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INSPECTION REPORT

MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chinnor

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123036

Headteacher: Mrs J. Million

Reporting inspector: Mrs A.J. Pangbourne
23818

Dates of inspection: 11th-14th June 2001

Inspection number: 192988

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mill Lane Chinnor Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX39 4RF
Telephone number:	01844 352106
Fax number:	01844 352106
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M.Lafferty
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23818	Alison Pangbourne	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9646	Geraldine Osment	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
3855	David Langton	Team inspector	English Religious education Music History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22729	Robert Arnold	Team inspector	Special educational needs Equal opportunities Science Information and communication technology Physical education Geography	

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA Ltd.
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mill Lane Community Primary School is situated on the outskirts of the village of Chinnor at the foot of the Chiltern Hills. It draws most of its pupils from the local area, which comprises mainly owner occupied properties. Children's attainments on entry are broadly average and cover the full range of attainment. Personal and social skills are well developed. At the time of the inspection, there were 220 pupils on roll, including 37 part time children in the nursery class. There were 49 pupils with special educational needs, which is an above average proportion. Nine pupils had statements of special educational need, which is well above average. Six of these pupils are integrated part time from the Chinnor Resource Unit for autistic pupils. There were few pupils from ethnic heritages and no pupils speak English as an additional language. This is below average. Numbers of boys and girls are about the same. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are broadly average with 13 per cent entitled to a free school meal, which is also broadly average. Since the previous inspection, the number on roll has increased by about one third and there are now about 14 per cent more pupils with special educational needs than there were then. The school now includes a nursery class that serves the local area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with many good features. Children start school with broadly average attainments. A significant number of pupils with special educational needs join the school, particularly at Key Stage 2 and pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit are integrated into the school part time. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need is well above average. The results of statutory tests for pupils from the Unit are included in the school's results. Consequently standards are sometimes below average by the end of Key Stage 2. This year, standards are below average because half the pupils in the current Year 6 have special educational needs. However, pupils are achieving well and those with special educational needs make very good progress. This is because the quality of teaching is good and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, supported by governors and staff, and all share a commitment to enabling each pupil to do their best. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in music are above average by the end of both key stages because music has a high priority in the school and several staff are accomplished musicians.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to their work, behave very well and collaborate very well with each other because the quality of teaching is good.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall because the school provides very good opportunities for personal, social and health education.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils, including those with special educational needs, for whom it makes very good provision.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and makes a significant contribution to the very good ethos of the school, where all are valued and included in all activities.
- The school has developed very good assessment procedures, resulting in activities that are well matched to the needs of all pupils.

What could be improved

- Standards in English are below average by the end of Key Stage 2, particularly for boys and writing is not celebrated in displays or developed sufficiently across other areas of the curriculum.
- Standards in mathematics are below average by the end of Key Stage 2 and some mental starter activities are insufficiently brisk, particularly in Key Stage 1, to encourage pupils to develop the skills of rapid calculation.
- The use of information and communication technology to develop research skills is underdeveloped.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 1997. The nature of the school has changed significantly, with almost one third more pupils on roll and 14 per cent more pupils with special educational needs. This makes it difficult to judge whether standards have improved. However, considering the above average number of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in the current Year 6, standards should not be considered to have declined. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly. The school has worked hard to successfully address all the issues pointed out in the previous inspection. There are now good procedures for monitoring teaching and tracking progress, all staff now have comprehensive job descriptions and there have been significant improvements to the building. Cost effectiveness has improved because the school thoroughly evaluates its spending to meet the needs of pupils. The school is well placed to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	C	C	D
Mathematics	A	D	D	D
Science	A	B	D	D

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

In order to calculate the grades in the above table, points are allocated to the levels attained and schools' average points are compared. More points are allocated to the higher Level 5. This school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and consequently fewer pupils are likely to reach the higher level. Pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit are also included in the results. Given the relatively small number of pupils in each year group and the variation in the number who have a statement of special educational need, too much emphasis should not be placed on any one year's performance. There has been a pattern in recent years of pupils with special educational needs joining the school during Key Stage 2. All pupils in Key Stage 2, including higher attainers, are achieving well, reaching their full potential.

Inspection evidence shows that standards are below national expectations in English and mathematics and meet expectations in science by the end of Key Stage 2. The reason for the difference between inspection evidence and last year's statutory results in English is that half the current Year 6 are on the register of special educational needs. Pupils do better in science because the school emphasises the investigative aspect of the subject. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line with national expectations in writing, mathematics and science. They are above expectations in speaking and listening and reading. Children start school with broadly average levels of attainment and, overall, achieve appropriately. Standards meet national expectations in all other subjects at both key stages with the exception of music, where standards are above national expectations.

The size of the year groups means that the comparison of results in recent years as an indicator of improvement is unreliable. Results in recent years suggest a decline in standards. However, during this time there has been a pattern of higher attaining pupils leaving the area before the end of Key Stage 2, with similar numbers of pupils with special educational needs being admitted. This is one of the reasons why standards are lower at the end of Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. The school has a justifiably good reputation for special educational needs and this, together with the possibility of their children obtaining a place at the Chinnor Resource Unit, attracts parents of pupils with special educational needs. The school closely monitors progress and sets challenging targets. Targets set

this year are lower than those set last year but are nonetheless challenging because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they know they are valued. They want to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well and are polite and courteous to others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit who integrate into the school part time are included in attendance statistics, which has the effect of lowering the whole school attendance rate.

- The way in which pupils accept those with special educational needs contributes strongly to the good ethos of the school, where all are valued.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Taking all aspects of teaching into account, the quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed and 17 per cent were very good or better. Three quarters of lessons were good or better and three per cent were excellent. There is consistency in the quality of teaching and good teaching was seen in all classes. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and all lessons seen in the nursery were judged to be good. Teaching in English, particularly literacy is good at both key stages, enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning and contributing to the standards attained in reading. In mathematics, teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1, where mental arithmetic sessions in the numeracy hour sometimes lack sufficient pace. Strengths in the quality of teaching include good subject knowledge, well-planned lessons and high expectations. Teachers make effective use of questions to challenge pupils of all abilities and the effective use of support staff ensures that all pupils, but particularly those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning. Pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning because teachers explain what they are going to learn at the beginning of lessons and assess what they have learned at the end. The way in which pupils concentrate on their tasks and work hard contributes strongly to the standards attained.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. It is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors. The development of writing skills across the curriculum is under emphasised. Provision for extra curricular activities is good. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school is committed to the inclusion of all and pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit are well integrated into the school. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social	Very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development. Good provision for cultural development. The school is good at promoting local cultures but it is not as successful in raising pupils' awareness of

and cultural development	life in multicultural Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. Pupils' academic and personal development is very well monitored and all staff know the pupils well.

- Curricular time is slightly below the recommendations for pupils in Key Stage 2.
- The school has developed very good assessment procedures, which it uses very well to ensure that tasks are well matched and to set targets for both individuals and groups.
- The school enjoys a good partnership with its parents. They receive good information and the impact of their involvement is very good. Many are currently making a very good contribution to the playground project.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very strong and caring leadership. She undertakes a lot of responsibility for the co-ordination of the curriculum and successfully leads the school forward. There is no deputy headteacher but the headteacher is very well supported by senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are supportive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school thoroughly analyses its performance according to gender, ability and subject. Very good tracking procedures ensure that areas of weakness both for individuals and groups are quickly identified and addressed. The quality of teaching is effectively monitored and this contributes to the good standard of teaching through the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are targeted to raise standards. The good number and quality of support staff contributes significantly to the standards attained, particularly by those with special educational needs.

- The school is adequately staffed. It has coped well with the disruption caused by the ill health of a senior teacher. The accommodation has been improved, but two classrooms are very small and impede opportunities for practical work. Two other classes are situated in a mobile classroom. There is a suitable range of resources.
- All staff show a very good commitment to improvement.
- The principles of best value are applied well.

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 teaching is good and their children enjoy coming to school. • Behaviour is good. • Their children make good progress. • Children with special educational needs are well integrated into the school. • The school is well led and parents feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more extra curricular activities, particularly for younger children. • Some parents would like more information about how their children are getting on and would like the school to work more closely with them. • Some parents would like their children to have more homework while others would like less.

The inspection team supports the positive views held by parents. A good range of extra curricular activities are provided which include a wide range of visits and visitors. Parents are provided with detailed information about their children's progress and there are ample opportunities to meet teachers both formally and informally. Parents are welcome in school and are fully consulted about school life. For example, many parents responded recently to the school's questionnaire about

preferred items to be included in the new playground project. The amount of homework is similar to that found in many schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average in all the areas of learning with the exception of personal, social and emotional development, where attainment is higher. Children in the Foundation Stage, both in the nursery and the reception class, make good progress, and firmly consolidate and broaden their skills. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage at the end of the reception year they are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the areas of learning, except for personal, social and emotional development, where they exceed them. They are achieving as they should.
2. In recent years there has been a pattern of pupils with special educational needs joining the school during Key Stage 2. This is partly because the school has a justifiably good reputation for special educational needs but also because some parents hope that their child may gain a place at the Chinnor Resource Unit, which integrates some of its pupils into the school. Data held by the school shows that in the last two years several higher attaining pupils left at the end of Key Stage 1 and a similar number of pupils with special educational needs joined the school during Key Stage 2. As the year groups in Key Stage 2 are relatively small this has an adverse affect on results at the end of the key stage and is one of the reasons why standards are lower at the end of Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. In addition to this, the results of pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit are also included in this school's results, even if the pupils do not integrate for lessons in the subjects tested. This is in accordance with the policy of the local education authority. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the results of national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 suggest a decline in standards. However, during this time there has been a revision in the way in which schools are compared. Previously, judgements about national test results were based on the percentage of pupils who reached the expected levels, Level 2 at Key Stage 1 and Level 4 at Key Stage 2. Now points are allocated to the levels attained and schools' average points scored are compared. This school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this has increased by 14 per cent since the previous inspection. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is well above average. Consequently, many pupils do not reach Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2 and so the average points are lower.
3. The significance of comparative test results or teacher assessments, as measures of school performance, depends on the number of pupils in a year group. Given the relatively small year groups and the variations between numbers of stated pupils in the year groups, too much emphasis should not be placed upon any one year's National Curriculum test results. The school closely monitors the progress of all pupils and sets challenging targets according to the variation in ability between the year groups. This is of particular note because half the pupils in the current Year 6 are on the register of special educational needs and consequently targets this year are lower than last year, but nonetheless challenging. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are achieving well because the school closely monitors their progress, provision for special educational needs is very good and the quality of teaching is good.
4. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, results were above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. Teacher assessments for science show that the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level was also above average. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected levels was well above average in writing and science, above average in reading and broadly average in mathematics. These pupils are now in Year 3 and are continuing to build on their achievements. This suggests that these pupils are achieving well. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, results have been above average in all subjects, but the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Key Stage 1 has been lower.
5. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, results were average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected

level was average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. However, the year group was relatively small and included a high number of pupils with special educational needs including two with statements of special educational need. Compared to schools in a similar context, with between eight and 20 per cent of pupils entitled to a free school meal, in 2000, attainment was below average in English, mathematics and science, but this does not take account of the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs or the inclusion of pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit. The previous inspection judged that standards by the end of Key Stage 2 were broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. However, the nature of the school has changed since then and there are now many more pupils with special educational needs, so this makes it difficult to judge improvement in the core subjects. Average standards have been maintained in the foundation subjects and standards in music at Key Stage 2 have improved.

