviour was observed. There have been no permanent exclusions and only one fixed period exclusion in the last year. This low figure has remained consistent over the past few years.
12. Behaviour in most lessons is generally good. In a few lessons, particularly in the afternoons, pupils' levels of concentration and sometimes their behaviour decline. Where this was observed, it was usually limited to one of the groups, either where the younger pupils had difficulty in concentrating or where there was insufficient pace to retain the interest of the older pupils.
13. During playtimes, the behaviour of most Year 3 and 4 pupils was good. At lunchtime, they have play equipment to use outside and this has improved their behaviour. This equipment is not available during the morning break when a few examples of inappropriate behaviour were observed. Overall however, most played well or talked sensibly to each other. Some Year 1 and 2 pupils engage in play fighting, which is stopped by the supervising adults as soon as they see it. These younger pupils do not have play equipment, although the school is planning to acquire age-appropriate equipment. Most do not use the playground markings that are there nor have developed skills of how to play well together. Amongst all ages, boys and girls play together.
14. Pupils respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others, as was indicated by the attention and interest shown in both the recognition assembly and also the class-led assembly on Passover. Pupils have a well-developed sense of what is right and wrong. For example, Year 4 pupils know that name-calling, including that of a racist nature, is a form of bullying, which should be reported to a teacher. Pupils are enthusiastic about their responsibilities, which was also noted in the previous report. For younger pupils, these are appropriately class based. Older pupils, however, have all-school responsibilities. These are undertaken on a voluntary basis, with most pupils having at least one and some two, specific tasks. Older pupils generally care for younger ones; some Year 4 pupils, for example, take any that have had accidents to the office, and generally display a high sense of maturity. Pupils respect school and each other's property.
15. Attendance remains satisfactory at around 95 per cent, at which level it has remained consistent over the past few years. Unauthorised absence remains just below the national average. Most pupils are punctual in their arrival at school and for lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall. In every lesson seen during the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better; in around 70 per cent of them teaching was good or very good. This shows a considerable improvement since

the last inspection, when teaching in around 20 per cent of lessons was unsatisfactory. Teachers at the school work hard and their pupils benefit from the effort they put into their teaching. Teachers have appropriate knowledge of most of the different subjects they teach; in information technology however, there are too few opportunities for pupils to work with the computers in all subjects.

17. Teaching of children under five in the Nursery is consistently good. The teacher has a delightful manner with the children and a clear understanding of their learning needs; she gives careful attention to extending their personal and social development as they are integrated into the Nursery. Both teacher and nursery nurse know the children very well indeed and have built up excellent relationships in the Nursery. They are both consistent in their approach and this has helped build up these young children's feeling of security. Young children are provided with good opportunities to work at a good variety of activities, with the teacher, nursery nurse or independently. Both the adults in the Nursery are skilful in managing their learning briskly and purposefully at an appropriate level. Good routines for listening are introduced at this stage, with an insistence that children listen carefully to one another. This not only contributes to the development of their ability to think for themselves but also ensures that time is not wasted.
18. The teaching of the youngest pupils in the school is less successful. While their learning needs are met in the main, at times the teaching of these young children is too formal and they are expected to concentrate on a single directed activity for too long. This occurs as a result of a too early introduction to the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum, to a literacy hour and lengthy daily numeracy lessons for example. Generally, these young children have too few opportunities to choose and organise activities for themselves and to learn through more practical activity and play.
19. In Key Stage 1, teachers have a secure knowledge of most of the subjects they teach. They are able to draw on a range of strategies, which enable them to manage pupils' behaviour well, and they successfully motivate them in their learning. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and this enables them to provide an appropriate variety of activities to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding or skills. At its best at this key stage, in a literacy lesson with Year 1 and 2 pupils for example, the teacher planned very well indeed, identifying clear learning objectives, which she communicated to her class, clearly linking it to work they had done previously. Her dynamic approach excited her pupils' interest and engaged their attention immediately. Her excellent use of the resources she provided and the pace with which she managed the lesson, ensured pupils were fully participating throughout. The teacher was able to manage her pupils' behaviour very well despite the intrusive noise from outside the classroom; her brisk questioning was very well matched to her pupils' individual needs and abilities and her purposeful approach ensured pupils concentrated well and remained on task. She also managed the contribution of the learning support assistant particularly well. Such skilful teaching had a most positive impact on the progress pupils were able to make in this lesson. In a significant proportion of lessons, teachers make insufficient use of the computers to support or extend pupils' learning.
20. In Key Stage 2, teachers also have a secure knowledge of most of the subjects they teach and are able to draw on a variety of teaching techniques and approaches to enhance pupils' learning, including whole-class teaching. In most lessons, teachers demonstrate good questioning skills, particularly in their introductions, when they use them most effectively to differentiate between the learning needs of individuals and groups of pupils in the class and to extend their thinking appropriately. Teachers in

this key stage were able to manage discussions with the whole-class well. In one lesson observed, for example, there was a clear structure to the discussion at the start of the lesson, which the teacher skilfully managed, enabling pupils to express their views about playing football in the playground. As a result, pupils were very effectively led on to consider different points of view. The whole lesson was most successful in engaging pupils' interest and in extending their learning. Teachers are also effective in their exposition in most lessons. In a religious education lesson observed for example, the teacher had clear learning objectives and made very good use of a range of resources and artefacts used at Passover to inform discussion with the pupils about symbolism. The teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge, which enabled him to explain the significance of the symbolism clearly at a level intelligible for the pupils.

21. Teaching of literacy is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1, and sometimes it is excellent; it is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. In both key stages, lessons are well prepared and teachers have an appropriate understanding of how to deliver the various components of the literacy hour. Teaching of numeracy is good throughout the school. Planning in this subject is consistent and the required daily numeracy lesson effectively implemented. The introductory mental activities are usually managed well and pupils' learning is pushed on at a good pace. Pupils are enjoying their work in numeracy.
22. Teaching of mathematics, science and religious education in Key Stage 1 is good; at times teaching of English is also good. In design and technology, history and physical education at this key stage, teaching is satisfactory. There were no opportunities to observe teaching in art, geography and music at this key stage and so insufficient evidence to support a judgement about the quality of teaching in these subjects. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good in mathematics, science, art and religious education; it is satisfactory in English overall and physical education. There were no opportunities to observe teaching of design and technology, history, geography and music. Teaching of information and communications technology is unsatisfactory throughout the school and this contributes to the restricted progress that pupils make in this subject. At both key stages, teachers make insufficient use of the computers to enhance pupils' skills in information and communications technology and their planning includes too little indication of how the computers might be used to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils have too few opportunities to work with the computers. Teaching of pupils with identified special educational needs is good.
23. Throughout the school, most teachers make insufficient use of assessment information as they plan each lesson. The school's assessment policy is not fully implemented and this means that the identified learning objectives for each group in the class are not always based on what pupils have learned previously. Pupils' work is marked regularly in the main, in a variety of ways. However, teachers include too few comments about how pupils might improve, develop or extend their work.

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

24. The school's curriculum is appropriately broad, including all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education; it meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is insufficiently well-balanced however, with insufficient time made available for teaching and learning in some subjects, like art, design and technology and music. The system of timetabling some subjects into half-termly blocks exacerbates this imbalance.

25. A heavy emphasis is given to those subjects which are tested nationally; English, mathematics and science. Each class timetable indicates that a large proportion of time each day is devoted to literacy and numeracy, even for the very youngest pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class. This emphasis also inevitably restricts the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum and therefore inhibits the range of pupils' learning. The impact is felt most particularly in the earliest part of Key Stage 1, where the youngest pupils are confronted with such a substantial allocation of time for literacy and numeracy immediately after transfer from the Nursery. Along with the constraints of the accommodation, this means that the youngest pupils in the school are provided with a curriculum that does not meet their learning needs and that they have too few opportunities to learn through play and practical activity. An Early Years' Co-ordinator has recently been appointed: she is already working hard to restructure and develop the curriculum to address the needs of pupils in the Reception class more appropriately.
26. In English, mathematics and science, pupils receive a suitably broad curriculum. The previous inspection report indicated that the school's provision for science, design and technology and geography was unsatisfactory. In science, there has been a significant improvement, reflected in recent good test results. Planning and resources for design and technology and geography have been improved, and teachers have received appropriate training in co-ordinating these subjects. Evidence gathered in this inspection indicates that pupils have insufficient access to work with the computers in all subjects and this is restricting the progress they can make in developing their skills in information technology. Measures are in hand to address this deficiency. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, for which provision is good.
27. The Nursery provides a very good range of high-quality learning experiences for children. At this stage, the curriculum is rich, providing a range of stimulating and exciting experiences, suitably broad and extremely well planned. Overall, it is broad, balanced and entirely appropriate to the needs of these young children and securely rooted in the required desirable outcomes of learning for children under five. For example, children are given very good opportunities to use calculators and a computer, although there is no printer. In addition, they enjoy a wide range of suitably practical activities in literacy, numeracy and in tasks which develop their learning about the world around them. They enjoy a wide range of creative activities such as painting and tie-dying fabric. They have fun in their role-play in their bakery and shoe shops and when using large apparatus outdoors. Excellent teamwork ensures that many opportunities are provided for children to take responsibility for their own learning and for their social development.
28. The last inspection report indicated that curriculum planning was unsatisfactory. This has been successfully addressed and planning has been considerably improved as a result. There are now standard whole-school systems securely in place, the quality of which is good. Similarly, schemes of work have been written, which usefully assist teachers in their planning. Some of this documentation is at a draft stage, however, awaiting final confirmation; in some cases, like design and technology, it is in the process of being reviewed. The school is well aware of the need to complete this in line with the more recent amendments to the National Curriculum. This is particularly important at a time when the school is likely to be radically altered with the addition of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Such has been the improvement in curriculum management, however, that the school is now well placed to address these issues and has already begun to consider future amendments both to its curriculum and assessment systems.

