

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FARINGDON INFANT SCHOOL**

Faringdon

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123060

Headteacher: Mrs C Camping

Lead inspector: Mrs H Bonser

Dates of inspection: March 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> 2004

Inspection number: 256101

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	185
School address:	Lechlade Road Faringdon Oxfordshire
Postcode:	SN7 8AH
Telephone number:	01367 240655
Fax number:	01367 240655
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Vale
Date of previous inspection:	May 11 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school draws almost all of its pupils from the town of Faringdon. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average overall. The number of children starting school has fallen in the last few years. Consequently, this year there is one less class and the Year 1 and 2 pupils are arranged in five mixed age classes. Eight per cent of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, mainly as a result of learning or behavioural difficulties. This is below the national average. At present, about one per cent have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is also below the national average. Five per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups but no full-time pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. There is a relatively small movement of pupils in and out of the school during the school year. The current headteacher has been in post for one year and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2003. The school received School Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2002, an International School Award in 2001, the Activemark in 2002 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22870	Hilary Bonser	Lead inspector	English; history; music.
9646	Geraldine Osment	Lay inspector	
30705	Graham Stephens	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; science; art and design; design and technology; physical education.
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; religious education; geography; special educational needs; English as an additional language.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The effectiveness of this improving school is satisfactory** and it gives sound value for money. Leadership and management are good, although recent developments have not yet fully impacted on standards, which are currently average overall. Teaching at present is sound, helping pupils to achieve satisfactorily, as there are some variations in their rate of progress. This is partly due to staff adjusting to the reorganisation of classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2 this year, following a demographic fall in numbers.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in reading and pupils do well by the end of Year 2 in both reading and writing because these are taught well.
- Some inconsistencies in the teaching of the mixed age classes have contributed to the lower standards evident this year in mathematics and science.
- The good provision for pupils with special educational needs helps them to do well, although higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough.
- The headteacher, governors and all staff work very well together as a team and are committed to raising standards, although the monitoring of teaching is not yet rigorous enough.
- The very good provision for personal, social and health education, together with the high level of care and support for pupils, is reflected in their good personal development and in the very good relationships throughout the school.
- The rich curriculum, good links with other schools and very good partnership with parents and the local community contribute significantly to pupils' learning and their enthusiasm for school.

The school has responded well to the issues identified in the last report, although some improvements are relatively recent and it is too soon to see their full effect on overall standards and achievement. In the Foundation Stage, provision and achievement, which were unsatisfactory in some aspects in the previous inspection, have been substantially improved. There is now a higher proportion of good teaching throughout the school and standards have risen in information and communication technology and religious education. Better use is now made of assessment information and there is an effective management structure in place.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	A	B	B
writing	C	C	C	C
mathematics	B	B	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

**Achievement is satisfactory** overall. In Reception, achievement is satisfactory and standards are average in communication, language and literacy and mathematics in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the year. Standards are above average in their other areas of learning, where they achieve well. In Year 2, standards are similar to 2003 in reading and writing. Pupils achieve well compared to their prior attainment in these areas, which have been a focus for development over the last year. In mathematics and science, where at present pupils are not always fully challenged in the mixed age classes, standards are average and not as high as in 2003. This year pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Standards are average in other subjects that were inspected.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall.** Pupils' attitudes are good and pupils behave well. Attendance is good. The school helps pupils to show a good level of maturity by the end of Year 2.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.**

**Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall**, but their quality varies across the school. It is good overall in the nursery and reception classes where children now achieve well in many lessons. In Years 1 and 2, it is satisfactory overall, with a significant amount of good teaching. English is now taught well. In other subjects, however, teachers do not always fully extend the older, higher attaining pupils in particular. In well-taught lessons, teachers use a good variety of methods and resources to provide interesting and challenging lessons. This encourages pupils to try hard and learn well. The curriculum is enriched very well, especially through the very good links with the community and very good extra-curricular opportunities. This motivates pupils and makes them keen to learn.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.**

Leadership is good. The headteacher, with good support from the senior management team and all staff, ensures a clear sense of direction as the school pursues its well-planned programme for continuing improvement. The day-to-day management of the school is good, although the monitoring of classroom practice needs to be more rigorous. The work of the governing body is also good and statutory requirements are met. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a clear and appropriate view of what is needed to move the school forward.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents: parents are very satisfied. For example, they feel their children enjoy school, are helped to settle in well, are expected to work hard and are well taught. Some were concerned about the lack of information they receive about their children's progress. The school is addressing this and inspectors found the quality of information for parents is now very good.

Pupils: most know an adult they can go to if they are worried and like going to school. They feel that teachers are fair to them and listen to their ideas. They think that other children do not always behave well. The inspection team found that behaviour was good overall.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Raise standards in mathematics, science and writing across the school, especially through increased challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching to reduce inconsistencies in its quality in the mixed age classes, especially in mathematics and science.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is satisfactory overall for boys and girls of all levels of attainment in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. This year, standards are above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement by the end of Foundation Stage and performance in the Year 2 national tests have all improved since the last inspection.
- This year, standards in Year 2 have fallen back in mathematics and science to average, but remain above average in reading and average in writing.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education have risen from below average to average since the last inspection and pupils now achieve satisfactorily.