6. Inspection evidence shows that there are variations in standards attained in different year groups, particularly in Key Stage 2, depending upon the proportion with special educational needs and the integration of pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit. Standards overall are broadly below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 but pupils are nevertheless achieving well overall. Standards are below national expectations in English because although standards in speaking and listening and reading meet the expected standard, standards in writing are below average, and well below average for boys. Standards are below average in mathematics but meet them in science. Pupils do better in science because of the more practical nature of the subject and the good emphasis placed on investigative work. Pupils do better in reading than in writing because the school places very good emphasis on the development of reading skills. One of the reasons why pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2 is because of the good quality of the teaching they receive and the very good provision for special educational needs, which enables these pupils to make very good progress. This is illustrated by the current Year 6, where half the year group has special educational needs, including two statemented pupils, but some of them are expected to reach Level 4. Another reason for the very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs is the attention the school pays to identifying areas of weakness and the extra support given to ensure that each pupil reaches their full potential. In Year 5, again almost half the year group has special educational needs and standards are likely to be similar to the current Year 6 by the time they leave the school. However, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 are reaching the expected standards in English and science and exceeding them in mathematics. This is partly because there are fewer pupils with special educational needs but also due to the good and often very good teaching they receive. Two teachers are new to the school this year and the consistently good quality of teaching has yet to impact positively on standards at the end of the key stage.
7. Inspection evidence shows that standards overall are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and that pupils are achieving appropriately. Standards in English, mathematics and science meet national expectations. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above national expectations. There are several reasons for the difference between inspection evidence and last year's test results in writing and science. There are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 than last year and the current Year 2 has experienced some disruption due to the ill health of a member of the teaching staff. This has resulted in these pupils having several teachers during the year and contributes to lower standards than might be expected.
8. Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, history, geography, religious education and physical education are in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages and pupils are achieving as they should. Standards in music are above national expectations by the end of both key stages and pupils are achieving well. Music has a high priority in the school with several of the staff being specialist musicians, and that is why pupils do so well.
9. Standards in literacy and numeracy are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. They are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils use their literacy skills to enhance learning in other areas, for example to record their investigations in science and in design and technology, but there were few examples of writing across the curriculum on display to encourage improvement in writing. The use of information and communication technology to

support research skills is underdeveloped. Pupils use their numeracy skills appropriately across the curriculum; for example, when recording their findings graphically in science and when measuring materials in art and design. Numeracy lessons start with mental problems but in some classes, particularly at Key Stage 1, these are not conducted at a sufficiently brisk pace to encourage quick mental recall.

10. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well due to the high quality of teaching and care they receive. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. They make good gains in their learning in relation to their prior attainment. This is because very good individual education plans include clear and specific targets and progress is very closely tracked to ensure that pupils are offered tasks that are closely matched to their needs. Targets in individual education plans and the requirements of all special educational needs pupils are used extensively in planning lessons. Higher attaining pupils achieve as well as they should. The school is committed to equality for all and their needs are well met. Girls significantly outperform boys in English, particularly in writing, by the end of Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The youngest children have very positive attitudes to school. They show good levels of independence and they respond very well to the very clear expectations and procedures of the staff. The very positive attitudes that the children develop during the Foundation Stage stay with them throughout their time in the school.
12. The pupils come to school with very good attitudes, which is better than reported at the last inspection. Pupils across all year groups enjoy coming to school, are enthusiastic about their schoolwork and want to learn. Pupils are keen to please their teachers and they are able to sustain concentration. For example, in a Year 3 information and communication technology lesson, the pupils remained on task for long periods of time when combining graphics and text.
13. Ninety three per cent of parents feel that behaviour in the school is good. The inspection team agrees with this view as it judges behaviour to be very good overall. As reported at the last inspection, very good behaviour contributes positively to the standards of learning. This was observed in many lessons including a Year 4 literacy lesson when the pupils were using dictionaries to explore the meanings of unfamiliar words. The pupils move around the school sensibly and respond readily to the requests and instructions of teachers, learning support assistants and mid-day supervisors. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other, to teachers and other staff, as well as to visitors. They are trustworthy and show respect for property, treating the resources they use with care. There was one fixed period exclusion from the school during the year prior to the inspection; this is an increase since the last inspection. However, the school does not use this sanction lightly but operates it using appropriate procedures.
14. The personal development of the pupils is good and reflects a school aim 'to foster within our pupils self respect and self confidence'. Personal and social development is sensitively integrated into the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and all pupils are encouraged to demonstrate self-discipline. The pupils form very good relationships with fellow pupils and adults, built on tolerance for the work, ideas, beliefs and values of others. They work well as individuals or in pairs or small groups. During a Year 4 literacy lesson, for example, the pupils discussed their work together sensibly when working on text from 'Danny, Champion of the World'. The pupils are kind to each other, take turns and help their classmates, and are very supportive of the pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit. The behaviour, responses and attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are very good. They are fully integrated into the life of the school. All pupils show exceptional care towards pupils with special educational needs.
15. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop personal responsibility, which they respond to with enthusiasm. They participate in area athletics and other local sporting events. They support charities by initiating fund raising activities and Harvest gifts were donated to senior citizens in the village. Older pupils look after the nursery children at break times and have opportunities to do other jobs around the school. These include office duty and setting up assembly equipment. Year 6 pupils also take part in an annual residential trip. All pupils display a good capacity for personal study skills, experimenting and investigating in science and mathematics lessons, but they have too few opportunities to use computers for research. All of these positive opportunities effectively promote the pupils' good personal development.

16. As reported at the last inspection, the level of attendance is in line with the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is also in line with the national average. These average levels are due to the local education authority policy of including pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit in the statistics, which has the effect of lowering the whole school attendance rate.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. Taking all aspects of teaching into account, the quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. All teaching seen was at least satisfactory with 17 per cent being very good or better. Three quarters of lessons were good or better and three per cent were excellent. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, where only six per cent were very good or better and 14 per cent were unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard to successfully address the weaknesses identified then, such as low expectations in Key Stage 2, insufficient challenge and time management. These weaknesses are now strengths. It has achieved this through thorough monitoring and sharing of good practice. As a result, the quality of teaching is consistently high and examples of good teaching were seen in each class.
18. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English at both key stages. It is good in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, it is satisfactory in mathematics. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in any other subject. As a result of the good quality of teaching, pupils make good gains in their learning. This is because the school takes care to meet the needs of all pupils, but particularly the high number with special educational needs, who make good gains in their learning from a low starting point. Strengths in the quality of teaching include good subject knowledge, well-planned lessons that develop what pupils already know, and high expectations. Pupils are managed very well and this contributes positively to the standards attained. A particularly strong feature is the way in which teachers explain what pupils are going to learn and check their understanding at the end of the lesson. As a result, pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning and strive to succeed. For example, in a good mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 4 and Year 5, the teacher explained that the objective of the lesson was to learn how to find the mode and range of a set of data. Pupils were given the opportunity to say how they felt about it by referring to sad, non-committal and smiling faces. This gave pupils the confidence to express their uncertainty in a fun way and gave the teacher an insight into who might find the concept difficult. At the end of the lesson, all the class indicated smiling faces because they had learned the difference due to the teacher's clear exposition and focused support.
19. The quality of teaching is particularly high in the Foundation Stage, where it is good overall. This has been maintained since the previous inspection. All teaching seen in the nursery was judged to be good and two thirds of the teaching seen in the reception class was also good. As a result of the high quality of teaching, all children in the Foundation Stage make good gains in their learning and firmly consolidate and broaden their skills. Strengths include very well managed children and the very effective use of on-going assessment in which all adults play a part. For example, in the nursery, the nursery nurse notes individual achievements as she teaches a group, before adding these notes to children's records. All adults share the same high expectations and effective organisation ensures that children receive a similar curriculum whether they attend nursery in the morning or afternoon, or whether they are supervised by the teacher or the nursery nurse. All activities are planned to motivate the children and to develop their personal and academic learning in an interesting way. Consequently, children are keen to come to school and show a good level of independence. For example, they work and play sensibly with minimal supervision when adults are working with other groups. A particularly good example was seen in the nursery, where children happily completed their tasks, allowing the teacher to give focused support to a child with special educational needs.
20. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is also good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Eight out of ten lessons were good or better, one lesson was excellent and three were very good. Two of the three teachers are new to the school this year and the third is new to the age range. The consistently high quality of teaching is having a positive impact on standards as pupils move through the key stage. In the class for pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, one lesson was excellent. In this geography lesson, to learn about land use in the village,

excellent planning, including photographs, maps and worksheets and very high expectations ensured that no time was wasted on the walk around the village. Very well prepared adults shared their deep understanding of the locality and very good use was made of a digital camera to record the evidence. As a result, pupils made excellent gains in learning about the village. Features of very good teaching include the very effective use of questions, very good organisation, and thorough on-going assessment to ensure that tasks are well-matched and very high expectations. For example, in a very good literacy lesson, again for pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, well matched questions enabled pupils to share their knowledge of the text and the very effective use of humour to celebrate correct answers or good attempts motivated all to join in. The teacher's use of expressive language brought the text to life and the pupils could hardly wait to hear more. Effective use of the text of the 'BFG' meant that by the end of the lesson pupils learned that a set of dots in the text means that something is missing or indicates a pause.

21. Other features of the good quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 include the way in which teachers ensure that pupils are ready to concentrate on their lessons. For example, pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 reflected quietly about their enjoyable playtime with their eyes closed, before starting their literacy lesson. As a result, they were calm and ready to do their best. Challenging questions that were well matched to individuals ensured that pupils of all abilities identified persuasive language before writing a letter of complaint. This contributes positively to the progress made, particularly for those with special educational needs. In a good mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, the teacher took care to ensure that the activity was motivating for boys by using football statistics to solve problems about percentages. Both boys and girls were keen to take part in this activity because it was well matched to their interests.
22. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good overall, taking all factors into account. This year there has been some disruption due to staff absence in Year 2 and a change of teacher during the year for Year 1. This contributes to slightly lower standards by the end of the key stage than last year, although there are also more pupils with special educational needs this year. Results in recent years have been above average, suggesting that teaching has been good. Scrutiny of work also supports this. During the inspection, two supply teachers who were not fully familiar with the class taught Year 2. However, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 was good overall with just over half the lessons seen being good or better. Two very good lessons were seen during the inspection. A very good information and communication technology lesson for pupils in Year 1 was characterised by very clear exposition, very high expectations and the very effective use of a programmable toy as a puppet. This motivated the pupils who were keen to do as the 'puppet' asked. By the end of the lesson, pupils understood the need to give correct instructions and learned to send the toy forwards and backwards along a route. A strong feature of this lesson was the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. A pupil with physical difficulties was able to take part in the lesson that included walking backwards and forwards according to instructions. Very effective support ensured that she could do this safely, also working towards a target on her individual education plan, showing pride in her achievement. Another very good lesson was led by the music co-ordinator for all pupils in Key Stage 1. Here, the teacher continually challenged pupils to improve their own performance and her enthusiasm for the subject was successfully transferred to the pupils.
23. What makes the difference between lessons that are judged to be satisfactory and those that are better is sometimes the pace of the mental starter to the numeracy session. In some classes, particularly at Key Stage 1, teachers wait too long for pupils to answer and the momentum of the session is lost. In Year 2, some lessons were judged to be satisfactory, where, because the teachers were new to the class, activities were not as closely matched to the needs of the pupils as they might have been if the teachers had been more familiar with the pupils.
24. Teachers show a good understanding of how to teach the National Literacy Strategy. Strengths include the good use of support staff, who provide valuable support and encouragement during group activities. This ensures that pupils remain on task and that their particular needs are met. Teachers are competent in the teaching of reading and this contributes to the above average standards in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 and to the average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. In numeracy, appropriate emphasis is placed on teaching correct mathematical language and pupils are encouraged to explain their strategies. For example, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 discuss whether it is better to double a set of figures and then add the total or to add

the numbers and double the total. This provoked much thought and led to very good gains in learning. Although numeracy lessons begin with mental arithmetic sessions, in some classes and particularly in Key Stage 1, the pace of these sessions is insufficiently brisk to encourage rapid mental recall of number facts.

25. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and contributes significantly to the very good progress made. Teachers are very aware of the needs of these pupils and all pupils in all classes have very good individual education plans. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are seen as a high priority. This is because the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average, especially in the older classes, and there are very successful links with the local unit for autistic pupils. These pupils are regularly integrated into the school and are taught alongside all other pupils, but with additional adult help. In lessons in all subjects there is a wealth of well-matched work. Work in these lessons is often planned with direct reference to targets set in individual education plans and this has a positive effect on achievement.

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

26. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum which meets all statutory requirements and follows the guidelines for religious education in the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All earlier criticisms have been successfully addressed. Provision for personal, social and health education is now a strength and planning has improved considerably. The curriculum provided is broad and generally well balanced, although the time allocation for Key Stage 2 pupils is slightly below the recommended minimum. There are sound up-to-date policies and schemes of work for all subjects, and the school makes good use of guidance from both the local education authority and national guidance. Planning, overall, is good, and has improved since the previous inspection. The school plans very carefully for its cycle of topics to ensure good coverage and cross-curricular links, and to ensure that pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically as they move through the school. The best planning links science, geography, history, religious education, design and technology, art and design and personal, social and health education. A weakness in provision for design and technology identified in the previous inspection has been well addressed, and a very detailed curriculum plan for the subject for the next three years is being trialled with a view to extending the system to all foundation subjects.
27. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. It is based on the nationally defined areas of learning for children of this age. Teachers plan this carefully in accordance with the early learning goals and provide good opportunities for both child-initiated and adult led activities. There are good opportunities for purposeful play, whole class and group work. Teachers share plans effectively with support staff and parent helpers who make a positive contribution to the curriculum. Children transfer easily from the nursery to reception class because the curriculum is planned to build on what they already know.
28. Equality of opportunity in the curriculum is very good. The school gives very good attention to ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of their gender, race, background or ability. The school is committed to inclusion for all and the pupils are fully aware of this. In discussion with inspectors, a pupil commented that one of the best things about the school was that everybody is included. This was well illustrated during the inspection when pupils with complex special educational needs took a full part in lessons despite their physical difficulties. Provision for special educational needs is very good. Pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit benefit from the whole school approach towards special educational needs where they are taught, part time, alongside all other pupils following the same curriculum. There is an expectation that all pupils should have full access to all activities. Disabilities are treated with respect by both staff and pupils. All systems and procedures connected with special educational needs are very good, as is the paperwork that underpins them. The curriculum is well modified to enable all pupils to make very good progress and take a full part in all the school has to offer. There is a high number of support staff, who provide effective support to individuals and small groups.

29. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy. This is helping to raise standards, but there is a need to make further provision to extend pupils' writing across all areas of the curriculum, and especially to meet the needs of boys in Key Stage 2. Good emphasis is given to developing speaking and listening skills, and the school's provision for the teaching of reading is very good, with an excellent partnership between pupils, parents and school through the implementation of the 'Books and Beyond' project, which contributes positively to the levels of attainment in reading. The school has also successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. This is also having a positive effect on standards but in some classes and particularly in Key Stage 1, the mental arithmetic session is not conducted at a sufficiently brisk pace to enable pupils to develop the skills of rapid mental recall.
30. A significant number of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the school's provision for extra-curricular opportunities and clubs. However, inspection evidence shows that provision is good overall. Activities provided for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is similar to that provided generally for pupils of that age, and there is satisfactory provision for older pupils, particularly with physical pursuits. Activities provided include soccer, netball, recorders, pottery, and a wildlife club, whose members were observed making birds' nests during the inspection. There are teams for soccer and netball, and matches are played against other schools. The school's provision for visits outside the school, and for visitors to talk to pupils within the school, is very good, and a strength of the school. All classes experience a rich contact with the outside world, through visits to local churches, museums, historic houses, wildlife centres. For example, Year 2 visit Cogges Farm and Hill End House and for Year 6 pupils the residential visit to Yenworthy is anticipated eagerly and enriches their learning. Visits from authors, from adults of different faiths, from local public services such as the police and a talk on poetry all help enhance the quality of the pupils' learning. The teaching of musical instruments such as the guitar and brass instruments is enabled through the county music service, and during the inspection an increasing number of pupils was observed benefiting from this. The school's provision for regular performances for parents, such as the current 'Dracula' and 'Gingerbread Man' productions, involving large numbers of pupils, is well above those of many schools.
31. The school has good relationships with partner institutions and these have a positive impact on pupils' learning. There are good links with both the village playgroups that help to make starting school easier for the youngest children. The headteacher works closely with other schools in the Thame Partnership. Joint initiatives are organised through the partnership including a family counsellor. The school also has good links with the local secondary schools and offers work experience placements to students. Students from Oxford Brookes University and Aylesbury College are also welcomed into school. Curricular opportunities are enriched through area sports and sporting fixtures against other schools, including kwik cricket, hockey, netball and football.
32. The local community makes a good contribution to learning. The methodist and congregational ministers and the rector have all visited to lead assemblies, the library supports the 'Books and Beyond' project and the village is well used as a geographical and historical resource. For example, an excellent geography lesson was observed during the inspection, when pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 were taken to view land use in and around Chinnor. There are good relationships with the two senior schools to which pupils transfer, with some sharing of facilities and joint performances such as 'Rock the Baroque', as part of the Thame festival. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 join with the other local primary school in the village for a production of 'The Gingerbread Man'. Key Stage 2 pupils took part in the Millennium concert in the village hall. Volunteers from the community regularly help in school, local people are welcomed to the fundays and harvest gifts are distributed to senior citizens in Chinnor. Community groups including a badminton club use the school facilities. 'Books and Beyond' is a very popular school project and extends to the wider community involving families and friends of the pupils. A local author opened the project and a well-known actor who lives in the area awarded the first prizes. The local community, encouraged by the school, makes a good contribution to pupils' learning, and is well used for visits to local churches, and for studying the local environment. The school itself is very much a community centre, and a focus for village life.
33. The school's provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is very good, and well supported in religious education lessons, circle time and assemblies. This is a good

improvement since the previous inspection, when weaknesses were identified. The school is in process of adopting the personal, social and health education policy and scheme of work provided by the Thames partnership of schools. The subject is being developed well by the co-ordinator. Appropriate policies for drugs awareness and sex education are well supported by visits from the police, the school nurse and the Life Education Centre. The subject is to be included in reports to parents this year. This aspect of the curriculum is much valued by pupils as an opportunity to express their feelings, and is a strength of the school. Particularly good examples were observed during the inspection in a class for pupils in Year 4 and Year 5, where teacher and individual pupils corresponded with one another on matters of concern. In Year 2, the teacher created a suitable opportunity for reflection, whilst pupils considered what they thought made a good friend, for example 'a friend is someone who helps you when you're crying...a good listener'. The school has recently introduced the teaching of values. This excellent initiative has already involved pupils in learning about respect, peace, and the important role of lunchtime staff. All adults are excellent role models and give priority to promoting the pupils' self-esteem, widening their social experience, caring for others, and developing a growing interest in learning. These values lie at the heart of the school's curriculum. This is a very caring school. Year 6 pupils have responsibilities which contribute effectively to their personal and social development, such as the lunch hour 'security' duty, answering the telephone, helping younger pupils, assisting in the nursery and running a lunch-time bookshop. Given the high levels of maturity and attitude shown, these pupils might be granted even further responsibilities.

34. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This represents very good improvement since the previous inspection. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Daily acts of collective worship or class assemblies provide pupils with time for quiet reflection, and similar opportunities were observed in a number of lessons. Circle time is very well used across the school to promote spiritual values, enabling pupils to listen to and respect the beliefs of others. A Year 2 religious education lesson observed promoted good spiritual awareness when artefacts of the Jewish faith were displayed to pupils, leading to appropriate gasps of 'awe and wonder'. Plenary sessions at the end of many lessons are well used to enable pupils to reflect on what they have learned and develop awareness of their own self-knowledge.
35. Provision for moral development is very good. All adults provide excellent role models and the school's positive behaviour policy is consistently upheld. Pupils are provided with clear guidance on distinguishing between right and wrong behaviour, and have helped form the school's Code of Conduct. Behaviour in lessons and throughout the school is very good, and pupils understand the rules of the school, and of their own class, which they have helped to draw up, with teachers.
36. The provision for pupils' social development is very good, and this is another improvement since the previous inspection. Girls and boys work and play together harmoniously. They are aware of the needs of others and speak proudly of the fact that 'everyone is included in everything here'. Pupils with special educational needs, of whatever nature or difficulty, are fully accepted into the school community, and fully supported by everyone. Group and paired work in lessons encourages collaboration between pupils, and acceptance of taking turns, in sharing equipment and resources. Older pupils help younger ones, making toys in design and technology lessons and small books for them to read. Within the local village pupils develop a good understanding of living in a community. They successfully learn to socialise with adults, through, for example, the distribution of produce to the local elderly, following their Harvest Festival Service. There is mutual respect for the feelings of all individuals.
37. Provision for cultural development is good overall. Provision for pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage is very good. They visit churches, galleries and museums. A group of pupils attend the Stilgoe concerts at the Royal Festival Hall. Visitors speak to pupils about books and poetry. Music plays an important part in the school, with works of the great composers played and identified in assemblies regularly. Provision for the understanding of other cultures is less well developed. Songs from other countries are sung, and in one assembly pupils were taught a Ghanaian handshake, but there is little evidence of other cultures around the school, no displays and very few appropriate books in the library. The school is aware of this

