

# INSPECTION REPORT

**MARSH BALDON C.E. (V.C.) PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Marsh Baldon, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123131

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Capel Davies

Reporting inspector: Mr R Fry  
21073

Dates of inspection: 21 – 22 May 2002

Inspection number: 230413

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

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## **Glossary**

Baseline assessment – tests for young children when they join the school or in their first year.

Booster classes – extra classes provided for Year 6 pupils, usually in English, mathematics and science, to help pupils to do better in the SATs tests.

Co-ordinator – teacher in charge of organising a subject, such as English or physical education.

Child – young child up to end of reception age.

Curriculum – everything the school teaches pupils in and out of class, such as English, science and health education, visits and visitors.

Early Learning Goals – Standards of work in the ‘Areas of learning’ listed below typical of children at the end of the reception year.

Foundation Stage – (young children up to the age of 5+) The curriculum includes the ‘Areas of Learning’ - language development, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative, physical and social development.

ICT – information and communication technology.

Key Stage 1 – pupils aged 6 to 7 years old.

Key Stage 2 – pupils aged 7 to 11 years old.

National averages – refer to National Curriculum test results and teachers’ assessments in English, mathematics and science where there are national comparisons with all schools and similar schools.

National expectations – most pupils are expected to reach Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects at the age of 7 years and Level 4 at the age of eleven.

National tests – sometimes known as SATs, tests for all pupils 7, 11 and 14 years old.

Pupil – term for a child in Years 1 to 6

SATs – national tests for pupils aged 7, 11 and 14

Scheme of work – courses of lessons in eg. English, for teachers to use when planning lessons. The school uses national guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to help them plan lessons for some subjects.

School development plan – set of plans that show how the school will improve over the coming year or longer, what its priorities for action are and how it will spend its money.

Tracking – word used to describe a method of recording individual pupils’ progress.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Green Marsh Baldon Oxford
Postcode:	OX44 9LJ
Telephone number:	01865 343249
Fax number:	01865 343249
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. A. Barne
Date of previous inspection:	1 December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Marsh Baldon C.E. Primary is a small school for boys and girls aged between four and eleven years. The school educates pupils from Marsh Baldon, the surrounding area and Oxford. It has 58 pupils on roll. The number of pupils who attend the school has increased steadily over the last four years. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average. Fourteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a broadly average proportion. Twenty five per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. Some pupils, for example, need extra help with reading and writing skills or have specific or moderate learning difficulties. A significant proportion of pupils (16 per cent) has either joined the school after the reception year or left before Year 6. Seven pupils have other ethnic backgrounds and English is their first language. One pupil has English as an additional language. The Church of England will inspect acts of collective worship and pupils' spiritual development later in the year and issue a separate report.

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

Marsh Baldon C.E. Primary is a very effective school. It makes very good provision for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' standards in Year 6 in 2001 were well above average and they achieved very well. The teaching is very good and the work that pupils are set is challenging. The leadership and management of the school are very good. All adults work very well together and seek to improve the standards of pupils' work. The school promotes the inclusion of pupils in all that it does very effectively. Although the cost of educating pupils is high, in the context of small schools Marsh Baldon provides good value for money. The school's motto is apt, 'Small school – big deal.'

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

- Pupils attained well above average standards in Year 6 in 2001 and they achieved very well.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good.
- The teaching and learning are very good. The curriculum has many strengths.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and moral and social development are very good.
- Parents strongly support the school.

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

- Teachers do not regularly set pupils individual targets that allow pupils to take further responsibility for their learning, such as to improve their writing standards.

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

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

The school was last inspected in December 1997. Three key issues were identified. Since then the school has made good improvements. There is a good match of tasks to pupils' individual needs. Investigative and problem solving activities are now a very good feature of the curriculum. The school has made progress in finding ways of helping pupils take greater responsibility for their work. Pupils have 'challenge books' and record many interesting pieces of work in them. The school has a comprehensive range of schemes of work, some based on national guidance and others on sources of the school's choice. Parents feel that they are well informed about what their children will learn each term and the comprehensive homework policy helps parents to support their children at home.

