

INSPECTION REPORT

VALLEY ROAD SCHOOL

Henley-on-Thames

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123041

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Wilson

Reporting inspector: Mr Chris Rhodes
16408

Dates of inspection: 27 – 30 January 2003

Inspection number: 248417

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Valley Road
Henley-on-Thames

Postcode: RG9 1RR

Telephone number: 01491 573784

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Tim Haigh

Date of previous inspection: 2 February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16408	Chris Rhodes	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
12277	Kingsley Halden	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19856	Cathy Lister	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage	How well is the school led and managed?
32088	Margaret Carter	Team inspector	English Physical education Special educational needs	
18652	Bob Bissell	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Valley Road Primary School is in Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire. There are 189 pupils aged between three and 11 on roll, which is smaller than most primary schools. Many more parents would like to send their children to the school than places permit. The pupils come from a wide variety of background and most live within walking distance of the school. A below average percentage is entitled to free meals. Approximately one in every ten pupils has special educational needs, usually moderate learning difficulties. This is below the national average. Two pupils, whose educational needs are severe, complex or persistent, are given the protection of a statement of special educational needs. The large majority of pupils are of white British origin. Other pupils come from a range of different European or more distant countries. Several use English as an additional language, but none at an early stage. Attainment on entry is in line with expected levels.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Valley Road is a very good school. Standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science in Year 2, and well above average in Year 6, the ends of the two key stages in primary education. The quality of teaching, and of leadership and management, are very good. All pupils have the same opportunities to learn and benefit from a rich curriculum. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and senior staff. The governing body is highly effective.
- Standards of teaching are well above average, and sometimes excellent. Pupils make very good progress as a result.
- Pupils behave very well. They like school and are very keen to learn.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average in Year 6.
- The curriculum is exciting and challenging, and includes all pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for those with particular gifts or talents, is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology are in line with nationally expected levels but should be higher, as already identified by the school in its development plan.

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 February 1998. The rate of improvement has been very good. Standards in English and mathematics have risen in Year 2 and have been maintained at well above average levels in Year 6. Standards in music and art and design have improved, but in information and communication technology are not quite as high as

previously reported. The overall quality of teaching is higher, especially in Years 3-6. High standards of behaviour, and leadership and management have been maintained. Improvement against the key issues identified for specific action in the previous report has been very good overall. Standards have risen as a result of teachers' continued professional development, and are set to continue in information and communication technology. Pupils are given clear targets for improvement, and the school now complies with statutory requirements for teacher appraisal and information for parents. The governing body has developed rigorous systems for monitoring the school's 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:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	A*	A	A*	A	In the highest five per cent A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A*	A	A*	A*	
science	A*	A	A*	A*	

Standards in national tests in Year 6 in 2002 were in the highest five per cent nationally. The English test results were well above average in comparison with schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, and in the highest five per cent for mathematics and science. The school exceeded its targets and has set them at a higher level for the 2003 tests. The results in 2002 in the Year 2 national tests reflected the higher number of pupils with special educational needs, one in four, which is considerably more than is usually found within a year group in the school. Standards were above average in reading and mathematics, and in line with national averages for writing. Results were close to those found in similar schools, except in writing where they were below average. Teachers estimated that standards in science were below average in that particular year.

Current standards in English, mathematics and science are above average in Year 2. They are well above average in Year 6, and have been for several years. Standards in art and design are well above expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in music and physical education are above national expectations in both classes. Standards in religious education are above those indicated in the local agreed syllabus. Standards in history are above nationally expected levels in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and well above expected levels in Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with nationally expected levels. Design and technology is taught at regular intervals but not at the time of the inspection. On the evidence available, standards are close to national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6.

Pupils' achievement in relation to their starting points is very good overall because they are keen to learn, and they make at least good progress. Children in the nursery and reception class make good and very good progress towards their early learning goals. Most children in the reception class are on course to achieve above the levels expected for their age by the end of the school year. Many will achieve at even higher levels in personal, social and emotional development, and in mathematical and creative development. The inspection evidence is that Year 4 and Year 5 are well on course to achieve similar high standards as the current and previous Year 6.

Pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language or who have particular gifts, make at least good, and sometimes very good, progress because of the quality of the support they receive in lessons, the overall high standard of provision and the school's very good arrangements for ensuring that all pupils take a full part in all its activities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils have very good attitudes and an enthusiasm for school. They are eager to learn, and very supportive of each other in working groups.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good throughout the school, and reflects the high standards expected of the pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on very well together. Staff and pupils trust and respect each other. Pupils respond very positively to opportunities to show they are mature and responsible. Boys and girls relate very well to each other.
Attendance	Similar to most schools. Pupils like school and are punctual. The main causes of absence are holidays or illness.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The **overall quality of teaching** is very good. Approximately seven out of every eight lessons seen during the inspection were judged good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Four of the 45 lessons seen were excellent. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in Years 1 and 2 overall, and very good in Years 3-6. Unavoidable staff absence and changes of teacher in Year 1 mean that overall standards of teaching are not quite as strong in Years 1 and 2 as in other classes. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught and pupils use them very effectively in all subjects including science. The standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

Teaching is very good overall because lessons are planned very thoroughly, teachers manage their classes effectively so that pupils are consistently well behaved, and the work is interesting and challenging. Basic skills are taught systematically and rigorously. Very good use is made of questions so that pupils have to think hard. Teachers always use an adult vocabulary, which is understood by the pupils and used in their own answers. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and make a very important contribution through their quiet interventions, encouragement and skilful leading of group work. As a direct result, pupils with special educational needs, particular gifts or talents, or English as an additional language, are fully included in all aspects of the teaching and make very good progress. Very occasionally teachers talk for too long in lesson introductions, or do not move higher attaining pupils onto more challenging work fast enough. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is particularly strong in personal, social and emotional development, and creative and mathematical development.

The quality of learning is also very good because pupils respond very positively to the good or better teaching, and they enjoy the intellectual, physical or creative challenges they are offered. Most lessons move ahead at a brisk pace which keeps interest levels high, and pupils learn effectively as the tasks are skilfully planned so that each new stage of learning builds on what has been taught before. The standard of marking in most classes is very high. Pupils feel encouraged and proud, and know what they have to do to improve and achieve their targets.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. It encourages high achievement and offers pupils an excellent range of additional opportunities through the wide variety of visits, visitors and specialists from the community and beyond.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Specialist staff and teaching assistants support pupils very effectively. Individual education plans provide the appropriate targets to improve pupil attainment.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Pupils' needs are assessed regularly, and appropriate support is provided so that all pupils can be involved, successful and happy in every aspect of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good in all aspects. Teachers plan carefully so that lessons give pupils opportunities for reflection, to experience wonder, and value a rich diversity of art, music and literature. Effective personal, social, and health education programmes help positively to promote all aspects of school life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Pupils' behaviour, attainment and progress are monitored closely. Tests are used effectively and the results form the basis for realistic targets for improvement.

The curriculum for younger children offers many creative and exciting opportunities. The curriculum in Years 1-6 is broad and balanced, and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It meets the needs of all pupils and groups, and provides them with equal opportunities to all aspects of the school's life. There is a very positive approach to promoting racial equality. The range of opportunities outside classroom lessons is excellent. Links with parents are very good, and families make a very important contribution to pupils' learning in school and at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the work and future development of the school, and the continued achievement of high standards. There is a strong and effective partnership between the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is highly effective. Governors are committed to the shared vision of the school. They have high levels of expertise, which they use to the substantial advantage of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has effective systems for monitoring its own performance. There are agreed processes for monitoring performance and considerable expertise among senior staff in analysing and using data.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school applies the principles of best value very effectively. Spending decisions are focused on the needs of pupils and raising standards.

The current arrangements for releasing senior staff to monitor and evaluate the aspects of the curriculum for which they are responsible are not linked directly enough to priorities within the school development plan. Staff are well matched to the demands of the curriculum, and the overall standard of accommodation is good. Learning resources are good although more work is needed to make the information and communication technology (ICT) suite fully effective. Research facilities and resources are appropriate but there is no central library.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children's happiness in school and the progress they make.• The emphasis on hard work and achievement.• The good teaching.• The strong leadership and management.• The way parents can approach the school with questions or suggestions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The information about their children's progress.• Homework arrangements.• Some parents were uneasy about arrangements for supervising the playground at lunchtimes.

Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views about the school. The range of information for parents is better than is found in many schools. Parents had a variety of views about homework. Inspectors consider the school's arrangements are good, and that the support that many parents give to their children at home is very beneficial. Inspectors checked the playground at lunchtime on several days and had no concerns. Pupils were properly supervised and were playing happily and safely.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most children enter the Nursery at levels close to the national expectation for their age. They make good progress in both the nursery and the reception classes. Children are well on course to reach the levels expected of their age in each area of learning by the end of their Reception Year, and to achieve at higher levels in their mathematics, and personal, social and emotional development, and in creative development. A few Reception Year children are already achieving within some aspects of Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
2. **Standards** in the rest of the school are judged in Year 2 and Year 6 because these are the ends of the two key stages in primary education.
3. Pupils in Year 2 achieved above average standards in reading and mathematics in the 2002 National Curriculum tests. Standards in writing were in line with national averages. The results were generally in line with those attained in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, but were not so high in writing. The size of the group was relatively small, and the performance of just one pupil can alter the figures considerably. The class also had a much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than is usually found in any one class in the school. They did well in the tests when their individual results are compared with their starting points. Teachers estimated that standards in science were below expected levels in that particular year. Standards in Year 6 were exceptionally high for the fourth year running. Standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science, and in the top five per cent nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was twice the national average, and two pupils reached Level 6 in mathematics. The results compared extremely well with those reached in similar schools, especially in mathematics and science. The school exceeded its challenging targets, and has set them at an equally high level for 2003.
4. **Current standards in English, mathematics and science** are above average in Year 2. Basic skills are taught systematically and rigorously, and enable pupils to reach higher standards in reading, writing and using their understanding of number in everyday practical situations. The rate of progress in Years 3-6 is very good, and pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 are on course to achieve at high levels. Current standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are well above nationally expected levels. Pupils have particular skills in speaking and listening, which enable them to take an active part in lessons, ask and answer searching questions, and enjoy being expected to think quickly. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 2 and Year 6 have improved since the previous inspection, and have been maintained at high levels in science.
5. **Achievement** is measured by comparing how much pupils improve as they move from class to class. The school keeps detailed records, and uses them to set challenging individual and group targets for improvement. Pupils keep these at the back of their books, and can record their own progress. The records and pupils'

books show good or better progress in all classes, and pupils refer to past and present work to illustrate their progress. Given that most pupils start school at levels that are close to those expected nationally, they are making good progress to be achieving above average standards by the end of Year 2, and very good progress overall to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6. Some individual pupils make exceptional progress.