#### Commentary

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (17.1)	15.7(15.8)
writing	14.9 (14.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.0 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests were well above average in mathematics and above average in reading and in teachers' assessments in science. They were average in writing as few pupils reached the higher Level 3. There was little difference overall in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils achieved well in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Since the last inspection, results at the end of Year 2 have risen more quickly than the national trend, in spite of some variations from year to year due to the differing proportions of higher and lower attaining pupils. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, the effective implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and well-planned staff training have contributed to this positive picture, together with the good behaviour and positive attitudes that boys and girls have towards their work.
2. Standards in the current Year 2 remain above average in reading and average in writing, with pupils achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. This is largely the result of effective whole school action last year and this year to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels. Standards are average at present in mathematics and science and most pupils achieve satisfactorily. This differs from last year partly because there are fewer higher attaining pupils in this year group. However, in the new organisation of mixed age classes, teachers do not yet always adjust questioning and work to match the wide range of pupils' attainment in these and other subjects as well as they do in English. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Clear and precise targets on their individual education plans, with carefully time-tabled support, help to ensure that pupils make good progress in meeting them.



3. In the Foundation Stage, most children are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of their reception year in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. This is a good improvement from the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average and progress was unsatisfactory. Children are likely to exceed the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative and physical development, as in these areas they benefit from a particularly rich curriculum. Records of children's assessments on joining the nursery class show that standards on entry to the school are broadly average. Children in the nursery and reception classes now achieve well in many lessons, as a result of good teaching, significant improvements in the curriculum that have been introduced over the last year and the good leadership of the Early Years co-ordinator. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of this on their overall achievement by the end of the reception year, which is satisfactory overall.
4. Improvements in the teaching of religious education and in the provision and teaching of ICT, especially over the last year, mean that standards are now average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a good improvement since the last report when standards were below average and progress unsatisfactory. In the other subjects inspected, evidence indicates that standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and achievement is satisfactory as at the time of the last inspection.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to school and learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are also good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils behave well both in and out of lessons.
- Pupils form very good relationships with each other and with staff.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, are keen to take part in activities and to take on extra responsibilities.
- Attendance and the school's action to promote it are good.

### **Commentary**

5. Pupils show good attitudes to learning in most lessons. They generally listen attentively, participate readily and undertake tasks enthusiastically. However, occasional restlessness occurs when pupils sit and listen too long, particularly in introductory sessions for the whole class, when not all are sufficiently challenged or involved. Pupils are keen to take part in other activities provided by the school. For example, a good proportion sign up for the wide range of after-school clubs organised by staff.
6. Standards of behaviour are good in the classroom and around the school. All pupils are aware of the high standards expected by staff. The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. Pupils share in the school's values because these are explained and demonstrated in ways that they can understand, as part of the good provision for their moral development. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen, and parents confirm that bullying hardly ever occurs. There has been one permanent exclusion during the last year that has been necessarily and effectively managed.

**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	106	20	1
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded*

7. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and they willingly take on a good number of responsibilities appropriate to their age. These range from normal classroom jobs to representing their peers on the school council. Pupils take their responsibilities of living in a community seriously, showing good levels of maturity and social development as they move through the school. Already the school council has helped to establish a buddy bench in the playground and a quiet area for pupils to use in school.
8. Pupils play harmoniously, although sometimes boisterously, together, and generally co-operate well in groups, often helping each other spontaneously. Assemblies, where values are shared, and personal, social and health lessons especially help to engender very good relationships. The consistently good provision in this area is begun in the nursery class and helps children to exceed the expected goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year. The school's programme for family nurturing contributes well to spiritual development, helping pupils to more fully understand and appreciate their own importance and that of others. This self-confidence and self-esteem are further encouraged through the school's reward system for personal and academic achievement, which culminates in a weekly sharing assembly.
9. Religious education lessons provide some insight of cultures associated with the different faiths studied. Links with other European schools through the Comenius project and a visiting Japanese teacher have shown aspects of life in other countries. However, the school recognises that more needs to be done to develop the satisfactory awareness pupils currently have of the diversity of cultures in Britain today and the contributions made by them.
10. Attendance levels are good, being above the national average. Parents co-operate well with the good systems that the school has in place for promoting regular attendance and punctuality.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in terms of teaching and learning. The curricular provision is good. The attention given to the care and welfare of pupils and the partnership with parents are very good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall in English but satisfactory in mathematics and science, which results in differences in the rate of pupils' learning in these subjects.
- Inconsistencies in teaching, largely due to changes in class organisation this year, are currently leading to variations in pupils' achievement.
- Although lesson plans generally take good account of pupils' ages and levels of attainment, they are not always implemented well.
- There has been a recent improvement in the use of assessment information in the English and mathematics.
- Teachers use a good variety of methods and interesting contexts for learning, which helps pupils to try hard and motivates them well.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (9%)	16 (46%)	15 (43%)	1 (3%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

11. The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection although most of the teachers have changed since then. In the lessons seen, there was very little unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of teaching that is good or better has increased. Effective action by the senior management team, especially in the last year and including well-planned, ongoing training and support for teachers and their assistants and the successful promotion of good teamwork, has helped to bring this about. It is a tribute to the hard work and co-operation between all staff that, in spite of the high turnover, there is already a common sense of purpose and direction among them and a determination to improve further.
12. In the lessons seen, teaching was good overall in the nursery and reception classes, with some that was very good. As a result, children achieve well in many lessons although it is too soon to see the full impact of this on standards and overall achievement in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the end of the Foundation Stage.
13. In Years 1 and 2, teaching was good in half of the lessons seen, again with some that was very good. However, while teaching was good overall in English, it was only satisfactory in the other core subjects of mathematics and science. It was also satisfactory in the other subjects where enough teaching was seen to make an overall judgement. This year, for the first time, teachers have classes with pupils from both year groups. They work very well together to plan appropriate work that takes good account of pupils' differing ages and levels of attainment. However, there are inconsistencies in the effectiveness with which the planning is implemented. For example, teachers do not always either focus their questions or deploy

resources effectively enough to challenge all pupils well in lessons. In the first term and a half, teachers have adjusted more quickly in English than in other subjects to the demands of teaching the wider range of attainment within each class. This leads to variations between the subjects in pupils' rate of learning in lessons and in their achievement.