There are other improvements. The school is much better equipped for information and communication technology lessons. The teaching is better and many lessons observed were very good. High standards have been maintained in the last four years. The school knows more about patterns in pupils' results and it uses this information skilfully to adapt the curriculum.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Marsh Baldon Primary compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A*	A	A	A
mathematics	A	D	A	A
science	A	B	A	A*

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In the table above, pupils' performances in Year 6 have varied little, except in mathematics, in the last three years. Year groups are very small however, and it is common for results to fluctuate more in small schools. In National Curriculum tests in 2001, Year 6 pupils' standards of work in English, mathematics and science were well above average compared with all schools nationally. In science, results were in the top five percent in comparison with similar schools. Pupils reached the school's target for literacy and exceeded the target for mathematics. In 2000, results overall were above average and they were well above average in 1998 and 1999. Last year's results (summer 2001) were better than those in 2000. Pupils consistently attain high standards in English, mathematics and science. The results of the good teaching of basic skills from reception onwards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are evident in the school's results.

English results in Year 2 over the last four years have varied between well below average and well above average in comparison with all schools nationally. The capabilities of year groups vary from year to year. Another significant factor affecting results is that the proportion of pupils with special educational needs has risen steadily since the last inspection. At the end of Year 2 in 2001, pupils' National Curriculum test results were well above average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics in comparison with all and similar schools. There has been a steady improvement in standards over four years.

Pupils have achieved very well over the last four years by Year 6. Standards of work observed during the inspection were slightly above average in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve very well throughout the school and they attain the targets in their individual education plans. Year 2 pupils' standards of work observed met national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. They achieve well. Pupils made good progress in the lessons observed. In the reception class, children attain standards similar to those of children nationally and achieve well. Young children become more confident and continue to learn many important skills, such as how to settle to tasks and to read, write and answer questions clearly.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show a very keen interest in school life and enjoy going to school. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and each other during lessons. Pupils respond confidently in lessons. They enjoy the extra-curricular clubs.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons, at playtimes and at lunchtime. Pupils work well together on shared activities. Movement around the school is also very good and many pupils have a sense of personal responsibility.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The school's emphasis on developing pupils' moral awareness and social skills has been very successful. Pupils have responded very well to the opportunities that the school gives them to take responsibility for their work.

Attendance	Satisfactory.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teachers' close attention to young children's individual needs in the Reception and Year 1 class helps them make a good start to their education. Activities are varied, well planned and broken down into elements children can understand. Teachers take full account of children's emotional and social needs. They provide many opportunities for children to read, write and count in small groups. The working atmosphere is very good. Teachers in the Year 2 and 3 class continue the good start made in the Foundation Stage.

Teachers have a pleasant and demanding manner. The very good organisation and challenging work set in literacy and numeracy lessons have led to pupils' high standards. Across the school, English (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and mathematics (numeracy) are taught very effectively. Teachers and support staff reinforce ideas and repeat key points of lessons regularly so that pupils learn at a good pace. Teachers are clear about what it is that pupils will learn in each lesson and they assess pupils' understanding regularly. Work is well matched to the needs of small groups of pupils in each class and lessons challenge pupils. There is not a whole school approach to setting pupils' individual targets to increase their progress further.

There is a purposeful atmosphere in classrooms. Teachers and support staff question pupils well and use this method to encourage pupils to think about new ideas and to check understanding. Teachers have a wide spread of knowledge and skills that they use effectively to bring about learning. For example, older pupils have learned during work on probability that seven is the most common number when two dice are rolled. Teachers communicate very well when they share classes. Pupils' capacity to learn is extended effectively and the needs of all pupils are met in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs learn effectively because teachers and support staff meet their needs quickly. Teachers' use of ICT in lessons is developing as they become more confident.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school gives high priority to teaching English and mathematics. The curriculum is exceptionally varied. Practical and investigative work is a strength, for example, in art. The school has good links with partner schools. The Foundation Stage curriculum meets the needs of young children effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The provision is well managed. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, and in all lessons. Support staff help pupils effectively in lessons and in small group work. All pupils are very well integrated into all lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. All pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are successfully integrated into classes. Teachers carefully plan to meet pupils' language needs when English is not their first language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in everything that the school does. There are many clubs, teams and residential visits for pupils to join, which they enjoy. The social and moral tone of acts of collective worship is very strong. Cultural development is satisfactory and the school has good plans to improve its work in this area.