6. **Standards** in art and design are well above expected levels in Year 2, Year 6 and other classes. Standards in music and physical education are above national expectations. Standards in religious education are above the levels indicated in the local agreed syllabus. Standards in history are above nationally expected levels in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and well above expected levels in Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with nationally expected levels. Design and technology is taught at regular intervals but not at the time of the inspection. On the evidence available, standards are close to national expectations. Standards in art and design, physical education and music have risen since the last inspection. The school has maintained previous standards in nearly all the other subjects. Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are not as high. Although pupils and staff have worked hard, the limitations of some of the information and communication technology hardware systems have restricted teachers' ability to teach skills as successfully as they would have liked, or to plan an extended use of information and communication technology skills into other subjects. Standards in design and technology have been affected by the long term absence of the co-ordinator, and Year 6 do not cover the subject in any depth until the summer term.
7. Teachers make very good use of **literacy and numeracy** in other aspects of the broader curriculum. Poetry is often used to catch pupils' attention or as an alternative medium for expressing ideas. Good examples were seen in past work in religious education. Pupils use their understanding of good English to write with greater depth and accuracy in history and science, using their own words rather than always reflecting the exact language used by the teachers. Good note-taking skills help pupils to prepare for later work. Pupils in Year 6 used the skills learned in mathematics lessons to compare the rainfall in various cities in a geography lesson, and to record their findings as graphs drawn from a computer-based data bank.
8. Pupils with **special educational needs** make progress similar to that of other pupils. Their needs are assessed at an early stage and the results are used to set specific and appropriate targets. Structured, carefully planned programmes of work and good quality support from the teaching assistants enable pupils to make very good progress overall. Those given the protection of a statement of special educational need make very good progress because of the school's care to involve them in every activity, the friendships they have with other pupils, and the high quality assistance they receive from the support staff. For example, records indicate that pupils' reading and writing skills had improved considerably since the beginning of the school year. The inclusion of children with complex special educational needs into the Nursery, in partnership with Bishopswood Special School, benefits all pupils.

9. Inspectors could find no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls, or in their enthusiasm for school or attitudes to work. Pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds are represented in all ability groups and are all given the same high quality learning opportunities. None of the pupils for whom English as an additional language are at an early stage of language acquisition. All pupils make very good progress overall, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnicity. The higher attaining group in Year 2, for example, contains pupils whose first language is not English. All pupils are well supported by careful planning and sensitive support from teaching assistants or class teachers.
10. The recently appointed co-ordinator has developed a policy for the identification of gifted and talented pupils. She has led staff training to ensure that appropriate criteria are applied consistently for the identification of each pupil. There is a gifted and talented register, which identifies pupils in all age groups, and planning ensures that they are challenged effectively in order to achieve their potential. The policy is working well, and can be seen in the individual high achievement of pupils in national tests and in their general class work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. **Pupils' attitudes** are very good and the high standards reported previously have been maintained. Pupils of all ages are very enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school. They value the education they receive and, older pupils in particular, are proud of the high standards reached in past years and feel confident in their own ability to do as well. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and between the pupils themselves, are very good. Pupils talked to inspectors on a morning when snow had disrupted life in the community and region. This had no noticeable effect on attendance or punctuality, and the pupils came to school ready to absorb themselves in their work. One pupil who had spent some time in a school abroad during a family visit reported how much he had looked forward to returning to Valley Road School. Pupils settle down readily in lessons, show an eagerness to learn and take pride in their work. They are confident learners and respond enthusiastically to their teachers' high expectations.
12. **Behaviour** is very good. Class rules focus on the importance of good behaviour and lessons proceed with a minimum loss of time because teachers manage their pupils very effectively. Incidents of aggressive behaviour, bullying or personal conflict are almost unknown, and pupils are confident that should any occur, they would be dealt with promptly. There have never been any exclusions. The high standard of behaviour noted in the previous report has been maintained and has continued to contribute to the school's positive atmosphere and high academic standards.
13. Pupils relate to each other and to their teachers very effectively. Personal relationships are very good. Pupils fully understand the impact of their actions on others and show respect for each other's feelings and identity. The small ethnic minority in the school is fully integrated, and pupils value the personal friendships they are able to form. Group work during lessons provides many opportunities for sharing, mutual support and collaborative learning.

14. Pupils with **special educational needs** and **English as an additional language** have positive attitudes to school. The caring ethos ensures that all are fully integrated and included. They form very good relationships with the teaching assistants and teachers. They behave well in lessons and are able to remain focused on tasks thanks to the high quality intervention and support they receive. They are well supported by the other pupils in the class. For example, a pupil in one of the younger classes was encouraged to identify the number of syllables in her name by a friend in the class. She applied extra effort as a result, and the whole class were proud of her achievement.
15. **Attendance** is satisfactory, the rate being just in line with the national average for primary schools. Registers are marked promptly twice a day and the usual attendance statistics are completed in the school office. Punctuality is very good even in adverse weather conditions. The school's attendance report for 2001/2 shows that family holidays during term time, and sickness or medical factors, are the most common reasons for absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. **The quality of teaching** is very good overall as seen in lessons throughout the school, in teachers' very thorough preparation and records, and in their assessments and knowledge of their subjects and the pupils. Approximately seven out of every eight lessons seen were good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Four of the 45 lessons seen were excellent. The overall quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good, with particular strengths in developing children's personal, social and emotional, mathematical and creative skills. The standard of teaching in English, mathematics and science is consistently good or better in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3-6. Unavoidable staff absence and changes of teacher in Year 1 mean that overall standards of teaching are not quite as strong in Years 1 and 2 as in other classes. Not enough information and communication technology, design and technology or religious education lessons were seen to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching in those subjects. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are very well taught, as was seen, for example, in the brisk 'warm up' sessions of mental arithmetic that start mathematics lessons, and teachers' creative ways to interest pupils in basic grammar. The standard of teaching in all other subjects was good, and was very good in art and design in all classes, and in history and geography in Years 3-6.
17. In the best examples, the quality of teaching is outstanding. **Excellent teaching** is found in all parts of the school. An example of excellent teaching was seen in a Year 5 class, for example, when pupils made remarkable progress within one mathematics lesson because the planning was meticulous and firmly based on the teacher's very secure understanding of the subject material and of the pupils' abilities. The investigation into the number of patterned tiles required for different areas felt like genuine research, a voyage of mathematical discovery, where the teacher shared the pupils' excitement as an algebraic formula began to appear. All the pupils made very good progress because questions and tasks were set at carefully graded levels, support staff enabled pupils with special educational needs to feel real achievement,

and the higher attaining pupils responded very positively to the intellectual and creative challenge in the work.

18. **Good and very good teaching** was seen in many lessons because they are planned very carefully, teachers manage their classes effectively so that pupils are consistently well behaved, and the work is interesting and challenging. Very good use is made of questions at varying levels of difficulty so that pupils are always involved, alert and have to think hard. In the best examples, teachers explain exactly why pupils will be doing various tasks. 'The reason we are doing this,' said one as she introduced an exercise about adjectives, adverbs and similes, 'is so that the stories we write on Friday are really exciting and vivid.' The pupils responded enthusiastically and made good progress because their work had a clear purpose that they understood and they wanted to be successful on that day and on the Friday. Lessons have a brisk pace, materials are well prepared, and teachers' high expectations and consistent use of a mature and challenging vocabulary, stimulate the pupils to greater effort.
19. Pupils with **special educational needs** learn successfully from the high quality additional support they receive. Their learning is enhanced by the commitment and professionalism of the teaching assistants who support them, both in class and when withdrawn for individual or small group teaching. Pupils make very good progress towards the targets identified on their individual education plans. Pupils with **English as an additional language**, who also have special education needs, achieve as well as other pupils because the quality of their additional support from the teaching assistants and the visiting special educational needs co-ordinator. Many are working successfully at higher levels of challenge. They make at least good progress because teachers are sensitive to their wider as well as linguistic needs. Pupils from a sandy part of Scandinavia, for example, were given extra support with work in geography because they had never seen a rocky coastline. Some pupils with **specific learning difficulties** are well supported by staff from a local special school. Pupils are regularly assessed and individual education plans are reviewed in light of these assessments to lead the pupil on to the next stage in their learning.
20. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection but there were occasional instances when teachers talked for too long in lesson introductions and pupils began to feel frustrated because they could not start their work. The level of challenge given to pupils during the inspection was very well matched to their different levels of ability, but a scrutiny of past work indicates that some tasks, in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, for example, have contained too many sums at the same level of difficulty for higher attaining pupils. Higher attaining pupils and gifted pupils in Years 3-6 are not always given enough opportunities to create or follow up their own ideas for scientific investigations. Limited use is made of information and communication technology in other subjects. Teachers are beginning to use the interactive whiteboard, but some lack confidence and lessons have to be changed when the software does not respond.
21. **The quality of learning** is also very good because pupils respond very positively to the good or better teaching, and they enjoy the intellectual, physical or creative challenges they are offered. Most lessons move ahead at a brisk pace which keeps interest levels high, and pupils learn effectively as the tasks are skilfully planned so that each new stage of learning builds on what has been taught before. The standard

of marking is generally high. Most teachers write detailed comments that praise achievement and offer advice on how future work might develop. Pupils read the comments carefully, feel encouraged and proud, and know what they have to do to improve and achieve their targets. Marking is less helpful when it is limited to ticks. The arrangements for homework are good, and that the support that many parents give to their children at home is very beneficial.

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

22. The curriculum for children in the **Foundation Stage** is very good. The teachers plan a very good range of activities in accordance with the government's guidance for children of this age and include an appropriate emphasis on learning through play. Children have ready access to a stimulating and secure outdoor area and teachers plan a very good range of activities to provide the children with valuable opportunities to learn outside the classroom. Effective links between different areas of learning bring added meaning and purpose to their work.
23. The school provides a rich and stimulating curriculum for its pupils in **Years 1-6**, which complies fully with the requirements of the National Curriculum and of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Exciting initiatives with a focus on the expressive arts are making a significant contribution to the high standards that pupils attain in English, music, art and design and physical education. Geography links with Oxford University's project on Sustainable Development gives all pupils a deeper understanding of environmental issues and promote attitudes of caring for their surroundings. All pupils, irrespective of background, ability, ethnicity or gender, are fully included in all aspects of the school's work.
24. The curriculum takes account of the most recent national guidelines, and schemes of work provide a secure base for teachers' planning. The care taken when drawing up the long term planning means that the school gives its pupils a well balanced curriculum that effectively meets the needs and interests of all. It is based on a cycle of topics that are taught across all year groups with clearly defined areas of learning for each age. This ensures that all pupils are working to an appropriate level. The success of this is particularly evident in the mixed-age teaching on four afternoons a week. The exception is design and technology, which is not taught regularly enough in Year 6. Teachers plan very effective links between many subjects, such as the design and painting of three-dimensional illuminated letters in art and design, which linked to the pupils' history topic of the Vikings.
25. The school has adopted the national strategies for **literacy and numeracy** very successfully. As a result, teachers plan more systematically for their teaching of basic skills and are doing more to provide different activities that match the range of ability groups in each class. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills through work in other subjects, such as geography, history and science. This has made a valuable contribution to maintaining high standards in these subjects.

