

INSPECTION REPORT

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Carterton

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123191

Headteacher: Mr Darrell Wood

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jane Morris
18270

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th July 2003

Inspection number: 248438

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lawton Avenue Carterton
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr Emmanuel Gili-Hammett
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18270	Mrs Jane Morris	Registered inspector	The foundation stage Special educational needs English as an additional language Science Design and technology, and History	What sort of school is it? The schools results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
1165	Mr Peter Dannheisser	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
28088	Mrs Chris Raymond	Team inspector	Equal Opportunities English Geography Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
31819	Mrs Shirley Duggins	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Music	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

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an average sized school, situated in the town of Carterton. A number of pupils travel from outlying villages. It is very close to the RAF station of Brize Norton and, as such, has a school population that changes significantly. The latest figures indicate that within the current Year 6 almost 60 per cent of pupils have either entered or left the school since the beginning of the reception year. The recent conflict in the Gulf has had a major impact on some pupils and their family life. The school is sited in new buildings, recently upgraded to incorporate an additional, purpose built reception class. There are 177 pupils on roll, taught in seven classes. Most pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds with a few pupils from mixed heritage backgrounds. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has a very small number of traveller children. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 27 (15.2 per cent). This figure too is below average as is the number of pupils with a statement to support their needs. Attainment of pupils as they start school is average. Since the last inspection there have been significant staff changes and three acting headteachers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's is an improving school that provides a sound education for its pupils. It has an inclusive, caring and supportive ethos with provision for personal development a strength. Teaching is good and standards are rising. The headteacher provides very strong leadership aided by an effective senior staff. They are supported by a knowledgeable governing body. There is a secure, clearly identified way forward. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership of the headteacher is of a very high quality.
- Teaching is good. It has some particularly strong features in reception and Years 1 to 4.
- The provision for special educational needs is of a very high standard.
- Pupils' personal, especially moral, development is effectively promoted by the school.
- Procedures to encourage high standards of behaviour are very good.
- Links with parents and the community make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 and in information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 6*
- The number of opportunities to develop the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects*
- Marking so that pupils are well informed about what they have achieved and what they need to do next in order to improve further*
- Monitoring of lessons and pupils' work in subjects other than English, mathematics and science*

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. Those marked with * already feature on the school's established development plan.*

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998. After that inspection there was a period of some disruption to the school's leadership and management and a very significant number of staff changes. Following the January 2003 appointment of a very strong headteacher and efficient senior staff, the weaknesses raised previously have been addressed satisfactorily. Standards in terms of results in national tests have not been maintained at the same level as was found in the last inspection. However, the school is now in a stable position and moving forward because of the recent and appropriate actions taken by the headteacher. Teaching has improved because lessons are monitored to ensure teachers build on strengths and acknowledge areas requiring improvement. Planning is better. Informed governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. A detailed, correctly prioritised development

plan ensures all involved with the school are working together to raise standards. Weaknesses in managing pupils' behaviour have been addressed. There are now sufficient information and communication technology resources to help raise attainment in this subject.

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	C	D	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	B	D	E	
Science	A	A	C	E	

Successful tracking of individual pupils, recently introduced, supports useful target setting. This takes account of pupil's prior attainment as they join the school and sets them goals to reach. This work underpins the collective determination of all staff to reverse the decline in standards. The very high percentage of pupils joining and leaving the school makes meaningful comments about progress towards school targets unrealistic. Comparisons drawn between results achieved by this school and schools designated as similar are not always reliable.

Inspection evidence and indications from the 2003 Year 6 test results show that pupils are gaining average standards in English and above average standards in science. Standards in mathematics are unsatisfactory. Writing requires further improvement. This group of pupils has had a turbulent time and as a result some have not done as well as they might. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn well and they are achieving above average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

The 2002 results for seven year olds were in line with national averages in reading and mathematics but below those of similar schools. In writing, standards were below average in comparison with all schools but well below average compared with similar schools. In science standards were in the highest five per cent nationally. Results for 2003 and inspection evidence indicate that Year 2 pupils have progressed well. Standards are above expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Standards in ICT are close to national expectations at the end of Year 2 but are below them at the end of Year 6. Standards in non-core subjects are generally satisfactory with music being above expectations by the end of Year 2.

Children entering the school are of average ability. They make good progress in the reception class and the majority of them achieve standards in line with or above expectations

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes. Most work hard and do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. With a few exceptions pupils behave well in lessons and playtimes are happy and co-operative occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are friendly and courteous. They benefit from the positive relationships throughout the school.

Attendance	Above average. The unauthorised absences of a very small minority of pupils have a significant effect on the number recorded.
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Pupils' attitudes and values are usually good. They almost always work and play happily and the vast majority are enthusiastic about learning and coming to school. Last year, however, the school reported a significant number of pupil exclusions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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 quality of teaching is good. Of the total of forty-five lessons seen, seven were very good, seventeen good and twenty-one satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The half of lessons that were good or better occurred throughout the school but the majority were in reception and Years 1 to 4. In Years 5 and 6 some lessons took too long to get going. Better lessons were characterised by teachers' good subject knowledge, pace and clear learning intentions, shared at the start of lessons and reviewed at the end. Less successful but still satisfactory lessons did not ensure all pupils listened attentively and some lacked sufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for and initiate their own research to support their learning.

The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory overall with newly introduced procedures to help teachers target pupils' learning already having a positive impact. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and use them productively. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are not always promoted sufficiently in other curriculum areas. Teachers know their pupils well, have good relationships with them and usually match work to meet their needs. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and are very well supported by the co-ordinator and teaching assistants. Marking procedures are under review and as yet are inconsistently applied.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides a reasonable range of learning opportunities. However, the balance is heavily weighted towards English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Tightly structured schedules for pupils following individual education plans are followed so they make good progress. The co-ordinator and teaching assistants are very effective
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school is particularly competent at promoting pupils' moral development. It has a newly introduced and clearly defined programme to promote this area. Cultural awareness is promoted successfully.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has established useful procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal and academic development.

Links with parents and the impact of their involvement with the work of the school is good.

The curriculum does not develop sufficiently the use of literacy and numeracy in other subjects. ICT provision and its use, is inadequate at present. Opportunities to foster pupils' independent learning and research skills are underdeveloped. A good number of visits and visitors enrich pupils' experiences at school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and he manages it very well. He is supported capably by the deputy headteacher who acts as a valuable role model for other subject leaders and the very efficient special educational needs co-ordinator.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well, are supportive and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Data is analysed. Lessons in English, mathematics and science are monitored and information gathered is used well to support improvement. Other subjects are not, as yet, evaluated sufficiently.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Resources, both financial and human are used effectively.

Accommodation is satisfactory overall. It has recently been improved significantly. Displays of work add to the learning environment considerably. There is an appropriate level of staffing. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution. Resources are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately.

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 enjoy going to school. • They think the teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. • Children are expected to work hard. • Parents feel there have been significant improvements to the stability and leadership and management of the school since the recent arrival of the new headteacher and deputy headteacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have some concerns about behaviour in the school. • A significant number of parents feel their children do not have sufficient homework. • Almost half of the parents would like more information about how their children are getting on. • Some parents would like closer contact with the school. • Parents would appreciate more out of school activities for their children.

The inspection team supports the positive views of parents. The new leadership team is having a very significant and beneficial impact. The vast majority of pupils behave well. Homework provision is satisfactory. The school has recently improved the quality of reports to parents. Links with parents are well-established. There is a satisfactory range of activities for pupils out of school hours and pupils have access to a variety of additional opportunities over and above what is required.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Many pupils join St Joseph's at different times because of the school's close proximity to the RAF station at Brize Norton. Pupils can be affected during troubled times, such as those recently experienced during the Gulf War. Year groups go through significant changes and this means that trends are difficult to analyse and interpret. This school has also been through a period of great instability since the last inspection. It has had four different headteachers and a very significant number of teaching staff changes (seven). The effect of these disruptions is most noticeable in the standards reached by pupils in Year 5 and 6. Data collected by the school suggests that pupils who stay at the school throughout their primary education usually make satisfactory or better progress, but it is clear that standards reached at the end of Year 6 have declined since the previous inspection and there has been a noticeable downward trend in all core subjects.
2. The arrival of the new headteacher has already had a major and positive impact on standards of work and behaviour, the quality of teaching and learning and the coverage of the curriculum. This has ensured that the school is in a strong position to recover from its troubled times and is on course to reverse the negative trend. The headteacher has introduced very effective systems to track and monitor individual pupil progress. These are used very well to identify areas requiring improvement, both at a whole school and individual level. Targets are set to ensure that pupils build successfully on their prior attainment. These procedures are already proving helpful in raising standards.
3. The attainment of children entering the reception class is generally in line with that found nationally. Most children only have two terms in the reception class. Within this class children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and achieve better standards in this area. This has a positive effect on other areas of learning. They do well in acquiring communication language and literacy skills as well as their mathematical competence and their knowledge and understanding of the world. When they enter full-time education at the beginning of Year 1 the majority of pupils' attainment is at least in line with the national averages in all areas and for a significant number it is above in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Since the previous inspection there have been improvements in planning to support children's learning and this helps them to achieve well.
4. The 2002 national tests for eleven year olds showed attainment was below the national average in English and mathematics but average in science. The number of pupils gaining higher levels was below average in both English and mathematics and well below average in science. All results were well below average in comparison with similar schools. Inspection findings show that, at present, standards in speaking and listening and reading are above expectations but in writing and mathematics they are still below that expected. In science standards are above average. Early indications from the results of the 2003 end of Year 6 national tests support these findings. More pupils are gaining higher levels, particularly in science, as a result of the individual pupil tracking system that has been used to monitor each pupil's progress ensuring teachers offer more challenge to higher attainers in the core subjects. This system also makes sure that pupils identified as having special educational needs make good

progress. Ethnic minority groups are also considered and their progress is monitored purposefully.