How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school cares very well for all pupils day to day. Information about pupils' progress is used effectively to guide teachers' work. Some health and safety documentation is not yet in place.
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## 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 good leadership and has clear reasons for all that the school does. Teachers with responsibilities are effective in their work. There is a strong sense of teamwork. The administration of the school is efficient.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The chair and many governors are effective 'critical friends' to the school. Many governors take an active role in helping to manage the school and they understand its strengths and much of what needs to be done. Some health and safety documentation needs to be completed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school development plan is used to check progress towards targets very well. The school uses the results of its checks on teaching and learning effectively to improve the quality of its work. The maintenance of pupils' standards is evidence of the school's success in this area.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has made good use of the money available to it and 'best value' is found for purchases. The school has been able to maintain a high number of support staff, to good effect. Financial control and monitoring is thorough. The large under-spend is be used to maintain the three classes for two more years.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Thirty two per cent of questionnaires (18) were returned and 14 parents attended the meeting

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children like going to school very much and make good progress with their work.</li> <li>Behaviour is good.</li> <li>The teaching is good.</li> <li>The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable when approaching the school with a question or problem.</li> <li>The school has high expectations of children and it helps them to mature and be responsible.</li> <li>The school is well managed and led.</li> <li>There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents feel that the school does not set the right amount of homework, particularly for Year 6.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' many positive views. The school has a very good partnership with parents. Inspectors found that the homework set or referred to by teachers during the inspection to be appropriate. Year 6 pupils have been having extra 'booster' classes this term to prepare pupils for national tests. Teachers have counted this provision as part of the homework timetable.

## OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

## WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

### **Pupils attained well above average standards in Year 6 in 2001 and they achieved very well.**

1. Over the last three years pupils have achieved very well by the time they leave the school in Year 6. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and the very good quality of teaching ensures that pupils make swift progress from the time they enter the school until they leave it. Many pupils with special educational needs have also made very good progress. All pupils have responded particularly well to the opportunities that the school gives them. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make and in the interest they have in lessons.
2. There are many reasons why pupils' very good achievement has occurred. The school makes good use of its funding. The headteacher and governors have provided a good ratio of adults to pupils and good quality resources for pupils to use. Pupils receive much help and support and so make better progress in lessons. Many books that pupils read are colourful and fun, so pupils like to read them and therefore make better progress. Teachers display pupils' work and important information clearly. There are several good displays of work, of which pupils are very proud. For example, Year 2 and 3 pupils have made bags in design and technology. Pupils have displayed their work proudly and given written examples of how they could make their bags better. Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils have written some exciting poetry about owls and described clearly how they fly and hunt.
3. A significant number of pupils either join the school after the Reception year or leave before the end of Year 6. In many schools, this amount of change can lead to lower standards because significant numbers of pupils have not had the benefit of a consistent education. However, Marsh Baldon manages pupils very well and this factor has little impact on pupils' standards and achievement by the end of Year 6. Teachers respond quickly to pupils who join the school and they soon achieve well. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has also increased in recent years. Teachers quickly assess their needs and pupils often make very good progress therefore.
4. The very good teaching that pupils receive up to the age of seven allows them to make the most of the curriculum provided in Years 4, 5 and 6. There is much emphasis on teaching pupils basic skills up to the age of seven, which has been successful. The results of the very good teaching and learning are seen later in pupils' results at age 11. However, last year (2001) pupils in Year 2 attained well above average standards in reading and above average standards in mathematics.
5. A further reason why pupils achieve very well is that teachers plan lessons that challenge all pupils. They provide interesting and well written information for pupils to use. Where teachers provide worksheets, they are also well written and informative. Pupils are always clear what they have to do and how long they have to do it. They receive praise when a job is well done. Consequently, pupils have a greater sense of pride in their work.
6. The school has identified areas of relative weakness over the last three years. Currently, for example, the school wishes to improve further pupils' standards of writing and their knowledge of information and communication technology. The target for improved writing includes, for example, that lessons should include more time for writing activities, pupils to be set writing exercises for homework, for teachers to set pupils writing targets and to make all writing activities purposeful.