14. In well-taught lessons, teachers managed pupils well, kept up a brisk pace, using a good variety of methods and well matched activities that kept all pupils fully engaged, and helped them to concentrate well. For example, in an English lesson introducing the idea of flow charts, the teacher targeted and varied her questioning in the whole class session so that Year 1 and 2 pupils of differing levels of attainment were equally and appropriately involved. In another well-taught English lesson, several factors contributed to the very purposeful way in which groups of Year 2 pupils worked quietly without direct supervision. The high expectations the teacher had of their behaviour and concentration were underpinned by good strategies. She explained the well-matched tasks very clearly so that pupils knew precisely what they had to do. As a result, boys and girls alike settled quickly and enthusiastically to their writing tasks, showing good levels of concentration and interest.
15. Inconsistencies in teaching and learning that often made the difference between satisfactory and good lessons included, for example, teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and concentration and the effectiveness with which they managed their pupils. While some teachers were quietly but firmly insistent on full attention all of the time, less effective management resulted in off-task chatter which slowed the pace of learning, sometimes causing lessons to overrun. Some introductory sessions did not fully involve all pupils so that some became restless because the content was too easy or too difficult. In some other lessons, the expectations of the amount and quality of group tasks were not sufficiently challenging, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Consequently, pupils were less attentive and their learning was only satisfactory.
16. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons from both teachers and learning support assistants, as well as on the occasions when they are withdrawn. This is very carefully planned and timetabled to help pupils achieve well against their specific learning targets, particularly those related to literacy and numeracy.
17. Recent initiatives are helping teachers to make better use of assessment information to track and improve pupils' learning in English, mathematics and ICT. However, there has not been enough time for these to become fully embedded and so there are variations in their effectiveness. Current staff training is improving the accuracy of assessments of pupils' writing and their work in science. A few good examples of marking included useful comments so that pupils know precisely what to do to improve their work. Assessment information has been used well this year to set individual targets in reading and writing, although little reference is made to these in some lessons and this limits their usefulness.
18. Close liaison with teachers and ongoing training help learning support assistants to provide good support for pupils, although in some lessons they are not deployed to best advantage. There was considerable agreement among pupils in the questionnaire, and in talking to them about their work, that teachers expect them to work hard and that they learn new things in lessons. Most parents also agree that their children are expected to work hard.

## **The curriculum**

The breadth and relevance of the curriculum are good, helping pupils to build on previous learning. It is enriched very well through the extra-curricular activities and extensive, well-used school grounds. Accommodation and the level of resources are good overall.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Recent improvements to the curriculum in the Foundation Stage have had a positive impact on learning opportunities for children.
- Good provision enables pupils with special educational needs to access the curriculum well.
- Extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors enrich the curriculum very well.
- The environment is used well to support learning across the curriculum.

## **Commentary**

19. Changes to the organisation of the curriculum and use of outdoor space have ensured that provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection, when it was described as not meeting the needs of young children. It is now securely based on national recommendations and supports the play-based, child-centred learning approach of the Foundation Stage early learning goals. As a result, children's standards and achievement are improving.
20. The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 has also improved since the last inspection, when it lacked balance and did not meet national curriculum requirements in some respects. It is now broad and balanced and meets the needs of most pupils well, including those with special educational needs, although some higher attaining pupils are not extended fully. The curriculum is organised in a two-year cycle to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes and schemes of work promote progression in pupils' learning in all subjects. Teachers are developing good links between subjects, for example by linking aboriginal art to stories from Australia, which contribute to pupils' enthusiasm for learning.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their targets are specific and well focused. Through very well planned support, they are helped to acquire the skills necessary to access the full curriculum. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs receive their full entitlement of support.
22. A broad range of clubs enriches the curriculum very well. During the inspection, a total of fifty-five pupils attended one of six clubs. Pupils are very enthusiastic and keen to attend and the range of activities, including French, ICT and cooking, allows pupils numerous opportunities to either learn new skills or to practise and apply those they have been taught. Visits provide additional learning opportunities, as does the annual visit from the 'museum bus' and a presentation about pulleys and levers. Visiting artists work alongside the pupils to create 'willow sculptures' and the next visit planned will focus on redesigning and painting murals. Both activities will add still more areas of interest to the well planned and developed school grounds that are used very well by all classes to support learning in subjects across the curriculum all the year round. The school has a clear vision to improve still further the grounds as a resource for learning. Strong links have been forged with schools in Spain, Italy and Sweden through the Comenius project, with teachers from these countries visiting and working with the pupils and the pupils themselves linking with the other schools through jointly planned cross-curricular activities. All of these opportunities enhance pupils' learning and contribute strongly to their positive attitudes to school.
23. All classes are supported well by trained and informed learning support assistants who, working with teachers, help pupils effectively in their learning. Although the shape of the school hall does inhibit some activities in physical education it is well used by the Breakfast and After-School Clubs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Procedures to ensure the care, guidance and welfare of the pupils are very effective. Achievement and personal development are monitored well. The school involves pupils well in its work.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils are very well cared for and they are happy in school.
- The very good relationships between pupils and adults help the pupils feel secure in school.