5. In the 2002 national tests for seven year olds attainment was in line with national averages for reading and mathematics but below those of similar schools. In writing, results were below average in relation to all schools and well below the standards achieved in similar schools. Results of national tests for 2003 and lesson observations show that standards reached by pupils currently in Year 2 have improved. Their attainment is above that expected in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. More pupils have achieved higher levels because teachers have successfully tracked pupils' individually and have challenged them appropriately. The good standards achieved by this age group are similar to those reported at the last inspection in English but noteworthy improvements in mathematics and science have been made. Standards in these two subjects have risen from satisfactory to above average. Teachers employ the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well to make certain pupils build on their prior knowledge and understanding. Pupils are all progressing well and are building successfully on their prior attainment.
6. Inspection evidence gathered from looking at pupils' books and analysing school based test results show that standards have recently improved throughout Years 1 to 4 and improvements are set to permeate through to the oldest classes. The headteacher has taken responsibility for English and has implemented an action plan that supports the raising of standards in writing. He monitors lessons and gives feedback to teachers to help them improve the standards pupils are achieving. He also acts as a role-model to promote better awareness of the Literacy Strategy as a tool for raising standards. The deputy headteacher is leading mathematics in a similar way and she too is taking appropriate action to address the unsatisfactory standards at the end of Year 6. Her work on the development of ICT, although very new, is clearly mapped out and takes appropriate account of the issues requiring attention in order to raise standards.
7. Recently introduced systems to track pupil progress are set to enable the school to do even better at matching pupils' potential to their actual achievement. Strategies are in place to monitor and support the attainment of boys; an aspect which the school has rightly identified as an area for consideration. This has already proved fruitful. These systems, alongside the work of the school to promote and improve the already successful teaching of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, are having a positive impact on standards, particularly in younger classes. However, the underdevelopment of the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum has had a negative effect on overall standards achieved at the end of Year 6.
8. Attainment in ICT is close to that expected at the end of Year 2 but is unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6. This is because skills developed recently in reception and Years 1 and 2 have yet to filter through into classes further up the school. There are gaps in the knowledge and understanding of older pupils caused by teachers' previous lack of expertise, an issue currently being addressed. The lack of hardware for pupils to use is also poised to be dealt with as the school has already purchased a bank of computers and the refurbishment of a classroom dedicated to the development of ICT skills takes place during the summer holidays. It is set to be functional at the start of the autumn term. The school improvement plan rightly prioritises the need to develop pupils' development of skills and their use of ICT in all subjects.
9. Standards in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education are satisfactory at the end of both key stages as was reported at the previous inspection.

Their development has been impeded by the school's unsettled period, the concentration on English, mathematics and science and a lack of focused monitoring. Insufficient evidence was collected to judge standards in music at the end of Year 6 but they are good at the end of Year 2. In history at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards, although satisfactory, are not as high as they were previously because there is not enough teaching time allocated to this subject. An analysis of pupils' work shows that there are missed opportunities to develop literacy skills in history because pupils, especially older ones, spend a lot of time completing mundane tasks and worksheets.

10. Pupils recently arrived at the school are supported well and their abilities and needs are recognised. They are all well catered for within their classes and the school's provision for this aspect of its work ensures that pupils are now doing the very best they can. The school's identified priority to promote even more productive learning for pupils showing greater talent is appropriate.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Behaviour is satisfactory and attitudes are good. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils say they are very happy to be at school. They almost always behave well, both in and out of the classroom. They are well aware of and are clear about the rewards for good behaviour, effort and concern for others. They are reminded of the class rules that they have helped to formulate and which are prominently displayed in class. A very small minority of pupils have specific behaviour problems that can unsettle other pupils but very good procedures to promote better standards of behaviour are effective and are having a positive impact on them.
12. The reinforcement of what is right and wrong and what constitutes appropriate behaviour in 'circle time' and other lessons helps to promote pupils' respect for one another and their good relationships. Pupils themselves remark on the significant change in behaviour in the past few months. They describe a new focus in lessons and a more positive attitude towards behaviour by all staff, class teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime assistants. These positive developments are linked in pupils' minds with the recent appointment of the headteacher. Pupils recognise and appreciate an increase in the number of clubs that provide plenty of opportunities for football and netball. Pupils respect teachers and other adults. They have confidence that adults will treat them fairly and with respect and teachers will do their best to interest and help them.
13. Pupils make lunchtime a pleasurable experience and during break times they generally play well together. Pupils and parents say that lunchtime behaviour has improved, thanks in part to the rich variety of play equipment now available, and to the sensible rota arrangements, which avoids too many pupils crowding onto the playground when the grass is too damp to play on.
14. Pupils are friendly towards and welcoming to visitors. They happily talk about what they are doing. Older pupils volunteer to care for younger ones at break time. Behaviour in assembly is good but pupils do not as yet participate whole-heartedly. Incidents of bullying are rare and there have been no incidents of racism. Pupils say that:
'... the school is good – they (teachers) listen to you – they solve problems if there is trouble. The school is great for education.'

15. Each class has a weekly personal and social education lesson in which pupils take part in conversations, discussions and activities to help them consider how to live together more successfully and safely. These 'circle time' lessons give pupils opportunities to talk to each other about their feelings in a tolerant and confidential atmosphere. Staff training in this area to further encourage pupils' personal growth and to help pupils to deal with their own emotions in a constructive way has been successful.
16. Attendance is above the national average. However, the proportion of absences that have not been satisfactorily explained is well above average because a very small number of pupils are regularly absent in spite of the best efforts of the school. The school has recently attended training to implement a newly purchased computer system to monitor and track absenteeism. There have been three temporary exclusions in the current year involving two pupils, but none since the implementation of the new behaviour policy. During the previous year there were eight temporary exclusions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the total of forty five lessons seen, seven were very good, seventeen good and twenty-one satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. More than half of lessons seen were good or better. Teaching has improved since the last inspection because teachers are better at planning to ensure all pupils learn well. Higher quality lessons occurred throughout the school although the majority were in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 4. During the inspection supply teachers covered the absence of the Year 6 teacher.
18. Teachers are a committed team. Although there are only three teachers, two full-time and one part-time, who were at the school during the last inspection, they have worked very hard to maintain equilibrium for pupils during recent times, welcoming and supporting new members of staff as they have arrived.
19. The last inspection reported that teachers were not always successful in ensuring that pupils built on their previous knowledge in a systematic way. This issue has been addressed by the school through the beneficial implementation of the government schemes of work. Recently introduced assessment systems are already having a positive impact and are poised to help this element of the school's practice even further. Lesson plans usually identify how pupils of different abilities can be challenged or supported so that they learn appropriately. At present there is still insufficient use made of assessment to make sure that lessons are always adapted to build on the progress made previously.
20. The teaching of the reception children is good because the teacher plans appropriate activities for children and the tasks set are purposeful and match their learning needs. The teaching assistant follows the teacher's planning closely and provides very good support to these young children, especially those who require additional help with their language development. This was very apparent during role-play activities such as those in the class shop. The teacher's commitment to in-service training has provided her with valuable information to guide and ensure quality provision. The classroom is bright and well organised. Improvements to the school building mean that these children will have a purpose built classroom after the summer with an enclosed outside play area. At present the teacher and her assistant make good use of a cordoned off area just outside the classroom. Here, children take part in many stimulating activities. The teacher ensures that children feel safe and secure, enabling them to make overall good progress as they build on their successes particularly in

personal, social and emotional development and in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.

21. The teaching of the Year 1 and 2 pupils is usually good because lessons are well planned. Teachers are clear about what is to be taught and share this with the pupils. Lessons are recapped at the end to judge how well pupils have learnt and to help prepare and guide the next steps in learning. This was apparent in a mathematics lesson when pupils were working on the values of digits in two figure numbers in Year 1 and as Year 2 pupils explored the appropriateness of endings to stories. Teachers clearly explained the purpose of the lessons at the beginning and drew lessons to a close by asking pupils to explain their understanding of what they had learnt.
22. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 usually benefit from lessons that have clear introductions, thorough preparation and good questioning which effectively reinforces previous learning. Teachers make sure new vocabulary is introduced and explained at the start of sessions. For example, in a science lesson with Year 4 pupils the teacher made sure all pupils were conversant with the terms predator, prey, food chain, consumer and producer. In Year 3, in a physical education lesson, the teacher made sure the pupils were clear about the tasks they had to do in order to improve their sprinting skills. The planning of lessons in these classes takes account of the needs of different ability groups successfully.
23. In Year 5 the teacher is always thoroughly planned, well-resourced and she ensures that strategies to manage pupil behaviour are consistent. However, the very small number of pupils who sometimes have difficulty in applying themselves to their learning, do interrupt and slow the pace of some lessons. Teaching assistants play a very valuable role in this class and they made a significant contribution to pupils' learning especially when they work with groups of pupils to support and further develop work related to the Literacy Strategy. During the inspection the school made adequate arrangements to cover for the absence of the permanent teacher of the Year 6 class. The two supply teachers' lack of familiarity with the class had an impact on the quality of the lessons seen and even though teaching was satisfactory the productiveness of lessons was more variable. Lessons with these oldest pupils did not always motivate or stimulate them. More successful lessons did ensure that pupils got going on tasks promptly. For instance, after a snappy and profitable introduction to a mathematics lesson, pupils exhibited their enthusiasm for tasks using a calculator that challenged their understanding of large numbers. At the end there was a review of the lesson and profitable discussion to take learning forward. Teachers usually enjoy productive relationships with their pupils.
24. Recent monitoring of teaching by the headteacher, subject co-ordinators and representatives from the local education authority has proved profitable and helped to provide useful feedback to teachers about how to improve their teaching, particularly in planning for the core subjects and in implementing the national strategies even more profitably. Teachers are using this feedback productively and this is impacting favourably on improving the quality of their teaching.
25. In lessons throughout the school teachers pay insufficient attention to enabling pupils to take responsibility for, and use their initiative to undertake independent research. Tasks such as these are too few. This is apparent in subjects such as history and geography where pupils' workbooks show they are often involved in very similar activities requiring the completion of too many worksheets and this has a negative impact on their learning.
26. The pace of lessons is variable and teachers sometimes do not make enough use of the time available to them. Pupils have to sit occasionally for too long before getting

involved in tasks that stimulate discussion and corporate work. There are missed opportunities for pupils to share opinions as they are listening to the teacher for prolonged periods of time leading to a little restlessness and fidgeting.

27. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactorily in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have implemented the national strategies with worthwhile results. Introductions to numeracy lessons are often lively and pupils respond positively to the quick-fire question-and-answer parts of the lessons. Teachers are committed to raising standards in reading and writing, and they look for opportunities to promote these skills in the main part of literacy lessons. The work they do with groups of pupils, such as guiding readers through a text, is valuable, as is the support given by teaching assistants when they help pupils in small groups. However, literacy and numeracy skills are not yet sufficiently well promoted across other areas of the curriculum. Pupils do not for instance have enough opportunities to practise writing in a variety of contexts. The use of worksheets also inhibits the further development of writing.
28. Teachers try to integrate ICT into their lessons and achieve this with varying degrees of success. For example, the use of ICT to support a lesson on weather in Year 5 was commendable. Pupils accessed information from the Internet about weather reports from around the world and within this country. Year 2 pupils used a programmable toy successfully. They entered data that made it turn at right angles. However, although most teachers have attended the nationally-promoted programme for subject development and they are gaining greater confidence in using ICT in their lessons, there are times when more could be done to develop pupils' skills because teachers' knowledge and confidence is still lacking.
29. Teachers plan and offer pupils time to think spiritually in class worship and each class has a display to celebrate the Catholic faith. However, there are only a few occasions when lessons have a sense of excitement and wonder as when Year 1 pupils experienced the difference between looking at objects in the light and dark.
30. There are some examples of marking in pupils' books when teachers refer back to the aims of the piece of work so that pupils know how well they are doing but, overall, this aspect of the school's work is not satisfactory. Many books are left without any constructive comments. This area of the school's work is currently under scrutiny in order to promote a manageable and workable policy. There are also times when teachers do not pay sufficient attention to how well pupils present their work.
31. Teachers generally use homework to support learning productively, as when they practise using the correct terminology to describe what they see happening in science investigations. The school is, however, reviewing its use to ensure a consistent approach, a lack of which has been noted by parents. Teachers encourage pupils to take their reading books home and observations in 'reading diaries' are informative, especially in the younger classes.
32. Teachers and support staff work very well together. This collaboration is a really strong feature of many lessons and ensures that pupils with special educational needs are included as are traveller children and pupils from ethnic minorities. Teaching assistants are briefed by teachers and know how they can contribute to pupils' learning especially when they are working with the very small number of pupils who are taking part in group activities to support the Literacy Strategy.

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

33. Since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress towards establishing schemes of work that define clearly the knowledge, skills and concepts to be taught. Published schemes are in place for non-core subjects and science, with the national strategies for literacy and numeracy appropriately established. Much work has been done on planning since the arrival of the headteacher. There is now a coherent approach. Long, medium and short-term plans are evident across the school. However, medium term plans for many subjects are not always transferred productively to lesson plans to identify what skills are being taught.
34. The reception class provision is planned well and is in line with the recommended guidance. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum for these children did not offer them enough variety. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the infant and junior classes are satisfactory. Although the curriculum meets the statutory requirements, it is insufficiently balanced. There is not enough teaching time allocated to all subjects to ensure pupils can achieve as well as they might in history. Throughout the school the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well and are having a positive impact on pupils' learning especially in reception and Years 1 to 4.
35. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good across the school. The strong ethos of the school lays stress upon the importance of encouraging pupils to care for each other and learn to work and play co-operatively. School life is characterised by a caring and mutually supportive atmosphere. Pupils and teachers respect each other and pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of self-esteem. Charity work helps pupils to focus on those less fortunate than themselves. The provision of a formal personal, social and health education programme has recently been put in place following specific training for teachers. It is already having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and learning. Policies are in place for sex and relationships education as well as drugs awareness and are timetabled for review.
36. Pupils have suitable opportunities to take part in an appropriate range of extra-curricular opportunities. These opportunities have not been easy to establish due to the turnover of staff. However, pupils experience a variety of sports, musical and other activities to enrich their learning experiences and the school states an intention to extend these. Visits to the locality, museums and further afield, as well as visitors to the school who share their experiences and expertise, broaden and enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world outside school. A residential visit for older pupils is useful in supporting pupils' learning in subjects such as science, geography and physical education. The school has formed good links with the local community and these links contribute well to pupils' learning.
37. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good overall and fully complies with the Code of Practice. Pupils benefit from being fully involved in all that the school does. They are very well supported by teaching assistants and fellow pupils. In the very best practice and where adult support is available, pupils' individual education plans form the basis of realistic objectives in lessons. This was evident in Year 2 where the teaching assistant was very clear about the expectations of the teacher and successfully supported two pupils as they developed their comparisons between flowering plants. They made good progress in their learning.
38. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good with some particular strengths in moral guidance. The school has improved aspects of this area of work. The provision for spiritual development is productive because the warm and caring atmosphere in the school encourages pupils' spiritual growth. Pupils are also encouraged to reflect and comment upon issues and personal qualities during 'circle

time' sessions. These times give pupils opportunities to share their thoughts and experiences in a supportive atmosphere. These help to lead them towards greater self-knowledge and spiritual enquiry.

39. Provision for moral development is very good. The school has recently introduced a suitable and effective policy for promoting high standards of behaviour and a tightly structured framework for dealing with that which is unacceptable. Pupils are well aware of the expectations of teachers and other staff. They usually respond positively, although, for the very small minority of pupils this presents more of a problem. The school recognises this and does its utmost to make sure all pupils are fully included in its work. Rewards and encouragement underline the importance of understanding not only the difference between right and wrong, but also the reasons. Pupils help to draft the class rules and these are referred to regularly. Pupils value the rewards which they receive and are proud of stickers that they can earn and enjoy earning the right to sit at the top table at lunch. The older pupils have noted a marked change in the way in which they are encouraged to learn about right and wrong in the last year by all teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime staff.
40. The whole school ethos and relationships around the school provide good opportunities to develop pupils' social skills. There are opportunities for pupils to develop these skills through residential visits and the other extra activities the school encourages pupils to participate in, such as the 'Marian Procession' when pupils donate flowers to older residents in the town. Pupils raise money for charity. The recently elected school council has started to meet. Young children in the reception class are encouraged to make choices and to work independently and this encourages creativity and self-reliance.
41. Provision for cultural development is good. Displays seen around the school show an awareness of other parts of the world and the successful use of the Internet has broadened pupils' experiences and understanding. The school welcomes visitors into school to support pupils' learning. For example, an African drumming group came to provide workshops for pupils. The work that was produced linked to a whole school topic on Africa and is in evidence throughout the school in art work, displays and in pupils' books. A visitor to school explained the work of a charity to support relief work in Uganda. Pupils also study their own culture constructively through history topics and visits to places of interest. They participate in local events. There is, however, an inappropriate number of books in the library to extend pupils' awareness of multicultural dimensions and this is being addressed by the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. Staff have very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There have been improvements to this area since the previous inspection. Health and safety procedures are good and the school follows the correct procedures with regards to child protection.
43. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and deal sensitively with any problems which may occur. Teaching assistants are committed and enthusiastic, providing invaluable support to teachers and pupils. The pastoral care provided by the staff for the pupils is good. Discussion groups are used well throughout the school in encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions, as well as a vehicle for them to communicate any fears or concerns in a non-threatening climate. Staff are very sensitive to the welfare of their pupils.