7. Five years olds attain standards that are typical of children nationally and achieve well in the 'Areas of Learning' they study. The teaching in the reception class has had a positive effect on young children's standards of work. Most young children, for example, write legibly for their age. The Reception and Year 1 teacher demonstrates very clearly how well she understands young children's needs.
8. Standards of work seen in Year 2 during the inspection were broadly typical of pupils nationally. Average pupils write accurately with consistent sized letters. They can tell a story in a logical sequence. In mathematics, pupils demonstrate that they can measure in centimetres, add 72 to 24 and use letter and number co-ordinates to find places on a simple map.
9. In Year 6, pupils' writing is generally well punctuated and accurate. A higher attaining pupil wrote, 'If I was a piece of clothing I would be a pair of warm socks,' in response to a challenging writing exercise. Lower attainers use some punctuation and have made good progress over the year with their work. In mathematics, average pupils show that they can find the area of odd shapes and divide 17760 by 12 accurately. Lower attainers successfully multiply 44 by 8 and use tally graphs to record information.

**The leadership and management of the school are very good.**

10. Since the last inspection, the school has responded effectively to what needed to be done. The progress that has been made reflects the quality of the leadership in the school. There is a very good blend of informal and formal checks on the school's work. The school is successful because all teachers work together to improve what the school does. The chair of governors and staff outlined more reasons why the school is successful. They feel that the teaching is often exciting and the school provides a wide range of experiences through the curriculum. Very good relationships have developed between all members of the school. Staff feel they pull together in one direction, which is vital when classes share teachers. Older pupils care for younger ones and the 'team' organisation where individuals from classes work together at different times is an important influence on pupils' social development.
11. The headteacher is a very good leader and she has clear and high expectations of all staff. The headteacher successfully combines a very pleasant manner that encourages staff to do their best with a very well thought out philosophy of education. The school always has very clear reasons for what it does. The headteacher knows pupils well and takes a detailed interest in their standards of work. There is a strong emphasis on the day to day care for pupils. Every pupil is valued and parents confirm that there is a family atmosphere in the school. Teachers have steadily improved the quality of education and ensured that all pupils' needs are met each day. Parents strongly confirm that this is so.
12. The school's motto, 'Small school – Big deal' is true. For example, the school provides a very broad curriculum that contains all the subjects of the National Curriculum and much more. The school sets out to be a caring community where all adults work for the benefit of children. All staff feel that they have an important role to play and there is a whole school approach to change. Teachers, who are each responsible for several subjects, have developed their subjects and responsibilities well. Teachers are thorough in what they do and share expertise regularly. They attend courses and bring back information for all to use. Consequently, the very good management has led to pupils' achievement being a strength of the school.

13. The governing body provides very good leadership and support for the management of the school. Many governors visit the school regularly. The governing body makes a significant contribution to the school's development planning process. The chair of governors has a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and what it needs to do next. Governors identify the school's needs from first-hand experience, and take positive action following visits. For example, the chair of governors is well aware that the school needs to develop a programme to set individual targets for pupils. The headteacher and governors have supported a school organisation based on a generous pupil-adult ratio. They recognise that pupils need adult support to be successful in their work. Pupils have benefited from this decision. Some governors work in the school and others visit school regularly. There are points for development for the governing body to address, such as ensuring that all health and safety records are kept up to date.
14. The accommodation has been skilfully developed to make best use of space. For example, pupils have games equipment that they can use during breaktimes. There are games painted on the playground surface and there is a small adventure playground for pupils to use. Lunchtime activities for all pupils are very well organised and pupils play well together. The daily administration of all aspects of the school is efficient.
15. The school development plan gives the reader a very clear indication of what the priorities for the school are. For example, the school has identified the need to improve the curriculum further for several subjects and develop the provision for the youngest children. The school's priorities are at the forefront of thinking. The headteacher is very well focused on the priorities and ensures the staff is too.
16. The school's evaluation of its performance is very good. The school checks its progress rigorously using the school development plan and associated documents. Targets in the school development plan are reviewed regularly and they are very useful tools for judging the school's progress over the year. The school development plan contains the main areas that the school needs to address to make further progress. The document indicates that the school knows its strengths and areas for development very well. The school correctly maintains a surplus of money that will be used to maintain three classes over the next two years. The school employs a bursar to manage its finances and this arrangement is efficient and effective.
17. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed effectively. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs early in their school careers. Early identification of pupils with needs has allowed the school to boost their performances considerably, in many cases up to the standards that are expected nationally by the time pupils are seven and eleven years old. Pupils make good progress.