and is planning further provision of books and artefacts for other religions, and the purchase of instruments from other countries. There is some lack of opportunity to learn about and appreciate the multicultural nature of our society as a whole. The school has identified this as an area for development, and is beginning to introduce ways of ensuring that its pupils will be well prepared to take their place as adults in today's multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school's steps to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good and this reflects a school aim 'to raise standards by enabling all pupils of all abilities to achieve their full potential in a supportive and encouraging community'. There are very good relationships at all levels and in response to the pre-inspection questionnaires ninety three per cent of parents feel that their children like school. The induction procedures for the youngest children, including visits to the nursery, are good and help to ensure that the children settle quickly and happily into the school. All staff work hard to maintain the very positive relationships and they know the pupils very well. Through the personal, social and health education programme the school monitors personal development very closely. The school has good information of pupils' likes and dislikes, the extra curricular activities they are involved in and their achievements out of school. The statements on the annual reports to parents show that the teachers know the pupils well. The school successfully identifies those pupils with special educational needs at an early stage of their education. They receive very good support and as a result these pupils are learning very well.
39. Health and safety procedures and practices are very good. Fire practices take place regularly and are recorded and governors with responsibility for health and safety make termly risk assessments. Guidance on personal social and health education is delivered very well through circle time, religious education, assemblies and science lessons. A Thames Valley police education officer supports the programme.
40. There are suitable arrangements in place for first aid and medical support and many staff hold the required first aid qualifications. Parents particularly appreciate that so many staff have been trained to deal with children with peanut allergies. The school has very good arrangements in place for child protection issues. The headteacher is the named responsible person and has been trained for this role. The headteacher also trains the other staff on child protection procedures.
41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. The attendance registers are checked regularly and instances of unexplained absence are promptly followed up. The school is well supported by the education welfare officer. Registers are taken briskly at the start of morning and afternoon sessions and this ensures a prompt start to lessons. All statutory requirements are met.
42. There are very good procedures for encouraging good behaviour. The school behaviour policy is implemented consistently by all staff to ensure that pupils behave well. The pupils follow the code of conduct closely and good behaviour and effort are rewarded through praise. Ninety per cent of parents feel that the school is helping their child become mature and responsible.
43. Throughout the school, all the adults know the pupils and their families well. They give them friendly help and guidance to overcome difficulties in lessons. This contributes positively to the standards attained. They monitor their personal development closely, being alert and responsive to any concerns.
44. Assessment procedures were judged to be variable at the time of the last inspection. They are now very good and there have been significant improvements in the overall consistency in the way that the teachers carry out the procedures. There are extensive records concerning achievement in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology where procedures are now very good. All subjects of the National Curriculum are assessed, as well as personal and social development. The school carefully analyses and records assessment tests that take place for English, mathematics and science. There are now very good systems for tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science and information and

communication technology, from entry into school to the time that they leave in Year 6. The school collects and analyses the regular assessment information in these subjects and uses it well to set targets for individual pupils and to help ensure that all pupils, including higher attainers, reach them. Additionally, work is sampled, matched to National Curriculum levels, moderated by staff and used to generate the next targets for improvement. Medium and short term planning reflects opportunities for assessment. Teachers and support staff were observed during the inspection recording details of individual pupil attainment within lessons to inform future planning. Teachers also analyse termly planning, match it to records kept and then use this to amend the next stage of education for groups or individuals. Assessment information is also used very well to identify pupils who need additional support. Although the school is generating comprehensive records some information is duplicated and there has been no audit to ascertain what is most useful and informative.

45. Very good procedures for assessment of pupils with special educational needs are in operation. Children are identified quickly at an early age or on entry at another point of the school. Carefully constructed and relevant individual education plans provide clear guidance for targets and how pupils will reach these. These plans are appropriately and regularly reviewed, as are the statements of special educational need. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and the provision for the nine pupils with statements. The school caters extremely well for a wide range of special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator and her team of learning support assistants are very skilled, knowledgeable and competent. They provide a variety of appropriate individual and group support, planned in discussion with teachers, visiting therapists and support services, through which all pupils are able to be included fully in the life of the school. The needs of higher attaining pupils are also well met. Activities are well planned to provide sufficient challenge for these pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The school has a good partnership with parents and this reflects a school aim 'to encourage a positive partnership between the children, parents, governors and teachers'. There was a very high response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and many parents and carers indicate that they have mainly positive views of the school. However, nineteen per cent do not feel that the school works closely with them and a significant number of parents do not feel they are well informed about how their children are getting on. However, the inspection team does not support these views as annual reports to parents provide detailed information about pupils' knowledge and skills and indicate how pupils could improve their performance in English, mathematics and science. There are two formal parent/teacher consultations during the year and they are well attended. In the summer term parents have an opportunity to discuss the reports and the National Curriculum levels their children have attained. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed of their progress. Individual education plans are very good and are shared with parents, and where appropriate, pupils, at open evenings and copies of targets are sent out. Parents are always invited to annual reviews and a high percentage accepts the invitation. Parents are generally very pleased with the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
47. The previous report stated that governors were working with the headteacher to improve communications and the inspection team judges information for parents to be good. Attractive newsletters keep parents up to date with the day-to-day life of the school. The prospectus is informative. Teachers write to parents to inform them about what their children will be studying. The home-school agreement has been signed and returned by the majority of the parents and is a useful tool to reinforce the partnership with parents. Induction meetings are held for the parents of children new to the school and information evenings are held on the key stage National Curriculum tests. Parents are welcome to bring their children into school in the mornings and are invited to meet teachers if they have any concerns. Many parents attend the family assemblies and the school uses these occasions well to communicate educational initiatives; for example the numeracy and literacy hours. A number of parents regularly help in school and many are actively supporting the playground project. The Mill Lane School Association organises fund raising events including fundays, Christmas bazaars and discos and they also produce their own newsletter. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good and is having a positive influence on standards.

48. In response to the parents' questionnaire a significant number feel that their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home. The inspection team does not agree with this view as satisfactory amounts of homework are set regularly to support the curriculum effectively, to develop pupils' independent learning skills and to prepare the Year 6 pupils appropriately for secondary education. The school has provided parents with a list of the homework set by each class teacher. The good help that many parents give to their children with homework is a valuable asset to the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The overall leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are very good. The headteacher provides very strong and caring leadership and the commitment she shows to the inclusion of all pupils contributes very strongly to the good ethos of the school. This has been maintained since the previous inspection. She has successfully driven the school forward despite the fact that there is no deputy headteacher and she currently has responsibility for the co-ordination of several key areas of the curriculum. For example, she is the co-ordinator for special educational needs, English, history and geography. At the time of the inspection, she was also acting as co-ordinator for assessment in the absence of the co-ordinator. The successful way in which she leads the school in these areas contributes very positively to its success.
50. There are several reasons why the headteacher has so many areas of responsibility. At the time of the previous inspection, the size of the school meant that she had a class teaching responsibility and curricular responsibilities were shared between the small number of teachers. The school has now grown in size and the governing body has recently appointed a deputy headteacher to take up her post next term. This should enable curricular responsibilities to be more evenly allocated and for the deputy headteacher to share in the management of the school. The school has also suffered from several changes of teachers and a senior teacher has suffered periods of ill health and so the headteacher has sensibly maintained an overview of curricular management in these areas.
51. The headteacher and co-ordinators work very well together as a team for the benefit of all pupils. All share a very strong commitment to raising standards and have a good understanding for areas of development in their subjects. For example, the mathematics co-ordinator has already identified pace in the mental sessions of the numeracy hour as an area for improvement. The headteacher is currently the co-ordinator for special educational needs. She is very hard working, knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provides good and valued leadership.
52. There are several reasons why the school is effective. The good quality of the teaching in most classes is fundamental to its success. The headteacher and core co-ordinators monitor teaching effectively, providing good feedback. This contributes positively to the consistency in the quality of teaching, where good teaching was seen in each class. Subject co-ordinators monitor planning effectively and examine samples of work. This leads to consistency between the classes, particularly those that accommodate pupils of the same age. Another reason for its success is the attention it pays to assessment. The school has worked hard to develop very good procedures, which it uses very effectively to ensure that all pupils, including higher attainers, are offered well matched tasks, resulting in pupils making good gains in their learning. Very good tracking of progress ensures that statutory targets are achievable and pupils have individual and group targets that are also well matched to their needs. The school also monitors and evaluates its performance well by gender, subject and the mobility of pupils and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. For example, data held by the school refers to the results of last year's statutory tests for Year 6 in comparison with that year group's results when they were in Year 2. It shows that of the eight pupils who left during Key Stage 2, five were higher attainers and of the seven who moved in, three had special educational needs with two pupils having statements of special educational need. This is a factor leading to lower standards at the end of Key Stage 2 than might be expected from the results at the end of Key Stage 1. The school is closely monitoring the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs joining the school and data for the current Year 6 shows a similar pattern. The school is committed to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and the very

good provision enables these pupils, including the above average percentage with statements of special educational need, to achieve well. Tracking data held by the school shows that pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.

53. The way in which the governing body fulfils its responsibilities is good. They have a good understanding of their roles and are supportive. Each governor is linked to a subject to keep themselves informed. There is an appropriate range of committees who report to the full governing body. The governing body is fully involved with issues regarding special educational needs and fulfils all its statutory duties. External support is sought, where appropriate, when school resources cannot meet individual needs. The governors have ensured that the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed successfully and consequently there has been good improvement. There are now good procedures for monitoring teaching and tracking progress, all staff now have comprehensive job descriptions, the quality of teaching has improved significantly, extensive alterations to some classrooms have improved facilities and statutory requirements are now met.
54. The school makes good use of the funds and resources made available to it. The school development plan is a good working document that has been well constructed to raise standards. Spending decisions focus appropriately on raising standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Good information is provided about the budget to keep governors informed. The administrative officer manages day-to-day accounts and office procedures well. The school makes a major commitment from its budget to the provision of support staff and this impacts favourably on the attainment and progress of all pupils, but particularly affects those with special educational needs. Funds made available for these pupils are used well to enhance their provision. The funds allocated to be carried forward have been suitably identified to improve the playground facilities and buildings further.
55. The school applies the principles of best value well in its use of resources. For example, the school evaluated several options before undertaking the playground project that is currently under way. Pupils and parents were consulted about what they would like to include and the final design includes as many ideas as possible.
56. There is an appropriate number of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a good number of support staff, who are well trained and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. All share the whole school ethos of valuing all pupils and the inclusion of those with special educational needs. All staff are very aware of pupils' special educational needs and understand the system for identifying their difficulties. Learning support assistants provide a valuable and valued resource helping these pupils to achieve success. Several have gained additional skills and qualifications to assist them in their role. There is a very good level of support for special educational needs pupils. The school has coped well with the disruption caused by one teacher leaving during the year and with the absences due to ill health by another teacher. This has resulted in the current Year 2 class being taught by several different teachers this year.
57. The accommodation has been much improved since the previous inspection. It is satisfactory overall. It is well cared for and includes a large well-equipped nursery. The extensive grounds include attractive grassed areas, a wildlife area and playground. However, two classes are housed in mobile classrooms and two other classrooms are very small and impede opportunities for practical work. The school has already identified the need to improve these classrooms to match others. Overall, there are suitable resources for all areas of the curriculum and there are strengths in resources in the nursery and for music. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory but are used well.
58. A judgement on value for money is based on what the school achieves in relation to its expenditure. The school's income is a little above average. The attainments of children on entry to the school are broadly average. A significant number of pupils with special educational needs join the school during Key Stage 2 and the test results of pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit are included in the school's results. Consequently, by the time pupils leave the school at the age of eleven, standards are sometimes below average. However, pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. The quality of education, including the quality

of teaching, is good. The school promotes very good attitudes and achieves very good standards of behaviour. Provision for personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school achieves this despite an above average number of pupils with special educational needs and a well above average number with statements. Taking all these factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue the good work of the school and to raise standards further, the headteacher and the governing body should now address the following in their action plan:

- (1) Raise standards in English by*:
 - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to develop their writing skills across all areas of the curriculum;
 - encouraging pupils to improve the quality of their written work by celebrating it in displays throughout the school;
 - ensuring that writing tasks are sufficiently motivating for boys. (paragraphs 9, 29, 63, 74, 76, 96, 101,120)

- (2) Raise standards in mathematics by *:
 - ensuring that mental starter activities in the numeracy hour are conducted at sufficient pace in all classes, and particularly in Key Stage 1, to enable pupils to develop the skills of quick mental recall. (paragraphs 9, 23, 24, 29, 80, 82)

- (3) Provide more opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to develop research skills. (paragraphs 9, 15, 90, 103, 105, 112)

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

- Ensure that pupils are fully prepared for life in multicultural Britain.* (paragraph 37)

* The school has already identified these areas as in need of improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	14	58	25	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	37	183
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	45

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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
	00			23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	21`	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (81)	91 (86)	96 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	21	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (86)	96 (95)	96 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	00			23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	16	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (80)	70 (60)	91 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	15	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (80)	66 (60)	39 (83)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Where numbers of boys and girls are omitted from the table it is because there were ten or fewer boys and girls in the year group.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	169
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	168

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	348675
Total expenditure	335038
Expenditure per pupil	1773
Balance brought forward from previous year	20408
Balance carried forward to next year	34045

Results of the survey of parents and carers**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	183
Number of questionnaires returned	151

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	40	5	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	38	53	2	2	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	53	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	46	13	5	16
The teaching is good.	50	45	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	38	25	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	30	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	40	3	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	35	41	16	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	43	47	5	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	48	5	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	28	26	10	20

Other issues raised by parents

Parents praised the work of the school and were particularly positive about the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. Some parents were concerned about the mixed age classes but understand that this is likely to be addressed as the larger Key Stage 1 classes move through the school.

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

59. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part time basis during the term after their third birthday. Some children attend in the mornings and others in the afternoons. The majority of children transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they have their fifth birthday and most attend part time for one term. Some children transfer to other schools as the nursery serves a wide community. Children are also admitted to the reception class from local playgroups. Evidence from baseline assessments and inspection evidence shows that attainments on entry are broadly average but cover the full range of attainment. Personal, social and emotional skills are particularly well developed.
60. Children receive a positive start to both the nursery and the reception class. They make sound progress and firmly develop and consolidate their skills. They achieve as they should and by the end of the Foundation Stage they are on course to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning with the exception of personal, social and emotional development, where they exceed them. The previous inspection identified a wide range of attainment on entry and this has been broadly maintained as the school has grown in size.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Children enjoy coming to school because they are offered interesting activities. They have good opportunities to develop their social skills. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good and children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. The youngest children in the nursery are already secure in routines and take responsibility for putting their completed paintings to dry on the shelf and then wash their hands. All children in the Foundation Stage work and play independently when teachers and the nursery nurse are working with other groups.
62. All adults encourage children to develop their social skills in a variety of ways. For example, children in the nursery learn to take turns and to share activities when they join the 'planning train' around the nursery, stopping off at their choice of activity if there is space for them to do so. They take responsibility for watering the seeds, filling the watering can themselves from the tap. They show sensible behaviour when acting out the story of Goldilocks in the role-play area. These skills are further developed in the reception class. Here, children take turns to take the register to the office and sensibly fetch their jumpers and take themselves to the toilet before a visit to the 'Book Bus' in the grounds. They also show a good level of independence when changing for physical activities, returning their bags to their pegs afterwards. Children with special educational needs are very well integrated. All adults share the same high expectations of behaviour and as a result children are very well behaved because they know what is expected of them.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Most children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. They make sound progress and achieve as they should. All adults give high priority to the development of these skills. As a result, children enter Key Stage 1 confident in expressing their views and this contributes to the above average speaking and listening skills evident by the end of Key Stage 1. In the nursery, children develop their speaking and listening skills through role-play in 'The Three Bears' House' and through regular opportunities to show toys and tell their news. In the reception class, they discuss how clay feels when making leaves and discuss similarities and differences between the story of 'The Gingerbread Man' and 'The Runaway Chapati'. Children have good opportunities to practise their writing skills in both the nursery and reception class. For example, nursery children use a wide range of tools to make marks and children in the reception class write sentences about the school 'Lollipop Lady' after her visit to school, showing their developing skills. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good overall. In a lesson seen during the inspection, children made good gains in learning how stories

are structured and how features of the text can give clues to help when reading. For example, they joined in reading 'The Runaway Chapati' with their teacher, identifying speech bubbles in response to her questions. This lesson also included a visit to the 'Book Bus'- the mobile library. Here, children learned that the end of a story may not always be what they might think and that stories can have repeated themes. This was as a result of inspiring story telling by the librarians. Opportunities such as this are an example of the emphasis the school places on the development of reading skills from an early age. Consequently, all children enjoy stories and join in when reading with adults. Good emphasis is placed on literacy skills in class displays but opportunities to celebrate children's writing are sometimes missed. Children in the reception class use pictures to help them read simple stories and use their developing knowledge of initial sounds to build simple words. Higher attaining children read with developing fluency.

Mathematical development

64. Attainment in mathematics meets that expected in order to meet the early learning goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and children are achieving appropriately. All adults take every opportunity to develop these skills. For example, in the nursery, they count with the children as they join the 'planning train' and encourage them to count up to ten and back to zero. Older children, in the reception class, develop their understanding of 'more' and 'less' by counting team members in physical education lessons. They develop an understanding of ordinal number by discussing which team is first. Children in the nursery learn the difference between 'more' and 'less' through their play in the sandpit and learn to identify simple shapes when they make collages using triangles, circles, squares and rectangles. Counting skills are further developed in the reception class, where children count to ten and beyond. They identify three-dimensional shapes around the school and collect data about items in the classroom. The lesson seen during the inspection was too short to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, children learned to identify shapes such as pyramids and cubes as the teacher slowly brought them out of a bag. This motivated the children to identify them and careful manipulation of the shapes ensured that the emerging corner was not always part of the first choice of shape. Activities such as these challenge children to think and encourage all to take part.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children are achieving appropriately. In the nursery, children learn how seeds grow through opportunities to plant them and observe their growth. They experiment with sand and water and use the computer to make simple graphs to show the colour of their eyes. In the reception class they develop their understanding of the natural world further when they sequence the life cycle of a dandelion and investigate whether sunflower seeds will grow in the dark. They develop early mapping skills when they examine 'bird's eye views' and draw their route to school. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. A good lesson was seen in the nursery where children made good gains in their learning about how a camera works. The teacher emphasised correct vocabulary such as 'lens' and 'shutter' and the children were fascinated by her demonstration.

Physical development

66. Children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. They achieve as they should. Nursery children have regular opportunities to develop these skills in their own attractive outdoor area. They develop the skills of balancing, climbing and pedalling, showing a developing awareness of space. During the inspection, children in the reception class made good gains in learning how to control a ball in response to the good teaching. They responded very positively to instructions and most were able to pass a ball successfully through their legs to take part in a simple relay race by the end of the lesson. Children with special educational needs were well integrated into the lesson. At the time of the inspection, work was underway to improve the outdoor play provision and plans are in place to improve outdoor access for children in the reception class. All children handle scissors, small toys and playdough regularly to develop manipulative skills. For example, nursery children roll

and squeeze playdough into a range of shapes and older children roll out clay to make leaves and cut materials to make collages.

Creative development

67. The children's creative development is on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children achieve as they should. Children in the nursery experiment with paint and use their feet to make prints. They develop their three-dimensional skills through making models from recyclable materials. These skills are further developed in the reception class where children make leaves from clay and paint self-portraits showing appropriate attention to detail. Observational drawings of a calabash and drum after a Ghanaian visitor show developing pencil control and also contribute to multicultural understanding. Music has a high priority and children in the nursery dance and play percussion instruments in time to taped music. Children in the reception class often join with pupils in Key Stage 1 for musical activities and the lesson seen during the inspection for all these pupils was very good. The youngest children showed that they could sing songs about 'The Gingerbread Man' with good attention to tempo.
68. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. The good quality of teaching is consistent between the nursery and the reception class. In the nursery all lessons seen were good. In the reception class, one lesson was satisfactory and the rest were good. All adults, including the talented nursery nurse, support staff and parent helpers share the same high expectations and this contributes to the standards attained and the very good behaviour. A particular strength is the use adults make of on-going assessment. All adults note children's progress across all the areas of learning and these notes are included in detailed records. Consequently, activities are well matched to the needs of all children. Very few judgements were made in the previous inspection about children of this age but the good quality of teaching identified then has been maintained.

ENGLISH

69. The previous inspection judged that 'attainment is at or above the national expectation'. The present situation is similar in Key Stage 1, but standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are now lower. Standards are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. However, there is clear evidence to explain this. The nature of the school has changed and there are now 14 per cent more pupils with special educational needs. The relatively small number of pupils in each year group and the variations between the number of statemented pupils mean that it is difficult to give an accurate picture of improvement. However, overall, improvement since the previous inspection is good.
70. In the 2000 national tests for seven year olds, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attained above average levels in both reading and writing, in both the standard Level 2, and the higher Level 3. Writing was well above the national average at Level 3. In comparison with similar schools reading and writing were above average. In the teachers' assessments for speaking and listening standards were above average. In the current Year 2 inspection evidence shows that standards are now slightly lower, due to an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs, and significant disruption to teaching due to staff absence. Over the last four years standards have fluctuated, but have generally been above the national average. There has been good achievement in reading and writing, and at a rate of progress higher than that found nationally.
71. At the end of Key Stage 2 in the 2000 national tests Year 6 pupils attained standards in English in line with the national average, but below average in comparison with similar schools. At the higher Level 5, however, pupils' attainment was average for both national and similar schools, indicating sound provision for higher attaining pupils. Over the last four years standards have fallen at the end of Key Stage 2, and inspection evidence shows that levels of attainment in the current group of Year 6 pupils are below average. This is due to the number of higher attaining pupils leaving the school during Key Stage 2, the inclusion of results from pupils attending the Chinnor Resource Unit, and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs joining the school during Key Stage 2. Half the pupils in the current Year 6 have special educational needs,

and over 70 per cent of these are boys. Not surprisingly, girls perform significantly better than boys, especially in writing. However, pupils are achieving well.

72. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with them by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils across the school are very good listeners, and very attentive in lessons and assemblies, to their teachers and to one another. Pupils in both key stages talk confidently about the books they are reading and can explain clearly the tasks they are engaged in. The use of circle time encourages pupils to reflect before expressing themselves on a variety of subjects, such as 'A friend is ...someone you can share your thoughts with... go to parties with...' Those pupils selected for discussion with inspectors were articulate and mature in their conversations. Observations ranged from 'I can't think of anything that I don't like about this school'- from Year 2, to more evocative statements with words carefully chosen to create atmosphere, such as from a Year 6 pupil in a lesson developing dramatic writing for a play script – 'I hope there are not any spiders in that library; it looks rather creepy!' Teachers make good use of drama and role-play across the curriculum to develop pupils' skills in speaking.
73. Standards in reading are above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and average by the end of Key Stage 2. There is very good provision for reading, through opportunities for teachers and other adults to hear individuals, silent reading times, group reading within the literacy hour, good use of homework and support from parents. The 'Books and Beyond' initiative is a particularly strong feature, which encourages pupils to read alongside adults, with incentive rewards for the number of books read. Initiatives such as these have a positive impact on the standards attained, particularly by pupils with special educational needs who strive to do well. Year 6 pupils help to foster a love of books by running a lunchtime bookshop for all pupils. Year 2 pupils showed much enthusiasm for books and were able to break down words successfully into syllables, using phonic skills to sound out letters, to work out new vocabulary, such as, for a below average reader – 'across', 'slipped', and 'plank'. A variety of graded, colour-coded material is used, and text is generally well matched by teachers to pupils' level of ability. Year 6 pupils read fluently and expressively, and correctly interpreted the use of italics for emphasis. Older pupils make comparisons between their favourite authors. Pupils are familiar with literacy terms appropriate for their ages such as 'author, index, glossary, blurb'. They are able to access information from the library, but are unfamiliar with the Dewey system in place. Teachers use a good system of assessing and recording, and home/school reading diaries are well used. Records reveal good progress in reading over time. Pupils across the school show a clear love of reading, and value books and reading highly. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in reading. All classes have reading areas, with good stocks of appropriate reading material, but there is little provision to sit and read or browse in comfort, particularly in the smaller classrooms.
74. Standards in writing are average by the end of Key Stage 1, but below average by the end of Key Stage 2, and for boys in Key Stage 2 standards are well below average. This is an area of weakness already identified by the school, and a number of good initiatives are already in place to help raise standards, such as improving grammar and spelling. Pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes, but insufficient time is allocated to this aspect of the subject, there is insufficient provision for writing across the curriculum within other subjects, and there is no specific time allocation for extended writing. Writing, overall, has a low focus around the school. There is little evidence of pupils' written work on display, no examples displayed of progressive handwriting, and insufficient celebration of good writing when it does occur.
75. Year 2 pupils acquire new vocabulary and show a good sense of rhyme and rhythm, selecting words carefully when writing their own poems in the style of 'Dave's Fleas', for example 'Dave's fleas know the date, Dave's fleas wrestle live bait!' In Year 3, pupils write in a variety of genres, and develop their understanding of instructional and explanatory writing, for example 'How to make a sandwich'. Year 6 pupils recognise parts of speech, write diaries, personal accounts, poetry reviews, and convert reported speech to direct speech. However, lower attaining pupils are not always writing in sentences, and punctuation is an area for further development. Standards of handwriting and presentation overall, are good. Pupils take pride in their writing, use rulers to improve presentation, and generally show good handwriting, forming letters correctly and of a consistent size. The school has recently revised its policy towards handwriting

to good effect. Emphasis on spelling has increased recently and standards are rising. Regular spelling lists are recorded and tested within a sentence context and words are set appropriately for groups of pupils of all abilities. For example words such as 'accelerator, residence and chromatography' are set for higher attaining pupils in Year 6.

76. The teaching of English is good overall in both key stages, never less than satisfactory, and on one occasion in Key Stage 2 it was very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, which judged teaching to be sound. Teachers are confident with the subject content and with the teaching of the National Literacy Strategy. This is one of the reasons why pupils do well in reading. The very good teaching seen was characterised by very detailed planning for pupils of all abilities, high expectations of task and conduct, good use of time and resources, pushing pupils along at a good pace and challenging them to greater achievement; for example 'You have four more minutes to finish'. Teachers make good use of praise to motivate pupils and consequently they wish to please teachers further. Plenary sessions are used well for reflection, to emphasise learning objectives and to develop speaking and listening skills. Most teachers make good use of the computers in their classrooms to develop pupils' word-processing skills. Homework is well used, especially in Year 6. Where teaching was satisfactory it was characterised by the teacher's less secure subject knowledge and slower pace to the lesson, resulting in parts of planning being omitted. Pupils' learning closely follows teaching and most pupils achieve well over time, making good progress in lessons, due to the very detailed planning for pupils of all abilities and the generous provision of support staff to help those pupils who have special educational needs. Speaking and listening skills are well developed by teachers across the curriculum and good examples were seen in a Year 2 numeracy lesson where pupils acquired correct mathematical vocabulary and emphasised the importance of giving clear instructions. In an art lesson in Year 5 and Year 6, pupils explained, for an advert, what happens if you do not wear a seat-belt, making effective use of alliteration for their posters – 'Be like Bob – Safe in a Seatbelt.' However, the development of writing skills across the curriculum is less well developed.
77. The subject is very well led by the headteacher, who has a clear grasp of how to take the subject forward. She has identified many areas already for further development. Assessment arrangements are very good, both within the literacy hour, and more formally through appropriate testing. Good use is made of assessment where weaknesses are identified, for example, in grammar, spelling and boys' writing. The school is fortunate to have a library, but during the inspection older pupils made very little use of this facility for developing retrieval skills or for research, either individually, or in small groups. There is good provision for poetry across the school. Drama features prominently and regularly, through role-play, and through the high number of productions for performance, involving large numbers of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to write scripts for these productions, which have strong links with music, and contribute positively to pupils' personal and social development as well as developing community spirit. Monitoring of the subject by the co-ordinator is very good. Learning support staff play a key role in helping pupils with special educational needs, enabling these pupils to make very good progress, and working closely with teachers. Resources are satisfactory. There are good stocks of books in the library and around the school, including sets of group readers and 'Big books'. However, some of the readers are a little dated now, and there is a shortage of books about other religions and cultures in the library, which the school has plans to rectify.

MATHEMATICS

78. Inspection evidence shows that standards are in line with the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 and that pupils are achieving appropriately. Results of the National Curriculum tests in 2000 show a similar picture both in comparison with all schools and also with similar schools. Given the relatively small number of pupils in each year group it is difficult to give an accurate picture of trends year on year and there are also significant differences in the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. The inclusion of pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit also affects the results. This year, pupils in Year 2 have suffered some disruption to their education due to staff absence, but they have, nevertheless reached the expected standard. The previous inspection judged standards to be above average by the end of Key Stage 1, but results in National Curriculum tests that year were well below average.

79. By the end of Key Stage 2, inspection evidence shows that standards are below national expectations. There are several reasons for this and pupils are nevertheless achieving well. Half of the pupils in Year 6 are on the register of special educational needs and two pupils have statements of special educational need in this small year group. This reduces the percentage of pupils who are likely to reach the expected level. Results of National Curriculum tests in 2000 show that standards were below average both in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. Although that year group also included a significant proportion with special educational needs it was not as high as the current Year 6, so there has been some improvement this year. As in Key Stage 1, the inclusion of pupils from the Chinnor Resource Unit also affects the results. Another factor which contributes to standards being lower at the end of Key Stage 2 than might be expected, considering the Key Stage 1 results, is the changing nature of the school. The school has a justifiably good reputation for its provision for pupils with special educational needs and as a result a significant number of pupils with special educational needs join the school during Key Stage 2. As in Key Stage 1, the number of pupils in each year group is fairly small and may not give a reliable picture of trends year on year. Since the previous inspection the school has grown in size but the percentage of pupils with special educational needs has significantly increased. This is the reason for what would appear to be a decline in standards from the average standards identified then. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 5 are also below those expected for their age because almost half this year group is included on the register of special educational needs. However, standards in Year 3 and Year 4 are above those expected for their age, but the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is currently much smaller.
80. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented appropriately and is making a contribution to improving standards. However, the mental session at the beginning of the numeracy lesson is not always sufficiently brisk in all classes and particularly in Key Stage 1, to enable pupils to develop the skills of quick mental recall. This affects the standards attained. For example, teachers sometimes wait too long for pupils to answer and this disrupts the pace. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 2, who were counting rhythmically in two's around the circle. When numbers exceeded 30, some pupils failed to answer and the teacher stopped and waited for them to work it out rather than continue counting round the circle. In a lesson for pupils in Year 4 and Year 5, the session started briskly with pupils identifying multiples of seven, but slowed when the teacher allowed too long for pupils to show their answers on their number fans when doubling numbers. However, in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, pupils counted around the class in tens, fives, twos and eights, both forwards and backwards, at a brisk pace. Pupils of all abilities made every effort to keep going. This lesson began calmly after playtime, after a short interlude to listen to quiet music. As a result, pupils were relaxed and ready to work hard.
81. There is little difference in standards between the different areas of mathematics in any of the classes. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use numbers to 100 confidently, undertake a good range of investigations to explore numbers and understand odd and even numbers. They show a good understanding of how to tell the time, use standard measures when estimating weight and length and identify symmetrical shapes. Higher attaining pupils understand the four rules of number and show a good understanding of money. By Year 3, pupils use numbers beyond 1000 and use fractions such as twelfths in their calculations. By Year 4, pupils confidently use partitioning strategies to solve problems and work in decimals to two places. They compile information about their favourite crisps and represent it graphically. By Year 5, they confidently use long multiplication to solve problems and understand the difference between mode and range. By the end of Year 6, pupils express fractions as percentages, add and subtract decimals to two places and understand negative numbers. They know how to find the area of a triangle and understand reflective and rotational symmetry. They use data from the 1851 census and represent it in frequency diagrams and pie charts.
82. Most pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and this makes a good contribution to their learning. They work hard and enjoy their lessons because teachers ensure that lessons are interesting and well matched to their needs. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All lessons seen during the inspection were judged to be satisfactory. Although these lessons included good features, such as well-chosen resources, high expectations and positive behaviour management, the pace of the mental starter activities were insufficiently brisk

to encourage rapid calculation. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher shared the lesson objectives with the pupils, gaining their interest from the start. They were keen to use the attractive large dice to make up their own calculations. Very good provision for a pupil with a statement of special educational need enabled her to take a full part in the lesson, taking a turn to scribe on the board while also addressing targets in her individual education plan. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were taught by supply teachers. Here, tasks were sometimes too challenging and led to some restlessness. For example, during a lesson about halves and quarters, the teacher moved on too quickly for lower attaining pupils because she was not sufficiently familiar with what they already knew.

83. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good. All lessons were at least good and one was very good. Good use is made of pupils' errors or misconceptions in discussions. High expectations and very good use of assessment ensures that tasks are well matched to the needs of all pupils. As a result, pupils respond with enthusiasm, show very positive attitudes and are motivated to succeed. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, a pupil commented 'Its like being on television!' as he eagerly took his turn to place price cards in order on a line. In this lesson, a particularly successful strategy was used to motivate the pupils. Here, pupils learned to double numbers because the teacher showed the layers in an empty box of chocolates to introduce the concept of doubling. This was well matched to their interests and they went on to complete an investigation to price different numbers of chocolate boxes. This was a successful and interesting way of learning different strategies for calculations. For example, pupils shared their ideas about whether it was quicker to add up the cost of chocolates in one layer and then double the total to find the price of the box or to double each chocolate and then add the total. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 4 and Year 5, to find the range and mode of a set of data, the teacher shared the lesson objective, asking how pupils felt about what they were going to learn, encouraging those who were uncertain. This reassured pupils and motivated them to try. As a result of clear explanation, pupils learned to calculate the range and mode from a set of data by the end of the lesson when they shared what they had learned. Opportunities such as these raise self-esteem and give pupils a very good understanding of their own learning. A good lesson for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 was characterised by the effective use of questions, which were well matched to the needs of individuals and well planned tasks, which motivated boys. For example, data about football teams was used successfully to encourage pupils to express fractions as percentages. Good use of humour and questions such as 'Ifpays attention for 87 per cent of the lesson of 60 minutes, how many minutes does she attend for?' amused the pupils and motivated them to calculate the answer. The quality of teaching has improved in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection, where some lessons were unsatisfactory. The weaknesses identified then, for example, slow pace throughout the lesson, lack of challenge and insufficient teacher intervention have been well addressed. Other criticised aspects, such as inconsistent assessment procedures and recording of progress, have significantly improved.
84. Pupils use their numeracy skills appropriately across the curriculum. For example, they use their measuring skills in design and technology when making photoframes and pop up cards. They create tables and graphs of scientific results and measure their shadows. They create graphs from census data in history. Good emphasis is placed on developing numeracy skills incidentally around the school. For example, younger pupils count in fives while waiting for another class to join them for music and every opportunity is taken in physical education lessons to count pupils in teams.
85. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has a clear view of the areas for development in the subject. For example, she has already identified that the pace of mental starter activities could be improved. As a result of very good tracking and target setting, she has ensured that the school sets appropriate targets and that these are met. She has identified subtraction as the current focus for improvement from her monitoring of last year's National Curriculum tests. Thorough tracking identifies pupils who have not made sufficient progress and these pupils are offered extra support. Individual and group targets are on display in classrooms and pupils know their targets well and strive to meet them. This has a positive impact on the progress made, particularly by those with special educational needs.

SCIENCE

86. In the 2000 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was above average, while the percentage reaching higher levels was well above. The reason that pupils do better in science than in English and mathematics is due to the more practical nature of the subject and the high emphasis placed on investigative work by the science co-ordinator. In the statutory tests for eleven-year-olds, results were below average due to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The previous inspection report judged attainment to be above average. However, the trend in results at Key Stage 2 has gradually declined reflecting the growing numbers of special educational needs pupils being admitted into the upper age ranges. The relatively small year groups and the significant variation in the number of pupils with statements of special education need in each year group mean that too much emphasis should not be placed on this.
87. The findings of the inspection are that standards currently meet national expectations by the end of both key stages. Children enter the school with average standards in knowledge and understanding. They leave with about average standards in science. This suggests that their achievement is satisfactory. However, when consideration is given to the increasing numbers of special educational needs pupils, then teaching has been good in order to maintain these standards and pupils are achieving well. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils learn about some physical changes associated with growing up both in humans and plants. By the end of the key stage, the pupils have a good understanding of the effects of friction. They undertake investigations associated with pulling and pushing and can verbally predict what will happen when you alter the gradient of a slope for a toy car. They are also beginning to understand the meaning of 'fair testing' in an investigation. By Year 5, most pupils can describe photosynthesis and carry out investigations on plants to test the effects of light. For example, they are aware that the green colouring in a leaf is necessary for food production and can predict what will happen if the leaf is deprived of light. Most pupils are clear about the necessity for fair testing in their investigation. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have a good understanding of a wide range of scientific phenomena. For instance, higher attaining pupils can carry out an environmental investigation and research and record their findings independently. Lower attaining pupils can identify various habitats and the associated creatures and plants. They can then construct simple food chains and record their answers in their books by way of pictures and words.
88. Pupils' enjoy science and their attitudes in lessons are frequently very good, which represents an improvement since the last inspection. From the earliest years of Key Stage 1, pupils are very interested in the topics they study and are often excited by the tasks they are presented with. Key Stage 2 pupils are very attentive during preliminary discussions. They are keen to share their ideas with the rest of their class, but still prepared to listen carefully to the views of others. Behaviour in science lessons throughout the school is mostly very good and is never less than satisfactory. Pupils particularly enjoy practical, investigative activities.
89. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 2. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement at Key Stage 1, although the quality of teaching was satisfactory in the lesson seen. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where some teaching was judged to be poor. Weaknesses in pace and provision for higher attaining pupils have been well addressed. Teachers' clear planning ensures a good focus to lessons and is another area where standards have improved. Objectives are always made clear to the pupils at the beginning of a lesson, so that they know exactly what they are hoping to achieve. Discussions are open-ended and challenging, and a good range of different kinds of activities within a lesson maintains pupils' interest. Discipline is positive but firm and has very effective outcomes in terms of pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships. In some lessons, however, the teacher plays too dominant a role and this detracts from pupils' capacity to exercise control over their own learning and slows down the progress they make in developing investigative skills. There is a conscious effort by all teachers to link scientific knowledge to appropriate vocabulary.
90. Schemes of work are in line with recent national initiatives and the school's overall provision for the subject is good. Assessment is very good, well established and is firmly linked to future planning and the needs of the pupils. The knowledgeable and hard working co-ordinator has a very good working knowledge of the subject across the school. She has identified appropriate areas for development that should raise standards. Limited use is made of information and

communication technology to support learning in science, especially in developing research skills.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Judgements are based on the three lessons seen during the inspection, two in art and design and one in design and technology, scrutiny of planning and displays and discussions with the co-ordinators. This indicates that the majority of pupils reach the expected standards for their ages in both subjects by the end of both key stages. They are achieving appropriately. The school has maintained the standards identified in the previous inspection in both subjects.
92. Displays throughout the school show that pupils develop an appropriate range of skills in both subjects. Pupils in Year 1 show good attention to detail, accurately representing hair and eyebrows in their pencil self portraits. They experiment with paint when depicting favourite illustrations from books that they have read. By Year 2, they show improvement in their observational skills when they use pastels to represent plants and paint pictures of Victorian children based on photographs. Attractive clay fruit baskets of good quality show the development of three-dimensional skills. Pupils design and make shops from recyclable materials and evaluate their results. They learn the skills of cutting, sticking and joining when constructing paper windmills. From their early experiments in drawing and painting, pupils progress to using watercolours effectively in Year 3 and Year 4 to illustrate places in the village, showing good attention to tone. They develop an understanding of mechanisms by designing and making 'pop up' books and use their measuring skills effectively to make photo frames including hinges. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 experiment with pattern and the way in which combinations of techniques can produce different effects. For example, that show that the impression of movement can be created by overlapping images or blurring the outline. Observational drawings of the village then and now show the development of skills. Good attention is given to the development of evaluation skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils examine and evaluate a range of money containers before designing and making their own from a range of materials. They evaluate and modify their designs, resulting in purses of good quality. The school uses the work of well known artists appropriately to develop pupils' skills and to encourage different styles in their work. Examples seen during the inspection include paintings based on the work of Van Gogh, Monet and Georgia O'Keefe.
93. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on the quality of teaching because it was not possible to see many lessons during the inspection. In the art and design lesson seen for pupils in Year 1, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Here, pupils worked quietly and sensibly, creating patterns on letter shapes before cutting them out to make a banner. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, effective use of resources such as a pliable model figure and photocopied images enabled pupils to design posters to support the 'Belt up in the back' campaign, showing a real sense of movement. This lesson also contributed positively to the development of speaking and listening skills as pupils confidently shared their knowledge about seatbelts. In the one lesson seen in design and technology for pupils in Year 2, the quality of teaching was good. The good ratio of adults to pupils ensured that pupils made good gains in learning different methods of joining materials because of ample opportunities to experiment. Good relationships contributed positively to the progress made.
94. The co-ordinators have a good knowledge and enthusiasm for the subjects and have a clear view for improvement. Planning is currently being revised in accordance with national guidance to ensure that pupils develop their skills systematically. There has been good improvement in addressing the weaknesses identified in both subjects in the previous inspection. In design and technology, there has been good improvement in provision for planning and evaluation and the range of materials available has been extended. In art and design, pupils have better opportunities to select their own resources and the use of sketchbooks now provides a good record of progress.

GEOGRAPHY

95. Only one geography lesson was seen during the inspection and, therefore, no judgements are made about the quality of teaching in the subject. Analysis of previous work, inspection of

planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that a full geography curriculum is provided and that standards are broadly as expected at the end of both key stages. Pupils are achieving appropriately. This judgement is similar to that of the last inspection.

96. Young Key Stage 1 pupils can draw their route to school in simple map form. By Year 2, pupils are able to make a map of Chinnor and describe key human and physical features. By Year 4, pupils have developed their understanding of Chinnor and go on trips to research local landmarks and occupations. They link this with historical facts, making comparisons with Victorian times. In one outstanding lesson pupils went on a visit to the centre of town where they researched differences in buildings using old pictures and maps. They took photographs on a digital camera for use back in class. They were able to discuss their findings, identify differences and give sensible, mature answers in response to the teacher's searching questions. The trip was extremely well planned with outstanding contributions from all the adults involved. As a result, pupils made excellent gains in learning about how the village has changed over time. Year 6 pupils can link their understanding of their own country with differences and similarities in Greece. They have an understanding of different world climates. They locate and label continents, oceans and countries on a map of the world. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand scale in mapping and successfully record aspects such as temperatures on graphs. There is more scope for pupils to develop their writing skills in the subject.
97. Assessment procedures are being used successfully to record progress and are firmly linked to the topic-based scheme of work. The current co-ordinator has a clear view of the subject's strengths and areas for future development. The scheme of work is supplemented by a wide range of trips to local areas of geographical interest. The annual residential trip for Year 6 to Dartmoor also makes a considerable contribution to the standards attained.