44. There is an established Health and Safety policy and regular safety audits and risk assessments take place. Safety concerns are noted and dealt with conscientiously by governors and senior management, and fire drills take place each term. The school is well looked after. Several members of staff are trained in emergency first aid and take appropriate care of those who need it. There are careful records made of mishaps.
45. A very profitable style of behaviour management has been brought into this school recently. Before this time there had been no clear strategy. The school staff has taken part in training to guide their approach to this personal education programme. Training is proving to be a valuable tool in improving relationships between staff and pupils. The impact of this approach has been very positive with both staff and pupils recognising improvements. There are good systems in place to record and follow up incidents.
46. Registrations are efficient. The school is adopting a computer system to monitor attendance more efficiently. Currently, some absences are not satisfactorily explained.
47. Strategies for assessment and procedures for recording pupils' academic performance in English, mathematics and science are good. This area has improved significantly since the last inspection. Tracking sheets for all subjects are being introduced and used by staff. Some moderation processes are in place to help teachers reach a common understanding of National Curriculum levels of attainment in the core subjects and of expected standards in national tests. Class teachers assess individual pupils using assessment sheets linked to the schemes of work. The results of mathematics tests taken by pupils in the school have recently been analysed to identify areas of strength and weakness and this information is being used to inform the future planning of work and address individual areas of need. Data is collected so the school can track the achievement of ethnic minority pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Under the leadership of the new headteacher St Joseph's is establishing good links with parents. In their letters to the inspection team, and at a meeting, parents said that behaviour, communications, leadership and management, are all strongly improving elements within the school. Three, well-attended open evenings gave parents an opportunity to meet the then new headteacher and helped to foster good relations from the start. However, some parents may not be aware of the progress that has been made in the recent past, and the school has no formal way of gathering parents' opinions about the school on a regular basis.
49. The majority of parents are interested in and become involved with their children's learning and support the work of the school. Although a significant number expressed some doubts about how closely the school works with them inspection evidence shows that the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator do make themselves available to parents as do other members of staff and regular and informative newsletters keep parents up to date with school matters.
50. The annual report format which the school has revised this summer, describes pupils' progress, is informative, and tells parents how well their children are succeeding and what they should do to progress further. This format is addressing parents' concerns about reporting progress. Reports are discussed with parents at consultations. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to take part in regular reviews of their children's progress.

51. Several parents come to regular class assemblies on Fridays. Most parents attend two consultations a year to receive information about their children's progress. The school now sends parents information about what their children will be learning in a termly curriculum grid. Although this is useful it could be difficult for parents to support learning based on this rather general information. Equally the use of reading diaries or homework record books is sporadic and there is little tradition in the school for parents and teachers to exchange informal written comments or concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs work closely with the school and are involved in the structuring of learning plans.
52. Parents' contribution to the work of the school and to their children's education is good. A few parents support in classrooms and in the clubs that have recently been set up. There is an active parent/school association that has raised useful funds, and importantly has contributed the strong community spirit that supports families who join the school community. The proportion of parents who respond positively to the home/school agreement has disappointed the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

53. St Joseph's has an extremely capable headteacher who is providing a very clear educational direction for the school. His plans for the way forward reflect the aims of the school well. He is working very hard to lead the school after an extremely difficult period. The problems faced by the school have included high staff and pupil turnover which has had an impact on pupil progress and led to an overall decline in standards. His substantial efforts are proving to be successful and are complemented by a newly appointed, efficient deputy headteacher and a skilled special educational needs co-ordinator. Together they form the senior management team and ensure that the overall leadership and management of the school are good. They have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have implemented helpful strategies to improve teaching and learning in order to raise standards.
54. The headteacher has played an important part in establishing the value of the role of the subject co-ordinator by taking English as his area. He has monitored literacy lessons and given demonstration lessons in order to improve teachers' expertise and confidence. He has initiated staff development in areas he has recognised as needing improvement. The deputy headteacher has assumed the role of co-ordinator for both mathematics and ICT. She has also monitored lessons and has an analysis of data that clearly shows where the school needs to go next to raise standards in mathematics. Her work with ICT is on course to be further developed when the new suite is opened in September. Successful intervention from the local education authority support services has also had a significant impact in some areas. For example, planning for the reception children has been developed and this has had an effect on children's learning. Some initiatives have had insufficient time to fully impact on the work of the school. For example, the relatively newly appointed non-core subject co-ordinators have not yet had the opportunity to share expertise or monitor teaching in all classes and areas of the curriculum.
55. Many governors are new to the school. They are all receiving substantial and valuable training from the local education authority to improve their effectiveness further. They are very supportive of the work of the school and regard the initiatives started by the headteacher in high esteem. Governors have been involved in the establishment of the school's development plan incorporating discussions with the Diocesan Board. They have started to develop a monitoring role through classroom visits but, as yet, their views as those of a 'critical friend' are less well developed. The headteacher is ensuring that governors are well aware of and use assessment and performance data to guide and inform future planning in order to continue to strive for higher standards.

This is an improving school with a good capacity to continue making progress in raising standards.

56. The key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed satisfactorily although the majority have only been dealt with since the arrival of the new headteacher. The school's plan for improvement is costed, has correctly identified priorities, targets and success criteria. As a result of this, specific action plans have been written for the core subjects and some non-core subjects. A valuable programme for monitoring teaching in the core subjects has been put into place alongside a performance management programme for all teaching staff. The improving ethos and rejuvenated staff morale owes much to the headteacher's direction and commitment. Co-ordinators of core subjects are beginning to have an impact on their subject areas through whole school planning and support for one another and this is already having a positive impact on standards although there is a lot more to do.
57. School buildings are well maintained and at present the accommodation is satisfactory overall. However, governors had recognised the limitations of some aspects of the buildings and have provided a superb Foundation Stage unit complete with an enclosed and partly covered outside play area. The forthcoming opening of this unit has enabled the school to plan some internal reorganisation of classroom spaces. From September there will be a designated room for a computer suite. It will house fifteen computers which are all bought and paid for. This project will, at the same time, deal with the unsatisfactory situation of the Year 2 classroom being used as a thoroughfare.
58. Budgets are planned appropriately and are monitored well. All designated funds are spent in the correct areas. The governors ensure that money is spent wisely and support the plan for improvement. It looks to ensure that it follows the principles of getting 'best value for money' in all its spending decisions and is successful. Money granted to support pupils with special educational needs is used well to ensure that they are fully included in learning. The school is rightly proud of its intention to be fully inclusive and it succeeds. Pupils with disabilities are fully integrated into the life of the school as are traveller children.
59. Financial planning ensures a good staff ratio. There is a prudent, strategic plan for the use of accumulated reserves. This is to make certain that staffing arrangements are secure for the next school year and there are sufficient, suitably qualified and experienced teachers on the staff. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution. The school produces information for new members of staff. Resources are satisfactory, although the library requires substantial improvement. Information and communication technology for office administration is efficiently used. The capable school administrator provides a warm welcome to parents and visitors.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to build upon the school's recent successes in raising standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 4; staff and governors should rigorously monitor the school development plan so correctly identified priorities are addressed further in relation to:

- (1) Raising standards in mathematics, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 6. (Paragraphs 4, 8, 28, 69, 70, 75, 83, 87, 121, 122)*
- (2) Introducing more opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other areas of the curriculum. (Paragraphs 9, 27, 28, 82, 90, 98, 101, 118, 124)*
- (3) Implementing a marking policy that ensures pupils are well informed about what they have achieved and what they need to do next in order to improve further. (Paragraphs 30, 80, 89, 97)*
- (4) Providing subject managers with opportunities to monitor and evaluate non-core subjects. (Paragraphs 9, 54, 56, 110, 114, 120, 125, 129, 135)*

The school may also wish to consider the following:

- Reviewing how teaching time is allocated to subjects to ensure there is sufficient breadth and balance to the curriculum. (Paragraphs 9, 34, 115)
- Providing pupils with more challenge and further opportunities to take responsibility for and initiate their own learning. (Paragraphs 25, 80, 118)

Issues marked with * have already been identified by the school within its own development plan.

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	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	17	21	0	0	0
Percentage	0	16%	38%	47%	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	177
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	27

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	10	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	15	18
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	27	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (91)	86 (100)	100 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	18
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	27	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (88)	93 (94)	100 (94)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	11	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	18
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	22	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (75)	77 (80)	94 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	15
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	20	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (74)	74 (79)	84 (84)
	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	148	4	0
White – Irish	6	4	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	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	5	0	0
Chinese	0	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)	8.44
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y1

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	191

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	414,011
Total expenditure	407,203
Expenditure per pupil	2,554
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,566
Balance carried forward to next year	31,374

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9.85
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	11

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	177
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	35	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	45	7	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	18	52	18	3	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	47	15	15	3
The teaching is good.	38	53	5	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	28	37	8	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	37	53	5	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	48	5	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	27	38	17	5	13
The school is well led and managed.	32	55	3	3	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	57	2	2	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	47	28	5	8

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. Children are admitted into the reception class in September or January according to their birth date. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Children's progress is good. The teacher's detailed information about their achievements and inspection evidence indicates that the majority of them will reach or exceed the expected levels of the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are on course to achieve the anticipated level in the areas of physical and creative development. Foundation Stage Profiles and assessments are used successfully to track how well children are doing. Children who are identified as having special educational needs are very well supported and thrive in the caring surroundings.
62. Since the previous inspection improvements have been made to the provision for these youngest children. Opportunities for creative development have improved significantly. The school has also provided a new, purpose built classroom for them. This is to be opened in September. Equipment is sufficient and of a good quality. It is very well organised. The purchase of bikes and trikes has been budgeted for and is set to enhance further the range of activities available for physical development in the newly established secure outdoor area. Children arrive at the school from all areas of the town and eight different pre-school groups. The teacher visits children in some of these pre-school settings before they start school and this, alongside introductory visits to school, helps to provide a smooth entry to the class. The teacher has also produced an informative booklet for parents of children about to start school and the headteacher is involved in the successful induction processes that inform new parents about their children starting school.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Teaching in this area is good. The environment created by the teacher is particularly worthwhile and productive as she and her assistant create a very calm and relaxed atmosphere in which children are safe and secure. They respond to this positively. All children are set to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area and the vast majority will exceed it because they are given opportunities to make choices and take decisions for themselves. During discussion times they wait for their turn without fuss and when the register is called they listen quietly for their name before responding appropriately. Children's behaviour is usually good. In speaking and listening sessions these young children sustain their concentration for a reasonable length of time although there are odd occasions when they spend too long sitting on the carpet which results in some restlessness. They share, play together happily and work hard.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Teaching in this area is good and ensures children make at least sound and usually better progress. Many are beyond the national expectations of the Early Learning Goals when they start Year 1. The class teacher's role is complemented extremely effectively by the teaching assistant who takes part in very productive role play activities to stimulate language development. For example, a group of lower attaining children were encouraged to act out the story of 'The Gingerbread Man'. The teaching assistant acted as a narrator, encouraging children to chant 'Run, run as fast as you can' and giving them prompts to add their contribution to the retelling of the story.