**The teaching and learning are very good. The curriculum has many strengths.**

18. Very good teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to school are the main reasons for pupils' standards of work and their individual levels of achievement. Many examples of good and very good teaching were observed during the two days of the inspection. Teachers question pupils well and use this method to revise pupils' knowledge from previous lessons. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Pupils want to

learn because they feel valued and included in all lessons. Teachers prepare for lessons very well. All the things that pupils need are ready for them to use each lesson.

19. There is a purposeful atmosphere in classrooms. Teachers reinforce ideas effectively and repeat key points of lessons regularly, so that pupils learn at a good pace. All teachers check that the intended learning has happened. Work is well matched to the needs of pupils in each class because the results of assessments are used to plan the next week's group and class activities. Teachers provide the highest attaining pupils with more difficult work.
20. Different teachers teach pupils in each class during the week. This arrangement is wholly successful. Teachers plan very carefully together to ensure that there is no unnecessary overlap or mismatch in the curriculum provided for all pupils and young children. Parents confirm how satisfied they are with this aspect of the teaching.
21. All pupils with special educational needs are included in all that the school does and staff help to meet their needs effectively. Support staff are effective in this area of their work. One support member of staff was observed working with a group of the youngest children. She kept the group on task because she was very well prepared for the lesson and she constantly reminded pupils about what needed to be done. She helped pupils at certain important stages of their work with counting, but never gave too much away so that pupils ceased to be challenged by their work.
22. Many examples were observed of teachers' expertise and knowledge of how young children and older pupils learn. The teacher in the Reception and Year 1 class skilfully ensures that each child receives the personal attention that they need. There is a happy and constructive atmosphere in the Reception and Year 1 class. Children make a very good start to their education. Activities are varied and well planned and the teacher is particularly skilful in the way she questions children and draws them into ways of thinking more deeply about ideas.
23. In a religious education lesson in the Reception and Year 1 class, the teacher skilfully involved pupils in discussing Noah's choice, that is, to obey God or not. The teacher encouraged pupils to act out the story and all were quickly involved. The teacher spoke quietly and warmly and created a very constructive atmosphere. Pupils learned more about the meaning of the story, for example, about why the earth was flooded. There were many opportunities for pupils to speak clearly and to organise their ideas before they spoke. One pupil said, speaking to Noah as if God, 'I'm going to send a flood, you had better build an ark. Everyone has been selfish.' Many pupils showed that they had remembered the story well.
24. Teachers in Years 2 and 3 continue the very good start made in the Reception and Year 1 class. In a science lesson, pupils learned how to make a switch for an electric circuit and learned why it worked. They consolidated what they knew about current moving from a battery, through wires and other objects and back into the battery. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and it was very well prepared by the teacher. Pupils had plenty of opportunities to try out their ideas with good quality bulbs, wires and batteries. The standard of pupils' work matched standards expected nationally for pupils of this age. During the group work activities, the teacher moved between groups very well so that a brisk pace was maintained.
25. English (literacy) and mathematics (numeracy) are taught effectively. The challenging work set in literacy and numeracy lessons has led to pupils' achievement. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 wrote letters to relatives to enquire about what different places are like.