## **Commentary**

24. At meetings before and during the inspection, parents said they are very happy with the caring nature of the school. Health and safety and child protection, first aid and other medical support procedures are very thorough and ensure that staff and pupils work and play in a safe environment. The school council suggested that a quiet area should be created for children who do not feel well and this has been put into place. The Breakfast and After-School Clubs also provide good care for pupils in a safe environment. The Healthy Schools' Award has brought many benefits for the pupils, including Munchy Monday, when they are encouraged to taste all sorts of different fruits and vegetables. The pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtimes, when they have the freedom to use the school grounds to relax and play in.
25. The mixed age classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a beneficial impact on relationships between pupils and the consideration they show towards each other. Ninety per cent of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire believe that there are good arrangements for settling their children into school. The inspection team agrees with this, as the youngest children do settle quickly into school routines. Targets for pupils with special educational needs are shared well with parents and pupils so that they can be aware of the support being given and the progress being made to meet them.
26. All adults who work in the school form very close and trusting relationships with the pupils. The majority of the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that there are adults to go to if they have worries. Teachers know the pupils very well and are able to pick up concerns quickly and put support procedures in place if necessary. The very good personal, social and health education programme gives pupils frequent opportunities to express ideas and opinions and also the confidence to share their feelings with their teachers and classmates. The celebration of pupils' achievements in assemblies, in the Achievement Book and by sending copies of work home to parents also contributes positively to pupils' personal development and belief in themselves. Teachers listen well to pupils during lessons; they value their contributions, which helps to build self-esteem. Most pupils feel that their teachers are fair to them and that teachers listen to their ideas.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a very effective partnership with the parents. Links with the community are very good and links with other schools are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school successfully encourages parents to be involved in their children's education.
- Parents are very well informed about what is happening in school and how well their children are doing.
- Very good links with the local community greatly enrich the curriculum.
- The oldest pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **Commentary**

27. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting were overwhelmingly positive and show that parents have confidence in the school. A number of parents regularly help in school; parents are invited to Environment Day, Maths Week and Book Week activities. The Home School Partnership holds popular fundraising and social events. Funds raised are spent to

enhance provision for all the pupils, such as a falconry display, outdoor play equipment and the Willow Den artist. Parents are very supportive of the after-school clubs that teachers run to fund the ICT technician. The music co-ordinator has started a choir for parents and community members, which was described by one parent as 'A lot of fun and very enjoyable'. A good number of parents have received training in the Family Links Nurturing programme on which the school's personal, social and health education is based. This has proved popular and is helping to establish a consistency of approach between parents and teachers that is having a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

28. Very good written information is provided in the form of fortnightly newsletters and the governors use questionnaires well to gauge the views of the parents and their children; parents are informed of the results and any action that the school intends to take. Through the school's own and the pre-inspection questionnaire some parents showed that they do not think communication is very good, especially for working parents. The school is responding by putting new systems in place that will help to ensure that parents get vital information. Parents are very supportive of homework and the help they give with their children's reading is having a positive impact on standards of reading throughout the school. Parents are sent curriculum overviews so they can see what their children will be studying and there are notice boards outside each classroom where parents can view the latest newsletter. The parent/teacher consultations are well attended and there are information evenings about, for example, the way the school delivers drugs education through 'Pride' (Parents Role in Drugs Education) and how reading is taught in Reception. The annual reports to parents have improved since the inspection of 1998. They contain good information about what the pupils know, understand and can do and of the skills they are acquiring; they also set appropriate targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science.
29. The school is involved in initiatives that are of great benefit to the pupils and the local community. These include: Bridging the Gap, Full Circle and Volunteer Reading Help. These schemes are bringing a lot of local people into school and greatly enriching the curriculum, for example, in history and art and design lessons and with reading skills. A local tennis coach comes into school to give pupils tennis 'taster' sessions. Representatives from the Faringdon United Church regularly lead assemblies and work in classrooms with pupils. All Saints Church is also used for the NSPCC Carol Concert. A local store has been very supportive of the Healthy Schools Award and provides a wide range of fruits and vegetables free of charge for the pupils to eat on Munchy Monday. Pupils entertain senior citizens at a residential home and take part in local arts festivals. All of these very good opportunities greatly enhance pupils' personal and social development.
30. The school provides work experience placements for students from Faringdon Community College and junior sports leaders from the college also help to run sports clubs. The Willow Den was created with an artist from a local specialist school for the arts and this has greatly enhanced the outdoor area for the pupils. Through the Faringdon Partnership the oldest pupils are well prepared for their move to the junior school. The Year 2 pupils are invited to 'taster clubs' and to induction days at the junior school. Parents are kept up to date with what is happening in the junior school as their newsletters are also sent to them. Pupils from the partnership schools contributed to the community mosaic that is displayed in the junior school. The infant school contribution included a depiction of the 'White Horse'.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff and the management of the school are good. The governance of the school is also good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The recently appointed headteacher quickly identified key priorities for improvement and initiated effective action to address them.
- The headteacher is an effective team builder and works well with key staff.
- The management of the school is now firmly focused on further improving pupils' achievement although monitoring of classroom practice needs to be more rigorous.
- The governing body takes a much more active part in the life of the school than at the time of the last inspection.