Although some were reluctant to perform the assistant gave them the confidence to have a go. Children also made good progress as they took part in well structured tasks with the teacher who challenged them to make an attempt at sounding out words and supported them as they made an attempt to read text, following it in a 'big book'. Although the majority of children lack pre-reading skills when they start school they learn quickly and know how to handle books carefully. Children show an interest in books and have a go at recognising words and saying letter sounds. A significant number of children who begin to show more ability are encouraged and given opportunities to read aloud to adults and this they do with growing confidence and improving skills. They tackle simple but progressively more demanding books. Well-structured games in literacy sessions ensure they learn how to sound out the initial letters of words. They try to read unfamiliar words by combining their knowledge of consonants and vowels and by looking at pictures for clues. They use this good understanding of the sounds of letters to join sounds together as they get to grips with writing stories for themselves. For example, some children retold, in writing, the story of 'The Gingerbread Man' without any help and made impressive attempts at words such as 'jumped'. Role-play situations such as the class office are used well to stimulate language skills and give the children opportunities to have a go at writing letters and notes to friends or have a chat on the telephone. Links with other activities are forged as when a child wrote a message to put in a bottle to complement the sea-side theme.

Mathematical development

65. Teaching in this area is good and ensures that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress and a significant number do even better. They reach standards in line with the Early Learning Goals and many exceed them. Once again role-play situations play an important part in enabling children to achieve appropriately. It encourages them to use mathematical language correctly. For example, they discuss the value of coins as they play at buying items in the class shop. When working with the teacher at the end of a numeracy session children could offer suggestions about the value of money. They knew that to make ten pence you could use either five two pence pieces or two five pence pieces. Children learn number rhymes and play games that go a long way to supporting their learning about number language. They take part in fun games to help them learn positional and directional words. Good quality displays around the classroom provide additional opportunities for children to become familiar with numbers and their values. When cooking they weigh and measure the ingredients carefully and successfully. They know that flour is measured in grams. They can fill in missing numbers between 10 and 20 and many can count confidently beyond 20.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Teaching in this area is good because children explore and find out for themselves. The majority are reaching or exceeding the anticipated levels of the Early Learning Goals. The activities relating to this area are often closely and usefully linked. Learning is very well supported by the teaching assistant. For instance, when given opportunities to cook 'Gingerbread Men' children discussed with her how to follow recipes, measure ingredients and then saw how heat changes a mixture. Their involvement in the task was clear to see and they thoroughly enjoyed taking part. Historically based lessons encourage the children to understand how things have changed over time. Visits support their learning productively. For example, they visited a farm to look at old farming implements and visitors to the school described seaside holidays from the past. Children are given opportunities to use the computer and they have access to a number of recently purchased programs that support their learning in many areas. They used the computer to explore a map of a treasure

island, finding out about what symbols represent. Class collages started discussions about the life-cycle of a butterfly and a 'home-made' light-house helped them to explore how batteries and bulbs worked to produce a source of light. Designing and making tasks are well-planned and the children use a wide variety of good quality construction sets. They make models from a variety of materials. Children have talked about fruit from all parts of the world and have expressed opinions about places they have visited. A picture to represent the story of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' was used to develop children's geographical awareness well. The children added signs and words to reinforce their knowledge of features in a locality, such as village, mountain, cave, hill, forest and lake. The parish priest, (the Chair of Governors), made a significant contribution to children's learning when he led a re-enactment of a baptism at the church to develop children's understanding of the meaning of the ceremony.

Physical development

67. Teaching in this area is good. All children make sound progress and reach appropriate levels that are in line with expectations. Children are encouraged to develop their hand control through cutting, sticking and using small equipment carefully. They fill containers in the water tray carefully, counting as they go. They handle pots of 'bubble mixture' sensibly and blow the bubbles carefully, counting them as they 'pop'. In this way the class teacher makes sure children practise hand-eye co-ordination. They cut out, stick and manipulate other tools and equipment so that they develop their hand control. For example, they use rollers and cutters to make 'Gingerbread Men' out of 'play-dough'. Although the children do not have large ride-on toys at present these are budgeted for and the area designated for their use has been prepared. During physical education lessons children use bats and balls well, with developing co-ordination and they can run and skip showing an awareness of space and body control.

Creative development

68. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. The teacher provides a wealth of high quality equipment and resources to stimulate imaginative play. This ensures that the majority of children reach the anticipated levels. Displays of work show that children are able to produce colourful and inventive work of an appropriate standard. They are given time to draw, paint, cut and stick, print, model in clay and use construction sets to build. For example, when drawing shells they looked closely using hand lenses and reproduced the patterns carefully. As they constructed a boat out of a large cardboard box they discussed the colours to use and made decisions about how to make the flag without any adult help showing an ability to assess which materials would be best for the task. Imaginative play is encouraged in many ways and is supported very well by the teaching assistant. Children join in with singing and rhymes, taking part with enthusiasm. Activities linked to African art have contributed productively to raising children's awareness of different art forms as well as giving them opportunities to develop more understanding of another culture.

ENGLISH

69. In comparison with all schools the results of the national tests for seven year olds in 2002 showed pupils attained standards that were above the national average in reading but were average for writing. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was average in reading but below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, reading for seven year olds was below average and for writing it was well below. By the age of eleven the standards that pupils attained in the 2002 tests were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. These results, although difficult to fully interpret because of the high number of pupils joining and

leaving the school, indicate a declining trend in standards in English since the last inspection. They also show that pupils have not been making sufficient progress. Turbulence within the school's leadership and management alongside high staff turnover have had a significant impact on standards, particularly in the oldest classes.

70. The evidence of work seen during the inspection and a preliminary analysis of results from the 2003 tests suggests that standards in writing at the age of seven have improved and are now above expectations. An initial analysis of information from the 2003 tests and work seen during the inspection suggest that by the age of eleven pupils are achieving average standards in English overall, but pupils' writing still remains below expectations. In Years 3 and 4 standards are above expectations.
71. Standards in speaking and listening are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to practise and develop speaking and listening skills in lessons, especially in those that relate to their personal and social development. For example, pupils of all ages make presentations to their peers when justifying themselves as a member of the school council. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 share ideas about their science investigations and communicate successfully their findings to one another. They remember and use subject specific vocabulary accurately as they did when explaining their understanding of predator and prey relationships in Year 4. They grow in confidence as they express their ideas and put forward shared information. For example, Year 3 pupils talked about changes to the town of Carterton since the building of Brize Norton RAF station and the effect it had on the area. They offer appropriate explanations to questions about characters in their storybooks. In Year 6 pupils have the confidence to talk to parents about their residential experience on the Isle of Wight and share ideas and express feelings and beliefs during 'circle time' sessions. There are some examples, however, of lessons with the oldest pupils that show a reluctance to respond to teachers' questioning. Pupils have some opportunities to take part in role-play activities in class but drama does not, at present, appear as a regular, planned feature of the English curriculum.
72. Standards in reading by the age of seven are good. Pupils can read fluently with appropriate expression, using sounds and pictures to help them tackle unfamiliar words. They are articulate when discussing the characters and the plots in their story. They predict outcomes and recount stories correctly. Pupils are aware of the function of an author and an illustrator, and higher attainers understand the reason for having chapters in a book. Lower attainers read accurately, but sometimes their reading is hesitant and lacks vitality and expression. Parents of younger children are encouraged to become involved with their child's reading through a diary system and this is a positive means of sharing information and building a useful home-school dialogue.
73. By the age of eleven reading standards are also good. Pupils read fluently and precisely with a good range of expression and in Year 6 some are use books appropriately for research although there are missed opportunities to develop this further. They are able to evaluate their books and form their own opinions about the contents. They use the contents and index in books to track down information. The school library, which is centrally located, has a very limited range of non fiction books. Most pupils do understand how to use it.
74. By the age of seven, writing standards are above average and pupils make good progress. They are secure in writing instructions, using sequencing skills accurately. For example, they list the instructions for taking a bath. Pupils use vocabulary well when writing story endings linked to work by Quentin Blake. Most pupils develop sound standards of spelling and punctuation and work is presented appropriately. Younger pupils use their phonic knowledge well to support their writing, for example, during a lesson that included the sound 'oo' a pupil used it to help her spell 'sootcase'.

Their writing reflects a variety of styles which includes diary writing, poetry, riddles and new endings for a familiar story. Most pupils join their letters and use an appropriate size with regular spacing. There is some improvement noticeable in books as a result of the school's present focus on handwriting and presentation.