29. The school has taken effective steps to improve its planning in all subjects. Teachers plan together regularly to ensure that the pupils in parallel classes receive equality of opportunity. However, their task is made more demanding by the current organisation of classes with two year groups. In particular, in literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers' planning contains objectives that attempt to encompass the needs of both age groups and the broad range of abilities simultaneously. The difficulty of meeting this wide range of needs inhibits the effectiveness of much of the school's planning; it is inevitable that objectives are either too demanding or not challenging enough as teachers try to meet the needs of two year groups. Despite this difficulty, particularly in selecting texts for whole-class work in literacy for example, the school makes sound provision for teaching basic literacy skills. Planning for numeracy is good. There are examples of good links being made between these subjects in teachers' planning. In a literacy lesson, for example, pupils recall their knowledge of centimetres and time when discussing characters in fairy tales, and in a numeracy lesson, the teacher takes care to use challenging vocabulary when studying analogue and digital clocks.
30. The strong concentration on literacy and numeracy, together with the improvements to planning and teaching in science, is matched by improved national and optional test results. The National Literacy Strategy has helped the school to raise standards in English, although handwriting skills are not as good as they could be. The National Numeracy Strategy is currently being implemented throughout the school, and is already having an impact upon pupils' performance in mental calculations.
31. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual educational plans contain detailed but manageable targets which are reviewed on a regular basis. The plans contribute directly to the good progress pupils make in lessons, especially when they are helped by one of the school's experienced and well-trained learning support assistants. Some pupils receive extra help when they are withdrawn to work with the specialist teacher either on a one-to-one basis or as members of a small group. The provision for those pupils who speak English as an additional language is very effective. Support for all these pupils is well organised and makes a significant contribution to their good progress as they move through the school.
32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. The curriculum is enriched through a number of activities and clubs which are well supported by a significant number of pupils. There are recorder clubs, for example, which cater for differing needs and abilities, a netball club and a football club which practises on Saturday mornings. The school has good links with the church through assemblies and services held in the church at Christmas and the end of the school year. The school choir practises in preparation for the Festival of Voices held annually in Dorchester Abbey.
33. The school is committed to equality of opportunity for all its pupils. Pupils experiencing difficulties are given every opportunity to succeed, and many do so. For example, a pupil with motor impairment still takes a full part in a physical education lesson because effective help from a learning support assistant is at hand.
34. Those pupils capable of higher attainment are less effectively provided for, due in part to the identified planning difficulties. Although many teachers plan for different ability groups within the lesson and provide good support as pupils work, the arrangements for the most able pupils are not refined enough and their tasks sometimes lack sufficient challenge. The facilities for information technology are poor, denying pupils their full entitlement to this important area of the curriculum.

35. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development provision is sound overall. Provision for moral development is good, and for social development provision is very good.
36. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered satisfactorily through religious education lessons and in assemblies. Most pupils respond appropriately during moments of stillness, as they focus on the prayer candle while the prayers are said during collective worship for example. On one occasion observed, they listened to the story of the Good Samaritan and acknowledged the unselfishness of one human being towards another. In religious education, they are encouraged to consider the idea of sacrifice, in giving something that is really precious, and in a Key Stage 1 class, they devote a short time to reflection, being still and quiet as they listen to music while they think about a particular idea.
37. Pupils' moral development is promoted consistently; all classes display a set of rules and teachers take time and care to ensure pupils understand right and wrong. Attitudes of respect and tolerance are actively encouraged, as are the values of fairness, truth and honesty. Pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable are asked to consider the effect of their actions on others: they are continuously supported in a fair but firm way by all staff including those who work with them out of class.
38. Social development is very successfully provided for throughout the school and the Nursery. As a result, pupils are developing a very clear awareness that sharing and taking turns are essential qualities for getting along together. Systems and routines are successfully established by teachers and support staff, in the classroom and on other occasions such as lunchtimes and playtimes, and as pupils move around the school. There are opportunities for pupils to share resources, such as working co-operatively in pairs using the computer keyboard and a mouse. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility by doing specific jobs, for example tidying away resources or taking messages and registers to the office. Selfless attitudes and thought for others are acknowledged in assemblies as, for example, when two boys made a duplicate frame for a member of the class who missed the lesson because of illness so that she would not feel left out. Opportunities to become aware of the needs of others in the wider community are provided and promoted in special assemblies, for example, in collecting for basic equipment such as pencils and chalk to be sent to refugee children in Cairo.
39. The school makes sound provision for pupils' cultural development. A range of suitable artefacts to support world faiths is available for teachers to use in religious education or history lessons. For example, in studying the exodus from Egypt, pupils handle with care and respect the special ceremonial Seder plates as they learn about, and taste, the various foods which are symbols of the Israelites' escape. In an assembly led by a Key Stage 2 class, the whole school is given the opportunity to learn in a particularly effective way about the Passover. Although there have been theatre groups in the past, and teachers have attended courses on African drumming, pupils are not provided with a sufficiently varied or diverse experience of their own culture in their immediate environment. For example, there are few visits into Oxford to see for themselves the beauties of architecture and art, or the exciting exhibits in the museums there. A good choice of music is played as pupils enter or leave the hall for collective worship, like Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, for example, but time provided to listen to these pieces is very limited. However, children in the Nursery have made a suitably fierce dragon whilst listening to Chinese music as they learn about the Chinese New Year and in a Key Stage 1 class, pupils have

constructed their own Torah as they study Judaism.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Procedures for the care of pupils are good. The school provides a very caring environment for its pupils; there is effective, comprehensive pastoral care provided by all the staff, who know individual pupils well. As a result, personal support and guidance for pupils are good. The arrangements for child protection are good. The monitoring of academic performance is sound. However, the use of assessment to guide curricular planning is not yet fully effective. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. External agencies are used appropriately to the benefit of the pupils. The school provides good support and guidance, which contribute positively to the progress pupils make and improves their confidence.
41. The school has an effective child protection policy, with clear guidance and procedures. In addition to the headteacher as designated person, the deputy headteacher has also now undertaken a course of training, which ensures that there is an appropriately qualified member of staff in the school at all times. Staff training is provided through the regular staff meetings and all are aware of their responsibilities. Liaison with other appropriate agencies is good.
42. There are now satisfactory systems in place for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in the curriculum. Teachers' weekly planning, for instance, includes identified opportunities for assessment, most notably in literacy and numeracy. In addition, teachers have standard files produced by the local education authority in which details of pupils' achievement in all areas of the curriculum are recorded. Each pupil has an individual record of achievement in which assessed and annotated samples of their work are stored. Day-to-day assessment is carried out well by class teachers as they interact with pupils whilst they are working. However, there is still no marking policy and consequently there are very few evaluative comments in pupils' books. Furthermore, the overall presentation of pupils' work, including handwriting and use of rulers, is not receiving enough direction or correction. In mathematics, for example, this can lead to inaccuracies when figures are carelessly aligned, or when pupils use both the £ and p signs in decimal representation.
43. While assessment systems are much improved since the last inspection, their use is still under-developed and sometimes inconsistent throughout the school. Neither is their use sufficiently regularly monitored, other than in literacy and numeracy. This means that planning the curriculum is less precise than it could be; in turn, lesson planning is not always sharply in focus since this is derived from as full an understanding as possible of how well pupils are achieving.
44. The school uses the local authority's detailed health and safety policy. As an all-encompassing document, it covers all eventualities but it is too detailed to be studied by all. There is an identified health and safety officer, who together with the headteacher and caretaker, forms a sub-committee. They carry out regular termly inspections. Health and safety matters are raised by staff either as a matter of urgency for immediate attention or during the weekly staff meetings. A number of health and safety issues were identified during the inspection and reported to the school. There is an adequate number of staff with first-aid training. The arrangements for the care of pupils who become ill or have accidents whilst at school, are good. Accidents are recorded and in cases of concern a letter is sent home.

45. The arrangements for the supervision of pupils at break times and over lunch are satisfactory and these generally ensure behaviour is appropriate. The lack of outdoor play equipment for pupils in Years 1 and 2, together with their underdeveloped sense of playing well together, sometimes makes playtimes a challenging time for supervising staff. Whenever they see inappropriate behaviour, staff intervene immediately. The school is aware of the continued play-fighting and repeatedly addresses the issue. The provision of outdoor play equipment for pupils in Years 3 and 4 has successfully contributed to their improved behaviour.
46. The previous inspection report noted that while behaviour was good, the school did not have a policy. This has now been rectified with the introduction of a clear policy, listing rewards and sanctions, which operates on a scale of increasing seriousness. Good academic work and behaviour are publicly recognised and praised in some detail in recognition assemblies, with stickers being given, and this is clearly motivating to pupils. The behaviour policy is well understood and consistently applied by all staff who reinforce acceptable standards of behaviour which is demonstrated by the good behaviour of pupils in and around the school and the very low instances of fixed-term exclusions and no permanent ones. There is also a clear policy for dealing with bullying, which is well understood by pupils and there are generally good arrangements for resolving incidents that arise. Staff are good role models for their pupils.
47. The procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory. These include the involvement of the education welfare officer. A new system for recording lateness is in place and helps ensure that the arrival of pupils after registration is recorded. The school's registers and attendance figures are not yet computerised. There is no policy or procedures in place for promoting attendance.
48. There is good monitoring of pupils' personal development by all staff. There are good pastoral arrangements, guidance and support, all of which help to achieve high levels of confidence, self-reliance and social skills among pupils. Parents are pleased with this aspect of the school's work; one parent, for example, expressed great satisfaction with the support the school provided in improving her child's self-confidence and esteem. Older pupils display a high sense of maturity. Pupils are provided with opportunities to take and exercise responsibility. For all pupils, there are various class jobs. Year 4 pupils have school jobs such as holding the doors, helping with tables in the hall at lunch-time and taking the daily book around school. These are voluntary responsibilities, which are regularly rotated; most pupils choose to do at least one such job and a number do two. The school's arrangements for the welfare of pupils are a significant strength, ensuring they have an appropriately caring and protective environment in which they can learn.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school's links with parents are satisfactory. Parents are generally happy with the school and the majority of responses in the questionnaire and at the meeting are positive. Some parents are very involved in the life of the school and in their children's education. Attendance at some meetings is low. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory.
50. The school communicates appropriately with parents regularly. Overall, the quality of information is satisfactory. The governing body's annual report to parents and the prospectus are good. They are informative and detailed. The frequency of newsletters

is less satisfactory as they are only sent out half-termly resulting in no formal communication to all parents in the intervening period. Broad details of the subjects being studied are sent to parents each term, although the amount of detail provided varies from subject to subject. More detailed information is available from teachers if parents request it. Parents are welcome to help in classrooms and a number of parents of nursery children, several of Year 1 and 2 pupils and some of Year 3 and 4 pupils do so.