## Commentary

31. The headteacher, well supported by the senior management team, has been instrumental in already bringing about good improvement in the priority areas on which attention has been focused. For example, improvements in the quality of teaching and curricular provision in the Foundation Stage are already beginning to impact on children's achievement in lessons. A focus on aspects of writing last year and reading this year has successfully increased the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in these areas. The appointment of a deputy headteacher who also has expertise in ICT has contributed to the improving provision and standards in this subject. The headteacher recognises and values the contributions that all staff make and leads by example, for instance, by running an art club - one of many clubs organised and run by staff. She encourages staff to be involved in all decision-making processes and this engenders good teamwork. She has a very clear vision for the future development of the school that she has shared with both governors and staff and this is well expressed in a three-year development plan. This has contributed to the shared sense of direction that was lacking at the time of the last inspection.
32. The deputy headteacher and the team leaders for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 carry out their roles well. Although the co-ordinator for special educational needs has only been in post for a term, she has organised provision very well and already brought about significant improvements in the way that pupils are helped to meet their targets in class. However, due to the high turnover of teachers in the last two years, several of the subject co-ordinators are new to their role. Although they monitor planning and provide helpful support to colleagues, they have few opportunities to monitor teaching. This limits their leadership role, the overview they have of their subjects and consequently their role in raising standards and achievement.
33. This year, good improvements have been made to the use of performance and assessment data. The data is now used effectively to track the progress of individual pupils and to set end-of-year numerical targets for each pupil in mathematics, science and English, so that any who are not making the expected progress can be given additional support or challenge. Individual curricular targets are being gradually introduced to underpin this process. Such improvements are enhanced through the focused use of performance management to support the key priorities on the school improvement plan with carefully linked, well-planned staff training. Over the last year the headteacher has carried out regular monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice in response to the previous key issue and the amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced. However, the frequency and rigour of this now need to be increased as teachers adapt to the new mixed age organisation of the Year 1 and 2 classes, to reduce remaining inconsistencies and to spread good practice.
34. Governors are very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties well. Since the last inspection, and particularly in the last year, they have become fully involved in shaping the direction and vision of the school and the related development planning and consequently they now have a clear strategic view of the school. They are committed to the principles of inclusion and high achievement for all, irrespective of ability, gender, background or culture, set within a broad curriculum. Governors are very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, through good communication with all staff as well as their visits to lessons and school activities. The open relationship they have with staff means they are prepared to question and discuss issues with them. This helps to inform their clear view of what is needed to continue to take the school forward.



35. Although the demographic fall in pupil numbers has resulted in a short-term planned deficit budget, effective financial planning and management are focused on minimising the impact of this on pupils' learning. In decisions about staffing and other resources, the governing body is pro-active in looking for additional sources of income and in seeking creative solutions to the financial restraints. The school is very clear about obtaining value for money and works hard to ensure that any available funding is used well in support of school priorities and pupils' learning. The efficient administrative staff contribute well to this.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	516896
Total expenditure	509228
Expenditure per pupil	2045

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46801
Balance carried forward to the next	7321

*The high carry forward from the previous year was to complete payments for building work.*

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

36. Both the nursery and reception class teachers plan and work closely together under the good leadership of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, ensuring that all children now receive a curriculum based securely on the early learning goals. Assessment procedures are good. All this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Staff are aware that further development of the outdoor areas and a review of resources and activities planned for children in the classrooms are needed. However, the learning environment presented to young children does now motivate them to explore and question and ensures that the majority come into school excited and with a sense of purpose.
37. Children enter the nursery class with broadly average attainment. Teaching has also improved considerably in both the nursery and reception classes and is now good overall. As a result of this, and the changes recently introduced, children are already achieving well in their personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Despite the good teaching, achievement overall and in communication, language and literacy, mathematics is satisfactory, partly because the recent changes take longer to impact on these areas. Current admission arrangements also result in some children only receiving one term's teaching in the reception class, which limits their achievement to some extent. Teachers are also aware that the recently reorganised reception classes, although much improved, still need to be developed further by ensuring that interactive displays and other activities are carefully planned to further consolidate teaching, especially in communication, language and literacy. The provision and display of books also needs to be reviewed in all classes.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children co-operate and play well together.
- Teachers expect children to take responsibility for their actions and they do.
- Good induction procedures and on-going links with parents ensure that pupils' needs are understood and met.

#### **Commentary**

38. The majority of children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1. Good induction procedures, along with links being established with the on-site pre-school that forms part of the Early Years Partnership, mean that children are well prepared for the transfer to the nursery class. Many parents come into both the nursery and reception classes at the beginning of the day and support and encourage the children as they settle. The children quickly become engaged with different activities and display their growing independence. They are secure and move around all classes confidently, following the established routines and knowing where the boundaries are set. They relate very well to all adults, seeking help when required and responding to instructions appropriately. They co-operate well with each other, sharing toys and adopting roles such as customer and shopkeeper in the toyshop. Teaching is good in this area and children achieve well. The nurturing programme is used well by all staff to promote children's skills. Even the children who have only been in a reception class since January approach adults with confidence and the majority help to clear materials away at the end of the session, showing the effectiveness of the joint planning. Their growing sense of responsibility would be enhanced further in this class if they were encouraged to begin to decide for themselves what needs to be done rather than relying on adult guidance.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Routines that focus clearly on the teaching of sounds, key words and the sharing of books with groups are well established in all classes.
- All staff are good role models with regard to speaking and listening.
- Books are not displayed well and this has a negative impact on pupils' attitudes towards books and their contents.

### Commentary

39. The majority of children are in line to reach the expected goals by the time they leave the reception class. A significant minority is likely to exceed them. The school is well placed to raise these standards, which were below average at the time of the last inspection, still further. Communication skills are well taught and children achieve well in these. Teachers question well, encouraging children to join in discussions. Children are confident speakers and are beginning to listen appropriately, being told to wait their turn if necessary as observed in a physical education lesson when the teacher said, 'Quiet please, this is instruction time.' Teaching and achievement in reading and writing are satisfactory. The very recent reorganisation of the reception classes now ensures that more opportunities are provided to receive instruction and guidance in focused teaching groups, where teachers concentrate on improving children's writing and reading skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, there are insufficient opportunities to consolidate and practise these skills in support activities specifically designed for this purpose. In all classes books are not displayed prominently and consequently children rarely choose to sit and look at a book for pleasure. Many of the books are worn, although there are no plans, currently, to review the reading stock.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan well, ensuring that all pupils receive focused teaching in small groups.
- Teachers plan interesting and well-organised support activities to consolidate learning but these are not always supervised for long enough to encourage the necessary focus.