Pupils learned to pose questions and to improve the way they recorded the content of their letters, by using paragraphs. There was a very good working atmosphere. All pupils asked some interesting questions to ask relatives in different parts of England, Australia and Jamaica. They wrote in sentences, using capital letters and full stops. The teacher spent much of her time stimulating pupils' thinking, giving them just enough information so that they could all write a good letter.

26. One teacher is a numeracy consultant. The oldest pupils, in Years 4, 5 and 6, benefit from this high level of expertise. The teacher introduced the idea of probability to pupils and they learned certain key words. 'Impossible' means there is no chance of something happening. Pupils learned other words, such as 'possible,' and 'probable' to describe the chances of things happening in their probability investigations. The lesson was challenging because pupils had to carry out short investigations and then explain what had happened.
27. In another lesson for the oldest pupils, pupils developed their understanding of stories with meanings. The story of Anansi was very well read by the teacher and pupils discussed the ideas of selfishness and greed that feature in the story. They learned, for example, that a dilemma is a difficult choice. In their own stories, pupils learned to set the scene for their story and build tension by using adjectives to create moods and challenges. Younger pupils in the class carried out a similar activity but were given more ideas by the teacher to help them make a start.
28. The school offers a very good curriculum. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught consistently across the school. High priority is given to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The quality of the curriculum is a major positive influence on the standards that pupils attain. Parents report that their children feel that the school makes learning enjoyable and this quality improves their attitudes to school.
29. The curriculum in the Reception and Year 1 class gives young children and pupils a very good start to their education. Each day, the teacher and support staff member present a wide range of activities based on the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The curriculum helps develop children's motivation to learn. Pupils learn to read and write, make up their own stories and to spell. The curriculum introduces children to counting, addition, subtraction and patterns in numbers. Children use their senses to investigate the world around them and to move with greater control and co-ordination.
30. The curriculum is carefully planned so that activities get harder as pupils get older. For example, young children take part in role-play and begin to learn the alphabet. In Years 2 and 3, pupils write letters of enquiry to a relative and do it largely independently. In Year 6, they write poems and read their work aloud to the class.
31. Older pupils' standards in literacy and numeracy benefit from work done in other subjects. For example, teachers develop pupils' understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar in many lessons, such as history and geography. Pupils learn to write clearly, to read for information and to express their ideas clearly when speaking. Pupils use skills they have gained in numeracy lessons in science and design and technology. They measure using, for example centimetres and time, to help them complete their work.
32. Two art lessons were observed, and in both lessons there was a strong emphasis on three-dimensional work. Pupils standards are above those found nationally. The oldest pupils made 'natural' sculptures from twigs, flowers, stones and wood. They learnt to adapt their work after evaluating it by listening to the views of others. Similarly in Years 2

and 3, pupils made clay sculptures in the style of Hepworth and Moore. The teacher provided many interesting and stimulating photographs of the artists' work and pupils developed some of the themes for themselves.

33. Pupils have opportunities to use computers to help them with their work. Teachers make increasing use of information and communication technology (ICT) and of national guidance to help them plan lessons. A parent, who is expert in ICT, works regularly with the oldest pupils to create a school web-site. It is a valuable project. Pupils have learned to write relevant text, incorporate different pictures of the school site and to piece together a base map of the school that acts as a springboard into other pages on the site. Pupils have learnt much and although they do not understand all technical aspects of web site creation, they have gained much from this work.
34. There is a very wide range of visits, visitors and after school clubs. The school provides pupils with opportunities to ring hand bells, take part in archery, play football and rugby, sing in the choir, play chess and to dance around the May Pole. The school provided a list of the breadth of the curriculum to support the subjects normally studied. Thirty items were included. Pupils take part in a variety of educational visits, for example, to Sulgrave Manor, an Elizabethan house. The school nurse visits regularly to support the health education programme. There are residential trips for the whole school to two different centres. Teachers display stimulating pictures, information and pupils' work on the walls of classrooms. The youngest children have written about 'special grandmothers' and put captions to their pictures. In Years 2 and 3, pupils have made bar and pie graphs about the popularity of different activities that pupils do. In the oldest pupils' class, there is an Ordnance Survey map of where Marsh Baldon is and a sewn history of the village dating back to 1771.