51. The annual reports to parents are good. They are evaluative, relate to the individual pupil, explaining what they know in each subject. In some cases, reports also identify the skills pupils have gained and targets for future development. There is no opportunity for parents to write their comments on the reports however. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at a meeting at the end of the academic year, although only a small number take up this offer. A good home-school agreement has been introduced and many have signed, and from their responses, view it positively.
52. There are two annual meetings for parents, one each term. They vary in their effectiveness according to the attendance at each. The spring term consultations at which each parent has an individual meeting with their child's teacher is the best attended with nearly all parents taking advantage to attend on one of the two evenings. Parents are invited to make an appointment if they wish to discuss their children's reports. Most parents appear content with the reports, since few request such discussion. The third meeting is a combined open evening and curriculum workshop. While open evenings are much better attended, parents tend not to stay for the curriculum workshops. The session on numeracy in the autumn term, for example, was attended by only a small number of parents.
53. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved appropriately in meetings with school staff and outside agencies.
54. The school has devised and implemented a homework policy. Parents are generally supportive of the homework provision and pleased with its impact on pupils' learning.
55. Parents' perceptions of the school are varied though overall they are satisfactory. Many parents hold very positive views, particularly with welfare arrangements and support for pupils. Parents feel that they are welcome in the school at any time and that teachers are approachable. Some parents expressed concern about the organisation of mixed-age classes. They are concerned about the impact it has on pupils' progress, in particular that older pupils may be insufficiently stretched or that activities may be above the level of the younger ones. There is good direct parental involvement in school. A small number of parents actively help in school and provide high quality support for activities such as reading or in helping with pupils' group work. Parents are very supportive of the school as a happy, warm and caring environment. Until now they have not viewed the school in terms of its academic goals, but expressed satisfaction that standards of attainment are improving.
56. Parents feel it is easy to approach teachers and the headteacher if they have any concerns. The headteacher is generally available outside school in the morning and is readily available for parents to speak to her. Most parents feel their concerns are appropriately considered, dealt with and are very happy with the follow-up. They are less supportive of school activities including those of the parent-teacher association.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The school is well led and managed; the headteacher provides strong leadership and clear purpose and educational direction. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has successfully led the school through an unsettled period recently and as a result, the school is improving noticeably, particularly in raising standards of attainment. Under her leadership, staff and governors work well together and share a commitment to improving the school further and continuing to raise standards for all pupils.
58. The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since the previous inspection. Teaching throughout the school has improved and the proportion of good teaching is having a positive impact on raising standards. In science, standards have been significantly raised. Curriculum planning has improved in most subjects. However, some important weaknesses highlighted in the last report are yet to be fully addressed. There are some curricular weaknesses in information and communications technology and design and technology. The monitoring role of curriculum co-ordinators is not yet fully developed.
59. The school's aims are well focused and wholly appropriate. The values taught and promoted have a beneficial impact on the pupils' achievement as pupils behave well in classrooms and display a keenness to learn. Within school, all children are highly valued and cared for and are encouraged to develop into well-motivated and self-disciplined pupils. The school is aware of the importance of meeting the learning needs of all pupils; those of children in the Nursery and pupils with special educational needs are especially well catered for. The aims and values are largely met. However, poor curriculum provision in information and communications technology and the lack of sufficient hardware resources inhibit pupils realising their full potential in this area of learning.
60. There are some structures and procedures in place to monitor standards and provision. Overall however, these procedures are unsatisfactory. The headteacher monitors some teaching in classrooms but not on a regular basis and she does not give teachers detailed written feedback. She monitors pupils' learning by scrutinising teachers' planning and pupils' work in books. Subject co-ordinators also monitor progress by scrutinising pupils' completed work and teachers' planning but this does not provide a complete picture of the progress being made in teaching and learning in a given subject. As yet, there is no systematic programme of direct classroom observation of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators.
61. The governing body is well informed and fulfils its responsibilities effectively. It has a commitment to the school, confidence in the headteacher and supports her and the school well. Some members of the governing body visit classrooms to observe pupils at work. The governing body has relevant structures and procedures in place to ensure individual governors can undertake their roles and responsibilities effectively. Appropriate committees are established and these have terms of reference. Minutes are recorded at these meetings and these are available for all members of the governing body to read. They are appropriately involved in forward planning and decision making.
62. The school manages most of its available resources well. Financial planning is good. There is an effective system in place to ensure that there is a clear relationship between educational objectives and the available resources. Money is appropriately

allocated and kept under constant review by the governing body's finance committee. Allocations relate directly to priorities established in the school development plan. This is now an effective management tool which identifies appropriate long- and short-term priorities and which contains a programme to ensure that subjects are reviewed regularly. This review procedure is an improvement since the last report. Governors are appropriately involved in making spending decisions and have a good oversight of the budget. Governors evaluate the effect of the school's spending decisions on standards. They receive regular reports from the headteacher and question the contents, they analyse statutory test results with the headteacher. Funding allocated for particular purposes is used well. For example, resources spent on special educational needs provision have made a significant contribution to the good progress pupils with special educational needs make.

63. The school's finances are in good order. There are secure financial systems and effective control. However, the school has not been audited since the last report. The headteacher and governors are well supported by the school's bursar, who ensures they have a clear understanding of the school's finances. The school gives careful consideration to the principles of best value through the work of the headteacher and finance committee. It has established good procedures in order to ensure the cost effectiveness of the goods and services that it purchases. Future expenditure is carefully costed with success criteria being built in. The school receives regular computerised printouts from the local educational authority detailing ongoing expenditure. This information is used well by the headteacher and governors in their monitoring of spending and in financial planning. The school bursar is well trained in the use of information technology, which is appropriately used in the administration of the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.
64. The school has an adequate level of teaching staff who are appropriately qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the curriculum; teachers are deployed effectively. There are also a good number of support staff who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those who have special educational needs. The school effectively uses students in training to enhance pupils' learning and it makes a positive contribution to the students' professional development. Several members of staff have been trained as mentors to students in training. The school has suitable informal induction procedures in place for teachers who are new to the school. However, these are not formalised and there is no staff handbook available which outlines the administrative procedures and day-to-day routines of the school. This is an area included in the school development plan for consideration in the near future. A system of appraisal is in place. The headteacher has been recently appraised. However, there is no system of regular assessment of teachers' performance through classroom observation.
65. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. This enables most aspects of the curriculum to be taught effectively. However, there are some areas of concern. In the newer part of the school, which accommodates the Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils, the building is of an open plan design. Three class groups are currently housed in this area, with a fourth to be added soon; all the classes share a large central area. The design of this part of the school creates particular acoustic problems, with considerable noise generated at times which is disturbing to those groups working on quiet activities. Noise carries from one part of the building to another and is amplified. The concern over managing the noise in this part of the school is contributing to the inefficient use of the space available, particularly the use of the large central area for play activities for the youngest pupils in the Reception class for example. The hall

used for physical education lessons is small, particularly for the older pupils and restricts some activities especially indoor games. Externally, the playing field and playground are of a good size; a valuable outdoor adventure play area has been created. There is separate library accommodation in which small groups of pupils can sit down and work. In other areas, the available space in the school is not used to its full advantage. For example, the class base used by Reception children is rather cramped and this inhibits some creative and play activities. The school might consider whether these pupils could better be accommodated in another area of the building.

66. There are some weaknesses in the school's learning resources. There are insufficient computers, for example, and an inadequate range of software to support pupils' learning. The library contains too few non-fiction books, limited in range. There is an inadequate supply of play apparatus for children in the Reception class. In science and religious education, however, resources are of a good quality and quantity; there are some good resources for literacy. Other areas of the curriculum are adequately resourced. Generally, resources are used satisfactorily. However, resources in information and communications technology are not fully utilised. Resources, staffing and accommodation for children under five in the Nursery are good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of education provided by the school, the headteacher, staff and governors, with the support of the local education authority should:

- **Take steps to raise standards of attainment and ensure that pupils are able to use the full range of skills in information and communications technology across the curriculum by:**
 - (a) reviewing teachers' planning to ensure that they identify opportunities for pupils to use the full range of information technology skills in all subjects;
 - (b) devising schemes of work and guidelines to ensure progression in the development of pupils' skills in information technology in all subjects;
 - (c) ensuring teachers' lesson plans indicate how the computers might be used to support pupils' learning in each subject;
 - (d) ensuring there are sufficient hardware and software resources to support pupils' work with the computers in all subjects;
 - (e) providing more opportunities for pupils to use the computers in all areas of the curriculum;
 - (f) providing time for the information technology co-ordinator to work alongside teachers to support them and to improve their confidence and competence in using the computers in all subjects.