75. Although the standard of writing in Years 3 and 4 is good, by the end of Year 6 it is currently below national expectations. Pupils in the two top classes have not yet recovered sufficiently from the disruptions caused by staffing problems earlier in their education and the good progress made lower down the school has yet to impact on their achievements. Teachers do recognise these issues and do their utmost to address them. They model writing well, acting as a scribe for pupils' ideas and providing key words and phrases as well as introducing a structure of a 'writing frames' as a support. When writing for specific purposes such as play scripts and letter writing the emphasis on handwriting linked to spelling is having a positive effect on pupils' work. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not always produce work of a high quality in content or presentation. Generally pupils in Years 3 and 4 present their work well and spelling is usually accurate with appropriately chosen vocabulary.
76. The range of work throughout the school is appropriate and includes persuasive, journalistic, descriptive text and report writing. Poetry is often based on a simple, repetitive format that provides a very tight structure. There is an over dependence on worksheets and these provide a limited opportunity for pupils to write freely.
77. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with suitably adapted tasks to address their needs. Their individual education plans highlight appropriate targets. They make good progress. In Year 5 valuable support was given to a small group by a teaching assistant who guided pupils through a task, linked to the Literacy Strategy support materials, in order to help them to describe monsters and scary animals using powerful adjectives and adverbs. This was a particularly productive session. Teachers and support staff plan together to ensure areas requiring reinforcement are dealt with effectively.
78. The vast majority of pupils' attitudes to literacy lessons are positive although in Years 5 and 6 some pupils are reluctant to respond to teachers' questioning and show a lack of enthusiasm. Usually pupils are ready to contribute to class discussions. They concentrate well and sustain their effort over time especially when work is well matched to their ability and has clear learning objectives. Relationships between teachers and pupils are friendly and usually respectful. Pupils collaborate well together and recognise that their contribution in the classroom is valued.
79. Teaching in English ranges from satisfactory to good. Most lessons are well planned and delivered at an appropriate pace. Teachers introduce lessons well, often starting with a review of previous learning and the sharing of the aims of the session. They have embraced the principles of the Literacy Strategy effectively so lessons are clearly structured, purposeful and organised. The range of teaching strategies and activities usually sustain pupils' concentration and involvement in the lesson well. Most teachers' use questioning well and their good knowledge is used to reinforce and consolidate learning. In a Year 3 lesson appropriate demands were made on pupils to encourage them to contribute to the analysis of an article from a magazine about a boy and a tiger. In a less successful lesson teacher's questioning did not encourage reluctant pupils to contribute to the discussion about the possibility of a proposed supermarket store being built on the school field. The need to reprimand pupils for their behaviour interrupted the flow and pace of the lesson.
80. In lessons tasks are usually matched well to the level of attainment including those pupils with special educational needs. However, more capable pupils are not always

challenged sufficiently to initiate their own research and opportunities to develop the use of literacy skills in other areas are not promoted sufficiently well. The only planned links with other subjects is within Religious Education. Marking of pupils work is variable in quality. When it is good it is informative and points out clearly to the pupils what they need to do to raise their standards of attainment but overall it is unsatisfactory.

81. Resources in English are of sufficient quality and quantity. Opportunities to use ICT in the subject are limited. The school has appropriate materials to deliver the Literacy Strategy and an adequate range of books for developing children's reading is available in individual classrooms. The library contains a very limited non-fiction selection of books but the school recognises this and has already raised money to improve this facility for its pupils.
82. The headteacher is the literacy co-ordinator. In his first two terms at the school he has had a considerable influence on the subject and the standards achieved. He has monitored teaching, demonstrated lessons and scrutinised work. He has made certain that English is recognised as a priority in the 'School Development Plan' and an appropriate action plan has been drawn up. The policy has been reviewed and all teachers have been monitored to highlight strengths and areas for development. Pupils' work has been scrutinised, and data has been analysed. The need to improve the quality of writing especially at the upper end of the school has been recognised and appropriate strategies to raise these pupils' attainment have been implemented. These include promoting the use of literacy skills in other areas.

MATHEMATICS

83. Since the last inspection standards achieved by 11 year olds have gradually fallen to below those expected nationally. The current low standards seen during the inspection reflect the significant turbulence caused by staff changes the school has endured over the past few years, as well as the high incidence of pupils who move in and out of the school throughout the primary phase. Early indications from national tests taken by Year 6 pupils are that they continue to perform below expectations. Inspection evidence shows, however, that standards reached by Year 3 and Year 4 pupils are showing improvement and are above national expectations. These pupils make good progress. This is supported by results of tests pupils have taken part in. The school has worked hard to address falling standards and has appropriate actions in place in order to pursue the determination to raise standards. However, these have not had sufficient time to impact on standards in Year 6.
84. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in 2002 were back in line with those nationally following a dramatic drop in standards the previous year. Early indications from national tests taken by Year 2 pupils this year are that there is further improvement and pupils meeting their targets.
85. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of place value and of ordering numbers to 100 with many pupils understanding numbers beyond. These young pupils make good progress by acquiring new knowledge and skills and increasing their understanding as they move through the infant phase. From scrutiny of their work they are productive and work at a good pace. They can add on tens, hundreds or units to specific three-digit numbers. Pupils have good mental recall of number facts and show good understanding of number vocabulary. Year 1 pupils make very good progress in using their knowledge of place value to write numbers such as 154 and the most able pupils the number 107. Pupils in the infant phase achieve well because learning tasks are challenging and varied. Year 2 pupils can collect data using a tally chart and collate information on a block graph. The computer

is used profitably to enable pupils to record information and produce a graph independently.

86. Across the school, pupils make good progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding of handling data. By the end of Year 3 pupils have secure knowledge of different ways of recording information, such as horizontal and vertical bar charts and Venn and Carroll diagrams. They make good progress in organising graphs and considering an appropriate scale. With helpful support pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils increase their understanding of the number system and use their knowledge successfully when working with money. Mental recall of multiplication facts is sound. Pupils understand the term multiples and are appropriately challenged by their teacher to use their knowledge of Venn diagrams to sort specific multiples of numbers within a range. They make good progress but quick mental recall of table facts is overall, below that expected for their age. Scrutiny of work shows an improvement in pupils' standards since January, before which teachers relied heavily on giving pupils published worksheets to complete that were often unsuitable and not challenging. Now pupils display more of their own recording skills.
87. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 make sound progress from a low starting point and achieve standards below those expected for this age group. Teachers work hard to reinforce and extend pupils' learning of the number system and the associated vocabulary. Pertinent use of praise and encouragement has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to their work. Year 5 pupils make sound progress in extending written methods to column addition of integers less than 10,000. They have secure understanding of place value and most can use this to add two four-digit numbers by partitioning method. Teachers use a suitable range of activities to challenge and interest these pupils many of whom have difficulty in sustaining concentration. Year 6 pupils, in general, read eight digit numbers and use calculators to decode puzzles involving words with letter values that have aggregate number values from 100 to 1,000,000.
88. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons. Most are confident and keen to offer their ways of working out problems on the whiteboard in front of the class, thus sharing their methods with others so they compare ways of working. As a result of teachers careful planning of tasks to suit the abilities and needs of pupils, pupils' response is positive and they make good effort.
89. The quality of teaching mathematics is consistently good for pupils in the infant classes and satisfactory overall in junior classes with good teaching evident in some aspects of the work. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, provide good pace to lessons, and can use questions very profitably to challenge pupils to think. Learning is also enhanced by the good contribution of support staff. From scrutiny of work, high expectation of the presentation and dating of work are not consistent throughout the school. On occasions it is difficult to follow pupils' progress over time. The school have identified the need to develop pupils' mental strategies and their ability to explain how they arrive at an answer. Although this takes place it does not yet have sufficient regularity in all classes to nurture high quality understanding and achievement by all pupils. Marking is not used as a helpful assessment tool. Work is marked but very limited use is made of quality comments to guide individual pupil's learning forward.
90. Teachers have enthusiastically implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. This, allied to the improvement in teaching styles since the arrival of the new headteacher and deputy headteacher in January this year, is having a positive effect upon standards, particularly in relation to understanding of number and recording calculation skills. There have also been improvements in planning and in the use of assessment

and test results, which are enabling the school to be more effective in matching activities to the needs of the pupils. More could be done to promote the use of numeracy in other areas of the curriculum.

91. Much of this improvement has been initiated by the subject co-ordinator since her recent appointment as deputy headteacher. Data analysis and information gathered from test results are used to identify those areas of weakness and to inform teaching plans. She has clear vision to take the school forward. For example, teachers now plan more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in a wider context and plan the use of ICT to support work in mathematics. Teachers are beginning to plan opportunities for numeracy in other subjects such as in science to record findings in graph format and the use of co-ordinates in geography. The school has established a firm base for improvement in mathematics.

SCIENCE

92. In 2002, at the end of Year 6, pupils achieved standards that were in line with those reached nationally. However, their results were well below those of similar schools. Currently the standards of work seen in pupils' books are good and these alongside the Year 6 un-validated test results show improvement and suggest that pupils are working at a level above that expected. This indicates a similar picture to that presented in the previous report. There are no differences between boys' and girls' achievements. Pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minorities do well and their standards are as expected or better.
93. The Year 2 results for 2002, based on teacher assessments, were well above average, indeed they were in the highest five per cent nationally although a below average number of pupils achieved above the expected level. These results are hard to evaluate for the reasons mentioned previously. The lessons seen during the inspection and teacher assessments for this year indicate that attainment is good and an increased number of pupils are working at a higher level. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection.
94. It was not possible to observe lessons in Year 5 and 6 in order to make judgements about teaching in these classes but pupils' books indicate a secure coverage and teachers' thorough knowledge of the needs of the subject. All pupils throughout the school make good progress both in their understanding of science concepts and in the way in which they conduct science investigations. They do this with growing confidence and ability. The scrutiny of work showed that pupils throughout the school have developed their investigative skills in a progressive and systematic way. In Year 6 they identify which factors to keep the same and which one to change when they investigate which material is the best insulator from a collection of gauze, cotton, wool and rayon. They explain why they are doing what they have planned. Year 5 pupils have produced good quality booklets that describe their investigations into how sound travels and how we hear. Year 4 pupils measure and compare temperature as they find out how fast water cools. In Year 3, pupils conduct a variety of experiments including those relating to light and shadows. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 have investigated forces, electricity and properties of materials and found out a great deal about living things. The work produced by all year groups shows an awareness and understanding higher than that expected.
95. Teachers' subject knowledge was reflected in the good quality of lessons seen in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4. In Year 1, pupils were totally engrossed in activities that led them to understand that we need light to see. They used torches to discover what was inside a selection of boxes with 'peep' holes. Groups of Year 2 pupils studied two different flowers from the teacher's garden. They looked for similarities and

differences and used hand lenses very effectively to make their observations. Year 3 pupils were able to plan an investigation into what conditions are needed for a plant to thrive.