**Pupils' attitudes to school and moral and social development are very good.**

35. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. Pupils' positive responses enhance their progress and the standards they attain because pupils make the most of what they are offered. They show a strong interest in school life and most have a thirst for knowledge. Pupils often respond very well to the teaching. The staff provides a rich curriculum and pupils have many opportunities to respond positively to school. Parents have considerable confidence in the school and their trust is communicated to their children.
36. Children's positive attitudes begin when they are very young because adults reinforce social and moral behaviour very strongly. There are many examples of older pupils' and young children's very good responses to school. By the age of five, young children have learned to tidy things away that they have used, because for example, things are easier to find next time. In the Reception and Year 1 class pupils designed and made three-dimensional minibeasts. Several pupils enjoyed the activity so much they did not want to stop. All pupils stayed on task very well and the results of their work pleased them. Young children responded very well to the class system that the teacher uses to gain their attention.
37. Most pupils confidently express their views and are also willing to listen to other points of view. Pupils play a variety of games co-operatively and sensibly in the playground. At lunch times, pupils see how fair the rotation of different spaces is, so that they all get a chance to play different types of games outdoors. Pupils have opportunities to collect and deliver things to classes, which they enjoy. Pupils carry out these activities reliably.

38. Pupils showed strong powers of concentration in many lessons. Pupils were attentive and concentrated very well on the teaching, because the teaching was interesting and teachers' expectations of pupils' attitudes were high. In the Year 2 and 3 class, pupils were well behaved and keen to carry out the investigations given to them in a numeracy lesson. They shared equipment very well and learning was very good. Pupils knew when to be quiet and how to answer questions.
39. The school encourages pupils to raise funds and care for people less fortunate than themselves. During an act of collective worship, pupils learned about Christian Aid. Pupils entered the assembly area quietly to the accompaniment of music. The vicar explained what Christian Aid does and it was soon obvious that some pupils were already collecting money for the charity from their neighbours near home. The vicar explained how money is given to people to help them make food for themselves. Pupils learned that small amounts of money given in England have much greater value in countries such as Ghana. They also learned that it is common for one teacher to teach 100 pupils in some countries. These facts caused pupils to reflect on serious world issues, such as wealth and poverty.
40. The school's provision for pupils' moral and social development has had a very positive effect on the way pupils approach their work and in the degree of effort they make in all aspects of school life. The school's emphasis on developing pupils' social skills has been successful because the school takes the time to educate pupils about doing the right things. Pupils consequently behave well in lessons. Their progress in lessons is enhanced because they make friends easily and most co-operate well. There is an expectation that pupils will behave responsibly. The oldest pupils work independently for significant periods and enjoy being treated as capable young people. Pupils are ready to take on the new challenge of secondary education at the end of Year 6.
41. Parents feel that the school makes a very good job of teaching their children right from wrong. Children know the school rules and parents are pleased that good manners are taught well as part of the daily life of the school. Teachers arrange residential activities for all pupils. In this way, the school is successful in improving pupils' confidence, social and educational capabilities through environmental studies, outdoor pursuits and self-care opportunities.

### **Parents strongly support the school.**

42. The school has developed a close and very good partnership with parents. The quality of the links with parents is another feature of the very good leadership and management of the school. Links between parents and the school have continued to improve since the last inspection.
43. At the parents' meeting, parents showed how very positively they feel about the school. For example, all felt that the school is well managed and that the teaching is good. Eighteen parents returned the questionnaires. One hundred per cent of parents reported that their children like school. Parents feel the school's expectations of their children are realistically high. All parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that they are kept well informed about their children's education and that the school works closely with them. Several parents at the meeting felt there was not enough homework for the oldest pupils. Inspectors found that the homework set or referred to by teachers in lessons was



appropriate. Year 6 pupils have been having extra 'booster' classes this term to prepare them for national tests. Teachers have counted this provision and other activities as part of the homework timetable.