Paragraphs: 4; 16; 22; 34; 66; 130 - 135

- **Improve the quality of provision for children in the Reception class so their learning needs are more fully met, by:**
 - a. developing a wider range of organisational arrangements in the classroom and adopting a variety of teaching styles to address the needs of different groups in the class, particularly those of the youngest children;
 - b. extending the resources available to support young children's learning through play and practical activity;

- c. exploiting the space and resources available to provide more opportunities for children to learn through practical activity and structured play;
- d. reviewing and improving the provision and use of classroom assistance to support appropriate learning activities for these youngest children;
- e. providing an appropriately secure outdoor play area.

Paragraphs: 18; 72; 76; 78; 93

- **Develop the role of the subject co-ordinators in curriculum management so they can ensure the curriculum is appropriately balanced, by:**

- a. reviewing longer-term planning to ensure that there is sufficient time allocated to teaching and learning in all subjects;
- b. ensuring co-ordinators monitor teachers' medium- and shorter-term planning;
- c. devising strategies to enable them to monitor and support teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible;
- d. extending their opportunities to scrutinise pupils' work across the school providing opportunities for them to lead and manage review and development in their subjects;
- e. extending their responsibilities for co-ordinating assessment in their subjects.

Paragraphs: 58; 60; 87; 108; 134

- **Ensure that teachers' assessment of pupils' learning fully informs their planning so that their management of continuity and progression in all pupils' learning is as effective as possible by:**

- (a) fully implementing the school's policy for assessment and recording;
- (b) using the outcomes of assessment to inform and support teachers' planning and the identification of specific learning objectives for small groups and individual pupils;
- (c) improving the effectiveness of teachers' marking, indicating in their written comments how pupils might improve their work.

Paragraphs: 23; 42; 43; 134

In addition to the key issues above, the following should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Extend resources for learning where there are identified shortages, including computers, non-fiction books and apparatus to support young children's learning through play.

Paragraphs: 66; 78; 132

- Review the use of space throughout the school to ensure that it is used as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Paragraphs: 65; 77

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	12	54	32	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 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	159
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	61

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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	21	17	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	16	16	14
	Total	32	32	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (50)	84 (67)	82 (75)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	32	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (50)	87 (67)	89 (75)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	10
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	2
White	123
Any other minority ethnic group	8

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	1	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 – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31.8
Average class size	31.8

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	185

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998 – 99
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	£
Total income	306629
Total expenditure	305670
Expenditure per pupil	1727
Balance brought forward from previous year	2000
Balance carried forward to next year	2959

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	148
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	55	6	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	43	27	7	4
The teaching is good.	51	45	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	41	21	2	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	32	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	47	4	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	45	19	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	41	49	4	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	57	0	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	47	23	6	8

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

68. The provision for children under five in the Nursery is very good and has a significant impact upon their learning. It has continued to develop since the previous inspection and is now a real strength of the school. Children enter the school with a range of social and early learning skills. Baseline assessment indicates that frequently their attainment on entry is below average. All children transfer to the Reception class as they reach statutory school age with entitlement to full-time education. On entry to the Reception class, standards are broadly average across the range of their work and in personal and social education. The inspection finds that children make such good progress in the Nursery because the teaching is very good and planning is excellent. Most children are reaching standards which are in line with the expected learning outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world; they reach the expected levels in their personal, creative and physical development.

Personal and social development

69. Children are making very good progress in acquiring social and personal skills. They settle quickly to their daily routines such as circle time and registration. They are developing a good awareness of right and wrong: for example when they spill the sand, they know they must sweep it up so that the floor is not slippery. They are beginning to care about the world around them, and share their feelings about events. For instance, they show sympathy when someone tells the group that the microwave has stopped working and they are very interested in the teacher's new party dress. News is told clearly and with confidence and there is a lively response to questions. As tasks are chosen, they demonstrate an awareness of each other's needs, for example, helping each other to do a jigsaw or waiting patiently for their turn to use the calculators or computer. They are very aware of the need to wash their hands before handling food, or after using paint and glue, and help each other to put on aprons to protect their clothes when playing in the water tray.

Language and literacy

70. Very good teaching in language and literacy enables children to reach standards that are broadly average by the time they transfer into school at the age of five. Teachers focus clearly on children's needs, extending their vocabulary in their conversations with the children. Talking and questioning are used effectively to develop children's understanding of their work and of the world around them. All adults in the Nursery involve themselves very effectively in imaginative play, encouraging conversation by responding to the children's actions: for example in the shoe shop, adults hold interesting conversations with the 'shopkeeper', asking pertinent questions. Children express their ideas and experiences confidently. They listen with increasing care and attention and join in readily both in discussions and in story-time. For example, when sharing a big book they soon begin to join in whenever the baby owl says '*I want my mummy!*' Speaking and listening skills are less well developed in the Reception class where opportunities for adults to involve themselves effectively in role-play situations are limited. This is because the class size is large, the use of the available accommodation constrains the type of activities being provided and the learning

support is directed mainly at children with special needs.

71. Children in the Nursery know that words and pictures carry meaning and they are beginning to enjoy stories and books. The skills required are well developed through regular well-organised activities: for example, they watch carefully as a story is told and the teacher uses a pointer to show the direction of the text. They then have a go for themselves, handling her pointer with care as they take turns being the 'teacher', reading to the rest of the group. Staff work very well together at these times to enrich the children's experience: they turn it into a dramatic play, one telling the story, the other speaking the parts within speech marks. The children listen with great concentration, entranced and they are completely absorbed in the story as it is so beautifully told. Children develop early writing skills as they watch each other using the whiteboard at news time. Letters are correctly formed when writing their own names. In the Reception class, further opportunities are sometimes provided for these early skills to develop and most pupils at this stage are writing recognisable words and phrases to communicate meaning. However, not enough opportunities for practice are being provided for letter formation to be improved.

Mathematics

72. Good quality teaching ensures that children make good progress in mathematics in the Nursery. Standards are average by the time children reach the age of five. A wide range of interesting activities is provided; there are high expectations reflected in a good range of interesting activities. For example, large calculators are used by children to generate numbers which they then write correctly, naming each one from zero to nine confidently. They know that four is less than six and eight is more than two. They count confidently from one to 20, and backwards from ten to zero. When sorting creatures into sets, they count how many legs one spider has and then count on to calculate how many legs two, then three spiders have. They know that spiders have more legs than starfish, and count starfish legs in patterns of five up to 20. At circle time, they count the number of children present, how many are absent, and re-adjust their findings as children arrive late. They count along a number line to 30 confidently, identifying numbers correctly as required by good questioning which challenges them to think. In Reception, the five-year-olds experience a numeracy lesson which is often an hour or longer. Their attention flags and their concentration wavers as they become bored with the lack of practical activity.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Children are making sound progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of the world around them. By the time they are five, they reach standards which are in line with expectations for this age. Well-chosen resources such as magnifying glasses and mirrors are used skilfully to stimulate their interest in the wider world. Children study the growth of seeds into plants, and take an active part in planting their new raised flowerbed. They investigate the waterproof qualities of a range of materials, and having studied the framework, make their own umbrella frames using straws. They attempt to make their umbrella capes waterproof by using wax crayons and then test their results using a watering can. Fabrics are observed and the changes noted when they are dyed. In making shortbread, they see how the ingredients change when cooked at a high temperature. The passage of time is noted as they recall when their birthdays are, how old they are compared with others and when they will move on to the next class. In celebrating festivals, they make cards for Mother's Day and at the time of the Chinese New Year, constructed a large Chinese dragon whilst listening to

Chinese music. When playing with dinosaurs, they describe their skins, their protective armoured plates and know that dinosaurs are extinct. They sort creatures into those that live by the seashore and those which can be found in the garden, and they recognise that some can sting and move faster than others. Reception children discuss characters in fairy tales, whether they are nice or nasty, and they confidently explain how some things move by being pushed or pulled whereas others, such as their Jack-in-the-boxes, move because they jump out when the pleated paper spring stretches up.

74. Standards in computer skills are good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Reception. Nursery children are using the mouse and the keyboard confidently and accurately. Unfortunately they cannot at present print out any of their work as there is no printer provided. Reception children build on the skills they have already acquired in controlling the mouse and using the keyboard.

Creative development

75. Effective teaching and a wide range of activities ensure that children in the Nursery make very good progress in their creative skills. Children can control brushes of different sizes well. They use them effectively to paint strong patterns of mathematical shapes like rectangles, squares and triangles. Their concentration is encouraged with softly played music while they work. The planning by all the adults enables them to respond positively and concentrate appropriately on these tasks. For instance, in working on pattern, children have identified patterns around them, including those in their big book *Owl Babies*. They work together to make a patchwork, and use objects of different shapes to make a tie-dyed curtain. Modelling materials are used effectively to make patterns and shapes and the available equipment is used well as children ice their small cakes. They enjoy singing action songs such as *Heads, shoulders, knees and toes* whilst handling soft toys and hand puppets.

Physical development

76. By the time they are five, children have reached standards which are in line with those expected of children their age. They show increasing control of brushes, pencils, crayons and scissors and they can use cutters when working with modelling material or when making shortbread biscuits. When decorating Mother's day cards, they take particular care using cotton buds to make delicate patterns with precision. They use calculator keys and computer keyboards and the mouse with increasing precision, and control the cursor on the screen with increasing accuracy. They make good use of their outdoor play area. They use large-wheeled apparatus with good control, and climb and jump confidently from a large frame. They use a gravel tray to discover through play how heavy differently sized containers become when filled with pebbles, and they show accuracy when using a dart board. Their social development is enhanced as they take turns in their 'second-hand shoe sale' using real shoes, being the shopkeeper or the customer. An ingenious system of wind-socks is used to signal whether it is a day when they can play on the grass, or whether it is too wet: children are quick to point out what sort of day it is today, and their sense of right and wrong is brought into play as they discuss the matter. Children in the Reception class are not receiving similar provision due to the constraints of the accommodation and the lack of an appropriately trained support assistant; however, they do have access to the equipment in the hall for gymnastics.