HISTORY

98. During the inspection week it was not possible to observe any history lessons, so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. Other judgements are reached from talking to pupils and teachers, from scrutiny of pupils' work and from looking at documents and teachers' planning.
99. Standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained, and improvement in the subject since then has been satisfactory. At the end of both key stages, attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving as they should. Pupils in Year 2 talk knowledgeably about the family trees they have produced, going back to their great-grandparents, and show in discussion good recall of earlier learning about the causes of the Gunpowder plot and the fate of Guy Fawkes. They identify different ways in which the past is represented, and recognise that their own lives are different from people in the past. They use appropriate historical vocabulary, such as 'long ago'. Year 1 pupils look at toys from past and present and compare their own favourite toys with those of their parents and grandparents. They can correctly sequence events from their own lives.
100. Key Stage 2 pupils in their study of Ancient Greece have covered a wide range of aspects from pottery and the Olympic games to empathic writing as King Xerxes. They have enjoyed a Greek day and completed the topic with a visit to the Ashmolean museum. Pupils spoken to showed good understanding of the origins of the Marathon, the terms BC and AD, and were aware that the Greeks came before Christ and before the Romans. In another topic these pupils have made a detailed study of local history in Chinnor, developing their skills of historical interpretation using first hand documentary evidence – the Chinnor census from 1851- to compare Chinnor with Liverpool in 1871. They retrieve information on the period, posing and answering their own questions, for example the name of the rector of the time and the role of servants. All those spoken to say that they enjoy history.
101. The subject is currently being well led by the headteacher, who is well qualified for the post. Arrangements to improve assessment and monitoring of the subject are currently being reviewed. A four yearly cycle of topics is carefully planned to ensure that pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically, particularly where pupils of two different age groups are in the same class. Planning is based on national guidance and assessment procedures are good. The

subject is well supported through a generous programme of visits and visitors. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils have a Victorian day planned in the near future, with a visit from 'History Off The Page'. Key Stage 2 pupils visit Holdenby Hall, Hampton Court and the Ashmolean Museum and have enjoyed an Ancient Greeks day with suitable use of costume and activities. Where appropriate, festivals are celebrated, such as the whole school being involved in May Day celebrations. Pupils show a good understanding of primary and secondary sources, and displayed timelines around the school help to develop a good sense of chronology. Other displays of good quality support the pupils' learning, though there is little evidence of pupils' own writing. Topic boxes contain appropriate resources, but there is a need for further artefacts to support the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the national expectation by the end of both key stages. Pupils achieve as well as they should and this is similar to the previous inspection.
103. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use the mouse and keyboard with increasing confidence and accuracy, for example, in producing graphs and in using 'Clip Art' to illustrate their work. They understand that they can control some devices and can give instructions for controlling the movement of another pupil. They have also learned how to program the 'Roamer' to move forwards and backwards. In Year 4 they can word-process their work, choose and import selected pictures, and resize the images to fit. Older pupils access the Internet and CD-ROM for information but these skills are underdeveloped. They can search a database, select text and pictures, re-size screen images, save work to disc and print out the finished work. Although pupils use spreadsheets to collect and display data, this aspect of the subject is underdeveloped and standards are not as high as in the other aspects. Little work is displayed or was made available for scrutiny during the inspection.
104. Pupils show positive attitudes to the subject and are proud of their achievements. They are keen to demonstrate their skills. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 confidently demonstrated their skills in selecting pictures and then copying them into their writing. Pupils in Year 6 showed that they could access a database then use the information to illustrate food chains for a science investigation.
105. The school uses information and communication technology effectively to support other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils use word processing skills in literacy to write poems, captions and instructions, using a range of functions to enhance their work. In Year 2 they use the vocabulary of producing a set of instructions to improve their speaking and listening. By Year 4, skills have developed further and pupils use photographs taken themselves using a digital camera to enhance their understanding of geography and history topics. By Year 6, pupils use a wide range of word processing features when they write accounts of their residential visit, including photographs taken with the digital camera. Some older pupils use their research skills effectively to search the Internet and CD Roms for information about plants. Drawing programs are used throughout the school to support artwork, but this is another underdeveloped area.
106. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching at either key stage because few lessons were observed during the inspection. However, in the very good lesson seen in Year 1 pupils used the 'Roamer', with help, with increasing independence and with enjoyment. They made very good gains in their learning because the teacher was highly imaginative in her introduction, using the computer as a puppet that captured the interest of all pupils. This amused the pupils and encouraged them to persevere.
107. Assessment procedures are very good with regular checks on progress. Work is marked and moderated across year groups, and the recent introduction of annotation sheets has added significantly to effectiveness of assessment procedures. The co-ordinator, who was absent during the inspection, has produced a comprehensive and informative file, which indicates that areas for development are well conceived. The introduction of new computers across the school is having a favourable impact on standards although they are not all fully functional. The

introduction of these new machines, combined with additional books in the library, means that resources are better than reported in the previous inspection. Training has been available for teachers to improve skills. Learning support assistants have also been trained, with some giving up their spare time to do so, and this is also beginning to contribute to the rising standards.

MUSIC

108. The previous inspection reported that 'music could become a strength of the school'. This is now confirmed. At the end of both key stages, standards in music are above average. Pupils are achieving well, maintaining above average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.
109. In Key Stage 1, pupils in a Year 2 class singing lesson sing with enthusiasm and clarity, in unison and in the round. They are able to hold their particular line of the song, and appropriately sustain notes to the end of the line, showing understanding of breathing and tempo and singing with a sense of the shape of the melody, maintaining the beat. They are particularly adept in singing 'action songs' such as 'When father painted the parlour' and the 'Frog's song'. They quickly learn both words and music to a new song for their forthcoming performance of 'The Gingerbread Man'. In a whole key stage practice pupils correctly identified the composer's directions for a new song to be sung 'tenderly', commenting that it was 'sad, lonely, peaceful, calm and sleepy'.
110. During a Key Stage 2 practice, a group of pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 performed their own composition, using drums, tambourines, shakers, xylophones and cymbals to create an atmosphere appropriate for their sinister Dracula theme. They played instruments with control and rhythmic accuracy, improving their performance with a crashing finale. Older pupils used a range of pitched and unpitched instruments effectively, learning new note annotation and correctly identifying different chime-bars. All pupils quickly learned the words and music of a new song, 'Dracula's Dead!', maintaining their own part against those of others, and singing with good diction, pitch, phrasing and expression. Another song, 'The Ghost Song', was sung very expressively, evocatively capturing the low, ghostly quality of the music.
111. No teacher was observed teaching their own class, so no judgement can be made overall about teaching, but in the two large group lessons observed, the teaching was of a high quality; good in Key Stage 2, and very good in Key Stage 1. The school makes very good use of the musical expertise of its staff and other adults, for example an ex-parent. It is fortunate to have so many adults able to play the piano and to support the subject so effectively. The teachers seen had high expectations of pupils' conduct and kept challenging them to improve their performance. They were very confident with the subject, and showed good expertise of their own in leading the singing, conducting and accompanying pupils on the piano. Their own obvious enthusiasm for the subject was carried to the pupils who showed very good attitudes towards their work, and real enjoyment in their singing and performing. As a result, the learning observed in these lessons, and the level of achievement, was good.
112. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who sets high standards for herself and colleagues. There are good arrangements for monitoring the subject, and she has identified a need to improve arrangements for assessing singing. Music is very well used at the beginning and end of assemblies to play pupils in and out, and is always identified. Other good use of music is made by some teachers during registration, as background for some lessons, for example Bach's 'Air on a G string' during silent reading, and in creating atmosphere appropriate for circle time, such as Handel's Pastoral Symphony when discussing Peace; or simply for settling pupils quietly on return from playtime. Such practice familiarises pupils with the names and works of the great composers. However, the use of this very good practice is not consistent across the school. Through the county music service, an increasing number of pupils are enabled to learn instruments such as trumpet, cornet, trombone and guitar. They make good progress with their tutors, but too little use is made of their expertise and extra knowledge within class lessons, and too few opportunities are offered to them to play publicly, for example, in assemblies. The school produces many concerts and musical plays for parents, throughout the year, with pupils arranging accompaniments and sound effects. Pupils take part in local festivals regularly, such as the 'Rock the Baroque' performance at the Thame Festival. Such provision is a strength of

the school and contributes very positively to the raising of standards and musical awareness. Resources for the subject are good in both quantity and quality, but the school has identified a need, and set aside funds, to purchase further instruments from other countries and cultures, such as African rain-bells. Good cross-curricular links are planned to support each term's topic. Social development is encouraged through songs such as 'Your friends are my friends', and through groups working together on compositions. There is little evidence of music around the school to raise pupils' awareness of the subject further, and little support for pupils' learning through the use of information and communication technology.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. Only two lessons were seen during the course of the inspection, one in each key stage. It is therefore not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching. Evidence from these two lessons, from scrutiny of teachers' planning and from discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils, indicates that pupils reach the expected standards for their age at the end of both key stages and achieve appropriately. This judgement shows that standards are similar to the last inspection. Presently, there are particular strengths in the standards attained by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 in swimming, as almost all attain the end of key stage requirement to swim 25 metres well before they leave the school. Older pupils are working towards the 'Ten Steps' award in athletics, which they do with enthusiasm.
114. In the dance lesson seen for pupils in Year 2, pupils made very good gains in their movement skills. A sound plan to the lesson included the regular teaching and development of skills. Enthusiastic demonstrations by the teacher ensured that pupils learned how to move and express themselves effectively. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported by the classroom assistant, enabling them to play a full part in the lesson. Pupils show very good attitudes to the subject and willingly work in pairs when asked. They are well behaved and respond willingly to instructions, whilst at the same time having a good regard for safe practice.
115. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their athletics skills effectively, demonstrating good body control. In the lesson seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. The use of pupils' critical comments and the ability to coach small groups ensured that pupils developed their ability to sprint faster. All worked with enthusiasm and there was a high level of enjoyment. However, insufficient attention was paid to the 'warm up' and 'cool down' sessions resulting in a high level of movement too soon.
116. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Planning is based on a sound scheme of work, which enables pupils to develop their skills steadily and systematically as they move through the school. Monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped but has been identified as an area for improvement by the school. Pupils participate successfully in competitive sports with other schools, contributing positively to their social development. For example, pupils have recently competed in netball and football competitions, and join with other schools in the area sports. The school has recently had some considerable success in this.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

117. The previous inspection judged that religious education was not meeting statutory requirements; there was very little evidence of pupils' work; progress was unsatisfactory in two out of three lessons; the scheme of work was insufficiently implemented; and resources were very few. The school has since worked hard to address all of these issues successfully, and standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are now broadly in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, and appropriate for seven and eleven year old pupils. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, are achieving as they should. There has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.
118. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 identify artefacts of the Jewish religion, and are familiar with terms such as synagogue and scroll, and are aware of their functions. For example, 'a scroll is an old-fashioned way to have your paper, like the Egyptians – like a prayer book'. Their writing reveals good knowledge of festivals such as Eid, Easter and Harvest Festival. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils made good use of role play when relating the story of the good Samaritan and

identifying that stories can teach us values, such as friendship and care. They pose good questions when considering one another's part in the story such as 'Why did you cross over to the other side when you saw the man?' They identify values and lessons learned from the story – 'You can't always expect people to support you; respect your neighbours'. In their writing they compose a modern day story on the same theme; for example, two football fans from different teams. Key Stage 2 pupils, from their visits to local churches, can identify such features as a lectern, pulpit, and the Norman font, and know of their purpose. They understand the story of Mohammed, Ramadan and other festivals.

119. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning, but in the two lessons observed, one from the end of each key stage, teaching was good. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, manage pupils well and show high expectations of task and pupils' conduct. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Dramatic role-play in the lesson for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 was very effective in enabling pupils to empathise with the characters in the story.
120. The school follows the locally Agreed Syllabus, with some support from national guidance. Christianity is the main focus but Islam and Judaism are the two other religions studied. Pupils bring good attitudes to their lessons. Written work is well presented, and well marked. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject, through word-processing accounts in Year 6, and using a CD-Rom in Year 2 for visualising the interior of a mosque. Collective Worship supports the subject well, through celebrating festivals such as Christingle, Harvest Festival, Ramadan, and, during the inspection week, from discussions on friendship, learning about Jesus as a fisher of men. Due attention is paid to both attainment targets – learning about religions, and learning from religions. Since the previous inspection resources have been improved and are now satisfactory. Topic boxes are well equipped and clearly labelled. New artefacts have been purchased, though more are still needed. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard in introducing many improvements. Visits made by all classes to the local churches and to the Oxford synagogue, and visitors to the school of different faiths, enhance the quality of the pupils' learning. The subject has a low profile round the school. Only one display was observed, with no labelling to identify artefacts, and there was no evidence of pupils' written work on display.