44. One reason why pupils have very good attitudes to schooling is that teachers make lessons interesting and show much interest in pupils' wellbeing. Parents are aware of the good quality of relationships and support the school; therefore, pupils have their positive attitudes reinforced. Parents have many good reasons why they should support the school. Children receive a curriculum that develops them in many directions and are happy at school. Some parents and friends of the school help with the extra-curricular activities. For example, some after school clubs happen because volunteers give their time and run, for example, the choir and chess clubs. One parent has helped the oldest pupils develop their own school web-site. It is a very exciting project.
45. At the meeting for parents, they commented, for example, that the school has continued to promote high standards in all that it does. Most parents feel their children are prepared well for the next school. They commented that the school rewards pupils for any aspect of their work or social behaviour, such as kindness to others and keeping the site tidy.
46. Parents feel that teachers care about their concerns and follow up their questions or concerns well. They feel there is no barrier between parents and school. Crucially, parents feel that the school has continued its good progress under the leadership of the present headteacher. Parents were keen to report that their children found aspects of science very interesting. They feel their children make good progress with reading, writing and number. Several parents commented that their children, who have special educational needs, have these needs met effectively. They approve of the educational visits offered such as to Sulgrave Manor. Pupils can have a go at anything and parents feel that there is always a friendly and supportive atmosphere in classrooms amongst adults. Parents have raised a considerable amount of money to help the school buy new books and equipment for use in lessons. The school's relationship with parents has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and on the atmosphere in school. Pupils' standards of work benefit because there is a sense of working together towards a common goal.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**Teachers do not regularly set pupils individual targets that allow them to take further responsibility for their learning.**

47. This year's school development plan emphasises the need to develop pupils' self-esteem and behaviour. The school has already been successful with this objective because pupils are well behaved and reliable. Teachers know their pupils very well and they discuss issues in class. Each pupil has a sense of belonging and of importance to the school.
48. Teachers plan lessons effectively to meet the needs of groups in their classes. There are times, however when pupils would benefit from working on a small number of personal targets to improve, for example, aspects of their writing and further develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning. The school is dedicated to developing every pupils' talents and the next step is to set individual targets that reflect each pupils' specific needs within the context of the lessons planned. For example, one pupil might need to check their work carefully for full stops and capital letters. Another pupil might need to work on being ready to start lessons on time.

49. Teachers in Years 4, 5 and 6 class have used individual targets at times this year. The system adopted and the targets chosen are highly appropriate. This approach is not common throughout the school and pupils do not have regular times in lessons to work on their own specific targets. The school has a good system for recording homework. The 'challenge books' contain many interesting homework activities. It would be appropriate for pupils to continue working on their individual targets as part of the homework routine.

### WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. The governors and headteacher need to ensure that,

- teachers set pupils individual short term targets to attain that address pupils' particular needs,

by assessing pupils' needs and agreeing with pupils what they need to do and how long they have to reach their targets. Targets might be, for example, to improve their writing style, to learn some multiplication tables or to take care of an aspect of the school environment.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	13
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	7	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0	46	54	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents eight percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	58
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	5	7	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	6	4	5
	Total	10	8	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (82)	67 (91)	75 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
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Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	8	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (82)	67 (73)	67 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	0	3	3

*Where a year group has less than 10 pupils, their results are not reported*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	45
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)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	19

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	68

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

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

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	167069
Total expenditure	150527
Balance brought forward from previous year	22786
Balance carried forward to next year	39328
Expenditure per pupil	2688

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	57
Number of questionnaires returned	18

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ neither
My child likes school.	56	44	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	30	6	0	10
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	26	0	0	15
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	32	6	0	12
The teaching is good.*					
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	56	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	28	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.*					
The school works closely with parents.	50	50	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.*					
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	44	0	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	31	0	0	0

\* An older version of the questionnaire for parents was sent out, and the three questions marked with an \* were not included. However, 14 parents at the meeting confirmed that they have great confidence in the teaching, that the school is well led and managed and that the school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best.

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents strongly supported the school at the meeting for parents. One issue arose at the meeting. Several parents were not content with the homework that the school sets children in Year 6.