77. The leadership and management of the Nursery are very good, and are strengths of the school. Staff are appropriately qualified and have very good knowledge of the type of curriculum needed by children of this age. The quality of teaching in the Nursery is consistently very good. Support staff and voluntary help all work very efficiently as they are well-briefed, conscientious and committed; for instance, some are pursuing further training in their own time. In contrast, children in the Reception class are not getting the level of support they need to engage in similar types of practical activities. This is because there is no nursery nurse to support their specific needs. The accommodation in the Nursery is good and is well organised: staff have made the best of their accommodation and storage. This is especially successful in their recent refurbishment of their outdoor play area with the help of parents. However, the accommodation for children in the Reception class is inappropriate as it places constraints upon the types of activities these young children can experience.
78. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the Nursery provision: teaching is now very good and planning is excellent. Outdoor physical resources in the Nursery are now satisfactory. However, outdoor physical resources for Reception pupils are inadequate. Opportunities for information technology in the Nursery, previously good, are now satisfactory as there is no printer.

ENGLISH

79. By the end of Key Stage 1, the results of statutory assessment in 1999 show that pupils' attainment in reading was broadly in line with the national average and in writing they were above the national average. When compared with similar schools, however, pupils' attainment in reading was below average, while in writing it was again above average. Standards in both reading and writing have improved dramatically in these most recent results; in the two previous years standards were consistently well below average. The school has made considerable efforts to raise standards of attainment in English, through the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy for example, and this has met with considerable success; standards are now back at the level they were at the time of the previous inspection. Currently, the attainment of pupils working towards the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average; the trend towards higher standards in reading and writing is being sustained. This is an effect of the quality of teaching and planning for the literacy hour.
80. Standards achieved by pupils working towards the end of Year 4 are in line with those expected of pupils their age. In the lessons observed at both key stages, attainment was in line with national standards, especially in reading. Standards in speaking and listening are also in line those expected nationally in both key stages.
81. The majority of pupils in both key stages have made sound progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. They speak well and listen carefully to what others have to say. The youngest pupils in the school are quickly introduced to appropriate routines for speaking and listening, which are successfully developed as pupils move through the school. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4, pupils are able to take part in discussions, contributing sensibly and constructively, and listen intently to what others are saying. These were observed in a number of lessons, as in one where pupils discussed the issues identified concerning playground games. Pupils with English as a second language also make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Pupils' success in this aspect of their work in English is directly related to the teachers' ability to ask questions, listen to pupils' answers and promote lively discussion. Where it is most effectively promoted,

speaking and listening are planned for systematically and discussions are built into lessons.

82. Standards in reading of pupils currently in Years 2 and 4 are average. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 1, many can read with confidence and discuss the content of their book appropriately. Most have acquired satisfactory phonic knowledge and read accurately at their own level, some with fluency and good use of expression; a small number are developing skills of self-correction by using a variety of cues. Most pupils understand what they read, those more confident readers are able to discuss aspects of the plot, including predictions about what might happen next, and sometimes they could discuss individual characters in their stories. Pupils continue to develop their skills in Key Stage 2 and average standards are maintained throughout Years 3 and 4. By the time pupils leave the school, many read widely and can talk about their favourite authors, an ability which has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils can use non-fiction books appropriately showing skill in using the contents and indexes to find relevant information. However, they have insufficient opportunities to use or develop their skills in finding information for themselves, in the school library for example.
83. Standards in writing are satisfactory in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils have good opportunities for writing in a variety of styles and for a range of purposes. The results are often imaginative and well presented. They write instructions, sequence ideas in stories and write play scripts. Pupils have considered and understood the style of a fairy story and written their own imaginative fairy stories, like *The Paper Bag Princess* for example. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 have compared characters in their writing. The younger pupils in this key stage are making good progress in their independent writing. By the end of the key stage, pupils are using simple punctuation accurately; some have begun to use apostrophes and speech marks, having learned about recording speech successfully in speech bubbles. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use the computers for drafting their work. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress, developing their writing for different audiences and different purposes. Pupils have produced some good writing having first read the first chapter of *Time Spinner* by Roy Apps, which are imaginative attempts to provide a second chapter of their own. Although there are examples of such interesting writing, overall however, they have too few opportunities for extended writing. They also have too few opportunities at this key stage to use the computers for drafting and re-drafting their work. Most pupils develop a smooth style of joined handwriting, which they demonstrate in final drafts of their writing for display for example, although at times in their other work, they are not as careful and the standard of presentation is not as good as it could be.
84. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language make good progress in developing their reading and writing skills. They are well supported by learning support assistants who contribute positively to the progress they are able to make. Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from additional literacy support, which makes a significant contribution to their progress.
85. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately supported in their literacy lessons. Teachers' planning, particularly in Key Stage 2, is effective in identifying specific learning objectives for these pupils and learning activities are well targeted at their needs in most lessons. This was evident, for example, in the way one group of pupils was able to discuss the double negative in the task the teacher had set, which was then effectively used to develop the discussion during the plenary part of the lesson. In

another lesson observed, higher attaining pupils were provided with the opportunity to work independently on a set writing task, during which they showed they were capable of writing persuasively having understood and selected powerful words.

86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better throughout the school; some particularly good teaching was seen at times in lessons in both key stages. Teachers' planning for literacy is good, comprehensively based on the National Literacy Framework. This planning is completed thoroughly in all the classes; teachers make appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills in other subjects. This enables all the teachers to provide a sequence of learning activities well suited to pupils' learning needs. In Key Stage 1, teachers' own knowledge and understanding enable them to engage pupils in discussions effectively at the beginnings of each lesson. They quickly ensure pupils understand the purpose of the lesson, as on one occasion observed where there was good discussion of punctuation and its relation to the layout of a poem. The teacher was then able to go on and extend pupils' understanding of rhyme, building skilfully on their ability to predict or anticipate the words. In one excellent lesson seen at this key stage, the teacher used her lively dynamic approach to good effect making the objective of the lesson clear to her pupils and exciting them with the prospect of studying various similarities and differences among characters from fairy stories. The teacher's management of the lesson was very good indeed, very well organised with excellent use of resources and keeping the pace of the lesson such that pupils' interest was kept alive throughout. The teacher very successfully generated a sense of fun, which ensured pupils gained in confidence and her use of vocabulary and her encouragement of pupils to use alternative words ensured their knowledge and understanding was widened and enriched. Such skilful teaching contributed very positively to the high level of pupils' achievement in this lesson.
87. In Key Stage 2, teachers also manage the literacy hour well. Teaching of speaking and listening is good, pupils are effectively engaged in discussions, which are used well in all areas of the curriculum. This was seen to good effect in one lesson observed in which pupils were fully engaged in discussion about the arguments concerning playing football in the playground. In some lessons, the practice of informing pupils of the objectives for the session is clearly beneficial in engaging pupils in thinking about their own learning. As in Key Stage 1, teachers at this key stage are able to pose questions well, not only to check on their understanding or to review their earlier work, but also to provide further challenge to particular individuals or groups. In one lesson observed, the teacher pushed on pupils' learning and understanding of persuasive writing with specific questions like, '*What does the second paragraph do?*' and '*What is this word doing?*' Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and high expectations of pupils' attainment. Pupils' work is marked regularly and at times, good use is made of opportunities to discuss work with individual pupils; teachers write encouraging comments in their marking but do not clearly and regularly inform pupils of ways to improve what they do. Although teachers did use the computers at times to provide opportunities for pupils to practice particular skills in both key stages, like reinforcing spelling patterns for example, generally there are too few computers available which restricts the opportunities individual pupils can have. Overall insufficient use is made of information and communications technology to extend pupils' reading and writing skills. In both key stages, satisfactory use is made of reading homework.
88. The management of the subject is strong. The co-ordinator monitors standards of attainment and charts pupils' progress effectively, which enables him to discuss

reasons why results of statutory assessment dipped in 1998. His scrutiny of pupils' work enables him to show how this cohort of pupils has now caught up. In other classes however, teachers did not make as much use as they might of the available assessment information as they planned their lessons. The co-ordinator also monitors all medium-term planning against the literacy strategy for each year group. As yet however, there is too little time for the co-ordinator to observe teaching and learning in lessons. This has been offset to a certain extent by the opportunities taken by the school's governor with particular responsibility for literacy observing some lessons. The co-ordinator effectively monitored the introductory year of the literacy strategy and an audit of resources available initially revealed some difficulties in its implementation but these have been successfully addressed in the main. On one occasion during the inspection, however, the lack of a big book for the youngest pupils inhibited their ability to participate fully in the lesson. There is a satisfactory range of appropriate reading books. Accommodation for the library is good, but the supply of reference books is inadequate. The available books are well maintained and appropriately classified. The library is currently used insufficiently for pupils' enjoyment of reading or for the teaching of research and library skills. Priorities for further development have been set, including extending opportunities for writing, improving girls' attitudes to non-fiction work and making more use of information and communications technology.