26. The school is doing a tremendous amount to provide pupils with experiences that enrich and extend the basic curriculum and make learning more stimulating. This is a major strength of the school. Pupils' curricular and cultural experiences are extended through visits to museums, galleries and a wide range of other places of interest both locally and further afield. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for instance, take part in a residential week at Calshot Activity centre, enjoying a mixture of adventurous activities such as sailing, skiing and rock climbing, together with excellent geography fieldwork in the New Forest and Southampton Water. Pupils in the school choir have sung at the Royal Albert Hall, and in Oxford and Henley. A wide range of sporting opportunities is offered both in school and in clubs, including tag rugby, hockey, rounders, football, cricket and netball.
27. The school provides a curriculum in which pupils enjoy a high degree of equality in access and opportunity. The involvement of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, has high priority in the school and contributes significantly to pupils' learning and social development. The school effectively implements its 'More Able' Policy to extend the learning of gifted and talented pupils. The school provides a very good curriculum for pupils with **special educational needs**. Work is well matched to pupils' needs to enable them to make substantial gains in learning. They are given every chance to succeed, either in their classes or when being withdrawn for individual or small group activities. Where pupils are withdrawn from classes, staff make sure that they do not miss any key teaching.
28. The school has established excellent links with the wider community, whose support is a real strength to its curricular development. Parents give generously of their time to the school in supporting teachers in many aspects of the curriculum such as reading, supporting information and communication technology groups and coaching a large number of sports. There are close links with most Henley clubs, including tennis, hockey, rugby and cricket. Local artists and drama groups visit regularly. A dynamic and hardworking Parent and Teacher Association has organised many social and fund raising events. There are close links with local schools, especially the Gillotts Secondary School. Regular meetings take place between teachers, particularly in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy. Teachers have also worked on an assessment project with Gillotts, together with Trinity and Kings College, London, which has helped shape and develop assessment practice. Older pupils in the school have been involved in a science 'bridging project' with Year 7 pupils at Gillotts, which helps prepare for a smooth transfer to secondary school.
29. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It builds successfully on the positive attitudes and alertness that pupils bring to their lessons and general behaviour through an extensive and comprehensive programme for pupils' **personal, social and health education**. It includes a suitable emphasis on healthy life styles, sex education and the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Class discussions in 'circle time' provide valuable opportunities for pupils to explore issues and come to terms with their feelings in a supportive and secure atmosphere. From their 'circle time' discussions, each class raises issues to be voiced at half-termly school council meetings, which provide excellent opportunities for pupils from each class to grow in their understanding of their role as part of the school community.

30. The provision for **spiritual development** is very good because teachers allow pupils time to reflect, question and wonder. The use of poetry in several subjects gives pupils a way in which to think or write differently about important matters. The whole atmosphere of the school, supported by the consistent references to values in assemblies and acts of worship, gives pupils a climate in which they can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected. Well read stories extend their enjoyment of texts, music sets a mood for an act of collective worship. Everyone in Year 2 said ‘Wow!’ when a pupil lifted away the top layer in a pressed print to reveal a perfect image beneath. The provision for **social and moral development** is also very good. Pupils respect the school’s clear moral code and the way all adults reflect it in their own behaviour. The school is proactive in promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality. Pupils feel that the agreed codes for behaviour are just and fair, and respect the way any rare breaches are managed. The aims of the school are to create a sense of community, not just within the building itself, but with parents and the wider world beyond the gates. The arrangements for lunchtime ensure that they are pleasant social occasions, with an agreed standard of behaviour.
31. The provision for **cultural development** is very good. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities in art and design, literature, music and dance to explore their own cultures and those of others. The provision for religious education, for example, is enriched by the participation from members of several world faiths represented in the school. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to make educational visits, including singing at the Albert Hall, and listening to the County Youth Orchestra in the splendour of the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. Pupils with particular gifts, in music for example, are recognised and valued.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. **The overall level of care** is very good, and the school meets the high expectations and standards set out in its policies. The very effective procedures noted in the previous report have been maintained, and there has been considerable improvement in the ways in which pupils are involved in setting and monitoring their progress through target setting. Governors are aware of the limited space for wheel chairs in Years 4-6, and are seeking ways to make those classrooms more accessible. There is a very positive approach to promoting racial harmony as an integral part of the school’s explicit recognition of the strengths and potential for high attainment within each pupil, and as taught through its Values Education programme. Pupils from all ethnic groups are found in the higher attaining groups. The headteacher and staff know pupils very well. They lead through personal example, which, in turn, generates trust, respect and confidence by the pupils. The concern for the welfare of pupils is not limited to the classroom. For example, the class teacher who led the assembly on the morning of a heavy snowfall, reminded the pupils of the need for special care during playtime so as to avoid accidents or injury. Appropriate measures are taken to ensure that access to the Internet is restricted to approved sites. The care provided by the school is a basis for the high reputation it has among parents and in the community.
33. Teachers take great care to make sure that all pupils have the **same opportunities** in lessons, extra-curricular activities and around the school. An excellent example is

seen in the nursery class, which includes children from the Bishopwood Special Needs Unit. Teachers use questions skilfully in all classes so that pupils of different abilities are kept involved and have the same chances to take part. Those who lack confidence are encouraged to try. Lessons all start with the same objective, but tasks are usually set so that pupils of different levels of understanding can be successful. Pupils receive very good guidance for their **personal development** in personal, social and health education lessons. This is reflected in their behaviour in the classrooms, in corridors and on the playground. Courtesy and cultured behaviour are the norm. The creation of the school council, along with classroom responsibilities, has gone a far way to stimulate the personal development of pupils and an early understanding of citizenship. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good, while those for promoting good behaviour or for managing bad behaviour in any form are very good. The arrangements for child protection meet statutory requirements. There is a trained member of staff, and all adults are aware of their responsibilities. Health and safety regulations are met, and evacuation times following fire drills are properly recorded.

34. There are appropriate **records of children's progress** in the nursery and reception classes. Progress in the Nursery is recorded against the 'stepping-stones' within each early learning goal. Samples of each child's work are kept in the reception class. These are annotated to indicate progress and future targets are recorded and used in planning. The school's arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress in Year 1-6 are good and there are effective procedures for assessing what pupils know and understand, and can do, in English, mathematics and science. These involve the use of both statutory and optional National Curriculum tests, a range of other school based tests and teacher assessments. Pupils' work is regularly monitored to ensure they are making progress toward the targets set for them. Teachers correct work conscientiously and use marking well as a means of celebrating pupils' success. Where marking is most effective, it identifies how pupils should improve their performance.
35. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is a developing strength. Teachers have good knowledge of pupils' individual targets and levels of attainment, and use it to plan effectively to meet pupils' needs in their lessons. This is of particular value in the mixed age classes where the range of attainment is greatest. Targets are written in a straight forward language that pupils understand. The school analyses test data very effectively to discover overall strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Senior staff use this information effectively to track pupils from year to year and to set whole-class and individual targets for raising standards. The practice is already effective in Year 2 to Year 6, and is in the process of being introduced into Year 1. At present, outcomes in science are only analysed at the end of the Year 2 and Year 6 National Curriculum tests. The school development plan has acknowledged the need for more rigorous analysis and assessment in science, and an increased involvement of subject co-ordinators in the consistent development of assessment and target setting in all subjects so that all pupils have a greater understanding of their own learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The overall high quality of relationships between home and school reported in the previous report has been maintained. Parents have a very positive view of the school. Their involvement through support at home and in school is excellent. Parents welcome the relative stability among the teaching staff, that teachers take good care of their children and that the school itself is a healthy and warm social environment. Parents feel the school has been delivering a good quality of education for a number of years, and that the previous inspection report was a stimulus for continued improvement. Places at the school are highly valued and once pupils are admitted, parental support is maximized to show their appreciation and to help in the delivery of a good education.
37. **Parents' views of the school** are reflected in the largely positive responses to the parents' questionnaire and at the pre-inspection meeting. A small minority of parents wanted more competitive sporting activities while others felt that the arrangements for playground supervision could be improved. At the same time several aspects of school life were highly commended - including pupils' happiness, the good teaching and strong leadership, the way high ability pupils are challenged towards higher effort, the way parents can talk about any concerns and the special care taken of children with special educational needs. Inspectors agreed with parents' positive views. They also found that the school provides a good range of sporting opportunities including matches with other schools. They visited the playground during several lunchtimes, and can reassure parents that the levels of supervision are correct, and that pupils play happily and safely. Some parents were also concerned about homework. Inspectors feel that the school's arrangements are good, and help the pupils to make greater progress.
38. **Links with parents** are very good. Both school and parents take their responsibilities very seriously. The school's delivery of a good education is confirmed by pupils' performance, while parents provide the support from home that has allowed the school to be what it is. The active Parent and Teacher Association has bought a minibus as well as physical education equipment. Parents help with in-school activities such as reading, cooking and curriculum workshops. They also help with educational visits. Some, who are gifted musicians, share their talents with the pupils.
39. Some parents were concerned about the amount of information they received. The quality of information given to parents by the school is very good because parents have direct access to the headteacher and class teachers at any time. Parents' evenings provide appropriate opportunities for discussing pupils' performance and progress. The annual academic report for each pupil is comprehensive and readable. The Annual Prospectus and the Governing Body's Report are attractively produced and their contents include all the required information.
40. Links with parents whose children have special educational needs are very good. They are involved and consulted from the very early stages of school's concern through to both formal and informal regular reviews of progress with the professionals supporting their child. Parents with pupils with special educational needs are welcomed in the school to observe first hand the support their child is receiving.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The **leadership** of the school is very good. The headteacher's vision for the school is clearly articulated and is shared with all who work in and for the school. It is focused on the continued raising of standards and on the educational entitlement of all pupils. The strong partnership between the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the governors to promote this vision has a positive impact on all aspects of the work of the school. The standard of **management** is equally high. Systems are effective and the school functions very smoothly. The very high standards of leadership and management reported in the previous inspection have been maintained.
42. The school has explicit **aims and values**, which are regularly reviewed and are shared with the whole community. The current Values Education programme, used in assemblies and as the basis on which the school promotes high standards, is an excellent example of this commitment to making sure aims and values are alive and fully understood. Significant strengths of the school are the quality of relationships and the commitment to the involvement of all pupils in all its activities. The support and celebration of all pupils' achievements is a feature of lessons. The good example set by adults is reflected in the way pupils positively care for each other.
43. Staff are dedicated to working together for the good of the school. This dedication has recently been accentuated by the way in which the school has continued to function during the illness of the headteacher. Strongly led by the deputy headteacher, everyone prepared for the inspection without distraction from the school's work and purpose. The absence of the headteacher has also emphasised the close and effective working relationship between her and the deputy headteacher, and the clear and sustainable management systems in place. The deputy headteacher has been able to take over the day-to-day management of the school with confidence and efficiency.
44. The **subject co-ordinators** are committed to this same vision. They work effectively to lead the school forward through their well managed planning for all classes, their teaching and professional support for colleagues. They have a responsibility, set out in job descriptions, to collect evidence of aspects of teaching and learning but the time allocated for this is not sufficiently linked to priorities in the school development plan. The headteacher has a very good knowledge of the overall quality of teaching and learning and of what is happening in classrooms. While co-ordinators do visit classrooms to support or to lead new initiatives, they do not yet make informed judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Their scrutiny of pupils' work checks that planned work is covered but does not focus enough on the consistent development of assessment and target setting so that all pupils have an increased understanding of their own learning.
45. The **school development plan** reflects the co-ordinated commitment of staff and governors to improvement. It is a very useful working document, compiled through an annual review of the school's strengths and weaknesses by the whole staff. The governing body allocates a full meeting to its consideration and approval. The present plan focuses on developments for the present academic year but also plans ahead over a further two years where it is acknowledged that change will take longer. Change is

well led and managed, for example recent changes to staffing structure have enabled single age classes in Years 3 to 6 every morning, and the employment of part-time specialist teachers who contribute significantly to the standards achieved.