### Commentary

40. Most children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to reach the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. A significant minority will exceed them. This is an improvement from the below average standards described in the last report. Teaching has improved and is now good overall. However, because both the teacher and teaching assistant work intently and well with small groups, they only make fleeting visits to the other activities designed to consolidate understanding, such as using coin stamps or selling items in the toyshop. Consequently, these activities do not always serve their purpose as well as they might. Nevertheless, children are developing very good attitudes to mathematics and enjoy explaining the value of coins with one saying 'That's worth 2 pence of course because it's got a two on it.' Adults seize every opportunity to refer to number, whether during registration or outside where they work with groups, throwing beanbags into hoops and keeping score on the blackboard. Planning indicates that mathematical understanding is also developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play with an appropriate focus on counting, sorting, matching, number, shape and measures.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have numerous opportunities to develop their fine manipulative skills and to use their bodies in a variety of ways.
- Reception children exercised very good control of their bodies in a physical education lesson observed.

### Commentary

41. The recently revised timetable and extended use of the outdoor play area have had a positive impact, with children moving confidently and cooperating well in play activities. Teaching is good and most children achieve well and are likely to exceed the expected goals by the time they leave the reception classes. They wrap parcels confidently, using scissors to cut string and folding the paper successfully. They control pencils and brushes well. Outside they run, cycle, dig, throw and climb, showing good coordination and control. In a very good physical education lesson observed children were 'student clowns' learning to travel along a rope chalked on the ground! They listened well and followed the teacher's instructions. As a result they achieved very well, even evaluating each other's efforts with one saying 'We've got better because we learned from the first group.' Teachers are aware that the quality and range of outdoor play materials need to be reviewed.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a wide range of activities that stimulate pupils' interest and encourage them to ask questions.
- There is a good range of resources upon which teachers can draw to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

### Commentary

42. The school environment provides ample opportunities for children to explore and discover and is well used by teachers to extend their knowledge and understanding. Combined with well-taught structured activities planned for the classroom, this ensures that children achieve well and are in line to exceed the expected goals by the time they leave the reception class. Children, in small groups, explored the garden and identified different types of flowers, well supported by a teaching assistant holding a guide to wild flowers! Inside children stamped and offered visitors passports and the teacher used the names of local stores known to the children to encourage them to respond in a communication, language and literacy lesson. There are good opportunities for exploration. For example, balloons filled with helium were introduced and children tied on teddies to see if they could make them float 'below' the ceiling by attaching 'paper' weights to adjust the height. They 'repaired' an assortment of electrical items with screwdrivers and other simple tools. They used computers well, showing good mouse control and explaining the purpose of the program. Photographic evidence indicates a wide range of activities – caring for tadpoles, melting jelly, studying spiders' webs on a frosty morning, learning about the beliefs and customs of other faiths from visitors and enjoying a visit from the local policeman.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The reorganised reception classes offer good opportunities for creative development.
- Resource provision to support creative development outside the classroom needs to be reviewed.

### Commentary

43. Teaching is good and the majority of the children achieve well and are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. The children are confident workers and quickly engage with the creative activities available to them. They printed with marbles rolled in paint and made finger puppets for the puppet theatre, using a wide variety of materials. They assumed the role of puppeteers and searched the room for an audience. Baby care is the current theme in the role-play area and pushchairs and washing are in evidence. Children are able to carefully paint their favourite toys, pictures of Jack and the Beanstalk and portraits of themselves. They recognise a range of colours and confidently used and mixed the primary colours, exercising great care in cleaning the brush thoroughly between applications. Music plays an important role in all classes and in one reception class in particular, where the children learn an extensive repertoire of songs. Teachers are aware that the range of resources for imaginative play outside needs to be extended and renewed, however there are currently enough for them to be rotated in order to provide an appropriate range of experiences over time.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy reading and standards are above average by the end of Year 2.
- Good teaching results in pupils achieving well in reading and writing by the end of Year 2, although some inconsistencies in teaching lead to variations in the rate of learning between classes and only satisfactory achievement in speaking and listening.
- Standards in writing are rising as a result of a whole school action in this area, although they are not yet as high as in reading.

### Commentary

44. Most pupils achieve well in both reading and writing. A successful school focus last year on improving pupils' writing resulted in a higher proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and this is being sustained in the current year group. However, a much smaller proportion of pupils reach the higher Level 3 in writing than in reading and this remains as an area for improvement. One reason for this is that some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the writing of higher attaining pupils. Another is that teachers make inconsistent use of guided writing strategies with small groups of pupils to help them improve their work. By contrast, in reading, effective focused teaching for groups of different levels of attainment forms part of pupils' weekly reading activities. In addition this year, good use has been made of individual assessment information to identify those pupils who have not progressed as well as they should in reading. There is a strong focus in every class on providing additional support to move them on. This year, the precision of the half-termly assessments of pupils' writing has been increased in order to track progress more carefully

and to set individual targets for improvement. However, the effectiveness with which teachers help pupils in lessons to use their targets for this purpose varies.