MATHEMATICS

89. Standards in mathematics have risen significantly recently. The results of the most recent statutory assessment in 1999 indicate that standards of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those achieved nationally and with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. These results show a significant improvement on 1998 when results were well below average. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations indicate that this improvement is likely to be maintained, particularly in number. There is less evidence of work covered in the other areas of mathematics, including shape, using and applying mathematics and data handling, but discussions with pupils indicate that their knowledge is secure, as is their understanding. The standard of pupils' attainment by the end of Year 4 when they leave the school is in line with that expected of pupils their age.
90. In Key Stage 1, achievement is satisfactory overall. By the end of the key stage, standards are securely in line with national expectations. Standards in number work remain above average as pupils receive good coverage of this aspect of mathematics. Most pupils add and subtract confidently in their heads up to 20. They enjoy practising sharing 24 biscuits amongst an ever-expanding family, learning how to divide by two, four, six, eight, and even twelve people.
91. High attainers make good progress in calculating addition and subtraction operations using numbers up to 100. Development of understanding and knowledge in measurement and two-dimensional shape is apparent in discussion, for example, most pupils know that triangles have three corners and sides. However, they are less sure about the differences between squares and rectangles and do not make the connection between an octagon and octopus readily. When dividing a pizza, they use the fraction half confidently but are less sure about quarters. However in a *Follow me* game, they readily halve numbers in their heads, and in an activity called *Come to my party* they decide how many sausages on sticks or jam tarts they will need for a varying number of guests from two to twelve.

92. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress as they receive extra help from well-informed learning support assistants. Pupils' individual education plans include appropriate targets for numeracy work.
93. The Reception age children make unsatisfactory progress as they are required to take part in the full numeracy lesson alongside Year 1 pupils. Their concentration levels are less secure and after a while, their attention wavers, they lose interest in the lesson and their progress is slowed. Their previous rich experience in the Nursery is not being exploited effectively; they have too little access to large apparatus, role-play or practical activities in which to practise their mathematical skills. Their progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of capacity, for example, is inhibited by the restricted opportunities they have to work in the sand or water. This is due to the constraints of the accommodation and to the lack of appropriately qualified support staff to help meet the needs of children this age.
94. In Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall as they continue to make progress in developing their skills. They count in fours, fives and tens forwards and backwards confidently and accurately. They enjoy beating the clock in a well-organised game solving problems in their heads, and counting in hundreds up to 2000 from random numbers such as 1,350. They consolidate past learning of addition in tens and units and later in hundreds, tens and units. They practise subtraction using three-figure digits.
95. High attainers work very confidently and with skill, calculating the answers to addition and subtraction sums and recording their answers in their books. They readily discuss their work and explain their calculations. Several of these pupils could calculate the answers in their heads. Pupils with special educational needs, or those who speak English as an additional language, receive extra help so they make good progress. The quality of their support is high: teachers ensure very close liaison by means of a 'Feedback Sheet' shared with their support staff.
96. Teaching of mathematics is at least satisfactory in all lessons throughout the school; in a high proportion of the mathematics lessons observed in both key stages the teaching was good. Teachers have good knowledge of mathematics and a good understanding of their pupils and of their attainment. Teachers' lesson planning is good in the main, although at times the planning of the introductory parts of sessions is weaker. Consequently, these times lack focus, becoming sluggish and over-long or, conversely, too hurried so that pupils are not left with a sense of achievement. Where the best teaching was observed, with a Year 3 and 4 class for example, the teacher clearly communicated the objectives of the lesson to her pupils and her expectations of them, which resulted in them responding with eagerness and enthusiasm. The sense of purpose engendered in the lesson ensured that pupils sustained their concentration and remained on task throughout. Where teaching was not as good, although still satisfactory as in one lesson with the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1, there was insufficient pace in the lesson to fully meet the learning needs of the higher attaining pupils.
97. Literacy skills are developed satisfactorily in mathematics lessons as pupils are required at times to explain to the class how they arrived at their answers, and all are using mathematical vocabulary such as *minus*, *digit*, *horizontal* and *anti-clockwise* confidently. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed in other lessons. In a Key

Stage 2 class, for example, a number line from 55 BC tracks the invasion of Britain by the Romans. In a Key Stage 1 class, pupils enjoyed completing passport details for an imaginary character derived from their studies of fairy-tales: for example, they decided the height of the character in centimetres - or in the case of giants, in metres. The use of information technology in mathematics lessons is adversely affected by a lack of appropriate hardware, although some work has been accomplished using a *Roamer* floor robot. Numeracy skills in other subjects such as design and technology are under-developed: pupils are not measuring or using rulers effectively at the planning stage of their work. In assembly, opportunities are taken to make links with mathematics: for example, turning the clocks forwards one hour is discussed and the pupils are told when Benjamin Britten died.

98. The school is working steadily at implementing the strategy for numeracy. Teachers have already undertaken appropriate in-service training. The three-part lesson is in place but the initial warm-up, quick-fire introductions vary; some are not always smart enough. Resources such as number lines, 100-squares and number fans or petals are not yet being fully used to stimulate interest and engage attention in some lessons. Nor is the pace of these initial sessions sufficiently dynamic and crisp at times in developing pupils' mental agility; sometimes they are over-long and some pupils' concentration wavers. The plenary sessions are usually successfully designed to leave the pupils with a strong sense of achievement, including a recapitulation of what has just been learnt and an indication of what will be learnt next time. Again, however, these sessions vary in quality across the school as teachers become more adept and confident.
99. The new co-ordinator for mathematics has developed an action plan to improve and consolidate standards still further; in pursuit of these targets she is monitoring planning, and is arranging in-service training for staff as the school adopts the National Numeracy Strategy. There is insufficient time made available for monitoring teaching however. While there are now systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress, teachers are still making too little use of this information as they plan their lessons. The co-ordinator has effectively audited resources and ordered new ones. The school is presently considering which scheme of text books for mathematics to adopt: this is a considerable expense and the school is right in taking time to choose one that best suits their needs. In the meantime, teachers continue to make their own resources or to make use of relevant parts of older schemes in the school. The co-ordinator's influence, the impact of the numeracy strategy, the use of new resources and the acquisition of a new whole-school scheme will combine to ensure the school is well positioned to sustain or improve upon its performance.

SCIENCE

100. The standards of pupils' attainment in science are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1; they are also in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 4 when pupils leave the school. It is evident that standards have improved considerably since the previous inspection when they were unsatisfactory.
101. The results of National Curriculum teacher assessments and tests in 1999 indicate that at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are attaining standards in line with the national average, and the findings of the inspection broadly confirm this assessment. Discussions with pupils, observations of science lessons during the inspection and a careful study of pupils' previous work all show that standards are now satisfactory

throughout the school. The evidence indicates that there is a good match between the tasks set and pupils' abilities and aptitudes, including those with special educational needs. Careful planning and monitoring of pupils' work in this subject contributes positively to the steady improvement in standards.

102. As they move through the school, pupils learn well at all stages. All aspects of science are well covered, and, although a slight deficiency was found by the latest teacher assessments in work on physical processes, this was not found to be significant during the inspection. The previous inspection report commented on the need to develop pupils' investigative skills and their ability to work independently in their investigations. Since then, the school has given attention to this through careful planning and the result is that there has been a significant improvement. At present, work on experimental and investigative science is much improved, and an investigative approach has become fully integrated into the curriculum at all stages.
103. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language are well supported and make good progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in science.
104. The pupils generally show a positive response to their work in science at all stages. In Key Stage 1, in their work on forces, the youngest pupils have understood that increasing the incline of a slope increases the speed at which a model car will move down it. They understand how to set up an experiment to show it. They understand that both push and pull are forces and they can identify some common examples. Older pupils in this key stage understand electrical circuits and they understand that some materials will conduct electricity while others do not. In their work on materials, they have understood that for some, changes are reversible and for others, they are irreversible and they can provide instances, in relation to heating and cooling food for example. At this age, pupils can sort materials into metals and non-metals using magnets. In Key Stage 2, in their work on life processes and living things, pupils understand the function of the skeleton and how joints and muscles work in relation to movement. In their work on forces, pupils understand that objects change shape when a force is applied to them and they understand gravity as a force. At this key stage, pupils develop their understanding and skills of investigation. In their work on materials, for example, pupils develop an understanding of a fair test as they investigate the strengths of different materials. In two Year 3 and 4 lessons observed on solubility, pupils enjoyed examining a range of substances to see which will dissolve in water. They showed they could make sensible predictions, put these to a fair test and record their results effectively working co-operatively together.
105. Working relationships, both between teachers and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves are good and this contributes significantly to the quality of learning. Behaviour is almost always good, with pupils showing sensible, co-operative and caring attitudes as they work through their tasks. Practical activities contribute positively to pupils' social development, teaching them to share, take turns and listen to the ideas and opinions of others.
106. Good and sometimes very good teaching at both key stages plays a notable part in the quality of pupils' learning and their achievement. Teachers generally set a lively pace of work. In a lesson on forces, for example, Year 1 and 2 pupils investigated how a number of toys were operated by changes in air pressure due to some external action. The teacher provided appropriate support as pupils explored the subject. The teacher used questions skilfully, ensuring that they were at the right level for the

pupils' understanding. Throughout the lesson, the teacher used correct scientific language, such as *pushing* and *pulling*, and encouraged the pupils to do the same. This approach makes a worthwhile contribution to the pupils' basic literacy skills. In another Year 1 and 2 lesson, a different group of pupils were also investigating forces and were using magnets to study the nature of the forces of the separate poles. They were intrigued to observe how like poles of two magnets repel each other. Again, the teacher successfully encouraged the development of scientific vocabulary. In both these lessons, pupils were effectively encouraged to describe their observations and to communicate their findings to one another.

107. The school's improved approach to planning, with its appropriate emphasis on scientific skills development and investigation, have contributed to raising teaching standards throughout the school. Teachers have good understanding of the subject, build good working relationships with their pupils and have good expectations, both for the quality of work and behaviour. Assessment precedes the teaching of each new unit of work and the results inform the planning. At the end of a unit, pupils are again assessed and achievements are recorded.
108. The subject is well managed, and the co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She monitors teachers' planning and advises how it can be improved by giving them written feedback. She has little opportunity for monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom. Resources are good and of reasonable quality. Due consideration is given to safety issues. Schemes of work have recently been revised and fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
109. The school is succeeding in raising standards in science, and in ensuring that areas in need of attention are being given appropriate consideration. In order to raise standards further the school needs to continue to develop pupils' investigative skills through attention to curriculum development, in-service training for staff and a structured programme of monitoring teaching and learning. Teachers are still not using information from assessment sufficiently as they plan individual lessons in science.