46. The **governors** contribute substantially to the effectiveness of the school. Governing body roles are identified to reflect a high level of expertise. For example, the chair of the premises committee is a building surveyor. Governors fulfil all their statutory duties extremely efficiently. They are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through the headteacher's reports and regular meetings between the headteacher and the chair of the governing body. Many are frequent visitors to the school. Omissions within statutory documentation have been corrected since the last inspection. Governors have also developed their skills as a body of 'critical friends.' Monitoring processes have been formalised and improved. For example, a curriculum governor visits classrooms, attends staff meetings and reports back to the governing body. There is now a much heightened knowledge of the work and direction of the school.
47. Appraisal systems have become efficient and effective since the previous inspection. Teaching assistants meet with the deputy headteacher for an annual review of their work and needs. They see this as a very positive development of their roles. Performance management for all teachers has been implemented with a focus on pupil progress objectives and the needs of the school development plan. It is acknowledged by the headteacher that a further development must be the opportunity for individuals to agree objectives related to their own personal professional development. The governors strongly support the positive link between raising standards and the professional development of all staff. The process for the governors' review of the headteacher's performance management is properly in place. The present cycle has been delayed through illness but dates are agreed for completion. There are good systems in place to support teachers new to teaching and to the school. The graduate teacher student at present in the school is mentored by an experienced teacher and given appropriate experience in all parts of the school.
48. The governors have set performance targets for the school and agreed them with the local education authority. The present Year 6 is well on course to achieve the very challenging targets in English and mathematics set for 2003. The governors and all staff are justifiably proud of the consistently high levels of pupil attainment at the end of Year 6. However, there is a need to review progress formally in year groups other than at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a particular issue for science and is recognised within the present school development plan. The school has its own entry profiles and recording processes for the early years. They guide the good progress made in this part of the school. Children's standards on entry to the Reception Year have not yet been used to forecast outcomes at the end of Year 2, but there are plans to develop this through the new Foundation Stage profile.
49. The **school administrator** manages the day-to-day financial issues efficiently. Each term an experienced finance officer reviews the management of the budget. Her report is discussed with the chair of the finance committee, who takes any concerns to his committee. The school budgets systematically for all its expenditure, and governors ensure that all significant budget decisions, relate to educational benefits for pupils. The recommendations in the most recent auditors' report have been

addressed. Specific grants for special educational needs and the professional development of staff are used effectively. The school makes good use of new technology to support office administration and preparation for teaching. The Assessment Manager program is used to store and analyse pupil performance. Most teachers' planning and all the day-to-day office management and communication is electronically based.

50. The present staffing structure is expensive. However, it makes possible single age groups wherever possible and reflects governors' concern for standards in Year 2 and for the most effective way to support all pupils in English, mathematics and science. A nursery nurse and highly effective teaching assistants complement the work of teachers. The school buys in an experienced co-ordinator for special educational needs. The skills of teaching assistants are recognised and teachers' planning exploits such skills. For example, an assistant's knowledge and skills in art and design made it possible for all pupils in Year 6 to work in small groups to produce very detailed illuminated letters. The school is adept at attracting external funding such as support for art and drama projects. The funds earned through the leasing of space to the attached but private day nursery are used to fund building and curriculum developments, such as information and communication technology hardware, that cannot be met from other areas of the school's budget.
51. The **early years co-ordinator** has a very good knowledge of early years education. She plans closely with the nursery teachers and teaching assistants in both reception and nursery classes. There is considerable expertise across the team. The split site makes links between Reception and Nursery challenging to plan and limits opportunities for the more able in the Nursery and the least mature in the reception class to move between both classes. It also reduces the co-ordinator's opportunities to oversee the curriculum links between the nursery and reception classes. At present, nursery staff and the Reception Year teacher receive separate funding for resources. While resources are sometimes shared, this approach limits the co-ordinator's opportunities to have an overview of curriculum needs and plan for the Foundation Stage as a whole.
52. The **special educational needs co-ordinator** has a very good knowledge and understanding of her specialist responsibility. She has reviewed the school's policy for special educational needs in line with the new code of practice and has produced an excellent school handbook that provides a very detailed overview of the provision throughout the school. She knows all relevant pupils well. Staff value the advice and support she gives. She is well supported in her role by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the governor for special educational needs.
53. The fabric of the building is well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff. The school is fully accessible to pupils with disabilities. There are attractive and up-to-date displays of pupils' work throughout the school. Some classrooms are awkward spaces within which to organise teaching and learning. Governors have investigated these inadequacies and made improvements wherever health and safety regulations have allowed. The ICT suite is a recent addition to the school's resources. There are some issues of hardware compatibility still to be resolved. The book stock, fiction and non-fiction, is distributed across the school, in classrooms and resource areas.

There is no space for a central library, which limits pupils' opportunities to develop study skills and greater independent learning.

54. Governors implement best value principles. They make detailed analysis of assessment results and use benchmarked data to compare performance with that of similar schools. Formal tenders are sought for all significant building maintenance. There is as yet no formal process in place to review the effect of major spending on the curriculum and the raising of standards. The pupils' very good overall achievements, the very good quality of teaching, the very high standard of leadership and management, and the very good improvement since the previous inspection, mean that the school is very effective and provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. The headteacher, staff and governing body should continue to work closely together and, as already identified in the school development plan,
- (1) Raise standards further in information and communication technology by:
- working through subject co-ordinators to ensure that information and communication technology is an integral part of the planning in all subjects;
[See paragraphs 6, 20, 76, 80, 85, 113 and 119]
 - completing the networking of the ICT suite so that it can be used more effectively for teaching and using information and communication technology skills
[see paragraphs 6, 53 and 118]

The governing body should also include the following minor issue in its planning:

- Link the monitoring and evaluation role of subject co-ordinators more closely to priorities in the school development plan.
[see paragraphs 35 and 44]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	12	22	7	0	0	0
Percentage	8	24	45	14	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 more than two percentage points.

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)	18	153
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	16

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

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	2002	15	9	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	20	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (97)	88 (97)	96 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	20	22	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (97)	92 (97)	83 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

* The specific data relating to numbers of boys and girls has been omitted because the number of girls in the cohort was less than ten.

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	2002	12	12	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	23	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96 (96)	100 (96)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	23	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96 (96)	100 (96)	100 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	136	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.3:1
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18:1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	44
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
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	£
Total income	451178
Total expenditure	475195
Expenditure per pupil	2747
Balance brought forward from previous year	38171
Balance carried forward to next year	14154

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	171
Number of questionnaires returned	77

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	31	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	29	1	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	34	0	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	45	10	5	4
The teaching is good.	65	27	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	38	13	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	19	5	5	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	30	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	42	4	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	74	18	4	3	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	27	1	6	6

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents felt that the arrangements for playground supervision could be improved. Inspectors visited the playground during several lunchtimes, and can reassure parents that the levels of supervision are correct, and that pupils play happily and safely.

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

56. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage covers all the early learning goals. A wide range of exciting and stimulating activities is provided, both in and out of doors. The overall very good teaching has a significant impact on children's learning. Some teaching in both classes is excellent. There are 18 children in the Nursery. A particular feature is the involvement of children from the Bishopswood Special School, some of whom have very challenging needs. They are fully integrated into the Nursery routines. Mainstream children support and learn from them.
57. Entry to the nursery and to the reception class occurs in September and January. At the time of the inspection, some children had only been in the Nursery for three weeks and, for 14 reception class children, it was their first week of full days in school. The high standards seen in the nursery and in the reception class at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained, and have improved in respect to children's creative development.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Children enter the nursery class with average skills. The quality of teaching is very good in both classes and children make very good progress. Many are on course to achieve well above the levels expected of their age by the end of the Reception Year. Almost all children in both classes sit quietly, particularly for story times. In the reception class, they can concentrate, listen and sit quietly for a twenty-minute registration and discussion. With rare exceptions, they separate happily from carers and parents. There is a true sense of security, respect for others and trust in both classes. Children greet adults and are eager to show them what they know. Very young children in the Nursery accept the needs of others. They are patient and helpful when children with very special needs interrupt them or take time to complete an activity. They understand the principle of taking turns in a circle game. Children in both classes enjoy tackling challenges. For example, all nursery children make some attempt to put on their outdoor clothes. In the reception class children choose, plan and play roles in the puppet theatre without any adult support.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Children in the Nursery have speaking skills that range from using uncertain phrases to sophisticated conversation. The quality of teaching is good in both classes and children make good progress. Many are on course to achieve above the levels expected of their age by the end of the Reception Year. Children in the reception class speak with confidence and fluency. They ask questions and comment on changes to the classroom organisation for a new week. Some nursery children use sign language to support children with special educational needs. Teachers set a good example in their own use of language and encourage children to explain what they are planning and doing. Staff have a very good understanding of each child's individual language needs and match the language they use and the standards they expect to the individual pupil. This means that all children, irrespective of need or ability, make

good progress. No children are at an early stage of understanding English as an additional language. Some staff do not always plan how they will develop children's specific language skills when they are using the outdoor play area, but examples of good practice were seen during the inspection when, for example, children were encouraged to think about the proper words to use when explaining their actions in throwing a ball accurately at a target.

60. The most able four year olds comment on story content, ask questions and predict outcomes. They make sensible attempts to organise friends into their own challenging activities, for example, showing each other what they can do on tricycles. Some reception class children are still inclined to interrupt others but most listen with considerable attention. They sing and recite well know rhymes with confidence, recall the detail of stories and use them in their play. Nursery children are helped to use ideas from their stories, such as making porridge and dressing up as the three bears.
61. Listening to stories and sharing books is an important activity in the nursery and reception classes. Three year olds use picture clues to tell stories such as Cinderella in the correct order to an adult. Most know about choosing and sitting quietly with a book. The most able, in both the nursery and the reception class, read short text with familiar words, some with meaning and expression. Many three and four year olds recognise the initial sound for their name. Reception class children confidently recognise initial letter sounds. Many can match letter names and sounds. All sing the alphabet with confidence.
62. Writing materials are always available in both classes and many children choose them for their own play. A corner in the reception class is resourced with a keyboard and a variety of writing tools. Industrious boys used this corner to play at being in the office. In the Nursery, children are learning the shapes of joined writing. Able and some average reception class children write correctly punctuated sentences and read back what they have written. The least able reception class children copy sentences and make some attempts at accurate punctuation. The most able are beginning to join their writing.