45. Well-targeted school action has contributed to the good overall improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection, when standards were average in reading and below average in writing at the end of Year 2 and pupils' progress throughout the school was only satisfactory. Planning has been adapted well this year to meet the needs of pupils of differing ages and levels of attainment in the mixed age classes for Years 1 and 2. Good use is being made of the Early Literacy Strategy to help Year 1 pupils in need of additional support, including some who, because of their age, have only had one term in the reception year. The programme is organised and taught well by learning support assistants. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets because they are supported well by learning support assistants who are familiar with their targets and also help them to participate fully in lessons.
46. Standards in speaking and listening are average at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Teachers build in some planned opportunities for pupils to develop these skills and some good examples were seen of teachers using strategies such as frequent short paired discussions to help pupils develop and articulate their ideas. In one well-taught lesson, the teacher encouraged small groups of pupils to role-play conversations between the three characters from a story she had read to them. This not only promoted their speaking and listening skills well but also ensured that pupils had developed their ideas for the subsequent writing activity. This helped them to settle quickly and confidently to work. However, such strategies are not used consistently or frequently enough across all classes to be fully effective in raising standards. In classes where teachers' expectations of pupils' concentration are not high enough, this limits the development of pupils' listening skills.
47. The quality of teaching is good overall, with teachers generally having adjusted successfully to teaching the mixed age classes. This is a reflection of the good teamwork, effective planning and hard work of teachers. However, some inconsistencies remain that result in differences in the rate of learning for pupils in some lessons. These included variations in the pace of work and in teachers' expectations of the quality and amount of pupils' work, their levels of concentration and ability to work well on their own.
48. Teachers give reading a high profile in the school, through events such as Book Weeks and visits by authors and poets. These, together with the good support given by parents at home and by other adults from the community who read with pupils in school, contribute to the above average standards and positive attitudes that pupils have towards reading. Pupils are taught an appropriate range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words so that by Year 2 many read with good understanding and expression. Some higher attaining pupils have preferred authors such as Roald Dahl and JK Rowling, whose books they discuss with enthusiasm. Pupils are given increasing opportunities to learn how to locate and select information from CD-Roms and the Internet as well as from books.
49. The co-ordinator leads the subject satisfactorily. The relatively small amount of monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice undertaken limits her overview of teaching in the subject in order to identify and reduce inconsistencies. It also means also that existing good practice is not shared effectively.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

50. Teachers make good use of opportunities in some subjects for pupils to apply the literacy skills they are learning in English lessons and to provide interesting contexts for pupils' work. This motivates them well. Examples include writing 'eye-witness' accounts of the Fire of London and a good variety of non-fiction writing following a visit to Wroughton Motor Museum. However, opportunities are missed in other subjects such as religious education.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high proportion of pupils reach the nationally expected levels of attainment.
- Pupils in mixed age classes are not always sufficiently challenged, in spite of good initial planning.
- Monitoring has not been rigorous enough to develop high standards of teaching and learning in the newly organised classes.
- Learning support assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs.

### Commentary

51. By Year 2, standards overall are average and this year pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In recent years, the results of national tests have shown standards by Year 2 to be well above average. In part, this has been due to the high proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 3. The school's assessment records show that in the current Year 2 group, fewer children than usual entered the school with above average skills. This is one reason why standards are lower this year. However, the school's recent move to mixed Year 1 and 2 classes has to an extent affected the quality of teaching and learning and the achievement of higher attaining pupils especially.
52. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to achieve well. Those who have numeracy targets are supported well in lessons. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides individual timetables, setting out the lessons in which pupils are being supported and the particular targets to be addressed. This well-focused support enables these pupils to achieve well and to make good progress in meeting their targets.
53. From an analysis of past work and lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan well together in setting learning objectives and activities for both Year 1 and 2 pupils. This enables them to share their expertise and experience in teaching mathematics. However, in lessons teachers are not yet fully adept at consistently addressing the learning needs of all pupils, given the wider range of both age and ability in mixed age classes, so that all are more effectively challenged and supported in their learning. This was apparent during mental questioning and whole class teaching. For example, 'mental' questions were frequently aimed at younger pupils and provided little opportunity for older, higher attaining pupils to reason beyond a basic level. In a lesson where pupils were using coins to make different amounts of money, identifying different coins and working through quite simple examples with the whole class took considerable time, slowed the pace of learning for many pupils and limited their progress.
54. Where pupils are sufficiently engaged in lessons, they behave well, display positive attitudes to learning and move sensibly to group work. Where work has been well introduced, they quickly settle to it. However, when not sufficiently challenged or involved, some become restless and start to lose concentration and interest. The work in their books shows some lack of expectation of quality and quantity, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
55. The school recognises that assessment procedures need to be reviewed so that work can be more accurately matched to attainment. In recent years, teachers' assessments have greatly underestimated the numbers of pupils achieving higher levels. Ongoing day-to-day assessment does not always identify the next small steps in pupils' learning to enable them to make more consistent progress. Work is regularly marked but contains few comments that refer to learning objectives or indicate that careful assessment is being made.

56. Leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is fairly new to her post but nevertheless shows enthusiasm and a desire to move the subject forward. However, there has been no recent monitoring with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising achievement. Improvement since the last inspection, where standards and the quality of teaching and learning were similar, is satisfactory. Resources are good and used well in lessons to support learning. Classes use a central interactive whiteboard for a weekly lesson. Pupils enjoy working through the pages displayed, but again the choice of pages does not provide appropriate challenge for all abilities.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support learning in other subjects although insufficient planned opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and develop particular numeracy skills. Pupils develop data handling skills in information and communication technology, but few opportunities are provided for their use in science, for example.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership of the subject is good and the school's planning supports learning well.
- Teachers' assessments do not accurately reflect pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills.
- Opportunities for older pupils to apply the skills they have been taught and to record the outcomes of experiments are not always fully explored.
- Teachers exploit the rich and varied school environment well and this contributes to pupils' good attitudes and behaviour.