ART

110. Pupils are provided with an appropriate range of opportunities to make progress in developing their skills in art. They explore a range of different media and techniques and this enables them to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. This satisfactory progress has been sustained since the previous inspection. The standards of pupils' attainment in art are now in line with those expected of pupils their age both at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 when they leave the school. Their work is valued and celebrated in the various displays around the school.
111. Pupils' progress is enhanced by the opportunities they have to work alongside visiting artists, as is shown, for example, in their silk painting hangings on display in the library. Pupils demonstrate they are able to recognise and emulate the style of famous artists. This was seen in their efforts at Key Stage 1 to use bold colours in the style of Mondrian and in Key Stage 2 in their work in the style of the Impressionists.
112. At Key Stage 1, pupils have good opportunities to record their ideas and observations. They have experimented successfully with thick and thin paint in their paintings of freesias for example and they have printed with objects. Their repeated pattern work has resulted in their printing on fabric, very attractively displayed as curtains at the windows. Elsewhere, they have worked with pencil and crayons, and they have used a

computer art program to draw their favourite toys. These opportunities to explore the possibilities of the media, the blending of colours and shading and the examination of background and foreground, has contributed effectively to the progress pupils have been able to make in extending their skills. Pupils' completed work in this key stage indicates that they become increasingly competent in expressing their ideas on paper.

113. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have good opportunities to extend their skills using a range of media; they make satisfactory progress. Pupils at this key stage show evidence of good progress in their drawing skills; they are able to use shading in their pencil drawings to show light and dark on a sphere for example. Their paintings show that pupils are beginning to think about perspective and distance in their pictures and they demonstrate an increasing understanding of colour mixing, as in their work on Monet and Cezanne using pastels and chalks. Their paintings of daffodils, displayed so effectively along with poems, indicate the level of careful thought and detail that pupils put into their work at this stage. Pupils' skills in art are used well in other subjects, like history and religious education, for example, in their paintings of the ten plagues of Egypt.
114. It was possible to observe only two lessons in art during the inspection, both in Key Stage 2. In these lessons, teaching of art was well organised, with some good teaching of specific techniques for sketching portraits and allowing time for discussion as well as opportunities for pupils to express their ideas on paper. The teacher's subject knowledge was good as he discussed the use of portraits in history and contributed positively to helping pupils to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills as they discussed the self-portrait of Van Gogh. In another lesson at this key stage, the teacher was very positive and encouraging of pupils while they worked and was able to give good support and guidance helping them to improve their work. There was good review of the learning objectives for the lesson as the teacher led the plenary discussion, allowing pupils to identify the difficulties they had encountered in terms of these objectives. This was a very good way of engaging pupils in reviewing their own work and the teacher skilfully built on their comments to point out ways to improve.
115. The co-ordinator for art has identified appropriate priorities for development. This includes addressing areas of art which are not fully represented in the school's programme, like work with fabrics for example. While pupils have had some experience, generally it has been insufficient. One reason is that the detailed guidance to enable teachers to extend their pupils skills is lacking. As the policy for teaching and learning in art is reviewed and the scheme updated, this needs to be addressed to ensure that these aspects feature more consistently in the school's programme of work in art. The amount of time available for art and its distribution across the timetable also needs to be reviewed if pupils are to receive an appropriately balanced curriculum. The high quality of some of the displays of pupils' completed work in art throughout the school, however, contribute positively to their spiritual and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. During the week of the inspection there were few opportunities to observe teaching and learning in design and technology and there was insufficient other evidence to support a judgement about the standards of pupils' attainment in this subject. Scrutiny of the timetable and teachers' planning indicates that while design and technology is blocked into specific times on the timetable, insufficient time is currently being

provided to ensure that pupils make appropriate progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in this subject. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the post and is planning a review of the policy and the scheme of work.

117. In Key Stage 1, pupils have folded paper to make 'Jacks' to fit into paper and card boxes, and they have investigated which materials make the best wheels. They have carried out some assessments of their work: re-designing Jack to fit into a smaller box, or noticing that thin card wheels tend to wobble more than thick card ones. One class has made Torah scrolls out of cardboard tubes and paper, sailing boats by folding and creasing paper and football fields complete with goal posts.
118. In Key Stage 2, pupils used wood strips and card corners to construct frames, and paper and straws to construct swings. They have begun to develop the idea of planning and re-designing, and there are initial written plans to support their designing and evaluating. However, these portfolios are in the very early stages of development. Pupils have not had opportunities to experience disassembly, nor to design, make and evaluate models which move.

GEOGRAPHY

119. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe any geography lessons during the inspection. Other evidence is drawn from a scrutiny of pupils' work in geography, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils. This evidence indicates that the standard of pupils' attainment is in line with that expected of pupils their age by the end of Year 4 when they leave the school. This indicates that standards have improved at this key stage since the previous inspection. There was insufficient available evidence to support a judgement about standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.
120. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a good understanding of their own locality and its relation to the wider world. For example, pupils have completed a job survey of the locality. This work included the construction of a tally chart and the compilation of a bar graph to represent results. Pupils were able to utilise previously learnt mathematical skills in a practical context. Pupils engaged in mapwork when studying their locality. They use Ordnance Survey maps of Oxfordshire and aerial photographs in their study of the landscape. In their use of maps, pupils can successfully apply compass directions and they use co-ordinates to locate grid references on maps. They can use the key on a map and they recognise and understand many of the conventions used on maps.
121. There is insufficient evidence to inform a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the geography co-ordinator provides clear guidance to staff. There is a scheme of work in place, which adequately provides for continuity and progression in pupils' learning in this subject. The co-ordinator has not held post for long but she has already carried out an audit of resources. In the last inspection report, resources were found to be unsatisfactory. This has now been addressed and resources are now adequate to meet National Curriculum requirements. For example, the school has an adequate supply of maps, atlases and globes, and there is an adequate supply of appropriate reference books available for the pupils to use in their studies. There is an action plan for the subject, which links directly to the school development plan. A priority for re-development is the school wildlife area.

HISTORY

122. The planned programme of work in history is ensuring that pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 in extending their knowledge of the past. Overall, the standard of pupils' attainment at the end of this key stage is in line with the standard expected of pupils their age. An appropriate range of subject knowledge is covered in lessons in Years 3 and 4, where again, standards of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils at this age. These standards have been sustained since the previous inspection.
123. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn appropriate words to describe the past. These are very effectively displayed, for example, on their work about old teddy bears. The pupils' range of knowledge about everyday life in the past is appropriate, illustrated in their completed work about toys and games. They understand that children's games were different in the past and they have examined some of these differences. The majority of pupils' work reflects the focus on extending their knowledge. On only a very few occasions has work been undertaken to develop pupils' skills in history, like the sequencing of pictures to extend pupils' understanding of chronology for example. Pupils have had good opportunities to handle artefacts during their work on toys however, including trying out old games in the playground, which has contributed positively to their understanding of change and continuity.
124. In Years 3 and 4, pupils successfully extend their knowledge and understanding of periods in the past through the range of study units covered, planned over an appropriate two year planning cycle. In their recent work, pupils demonstrate an understanding of some aspects of life in ancient Greece and Rome. There is a strong emphasis on extending pupils' knowledge and this is secured through the inclusion of a broad range of themes. Photographs on display indicate the valuable work pupils had completed following the Roman day organised around a visitor to the school, who brought in artefacts for pupils to handle and involved them in role-play.
125. Teaching in history is satisfactory in Key Stage 1; there were no opportunities to observe teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 and therefore insufficient evidence to support a judgement about teaching in Key Stage 2. In lessons seen in Key Stage 1, teachers effectively engage pupils in discussions in which they participate enthusiastically. There is an appropriate concentration on extending pupils' vocabulary to ensure they understand the passing of time, for example about old and new toys with the younger pupils at this key stage. It is clear that some teachers have extensive knowledge of history and they communicate a real enthusiasm for the subject. In one particularly good lesson seen, the teacher very effectively engaged pupils in discussion about how they knew toys were old or not, focusing on the materials of which they were made. She provided good opportunities for all pupils to contribute and extended or reinforced their vocabulary most effectively, providing well-chosen words on cards in an enjoyable game. There was also a good link to their work in literacy in this lesson as pupils were reminded about writing labels.
126. In the lessons seen, pupils responded well to their lessons in history. They listened attentively both to their teacher and to each other and were confident and eager to contribute in discussions. They handled the resources very carefully and respectfully, since some were provided by parents and grandparents. Younger pupils in this key stage also show interest in their history lessons, eager to contribute to discussions and to explain what they are doing. In these lessons, the variety of activities provided contributed positively to pupils' achievement and enjoyment of history.

127. The co-ordinator for history has identified appropriate priorities for development, including reviewing the school's policy for teaching and learning in this subject. The co-ordinator is also aware that a review of planning is now required, including provision for all the study units over a four-year planning cycle in Key Stage 2 should the school become a primary school in the near future.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

128. Evidence gathered during the inspection from classroom observations, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of previous work, indicates that at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Year 4 when pupils leave the school, standards of attainment are below average. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and observations of lessons indicate that pupils have too few opportunities to work with the computers in all subjects.

129. In Key Stage 1, pupils have some experience of using the computers and they have made progress in extending some of their skills. The youngest pupils in this key stage understand the function of the command keys on the computer, including the arrow keys, backspace, shift and spacebar. In one lesson seen, these youngest pupils could identify errors in the text given to them and direct the teacher to use the arrows and backspace to correct them. Older pupils in this key stage are introduced to an appropriate word processing program and they are making progress in learning to use it. They can insert capital letters, for example, and they can centre text on the page. Some pupils understand that the red underline indicates that there is a word spelt incorrectly.