Mathematical development

63. The quality of teaching is very good in both classes and children of all ability make very good progress. Many are on course to achieve well above the levels expected of their age by the end of the Reception Year. Opportunities for mathematical development range from adult led activity in the Nursery, such as sorting the three bears' bowls into 'big' and 'little', to the most able reception class children attempting addition and subtraction, and writing their own sums up to 20. Although materials are provided to support this, some are using mental calculations and their fingers to check their answers. The same children add pence within 10p without support and know half past on the clock. These children are working securely within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Most children in the reception class can match numbers with objects to 20. They line up small teddies, count and identify the matching total. The least able measure the height of their own painted teddies, sticking and counting a line of smaller teddies as a measuring tool. They report on their findings and learn to measure height from bottom to top. Many children in the Nursery can count to ten,

some up to 20. They use an outdoor number line to organise numbers to 20 in sequence with adult support. Many manage to count with confidence to nine but need greater help for two digit numbers. In the reception class the most able complete a number square to 100.

64. Nursery children sort different sized containers in the sand. They cut and stick a variety of three-dimensional shapes. They copy and design their own repeating patterns. Adult led activity in the sand gives them opportunities to learn about capacity by pouring, filling and weighing. They measure and count scoops of oats for the three bears' porridge.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. The quality of teaching is good in both classes and children of all ability make good individual progress. Many are on course to achieve above the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year. Children in both classes are given a considerable breadth of opportunities to build on the knowledge they bring to school. Personal and social skills are closely linked with their growing knowledge. One particular computer program invites them to identify feelings such as happiness and anger. Nursery children use various switches and the mouse to control computer programs. Reception class children use a mouse with confidence. They match growing letter recognition skills to the use of the keyboard. They decide upon the instructions to control a floor robot and program it correctly.
66. Children in the Nursery explore objects and materials. They begin to understand change. It snowed in the week of the inspection and a tray of snow was brought inside to provide a real opportunity to see change. In the same week children added water to oats, and shaped and cut play dough into various shapes. Sandwich making with jam and Marmite encourages children to identify likes and dislikes, and to experience and discuss different tastes. Opportunities for nursery children to 'design and make' range from using large apparatus to build vehicles outside to making musical instruments in the classroom. Reception children are beginning to understand the need to design before making. The most able design a van, drawing with precision. The least able still have difficulty in drawing essential parts for a van with any accuracy.
67. Children are given good opportunities to talk about their personal experiences and put them into a time context. Nursery class children make sandwiches, spreading and slicing. They understand they must keep the food for a special picnic at the end of the session. One reception class child described her weekend trip to Paris in some detail. In both classes routines are very clear. This gives all children a sense of time as they move through the day. Children are beginning to understand about cultures and beliefs other than their own. Nursery children have learned about other children in Italy and the Nursery has links with schools in France and Spain.

Physical development

68. The quality of teaching is good in both classes and children make good progress. Many are on course to achieve above the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year. They learn about how their bodies work and develop skills in

controlling them. Nursery children have watched a baby being bathed and changed. In the reception class, children talked about how their bodies were reacting to physical exercise at each stage of a physical education lesson. They use an appropriate range of words including 'breathing', 'lungs', 'bones' and 'heart'. Both classes have separate outdoor areas. The Nursery area is large and designed to provide exciting learning opportunities. The all-weather flooring in both areas means that outdoor activity can be a daily feature. The youngest children learn to ride tricycles, to climb steps, and to ride and walk and run up and down a slope. The reception class outdoor area is adequate but difficult to manage, as a considerable part of it is out of view of the classroom and outside the windows of a classroom used by older children. At times therefore its use is limited. The overall space is used well. Children ride scooters, have large and small equipment for building and climbing and access to sand and water.

Creative development

69. Teaching and learning is very good in both classes and children of all abilities make good progress during the Nursery and Reception Years. Many children are on course to achieve well above the levels expected of their age by the end of the Reception Year. Children in the Nursery create collages using a variety of material. Reception class children make paintings of their own teddies, choosing appropriate colours accurately. There are many planned opportunities for role-play, from dressing up as the three bears, organising a wedding and managing a teddy bears' picnic in the Nursery, to using a puppet theatre and deciding their own use for the theme corner in the reception class. Reception children are able to stay in role for extended periods. They imitate adults spontaneously. For example, in play about working in an office one child arrived breathlessly late for work! They organise their own play without interrupting adults working with other groups. Children make their own musical instruments and think about tunes, which might be slow or fast. They clap to rhythms and sing many simple songs from memory.

ENGLISH

70. **Standards** are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. This is an improvement in both year groups since the previous inspection.
71. The school's results in the 2002 tests for eleven year olds were in the highest five per cent and well above the average for similar schools. The inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 6 are on course to achieve the similar challenging targets set for 2003. The school has maintained its high standards over the last four years, and increased the number of pupils attaining at the higher levels. This is a result of the very good teaching in Years 3-6. Work in the books of the present Year 6 pupils is generally of a high standard and progress is very good. A significant number of pupils are already achieving or working towards the higher Level 5.
72. The results of the 2002 national tests for seven year olds showed that pupils' attainments were above the national average for reading and average in writing. Present Year 2 pupils are on track to reach higher overall standards and attain above average standards in reading and writing by the end of the year. Their books indicate good progress since the start of the school year. Pupils of all abilities, including those

with special educational needs, English as an additional language or with particular gifts, make at least good and often very good progress as they move through the school.

73. Pupils are very confident **speakers**, showing levels of attainment that are often high for their age. Standards in Year 2 are above expected levels and are well above in Year 6. Pupils listen attentively in lessons. They speak clearly, using a well-developed vocabulary, and are confident to share their ideas and suggestions with others. Very good use is made of discussion in pairs or small groups to rehearse ideas before suggesting them to the class. Good opportunities are provided for thought and reflection so that pupils give reasoned accounts of their own views. For instance, pupils in Year 2 closed their eyes and imaged what it would be like to be South America. Pupils in Year 6 were working on information tests, having first studied an example on 'What causes volcanoes?' They went on to work in pairs using information obtained from the Internet to discuss the causes of earthquakes. In a Year 4 class, pupils discussed a range of adjectives, which they would use later in their writing to create atmosphere and build tension. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from the unobtrusive support offered by teaching assistants, who rephrased questions and encouraged pupils' responses. Good use is made of role-play to stimulate imaginative speech. For example, pupils in a Year 5 class had practised their organisational and imaginative skills in working with a group to role-play the story of Llewellyn and his faithful hound Gelert. They were able to relate very sensitively to the feelings of the characters in this tragic poem. Pupils in Year 6 used role-play to good effect in acting out the reporting of an accident at school to the police.
74. **Attainment in reading** is above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. High attaining readers in Year 2 read with accuracy, understanding and enjoyment. They articulate clearly and have a clear understanding of narrative. Pupils of average ability are reasonably accurate and fluent but they have some difficulties with unfamiliar words. Lower attaining pupils have an insufficient range of strategies to help them tackle unknown words. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are skilled and fluent readers, tackling books with a sophisticated range of meaning and vocabulary. Several pupils were enjoying reading Harry Potter stories. They could discuss the merits of the different characters and quickly find phrases in the book to illustrate their conclusions. Pupils in the higher and middle ability groups were able to comment on preferred authors and give reasons for their choices. Lower attaining pupils read accurately with the ability to self-correct. Overall resources for reading are good, both for fiction and non-fiction. The Parent Teacher Association provides extra funding to purchase books to augment the class libraries. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 undertake research for the different topics studied in the year. This is having a good impact on the development of their literacy skills. Although a good range of well-used books in every classroom, there is no school library. The school benefits from the support of parents and friends who hear pupils read on a regular basis.
75. **Standards in writing** are above average in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Higher attaining pupils are already exceeding the expected standard for the end of the school year. Pupils write for a variety of purposes and audiences throughout the school. In Year 2, pupils practise their spelling and punctuation skills through independent and guided writing. They retell events in stories. The recent introduction of a school

handwriting policy has effectively reinforced the importance of correct letter formation, and pupils' handwriting shows marked improvement since its implementation in September 2002. Pupils in Year 3 write in the styles of traditional tales such as 'The boy who cried wolf'. They sequence stories and are practising the use of different types of nouns. Pupils in Year 4 use examples of descriptive and expressive language in their writing. By Year 6, pupils can write interesting and exciting stories and poems. They present their work well.

76. The school is at an early stage in developing its use of information and communication technology in literacy sessions. For example, a Year 6 class practised their skills in seeking information by using the Internet. There were examples in all classes of pupils using word processing skills to present their work attractively. During the week of the inspection there was little evidence of computers being used to support the learning in the daily literacy lessons.
77. **The overall quality of teaching and learning** observed in lessons was very good. It was good or better in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3-6. Unavoidable staff absence and changes of teacher in Year 1 mean that overall standards of teaching are not quite as strong in Years 1 and 2 as in other classes. Teachers use the literacy hour, and the key structures of the national strategy, to good effect, placing the right emphasis on text, sentence and word level activities. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Their planning is very thorough, showing what pupils of all abilities are expected to learn. Their questioning is skilful and produces thoughtful responses. They use interesting resources, and demonstrate a very real enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers know and manage their pupils very well and plan to meet the needs of all of them. They have created calm working environments where pupils can flourish as independent learners. Teachers encourage all pupils to be involved in literacy lessons. In partnership with dedicated teaching assistants, they make sure that pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Higher attaining pupils are challenged rigorously, and teachers and teaching assistants regularly discuss pupils' progress towards achieving targets for literacy improvements. Pupils with English as an additional language also make very good progress in all ability groups.
78. In the best lessons teachers use the last part of the session effectively to make an assessment of what pupils have learnt and provide reinforcement or challenge for the next stage of learning. Where teachers' marking is most effective, as in Year 4, comments written in pupils' books are positive, refer to the individual pupil targets and include advice for improvement. Pupils' assessment results are carefully analysed and their progress is tracked to determine those in need of additional support. The very good strategies for teaching literacy skills have a direct effect on pupils' very positive attitudes to English lessons. They behave very well, get on well together and can also work productively on their own. They persevere with tasks and have very positive attitudes to reading and writing activities.
79. The subject is very well led by the effective and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She has very good subject knowledge and provides staff with a clear direction in the development of English. The whole school planning format for literacy ensures consistency of approach throughout the school, as do the agreed policies for handwriting and spelling. She has led staff, governor and parent training sessions on

a wide range of aspects of the literacy strategy including handwriting, questioning techniques, shared reading and cross curricular links. There is a good variety of resources to support teaching, including an interesting range of sets of books for guided reading. Opportunities to develop literacy skills through geography, history and religious education are well established.