96. In Year 4, pupils were eager as the teacher led them through a series of stimulating games that held their interest and helped them explore predator and prey relationships. They also sorted a collection of pictures into different food chains that illustrated clearly that they understand how chains begin with a green plant as a source of energy. Higher attaining pupils were challenged successfully as they were given more animals to sort and put into more complex food chains.
97. Pupils are enthusiastic about science. A Year 4 girl said to an inspector, "It's my favourite lesson, we do such exciting things." Pupils plan experiments and work collaboratively. A whole school strategy for the development of science skills is particularly effective. This helps pupils to take initiative and plan investigations for themselves and they reach higher than anticipated levels. Teachers use homework appropriately to support learning in science especially in Year 6. There is, however, some inconsistency in the approach to marking and work is not always presented to a sufficiently high standard.
98. Science is very well led by a co-ordinator. She uses her expertise and commitment to support staff, to monitor data and evaluate teaching and learning. She ensures that science has a high profile within the school's curriculum by arranging many additional opportunities for pupils. They visit exhibitions, museums and an Exploratory at Bristol as well as exploring the school grounds and using environments away from the school. A scientist has visited the school to explain to older pupils what their brains look like and how they work. This prompted some very emotive comments from the pupils. The co-ordinator is fully aware of the next steps forward for this subject and is looking to introduce more use of ICT into science lessons with the introduction of the recently purchased data loggers and computer linked microscope.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Judgements on art and design are made from a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays around the school and discussions with the subject co-ordinator, as well as observations of two lessons. By the age of seven and eleven, pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally, successfully maintaining the standards found in the last inspection.
100. Pupils in all classes use a range of techniques, such as drawing, painting, printing and collage work with increasing skill to develop their ideas. They use pencils, pastels and paint carefully. For example, Year 3 pupils showed a growing sense of colour blending with hues of blue to obtain the effect of being underwater. Year 2 confidently use pencils to represent good shape and add detail to their drawings of shells. These are successfully used to develop ideas for repeat appliqué patterns on Hessian and based on the style of William Morris. Year 6 pupils demonstrate an effective use of colour in their rainforest scenes by aesthetic use of tissue paper strips for backgrounds. However, their skills using information and communication technology to support their art and design work are limited.
101. Pupils make sound progress as they learn about the styles of famous artists. Sketchbooks are used appropriately to record their ideas. Pupils begin to understand a little of the style, work and intentions of artists and the methods they employ. For example, Year 5 pupils explore the style of Lowry and make sound attempts at drawing people in his known style. They have opportunity to experiment with colour mixing to obtain the colours portrayed in his work. Year 6 begin to depict perspective in their

sketches and make appropriately detailed observational drawings of houseplants but the use of a pencil to portray light and shade is not sufficiently developed.

102. Art and design plays a positive part in contributing to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In Year 4, work based on Aboriginal culture and design successfully contributes to an effective display that illustrates pupils' knowledge of Aboriginal pattern. Clay work shows appropriate manipulative skills to make figurines to add to the display. An African Art Week very successfully involved all pupils throughout the school in different aspects of African culture such as masks and pattern work as well as music making.
103. In the lessons observed, pupils in Year 1 show an awareness of form, texture and use of colour as they make a representation of a favourite place using natural materials. When drawing from observations many Year 4 pupils make sound effort to draw objects in their correct position but need encouragement to look carefully at detail. This aspect of the art curriculum is not well developed.
104. The quality of teaching seen is sound. Teachers challenge the pupils appropriately but do not always give sufficient guidance about techniques such as use of glue to stick lentils and other small natural objects. Opportunities for pupils to select suitable paintbrushes or mix colours to the required tone are sometimes missed. Art is suitably used to support other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' illustrations to support work in history and literacy are often of a good standard. The school values pupils' achievements, and frame samples of pupils' efforts for the school gallery.
105. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge, knows its strengths and weaknesses and is in a strong position to lead its development guided by a detailed action plan. The assessment of pupils' artwork is not firmly established as a contribution to the progression of skills and techniques as they move through the school. The school have recently adopted a scheme of work that will support this process more favourably. A consistency of teaching skills is not established. The school environment is enhanced by colourful displays that celebrate pupils' achievements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Due to timetable arrangements it was not possible to see sufficient lessons to make a rounded judgement about progress or teaching in this subject. Samples of pupils' work, planning and photographic evidence of previous topics were evaluated and indicate that design and technology has a secure place within the curriculum. By the ages of seven and eleven, standards are in line with national expectations and are very similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.
107. Displays around the school and pupils' evaluations of their own work show how, by the age of seven, they have worked on a range of projects reaching appropriate levels. For example, they have made moving models and designed and made photo frames. By the age of eleven, they have made hats and models of shelters selecting appropriate methods of joining materials together. They have practised and learnt investigative, disassembling and evaluating skills to a satisfactory standard.
108. Throughout the school pupils undertake different projects. In Year 1, they experiment successfully with hinges to make models with moving parts. A class book about 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' shows how pupils have considered how levers can make pictures move. Year 2 pupils have considered the best materials to select to make a photo frame. They thought about shape and the types of decoration to use. They are also able to sew carefully as they create a felt 'coat' and display satisfactory skills as they do this.

109. Year 3 pupils take part in a task to make a monster with moving parts having investigated pneumatics successfully. They access images of monsters from the Internet making appropriate use of their ICT skills. A food technology topic makes effective links with pupils' personal development as they consider healthy sandwich making and the different types of bread to use. Social awareness is raised when pupils consider re-cycling and make their own paper. Visits to places of interest, such as the Botanical Gardens, extend usefully pupils' experiences. They consider how bamboo grows and then cut it to different lengths to produce a musical instrument. Year 4 pupils create clay models linked to their work on aboriginal art. This project raised successfully pupils' awareness of other cultures.
110. The co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for the subject. It is being led satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has already updated the policy, set priorities for the subject, overseen the introduction of guidelines and has established a clearly defined way forward. Monitoring procedures have not yet started due to the school's other priorities.

GEOGRAPHY

111. From the scrutiny of work and displays, teachers' planning and talking to pupils and lesson observations it is clear that pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding. There were insufficient lessons seen to judge the quality of teaching.
112. By the age of seven, pupils are acquiring new skills and knowledge. When using a big book called 'Where the Forest Meets the Sea' they recognise that it is not in England but far away where parrots live. Pupils offer opinions about why the forest should not be replaced by a seaside resort. They are encouraged to consider the proposed 'fictional' development from different perspectives. In discussion with pupils, they could explain the reasons for retaining the rain forests. They also follow the journeys of the character from the geography scheme of work called, 'Barnaby Bear'. They plot his travels on a world map as he accompanies pupils and staff on a variety of journeys both in this country and abroad extending pupils' understanding of places around the world. Pupils know how to draw simple maps showing a journey from home to school.
113. By the age of eleven, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of maps of the local area and Year 6 pupils talk about the development of houses from Saxon times to the present. They have a sound understanding of the impact of the RAF station at Brize Norton on their town from both a physical and economic perspective and have completed a survey of jobs in the area. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 are able to use appropriate vocabulary describing climates as tropical and understand the meaning of monsoon. The whole school has been involved in a topic based on Africa and pupils know that the lives of African children are very different from their own. They explain how mountain ranges are formed and where the main ranges can be found in areas around the world. Older pupils have used research skills effectively to find out about rivers of their choice. These include the Nile and Mississippi rivers. Pupils use books and the Internet for their research and this work is also linked to homework. Geography contributes well to raising pupils' cultural and social awareness.
114. Overall leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors the long term planning but as yet does not monitor teaching and learning in lessons across the school. The school uses the assessment sheets linked to the scheme of work. The co-ordinator attends a local support group and acts as an effective mentor for the rest of the staff in school. The co-ordinator ensures that all necessary resources are provided to support the new scheme of work as required.