130. In Key Stage 2, pupils extend their word-processing skills. They have used a word processing program to write their own pieces on the theme of *The Iron Man*, including using the spell check facility. Pupils in this key stage can select and change fonts, varying its size and they can add colour and print their own work. In some interesting work with a desktop publishing program, pupils have used clipart to design their own book covers. This successful work indicates how well they could use the computers if they were given the opportunity. Pupils have also used both the Roamer and a logo program to develop their understanding of sequences of instructions for control. In one lesson seen, pupils demonstrated their understanding of the commands required and the abbreviations used in the program as they were able to write instructions to draw a variety of shapes, some of them fairly complex.

131. In many lessons observed at both key stages during the inspection, however, opportunities for using the computers to support pupils' work in all subjects were missed. Computers were often seen switched on, but they remained unused when their use would have been of benefit to the work being done. There were frequently insufficient computers available, particularly in Key Stage 2 where they were not used as efficiently or effectively as possible with the result that these large classes had access to only one computer at a time. Although pupils have had some opportunities to make progress developing their understanding and skills of word processing, other areas of the Programmes of Study for information and communications technology have been less thoroughly covered. There was little indication of any work in data handling using the computers for example. There was no opportunity to see pupils using the computers in their work in mathematics or science and little evidence in any of their workbooks or folders of work involving using the computers.

132. The teaching of information and communications technology is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers have too few computers to work with and this inhibits the work they can do with their pupils. At times, there is useful teaching of specific skills, as in the work observed with Year 3 and Year 4 pupils using logo, although in both of these lessons the teacher and class had only one computer to work with. In one of these lessons, the teacher made good use of the earlier practical work done in the hall to build on pupils' understanding of logo directions to create a sequence of instructions to draw a shape. However, there is insufficient guidance to teachers of how pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are to be developed over time, and teachers' short term session plans do not usually indicate how information technology is to be used in individual lessons. Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to work with the computers across the curriculum.
133. The present subject co-ordinator is currently reviewing the school's policy for teaching and learning in information and communications technology and evaluating practice across the school, including auditing the use of available hardware and software resources. The revised policy is appropriate and needs to be agreed speedily and then fully implemented. As yet, there is not a scheme of work reflecting all the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in information technology. The learning activities and opportunities for pupils to use the computers that the school at present provides are insufficient to constitute a fully coherent curriculum for information and communications technology. Some teachers require further training to enable them to plan and deliver an appropriate programme of work to develop and extend their pupils' skills. The co-ordinator has too little time available to enable him to monitor and support teaching of information and communications technology across the school.

MUSIC

134. It was not possible to observe any lessons in music during the week of the inspection. There is therefore insufficient evidence to inform judgements about the standards of pupils' attainment or the quality of teaching in music. A scrutiny of the timetable and of teachers' planning indicates that pupils have too little time for learning in music.
135. During collective worship, pupils sing to the piano or a recorded accompaniment. Their singing is strong and in tune. In hymn practice, they show they can sing a round in two parts and hold their line well. Each hymn practice has a teaching point: for example, to sit up straight, but otherwise little attention is given to the dynamics of loud or soft, to tempo, or to practising making rhythms sharper and crisp although this was noted as requiring attention. However, pupils enjoy singing and experience a range of styles, and the occasion is managed by teaching staff in a lively and confident manner.
136. Although music is played as pupils enter and leave the hall for collective worship, insufficient use is made of these opportunities to extend pupils' skills of appraising music. During the inspection, for example, there was a good choice of music played from Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*. Pupils were given some information about the piece but they had insufficient time to listen more attentively. As a result, neither their knowledge of which instruments were being played nor their understanding of what to listen for in Britten's piece were enhanced.
137. Recorder groups are keen and enthusiastic. They consolidate past learning willingly as they practise together for assembly: they have learnt to play together in time and

are beginning to play in two parts, holding their own line confidently.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. There were no opportunities to observe lessons in physical education in Key Stage 1 during the inspection and consequently there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement about standards of pupils' attainment at the end of this key stage. By the end of Year 4, pupils attain average standards in movement and dance; swimming standards are good.
139. In lessons seen in movement and dance, Year 4 pupils demonstrate satisfactory movement skills, which are both expressive and controlled. For example, working individually, pupils can sequence movements, which adequately express feelings and moods in an appropriate response to music. They can further sequence a number of previously learnt short movement/dance compositions into a mini dance drama. The hall, in which pupils work, is restricted for space but the pupils use it well. In a games skills club a mixed gender group of Year 3 and 4 pupils were observed practising netball skills including throwing, passing and ball handling skills. Using these skills in paired activity and in small groups they demonstrate that they are achieving levels to be expected for their age. When working in small groups in a games context, they display satisfactory positional sense and satisfactory ability to make use of space. During club activities, they practise and improve performance and they show appropriate safety awareness.
140. Pupils make good progress in swimming at Key Stage 2. In Year 4, a third of the year group can swim at least twenty-five metres both on their fronts and on their backs. All pupils in Year 4 who were observed during a swimming lesson were confident in the water. Most can float for at least a short distance. Half of the Year 4 pupils can propel themselves in the water unaided for at least ten metres. The majority of those who can swim twenty-five metres are developing good stroke techniques in breaststroke, front crawl and back crawl. These pupils are also developing effective skills of water safety and survival.
141. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Some large apparatus is available and pupils can enjoy a programme of educational gymnastics. They can perform movement tasks from raised platforms and they have opportunities to practise some climbing and balancing skills. The school enjoys good outdoor facilities having the use of a large playing field and an adequate area of hard surfaced playing space. The school has adopted a comprehensive scheme of work which teachers use to plan lessons appropriately. It contributes towards the balanced programme of activities pupils enjoy.
142. The teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall. Teachers begin lessons with appropriate warm-up activities. There is an appropriate emphasis on skill development. Lessons are planned so that there is a clear progression of skills development. Pupils are given opportunities to use their skills in an appropriate context, for example, Year 4 pupils use movement skills in dance sequences and to interpret rhythm, pitch and mood in music. They are encouraged to listen intently to music and to feel its rhythm and beat. Pupils are introduced to a range of appropriate movement vocabulary, for example, twisting, stretching and reaching which they are encouraged to use when evaluating their own and each other's performances.

143. An adequate range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities, particularly for older pupils, makes a good contribution to the pace of learning in physical education. A parent organises a football club on a Saturday morning. Other games clubs are held, for example around 15 pupils attend a netball club and receive good coaching in ball handling skills and games tactics. Pupils also have opportunities to play football and netball. Each Year 4 pupil has the opportunity to receive swimming teaching. The school reports when pupils leave school most are in line to swim at least twenty-five metres by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. By the end of Key Stage 1, the standards of pupils' attainment are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. When pupils leave the school, they are in line to achieve standards above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on standards reported in the previous inspection.

145. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop an understanding of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They learn about the significance and importance of the major festivals, for example Christmas and Easter. In two lessons observed, Year 1/2 pupils were considering the meaning of sacrifice. Teachers skilfully and successfully used appropriate stories and astute questioning in order to develop some understanding of the concept of sacrifice. This enabled pupils to grasp some notion of the sacrificial aspects of the Easter story. By the end of the key stage, pupils are beginning to understand the significance of special books such as the Bible and recognise that we treat them differently from ordinary books.

146. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn about Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They study the meanings, symbols and importance of major celebrations of these faiths, for example, Easter, Yom Kippur and Passover. They know how people celebrate them and why. For example, both classes of Year 3/4 pupils studied how modern Jewish families celebrate the Passover. One of the classes watched a video of a Jewish family observing the custom and then sampled some of the food used in the ceremony and considered its symbolism. Pupils from the other class role-played the ceremony. Pupils know that there are various places of worship for different groups of believers and that Christians sometimes go to special places, such as churches, to pray, Muslims worship in mosques and Jews in synagogues. An understanding is developing of roles and responsibilities. Pupils thoughtfully consider the rules they might have for their lives and relate these to the rules basic to some religions, for example, the Ten Commandments and the Five Pillars of Islam. By the end of their time in the school, pupils show a good understanding of the richness and diversity of religion. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

147. During the inspection, good and very good teaching was evident. Teachers make learning directly relevant to the lives of pupils. For example, in the lessons dealing with the concept of sacrifice, teachers use well-chosen stories to which pupils can easily relate. These help Key Stage 1 pupils to think of things it would be difficult for them to sacrifice in order to give to others. In telling the stories and interposing astute questions, teachers successfully develop the idea of self-sacrifice. Good use is made of artefacts, for example, pupils role-playing the Passover feast use a Seder plate. Older Key Stage 2 pupils have a good awareness that symbolism plays an important

part in most major religions.

148. There has been impressive school improvement in this subject since the previous inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Older pupils engage in a range of extended writing and generally produce well-presented work. A whole-school scheme of work based on the requirements of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus is in place to ensure that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built upon progressively from year to year and to provide guidance for teachers. This ensures that there is adequate subject coverage. Resources for learning are good and include a good range of relevant artefacts that are used effectively to enhance learning.
149. The contribution made to the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils in lessons is good. A satisfactory contribution is made to pupils' spiritual development. The subject co-ordinator sees it as a priority to develop the contribution made to spiritual development. Assemblies contribute to the pupils' quality of learning by providing some opportunities for prayer and reflection, and classroom learning is often reinforced during this time. For example, after a lesson role-playing the celebration of a family Passover feast, a class of Year 3/4 pupils re-enacted the experience as part of an assembly and enabled the whole school to share some of their learning about the symbolism of the feast.