80. The co-ordinator analyses test and assessment results and this analysis is used well by colleagues. Pupils' strengths and weaknesses are identified so that teaching and learning support may be appropriately focused. The co-ordinator monitors the teaching and scrutinises the pupils' work. Staff meet regularly to compare samples of written work. Evidence from monitoring and evaluation has been used as the basis for a sharply focused action plan. Governors are involved in monitoring and evaluating the impact of developments through the chair of the curriculum committee, who reports on English matters to the full governing body. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the management of English in the longer term. She knows that this means maintaining and extending the current good practice in order to sustain and improve standards. In particular, the development of opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in Years 1 and 2 and the further use of information and communication technology to assist learning are highlighted.

MATHEMATICS

81. **Standards** are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, and maintains the continued high levels of attainment in National Curriculum tests over the past four years. Progress is very good overall because pupils enter school with average levels of attainment for their age and achieve well above average results in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make good progress because they are fully involved in the oral parts of lessons through skilful questioning, and receive high quality support from teaching assistants in their group work. Their answers are valued by staff, who always include pupils of all ability in the final part of the lesson. Gifted pupils make very good progress because their needs are recognised. Two pupils from Year 2, for example, were judged to be at Level 4 in the 2002 National Curriculum tests, the national target for eleven year olds. Higher attaining Year 4 pupils work with older pupils so that their skills can be fully developed.
82. **Standards in Year 2** are above average. Pupils add, subtract, multiply and divide confidently and accurately with numbers up to 100 or higher. They enjoy working out answers in their heads, such as making up 50p with more than five coins. Higher attaining pupils can explain the mathematical basis for £1.05. Pupils have a secure understanding of shape and measurement and how to record their conclusions from a mathematical investigation. They set out data in bar charts and use them as the basis for answering mathematical questions. Progress is good in older classes. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 and all pupils in Year 5 have a very good understanding of basic calculations, including the use of brackets in number equations. They have a secure knowledge of shape, and recent topics include challenging work on perimeters. They measure accurately in metres and centimetres.
83. **Standards in Year 6** are well above average. All pupils cover similar work, but attain at different levels because the various groups within the class are given tasks

that match their level of ability. Much of the work is demanding, for example, multiplying three digit numbers by two digits. Mental skills are well established. Pupils define square numbers, for example, and calculate factors in their heads. Good use of small white-boards in mental mathematics sessions, on which pupils write answers, enables the teacher to keep track of each individual class member. Skilful teaching includes all pupils so that, for example, every pupil in one lesson was able to place $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{7}{12}$ and $\frac{5}{6}$ in the correct order on a number line. Good teaching ensured that pupils made the connection between fractions such as $\frac{1}{2}$ and their decimal equivalents. Higher attaining pupils worked confidently and converted 1 and $\frac{4}{15}$ into the vulgar fraction $\frac{38}{30}$ correctly. Pupils have completed work on compound shapes, mode and median, and can explain the probability of coins always coming down headfirst. They base their mathematical conclusions on actual evidence. The sizes of the angles in regular shapes are measured accurately to the nearest degree.

84. The overall **quality of teaching** is very good. The standard is consistently good or better in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3-6. Unavoidable staff absence and changes of teacher in Year 1 mean that overall standards of teaching are not quite as strong in Years 1 and 2 as in other classes. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection when some lessons were unsatisfactory. Teachers have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy successfully and have a very secure subject knowledge that gives pupils confidence. Pupils particularly benefit from the quick fire mental work that starts all lessons and the pace that comes from a tightly structured learning programme. Teachers use a range of questions skilfully so that pupils of different abilities concentrate and think hard. They do not just praise pupils for a correct answer but will press them to explain 'How did you do that? Can you think of another strategy?' This deepens pupils' understanding and encourages them to look creatively as well as intellectually at the problem. Errors are not seen as mistakes but as an opportunity to re-examine the question afresh. All staff use a correct technical vocabulary, referring for example to digits, number strings and factors, and expect pupils to use the same vocabulary in their answers. Good use is made of links to other subjects. Most classes have a history time line, and Year 2, for example, developed their enjoyment of a story about a giant through measuring and comparing their own heights with his. The best lessons end with a well-focused final session that pulls the lesson together and indicates how what has been learned that day is the stepping-stone to the next day's work. The very good lessons also include an assessment, often from the pupils themselves, of what has been learned, as when Year 4 told their teacher 'What I am better at today.'
85. Where teaching is not so strong, new members of staff are unfamiliar with the age group and their partial lack of confidence limits pupils' overall progress. Very little use is made of information and communication technology in most classes. Although pupils use calculators confidently, and older pupils enter data onto computer-based spreadsheets to produce drafts, very few examples were seen of class computers used to extend the mathematical understanding of individual pupils or groups. The quality of marking is variable but is very good overall. Most is very detailed. It takes teachers a long time to complete, but is highly valued by pupils because it helps them to make greater progress. Other marking is more limited.
86. The overall **quality of learning** is very good because pupils are well taught and have a clear intellectual understanding of why and what they are doing. They work hard

and are keen to be more successful. 'I really enjoyed that lesson,' reported a Year 4 pupil, 'although I got some wrong.'

87. The subject is strongly co-ordinated by an experienced member of staff. She has a considerable knowledge of mathematics, and enjoys working with colleagues to raise standards and ensure a common approach across the school. She is aware of standards through a scrutiny of teachers' planning, data analysis and an annual opportunity to observe lessons. She has overseen the development of target setting, a priority from the previous inspection, so that pupils understand what they have to achieve next. She recognises that the good practice now established in older classes can now be extended to Year 1 and 2. There is an appropriate range of books for research to support teaching in mathematics.

SCIENCE

88. **Standards** are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6, and have been maintained at the high levels recorded at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers assessed that attainment in Year 2 in the summer of 2002 was below national expectations. This reflected the number of pupils with special educational needs within the class. Current standards are much higher. Year 6 results in the 2002 national tests were well above the national average. The number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was more than twice the national average and in the top five per cent nationally.
89. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make at least satisfactory progress. For many, progress is good. They make choices about preferred stimuli when investigating senses, and then relate their own use of the senses to those of well-known animals, such as a dog. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported so that they can make task-related observations and talk about the things they find out. Higher attaining pupils draw conclusions using their own ideas, and link them to the learning within the lesson. Pupils record what they have done but not enough about the reasons for the choices they made. Pupils in Years 3-6 make very good progress. For example, in setting up and understanding fair tests, pupils progress from a simple idea of what fairness means in Year 3 to discussing key factors which they have applied successfully and those that might have been more suitably addressed in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs, particular gifts or with English as an additional language, make good progress because work is interesting and are well supported.
90. **Pupils in Year 2** express their own ideas and make appropriate verbal observations in lessons. They write simple texts to support their observations. They know common properties of materials and have some knowledge of how to sort and categorise into different groups. Higher attaining pupils have an early understanding of change and reversibility. However, while pupils record carefully to show what they have investigated, there is almost no evidence of recording using scientific language or of commenting on and explaining outcomes. **Pupils in Year 6** have a good idea of the need to seek scientific evidence and think creatively when deciding how to carry out an investigation. They have very good knowledge, for example, of physical processes, and used what they already knew about 'up thrust' and 'gravitational pull' to make predictions.

91. **The quality of teaching** in Year 1 and 2 is good. Pupils are challenged strongly, and expected to listen and observe carefully. The teachers' questioning probes their understanding using, for example, 'How could you tell if we can hear better with our eyes open or shut?' Resources catch their interest and are well organised. Investigations are linked to opportunities for pupils to draw their own conclusions. Behaviour and attitudes are very good. Pupils in Year 2 report that they love science. All were fully engaged in an investigation of the five senses and very excited by the separate activities. One pupil in Year 1 was most anxious not to allow reading with an inspector to interfere with going on a science walk.
92. The quality of teaching in Years 3-6 is very good overall. Planning is detailed and includes a high level of challenge. Aspects of very good teaching include the use of helpful wall displays that focus pupils' attention on the use of scientific language and remind them of what they have already learned. The best teaching takes learning one step further so that pupils are able to predict what they might need to do and learn next. However, some teachers direct the pupils too much when they are planning investigations. This limits the opportunities for higher attaining pupils, in particular, to develop their own creative thinking. It also limits teachers' opportunities to work more closely with the less able and average learners while the most able are developing their creative thinking. Despite the instances of over control, pupils respond positively to their teachers and follow instructions promptly. They enjoy the scientific processes of investigating and finding out. They co-operate well in mixed and ability groups and, particularly in Year 6, there is a real sense of celebration of their success as scientists.
93. **The curriculum** provides a broad range of very good classroom opportunities to meet the needs of all learners. Pupils have become creative and analytical scientists by the time they are in Year 6. All aspects of the curriculum are effectively planned and met. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge of the subject and is determined to maintain and improve standards. However, partly because pupils achieve so well in the subject, there is very limited monitoring of either the teaching or pupils' recorded work. This is already restricting the development of the subject in Years 1-2, where teachers feel that assessing standards at the end of Year 2 is very difficult, and that they may be under-estimating the quality of their pupils' work. The absence of specific processes to annotate or assess pupils' work reduces the information teachers can use to judge how well the pupils are doing or to set targets for improvement. It also makes judgements about how well the year group is doing as a whole, as opposed to individual pupils, much harder. At present, outcomes in science are only analysed at the end of the Year 2 and Year 6 National Curriculum tests. The school development plan has acknowledged the need for more rigorous analysis and assessment in science. There has been a stimulating programme of scientific visits and visitors in the past, and the co-ordinator is concerned that this has not been the case recently.

ART AND DESIGN

94. **Standards** in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above expected levels. Judgements have been based on observation of three lessons, the work in sketchbooks and on display, scrutiny of planning and discussion with co-ordinator for the subject. Standards have improved since the last inspection when standards Year 2 were judged to be in line

with national expectations and, in Year 6, to be above the national expectation. Since then the school has been awarded the Arts Mark, has received some local and national grants and participated in exhibitions.

95. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are highly responsive to ideas and outcomes. One class gasped with pleasure at the quality of printing achieved by one pupil. Pupils talk about their ideas, plan carefully and are proud of designs completed for homework. They compare their work with others and listen carefully to teachers so that they can make improvements to their own work. Year 2 pupils have recently examined a range of household textiles. They have printed their own textile designs and written to local shops about their work.
96. Printing has been a recent theme across the school. Older pupils have completed lino and screen prints. They have examined the work of William Morris and fabric designs from India. Year 6 pupils have produced fabric with detailed designs using overlaid colours. Year 4 and 5 pupils have a very good understanding of working with clay. They have used slabbing and coiling techniques to produce Celtic designs of a very high standard. They talk confidently about what they have designed. Year 3 pupils have worked in the style of a well-known artist, Paul Klee, to sketch self-portraits. The most able have translated the work in sketchbooks into charcoal drawings. The quality of the observational drawing from this lesson was very high.
97. **The quality of teaching** is very good. Teachers plan in detail. They set high challenges but give very good support and instruction to ensure that the challenges can be met. For example in a Year 4 and 5 class, each stage of the process of coiling clay was described very clearly. Pupils were encouraged to work alone but were stopped at intervals to check that procedures were being followed correctly. The work of those who needed the most support was used as an exemplar to help them to recognise success and encourage others. Teaching assistants are used very creatively. They help those in younger classes who have under-developed hand-eye skills to take their time to produce good work. An assistant with very good knowledge and skill in art supported a class of older pupils so that it was possible for the class to work in smaller groups. The delicate work on illuminated letters that resulted was of a very high quality.
98. **The co-ordinator** leads the subject well. She co-ordinates all planning so that there is a broad and balanced curriculum so that all the statutory strands within the art and design curriculum are covered, and skills are taught progressively as pupils become older. Very strong links are made with other curriculum areas. For example, Celtic clay models and illuminated lettering in Year 4 and 5 were linked to the history topic and last term's work in Year 2 related to a cross curricular study of religious festivals from various parts of the world. The school's framework for monitoring and evaluation gives her little time for observing the quality of teaching. She does lead whole school moderation of pieces of work. She has done some work scrutiny and is aware that the work in sketchbooks is variable and does not enable all teachers to see progression from class to class. The award of the Arts Mark has enabled the school to develop its artwork within the community. Recent visitors have included an artist from India and an African mask maker. Pupils have exhibited work at local festivals.

99. Resources are good and well maintained. Recent reorganisation ensures that everything can be stored in one area so that the co-ordinator can be aware of stock needs. There are plentiful posters and large books to allow pupils to investigate the work of various artists and designers. Use of information and communication technology is limited, mainly to downloading texts and illustrations from the Internet. This is an area identified for improvement in the co-ordinator's development plan.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. It was not possible to see any design and technology lessons during the inspection as it is not timetabled for this half term, and therefore no judgement can be made about the current quality of teaching. The evidence collected during the inspection included an examination of work shown in pupils' books, in photographs and on display from last term, and discussions with Year 6 pupils. Current standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 were judged to be close to national expectations and not as high as those reported at the time of the previous inspection.
101. Younger pupils had visited a local building site, and designed and built their own raised flowerbed with the knowledge gained from that visit and with support from adults. Pupils in Year 2 have made puppets, learning to design and to decide on different processes for joining parts. Some work in pupils' books in Year 1 and Year 2 has been evaluated using the design and technology association evaluation sheet but this practice does not appear to be consistent. The marking of work does not comment on how well pupils have done or what they need to do next.
102. Pupils in Year 3 have designed and tested pizzas. They have made some thoughtful evaluations of the outcomes and discussed how the pizzas might be improved. Years 4 and 5 have made animals with moving parts using camshafts. No design and technology has been taught yet in this academic year in Year 6, as the subject is covered principally during the last part of the summer term. This limits pupils' ability to develop skills and understanding over time. Pupils now in Year 6 are able to recall previous work in Year 5 and talk about objects made with moving parts and reinforced joints. They could make links with their work in science and the use of batteries. They recalled visits and visitors and the making of various structures to test strength and have a good technical vocabulary.
103. Planning is based on national guidance and indicates that the subject is covered over the school year. There is no evidence in the planning portfolio that overall curriculum planning is adapted to the needs of particular groups of pupils. The subject co-ordinator has been on long-term absence.

GEOGRAPHY

104. **Standards** in Year 2 are in line with those typically expected for the pupils' age. They are well above expected levels in Year 6, and have improved since the previous inspection. All pupils make at least sound progress in Years 1-2, and very good progress through Years 3-6. The overall good progress results from the school's effective implementation of the national recommendations that show teachers how to develop pupils' geographical knowledge and understanding from term to term and year to year. In the mixed-age classes of Years 4 to 6, the progression of learning for

each age group is carefully planned with challenging activities. Older pupils develop advanced skills of geographical research and enquiry through a wide range of fieldwork opportunities. The links with Oxford University's project on Sustainable Development gives all pupils a deeper understanding of environmental issues and promote attitudes of caring for their surroundings

105. Year 2 have learned about their own community as well as contrasting localities and have begun to acquire a sound geographical vocabulary. They are able to find places in atlas maps and globes, and to develop their skill in identifying different types of land use from maps and pictures. In a lesson discussing different types of land use in the Hebridean Islands of Scotland, Year 2 pupils discussed living conditions that they were able to compare to their own locality around Henley-on-Thames. Pupils identified different uses of land and buildings, which they accurately labelled onto maps. Good links are made to work in literacy lessons where pupils have been hearing stories about life on a Scottish island.
106. Pupils in Years 3-6 make very good progress in developing investigative skills that extend their understanding of different places. Pupils carry out fieldwork in the nearby Warburg Nature Reserve in Years 3 and 4, and consider ways in which the natural environment can be protected for the future. During a residential week at Calshot, Year 5 and 6 pupils made detailed observations and measurements of the Darkwater River, which they used to explain the changes that occur throughout its course. Pupils in Year 6 use an extensive geographical vocabulary. They are able to offer detailed explanations to show how human activities can influence livelihoods and developments, both in Henley-on-Thames and in the contrasting location of St Lucia in the Caribbean. Their confidence in using a variety of maps of different scales and sizes was clearly shown in a lesson that was linked effectively to their studies in history, in which pupils were able to identify settlement patterns in northeast England resulting from the Viking invasions of Britain.
107. It was only possible to see two lessons during the inspection. However, discussions with pupils and teachers, a careful scrutiny of pupils' work in books, classroom and corridor displays, together with reference to teachers' planning, all indicate that teaching is sound in Year 1 and 2, and good in Years 3-6. Teachers plan and resource their lessons effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, who are well managed. The purpose of the lesson is usually shared clearly with pupils, who then know what is expected of them in their work. Where teaching is good, activities provide greater challenge, especially to more able pupils, and challenging questions give pupils opportunities to explain and develop their thinking. In both lessons, the support given by the classroom assistants was particularly effective in supporting the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
108. Subject leadership and management is very good. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of pupils' learning across the school effectively and is very supportive of colleagues in making sure that their planning meets the needs of different aged pupils. The updated policy reflects recent curriculum developments and gives pupils growing opportunities to develop their awareness of environmental issues and explore the cultures of other countries. There is a wide range of geography resources, which are regularly updated. Very good use is made of fieldwork opportunities in the local area, such as the Warburg Nature Reserve and Henley-on-Thames. Excellent work was

carried out further afield during the Calshot Activity Centre residential week. Opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in information and communication technology to support their geography learning, however, are particularly limited in Years 1 and 2, and are not developed consistently in Years 3-6. Classrooms contain a range of suitable books for reference but the lack of a central library limits pupils' opportunities for personal research.

HISTORY

109. Although only one history lesson could be observed in Years 1 and 2, the scrutiny of pupils' work in books, classrooms and in corridor displays, together with discussions with teachers and pupils, provide enough evidence to show that pupils of all levels of prior attainment and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve above that expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Standards in Year 6 are well above national expectations. The school has maintained the high standards of pupils' achievement in history that were observed during the previous inspection.
110. Year 2 pupils are developing an awareness of changes in their own lives and the adults around them, and are able to sequence pictures from different periods. They develop their sense of chronology through time lines and a sense of 'period' through their detailed investigations into particular historical times. They have compared aspects of life in Victorian times to that of their own, for example, by examining different household articles. In a recently introduced topic about the Roman period, pupils were able to identify a range of artefacts linked to Roman soldiers, from which they begin to learn about the harshness of life at that time. Year 6 pupils show a good understanding of the historical periods that they study and are developing the ability to use a variety of sources of evidence to draw conclusions and report them, demonstrating an ability to determine the differences between facts and the opinions of historical reporters. Following the 'visit' of a 'Roman soldier' to the school, pupils in Year 3 demonstrated their understanding of his living conditions by writing their experiences on letter tablets similar to those recently discovered at Hadrian's Wall. They discussed a wide range of picture and artefact evidence knowledgeably, from which they were able to give detailed accounts of this period.
111. **The quality of teaching** in the lessons seen was good and included examples of very good teaching in Years 3-6. All teachers displayed a very good relationship with their pupils and very good classroom management. They show a good understanding for teaching history skills through their planning and the choice of challenging activities to help all pupils to make good progress in lessons. Teachers work hard to prepare well chosen resources which enable pupils to investigate different types of evidence to further their historical understanding of different periods. In the lesson where very good teaching was observed, considerable preparation for the lesson had taken place. Pupils performed a Roman soldiers' marching drill, with instructions given in Latin by one of the pupils. 'Interviewing' a soldier further enriched their enjoyment of the lesson and the teacher's use of skilful questioning encouraged pupils to use their knowledge and develop new ideas.
112. Visits to a wide variety of historical sites, such as Nuffield House and Selgrave Manor, add to the richness of the pupils' experiences, together with visits by 'costume re-enactors' who make history come alive in the school. They provide very good

opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of both the past and present.

113. The subject is very well managed and led, with pupils' learning closely monitored and teachers well supported. History is linked effectively to all curriculum areas in the school with well planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through drama and role-play, and to develop literacy skills through imaginative pieces of extended writing. The subject is very well resourced with opportunities for pupils to research evidence from a wide variety of books, pictures, artefacts, CD-ROMs and the Internet. However, the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning is not planned consistently enough to cover all year groups or help pupils to grow in confidence in using all appropriate aspects of information and communication technology.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. Information and communication technology is not timetabled separately, except for short demonstration lessons and to support the teaching of mathematics through the recently acquired interactive whiteboard and mathematical software. The subject is currently taught through specific topics within the teaching of other subjects. A new ICT suite is to form the focus of the school's development for information and communication technology but remained largely unused during the period of the inspection. Judgements are based on the limited number of opportunities in which pupils were involved with information and communication technology related activities. A close examination was made of pupils' work within classrooms and corridor displays, discussions were held with pupils and teachers, and teachers' planning was considered carefully.
115. **Standards of attainment** are in line with expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. This is not as high as was reported at the time of the previous inspection, where standards were judged to be above national levels. Whilst appropriate computer software is available within each classroom and the ICT suite, it is generally underused and pupils have only limited opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in their use of information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
116. When opportunities to use information and communication technology are given, Year 2 pupils are able to make satisfactory progress. Younger pupils develop keyboard skills and use a mouse with growing confidence. The majority are able to word process aspects of their work and program instructions for a moveable toy. Most pupils in Year 2 can make corrections to their presentations, which they are able to save, print and retrieve, and find information from CD-ROMs to support their learning in different subjects. They are able to present information they have collected in the form of simple picture and column graphs. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy using computers, especially when the program helps them to present and spell their work to a higher standard.
117. Pupils' progress in developing information and communication technology skills in Years 3-6 varies between year groups and is dependent upon the information and communication technology skills of individual teachers. Pupils in Year 3 succeeded

in bringing together pictures and writing to support their history work, displaying evidence from the visit of a Roman soldier to the school. They were able to change the nature of the titles they used and alter the size of the photographs in their presentations. The development of pupils' progress in information and communication technology understanding is much greater in Year 6. Year 5 and 6 pupils collect and save data of weather information, which they display in a variety of graphs, and compiled three-dimensional pie charts and graphs to show different activities they enjoyed on a residential week at Calshot. Higher attaining pupils are confident in giving PowerPoint presentations of their work and competently combine photographs, pictorial images and text.