HISTORY

115. Due to time-table arrangements it was only possible to observe two history lessons during the inspection. Judgements are based on these and an analysis of teachers' planning, display and a scrutiny of pupils' work. Standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and they do well because teaching assistants are clear about their role and how it will influence the work of these pupils. Previously standards were reported as higher than expected in this subject indicating that less emphasis has been placed on this subject since the last inspection especially in relation to the time allocated to teaching it.
116. Pupils' books show that they cover the prescribed areas and develop the appropriate enquiry skills. By the end of Year 6, when they study the Victorians, pupils explore the attitudes and values of the times. For example, why boys and girls studied different subjects at school. Using a variety of sources they gather information about famous people such as Joseph Rowntree. They compare the life-styles of children from different backgrounds and the clothes they wore. In other junior classes pupils interpret information gathered from a variety of sources such as a visit to a Roman villa to consider, first hand, what mosaics found there can tell archaeologists about life in Roman Britain. They raise their cultural awareness satisfactorily as they study the mosaic and then recreate their own image of it back at school.
117. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson were extracted information from a variety of sources. They took notes as they watched a video about Egyptian artefacts employing usefully their literacy skills. The video raised successfully their awareness of how historians and archaeologists use different ways to gather together data. A large selection of books was also used as secondary source material to help pupils. By the end of the lesson, pupils made some useful and sensible inferences and deductions about life in Ancient Egypt. Year 4 pupils drew comparisons between photographs of Carterton in 1916 and 2003. Previously they had constructed a time-line of major events in the development of the town to explain how it had changed from Carter's Town to Carterton. Links were forged successfully with geography as pupils usefully considered the impact of the establishment of the RAF station at Brize Norton.
118. Pupils in the lessons seen displayed reasonably positive attitudes to history but more could be done to stimulate them and awaken their interest. There are missed opportunities to use the Internet effectively for research and to motivate them to work on collaborative tasks or to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning before reporting back to their pals. The missed opportunities for these types of activities inhibit the possibilities for pupils to progress further in the development of their literacy skills. Work scrutiny shows that often pupils are given mundane tasks to do in this subject, many of them related to completing worksheets which are distributed to the whole class without sufficient challenge for higher attainers.
119. In Years 1 and 2, lessons make use of effective links with the community. For example, visitors from the town came to talk to the pupils about their holidays in the past. Visits to places such as old manor houses and farms ensure pupils are given lots of chances to learn from real places and artefacts.
120. The history co-ordinator has only recently taken up the post. She is providing a secure foundation for this subject to build upon as it moves up the school's priority list in tune with the development plan. She attends training sessions to gather information to disseminate to staff to help them plan lessons but as yet she does not monitor standards in the subject and her role is underdeveloped.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

121. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the time of the last inspection for pupils aged seven and they remain in line with national expectations. However, standards have not been maintained by the age of eleven and they have fallen to below national expectations. The confidence and expertise of teachers in using information and communication technology is variable and not all teachers are adequately trained. Unsatisfactory provision is set to be addressed by the school. The completion of a dedicated, fully equipped classroom for ICT, opening in September, has the potential to provide far more opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills. The school employs a part-time ICT technician who supports the school and will oversee the new computer suite. Once the new suite is open, the technician, a teaching assistant, will be time-tabled to work alongside pupils helping them to develop their skills.
122. Despite the limitations outlined above sound progress is noticeable throughout the school where ICT is used. The number of computers available necessitates access for pupils for very short periods of time that are not long enough to enable completion of extended tasks or access until long after the initial lesson given by the teacher. An example of this was observed in Year 5 where the teacher effectively used a projector linked to a computer to teach the class the skills needed to use a spreadsheet purposefully. Pupils made sound progress in their knowledge of the procedures and use of a formula builder. Four pupils worked in pairs to follow up this work immediately, using the computers. Others have to wait until it is their turn and for some it will be next week. Year 6 pupils have limited confidence. Most of them are familiar with the art computer program used in the school but have difficulty in referring to its facilities when designing a chocolate bar package.
123. When pupils enter the infant phase they build upon the skills learnt in the reception class. They are familiar with a suitable range of ICT objects such as tape recorder, video player, telephone and television as well as the computer. By the end of Year 2, pupils can control events through the use of a programmable toy. Most pupils make good progress in the lesson as they devise and record a sequence of movements for the toy to make. Satisfactory skills are evident in their use of a word processing program, an art program and simulations to investigate options such as designing a town or dressing teddy.
124. In the lessons observed where a comment on teaching was possible, the quality is good in infant classes and satisfactory in the junior classes. However, an examination of pupils' previous work indicates that teaching is good in infant classes, sound in lower juniors but overall unsatisfactory in upper junior classes. This is due mainly to the fact that teachers have not followed an effective programme of work to promote progression in the development pupils' knowledge and skills. An appropriate scheme of work has recently been adopted but not had time to have significant impact on standards of older pupils. The school recognises that ICT is not planned well to support other areas of the curriculum and has plans to address this next term.
125. Despite the problems outlined above, teachers are making commendable efforts to ensure that pupils gain as much access to ICT as possible within the present circumstances. However, the control technology aspect of the curriculum is underdeveloped in junior classes as is the use of data loggers in science. The subject co-ordinator, the deputy headteacher, has good subject skills but has only taken over the post in the past few weeks. She has a clear action plan to support teaching and learning throughout the school and is well aware of the need to raise standards.

MUSIC

126. Due to time-table arrangements it was only possible to see music lessons with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. By the time pupils are seven years, old standards in music are deemed to be above those expected. As no lessons were observed in junior classes no secure judgements can be made about attainment and progress by the time pupils are eleven. A scrutiny of planning and talking with pupils does, however, indicate an appropriate coverage of the curriculum and effective development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
127. In assemblies, pupils sing a range of songs and hymns tunefully with clear diction and a developing awareness of dynamics. Year 1 pupils clap and tap rhythmic patterns that are successfully echoed by others. They are adept at quickly picking up rhythm and repeating it. They play 'pass the tambourine' and successfully follow the teacher's beat when it is their turn. The teacher's understanding of pupils' attainment is successful in building pupils' confidence and enjoyment of music. She can quickly adapt activities to the response of pupils, retaining their interest and developing their skills. These young pupils demonstrate confidence when singing a two part song of 'London's Burning' and 'Pease Pudding's Hot'. In Year 2, pupils have good knowledge of the names of percussion instruments. They use untuned instruments well to develop their musical ideas combining dynamics and texture effectively. They organise their musical ideas into various musical structures, use symbols to represent instruments and confidently play from their score taking notice of when to play softly and loudly as well as when to rest.
128. The quality of teaching observed in the Year 1 and 2 lessons was good. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the subject and successfully encourage pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. A good range of resources is readily to hand and lessons start purposefully. Pupils are made well aware of what is expected of them so that when the time comes for them to perform they do so with confidence. They are enthusiastic and eager to please because teachers praise warmly, value and recognise their individual efforts. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in performing and following teachers' instructions often supported by helpful teaching assistants or their peers.
129. The subject is in the capable hands of a well-qualified co-ordinator who has clear views on how to raise pupils' standards but does no formal monitoring as yet and therefore the impact of her work throughout the school is limited. Music tuition by a peripatetic teacher has recently been successfully started and the school has a small choir. Opportunities are taken for pupils to perform to parents and the community, including older residents in the locality.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. It was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education curriculum being taught during the week of the inspection. Evidence is drawn from lessons, photographs, talking to staff and pupils and other documentation, including planning. From these it is judged that all prescribed areas are covered and pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 reach standards in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make at least sound progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Links with the RAF station at Brize Norton mean that the school has free access to a swimming pool. Ninety-nine per cent of pupils leaving the school are able to swim the recommended distance.

131. By the time they are seven, most pupils demonstrate an appropriate level of co-ordination when using large body movements. They run and skip, changing direction on command when warming up for an athletics lesson in preparation for Sport's Day. Their throwing skills are satisfactory and pupils are developing an element of control when trying to toss beanbags or quoits into hoops placed a distance away. Pupils in Year 4 can take part in relay races, successfully transferring the baton from one to another indicating they have acquired some athletics' techniques. Planning shows that the oldest pupils are working at appropriate levels. Their lessons are supported by the use of a scheme of work suitably matched to their levels of expertise.
132. Teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall. In better lessons teachers use their expertise and knowledge of pupils' achievements to ensure they make appropriate progress. They usually achieve purposeful class management. They correctly suggest techniques to the pupils and keep them on task. Good links are made with mathematics when pupils log results of their achievements both as time and distance in athletics lessons. Pupils' personal performance is used as a good model for their peers to follow, often acting as a challenge for others to emulate so they raise their own standards. For example, in Year 3, pupils develop their throwing skills, practising techniques such as transferring the weight behind them before throwing. They select and use both under arm and over arm throws and try to improve the distance achieved when pitching a bean bag. Teachers encourage good techniques for sprinting and pupils benefit from positive teaching points such as, 'Lift up your knees when you run' and 'tuck your arms in'.
133. Most pupils work with enthusiasm and enjoyment in physical education. They generally collaborate well in groups and teamwork and make sensible use of the opportunities provided to improve their own performance. Behaviour is usually appropriate and resources are used responsibly. The vast majority understand the concept of 'fair play'. There are, however, some occasions when a minority of pupils find it difficult to listen carefully to instructions.
134. The subject co-ordinator has provided written support for teachers to help them plan their lessons for games and gymnastics. He has identified an appropriate way forward which includes the need to develop older pupils' skills further so they can fulfil their potential. To help to facilitate this he has introduced a wide selection of PE based after school clubs and the furtherance of skills is also being supported by the effective use of a commercially funded programme adopted by the school and aimed at promoting higher levels of pupil achievement. Year 5 pupils are given additional opportunities in this subject when they attend sport's based days at the local comprehensive. Year 6 pupils take part in residential visits that supplement their experiences with more adventurous activities, such as caving and they also take part in problem solving tasks.
135. The co-ordinator does not look at all planning but supports his colleagues in an advisory capacity. Assessment takes account of the development of pupils' skills by recording their achievements on an individual pupil tick list. At the present time the physical education co-ordinator does not formally monitor teaching and learning throughout the school because of the school's recognised other priorities. PE does, however, feature within the school's overall development plan and is in safe hands.