118. **The quality of the teaching** was good in the one lesson of information and communication technology teaching observed during the inspection. The teacher had secure subject knowledge and gave an effective demonstration to her pupils. A learning support teacher and a parent ably supported the teacher in helping pupils to retrieve photographs and add text to their presentations. Explanations were given clearly and an effective use made of the interactive whiteboard to develop pupils' knowledge. However, because of a range of different computers in the ICT suite, procedures for carrying out the activities varied and this reduced the impact on pupils' opportunities for learning. During this lesson pupils were very enthusiastic in carrying out tasks and supported each other closely, taking pride in their final presentations and confidently sharing the skills they had acquired with the whole class.
119. **The subject co-ordinator** is knowledgeable and has worked hard to train and develop teachers in their information and communication technology expertise, particularly in the use of the interactive whiteboard to support their numeracy teaching. He has also produced an informative school website. He recognizes the need to ensure that pupils' information and communication technology development is reflected appropriately in all curriculum areas and is planning to address the full range of information and communication technology skills as set out in the subject's development plan. The school intends to increase teachers' confidence in using information and communication technology by developing a fully networked system of similar computers within the ICT suite.

MUSIC

120. **Standards** are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents an improvement from the time of the previous inspection. Pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities for instrumental tuition including guitar, violin, brass and keyboards, have taken part in local concerts and sang at the Albert Hall, and have had an opportunity to hear a full orchestra. There is now a school choir. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress because the steps in learning are judged very carefully and there is an emphasis on enjoyment as well as on improvement.
121. **Pupils in Year 2** recognise long and short musical sounds, and listen carefully to a range of percussion instruments to decide which is which. Higher attaining pupils used their knowledge from science lessons to suggest why metal instruments made 'longer' sounds to those made of wood. They enjoy singing, and keep the correct

rhythm in a variety of tempos. Pupils listen very carefully, enjoy being the conductor, and know how to improve and polish their performance. Pupils in Year 4 recognise notes using 'soh', 'fah' and other parts of the pentatonic scale, and can repeat a four-note sequence back to the teacher accurately. They understand and use a technical vocabulary, including 'pitch', 'drone' and 'ostinato'. Individual pupils know the correct note values.

122. **Pupils in Year 6** are familiar with basic chord structure, identifying the notes correctly on a keyboard and on tuned percussion. They listen carefully to harmonies, and modify those that 'don't sound right.' Pupils' success is strengthened through group work because they listen carefully to each other and collaborate well. Singing, sometimes in three parts, is tuneful and unforced. Many pupils, especially those who are learning to play an instrument, are developing good sight-reading skills and perform confidently. They enjoy performing with individual instruments, starting with the recorder and basic percussion instruments in Year 2. A boys' and girls' recorder group, for example, enriched the quality of worship and spirituality through their confident accompaniment to the hymns and the Lord's Prayer in assemblies. They were aware of their own individual parts as a contribution to a combined harmonious sound.
123. **The quality of teaching** is consistently good. The lessons observed during the inspection included an appropriate balance of singing and performance. Voices are warmed before longer pieces are attempted, with an appropriate emphasis on good breathing techniques and posture. Lessons are very well planned, as was seen in Year 4 when the initial singing was to a good quality backing tape so that the teacher could concentrate on the standard of the pupils' work. The lesson progressed successfully and the final versions were accompanied by the class itself, using a variety of tuned percussion. The teacher's high expectations of very good behaviour and excellent performance set the standard from the moment the lessons begin. Learning is enjoyable with a good mix of activity. Pupils in Year 3, for example, closed their eyes to imagine they were Roman soldiers, felt the road under their boots and rose to sing a song in marching rhythm. Progress was good, and the diction had noticeably improved as the teacher taught pupils to sing the ends of the words as well as the beginning. No use of information and communication technology was seen during the inspection, and lessons focused on singing and performance rather than musical appreciation.
124. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all lessons and make good progress. They enjoy singing, and work happily with a partner in instrumental sessions. Individual pupils who have a particular talent or interest are able to learn a range of orchestral instruments, keyboards and the guitar with visiting specialist staff.
125. **The co-ordinator** is a skilled musician with a passion for giving pupils a range of high quality opportunities to make and listen to music. She takes most music lessons herself, often with the support of the class teacher. This is especially valuable when the teacher is active in support, as in Year 3, and not just an observer. She is developing plans to enable staff to take a greater role in teaching music, starting with music appreciation. She makes sure that the curriculum is broad and balanced, and contains a range of composers so that pupils can appreciate music from a variety of cultures as well as more traditional European classical music. She is developing

music across the curriculum, Asian music to accompany pupils' celebration of Diwali for example, and linked a music hall sequence of songs to the school's history presentation about Victorian factory children. There is an appropriate range of tuned and untuned instruments, including a variety of instruments from various musical cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. **Standards** are above nationally expected levels in both Year 2 and Year 6. Progress is good because pupils respond purposefully to the good teaching and are keen to improve. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good because of the teachers' sensitive interaction and support. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve standards in line with the rest of the class because teaching is well adjusted to their needs.
127. **The quality of teaching** is good throughout the school. Teachers pay close attention to health and safety issues, and pupils generally have a good understanding of the need to warm their muscles before activities and the importance of cooling down after exercise. Lessons are planned well and identify a clear focus for pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of direct teaching and positive encouragement to improve skills. For instance in a Year 3 gymnastics lesson the teacher effectively demonstrated an aerobic exercise warm up activity, which inspired the pupils to emulate her high quality performance. Expectations are appropriate for the age and the ability of the pupils. Behaviour is managed well, and pupils are enthusiastic and well motivated. Resources and equipment are well prepared for the sessions. Lessons started promptly and the pace is brisk.
128. The quality of **pupils' learning** is increased within games, gymnastics and dance lessons because they work very well together. For instance, pupils in a Year 2 dance lesson worked effectively in pairs to develop a dance sequence using three different types of travelling. They were able to vary their movements in speed, level and direction. They use appropriate language to describe and comment on their skills. Pupils in Years 2 get out and put away apparatus safely. They use space effectively. For example, in a Year 1 dance lesson pupils were able to build on their skills of dodging and weaving. They could copy, remember and repeat simple actions and sequences with control and confidence.
129. Pupils receive a well-balanced programme of work, focusing on gymnastics, games, dance and swimming. Additional activities include outdoor and adventurous activities. The curriculum is also enhanced by the provision of extra-curricular clubs, which include tag rugby, netball, gymnastics, football, dance, rounders, tennis, hockey and cricket. Expert coaching in rugby, football, cricket, netball and hockey is provided in school by local clubs. The school has established links with local secondary schools and uses their Astroturf and swimming facilities. They also have links with a local Sixth Form College, whose students provide games coaching. In addition, the school takes part in a variety of inter-school team games, including tag rugby, cricket, athletics, football, cricket and netball. These activities enhance the curriculum and make a strong contribution to raising pupils' self-esteem, social and skill development. They also provide the opportunity to extend the provision for the more able pupils in order for them to achieve at a higher level. The carefully planned

curriculum contributes to the development of the pupils' cultural awareness through a variety of dance workshops featuring Afro-Caribbean, Asian, Scottish, and English country dancing.

130. **The accommodation** is adequate and is used well. The school has a large hall with recently purchased large gymnastic apparatus. There is adequate playground space marked out for various team games, as well as a large grassed area with an outdoor amphitheatre for dance and drama. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and leads the subject effectively. She has a clear strategy for the development of physical education, which forms part of the school development plan. She has implemented a new scheme of work, which provides good support for non-specialist teachers to be able to deliver the full curriculum. She has led staff training sessions on the use of the scheme, and worked with every class to train pupils in the setting up of the new gymnastic equipment. She has also organised staff training sessions in the teaching of dance. The Parent Teacher Association has provided funding to supplement the physical education budget in order to purchase the new gymnastic equipment and to replace resources as necessary. Physical education has a high profile and is greatly valued by the pupils and parents. There are regular displays of pupils' work in dance and gymnastics, an annual swimming gala and sports day, which features both traditional athletic events as well as fun activities. There is also an annual orienteering day in which the whole school takes part. The school is in the process of applying for the Active Sports mark.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131. **Standards** in Year 2 and in Year 6 are above the levels expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, especially in Years 1 and 2. All pupils make good progress. Those with special educational needs or English as an additional language listen to and enjoy the stories they hear, and play a full part in class discussions. However, pupils in several classes find some written tasks challenging without adult help, and do not always complete their work. Those pupils whose faith is other than Christianity feel valued and willingly share their knowledge with the rest of the class.
132. **Pupils in Year 2** have a good knowledge of Christianity for their age, and have enjoyed learning about Hinduism from a parent who visited the class. They have a mature approach to their work, and respond positively to opportunities to reflect on the deeper issues in life. They use the literacy skills they have learned in English lessons very effectively, as seen in the detailed and well written accounts about the Nativity. **Pupils in Year 6** have a sound understanding of several major world faiths, including Hinduism, Judaism and Islam, and can compare and contrast some of the key features of religious life and practice. They have a good understanding of Christianity, and draw on the Old and New Testaments to illustrate their answers. They recognise why Christians regard Jesus as the Son of God, and understand the symbolic importance of the Last Supper, and the events of the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Pupils are articulate and enjoy discussion. This enables them to express their own values and commitments, and evaluate them alongside those of others. A good example occurred when pupils discussed the moral and racial lessons to be learned from the story of the Good Samaritan. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively, as seen in Year 6 poetry about the Nativity.

133. It was only possible to observe one lesson within the inspection. **The quality of teaching** was good, in this case about Moses and the Ten Commandments, because the work was well planned and pupils concentrated hard throughout the session. The teacher's own deep knowledge of the subject material gave the pupils confidence to ask questions and increased the quality of their learning. Music was used imaginatively to give variety to the lesson, and good links were made to the school's provision for moral and social education through a discussion of class rules.
134. **The co-ordinator** brings a strong commitment to her work. She makes sure that the subject has a high priority, and that pupils enjoy their lessons as well as gaining in knowledge and having opportunities for reflection. Some parents at the meeting, although not religious themselves, reported that this was a strength of the school. The co-ordinator organises visits to a variety of places of worship so that pupils see religious faith as a living part of people's lives. Several parents have willingly visited the school to describe their own beliefs. Good links are made to other parts of the curriculum, to music, art and design and geography for example. Pupils make appropriate use of a range of suitable reference books but the lack of a central library limits pupils' opportunities for more extended research. Pupils were not observed using information and communication technology for wider research during the inspection, but work about the Nativity displayed in Year 6 was very well presented in a newspaper format, and Year 2 produced attractive word processed accounts of Diwali.