#### **Commentary**

58. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This outcome is similar to that of the last inspection. However, for the first time in several years, science is a focus in the school development plan. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has been in post for just over a year. With the support of the local advisor, all staff are reviewing teaching, learning and assessment procedures in order to raise standards further. The scheme of work supports learning well and ensures that the range and content of the work are appropriate.
59. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory. The pace in the lessons observed was steady and pupils enjoyed the planned activities, co-operating very well as they explored aspects of 'force.' Although teachers take account of the different abilities and ages of the pupils in their planning, older and higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough, either through the teachers' questioning or the extension activities planned. For example, a teacher did not seize the opportunity to further question a pupil who said, 'I know another force – gravity!' In books, there is little evidence of work being matched to the age and attainment levels of the pupils and this means that some are not extended in their learning sufficiently.
60. There are indications that the current focus on raising standards of attainment in science is beginning to make a difference, with the introduction of a new format for recording the outcomes of experiments and the processes involved. These changes have the potential of allowing pupils to begin to formulate their own hypotheses and for the older, higher attaining pupils to begin to apply the skills they have been taught with less direction from the teacher. Assessment procedures are well established but they do not allow the pupils to demonstrate what they understand, know and can do; instead they are over-reliant on pupils answering



teachers' questions at the end of a unit of work. Consequently assessments are knowledge based and do not always assess pupils' investigative skills accurately.

61. Teachers draw well on the large and varied school environment that is rich in a variety of habitats. Pupils study and identify plants, fruits and seeds, use the climbing frame as a base for experiments on forces and follow a 'senses trail' through the woods.
62. The science co-ordinator quickly identified the need for a thorough review of the subject and has the enthusiastic support of the headteacher and all staff. As one teacher explained, 'It's really good, I'm becoming far more confident.' Resources are good overall and the school is in a strong position to raise standards further.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- The school has a good development plan to help move the subject forward.
- Not enough use is yet made of ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- Teachers plan and prepare lessons well.

### **Commentary**

63. By Year 2, standards in ICT are broadly average and pupils' achievement satisfactory. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average and achievement poor. Planning, interviews with pupils and photographic evidence show that all aspects of the subject are now being taught. Teaching and learning are now satisfactory where previously they were unsatisfactory.
64. Teachers have one lesson each week where skills are taught, and these are later developed in individual and group work. The lessons seen were jointly well planned and prepared with effective use made of resources. Learning objectives were recorded for both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. A similar lesson was seen in three classes, where pupils learnt to programme a floor robot. The lessons were introduced well using the story 'Train Ride', which emphasised travelling, starting, stopping and changing direction. This theme was then transferred effectively to a large floor map and pupils learnt to estimate and then enter the distance to be travelled by the Roamer and any turns to be made. All pupils started with the same task. Some Year 2 pupils said they had done it before. Only in one of the lessons did higher attaining pupils quickly move onto learning how to enter a string of commands rather than entering them one at a time, therefore making better progress in their learning.
65. The subject has, until recently, had no long-term co-ordinator, and this has hampered development. The new co-ordinator has clearly identified the need to develop provision. Improvement plans show a strong vision for using ICT more fully for supporting teaching and learning across the curriculum. An audit of staff skills has been carried out and further training planned. The school raises its own funds to employ a good and valued part-time technician who services the equipment and has the skills to train staff. She will be instrumental in supporting planned developments. The policy has been rewritten and a new scheme of work is being introduced to take account of mixed age classes.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

66. Some use is being made of ICT to support learning in other subjects, particularly literacy and numeracy, but opportunities are not yet fully exploited. Each class uses an interactive

whiteboard, sited in the library area, once a week for numeracy. The use of classroom computers was not a regular feature of lessons observed.

## HUMANITIES

*Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. History was sampled. Geography was not inspected.*

67. In a satisfactory **history** lesson, the teacher questioned pupils well, helping to reinforce their good recall of information about the different forms of transport that they saw during a recent visit to Wroughton Motor Museum. The pupils had clearly enjoyed the visit and as a result were interested in their work and keen to learn more. They tried hard in their task of identifying similarities and differences in pictures of old and modern vehicles and co-operated well in their groups. However, Years 1 and 2 pupils of all levels of attainment found it difficult to identify these precisely as their observational skills were limited. Scrutiny of work from last term about Florence Nightingale and the Fire of London showed little difference in the expectations of pupils' skills and understanding in Years 1 and 2. The newly appointed co-ordinator is aware of this and has appropriate ideas of how to move this and other aspects of the subject forward.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- Lessons are well planned and teachers use effective methods to help pupils understand more fully.
- More opportunities could be provided for pupils to develop their writing skills.

### Commentary

68. By Year 2, standards in religious education are average and reflect those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average and achievement unsatisfactory. Teaching, resources and co-ordination have also improved.
69. From the lessons seen and an analysis of pupils' work, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The lessons seen were jointly well planned and used good methods to convey a complex idea. By listening to the story of the Blind Men and the Elephant, and having an interesting range of activities to show that people often perceive common things differently, pupils started to understand that Hindus view God in many forms. The good quality of the two lessons seen was not as evident in pupils' recorded work. Where opportunities for writing are provided, insufficient account is taken of pupils' individual literacy skills. Higher attaining pupils especially are not sufficiently challenged in the use of their writing skills. The classes observed were well managed and as a result behaved well and showed positive attitudes to learning.
70. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed. She leads and manages the subject satisfactorily. The policy has been updated and the scheme of work rewritten to take account of mixed age classes. There has not been the time or the opportunity to fully monitor provision in the subject. Different approaches have been encouraged in lessons to add interest and vitality to pupils' learning. Resources are good and used well to support teaching and learning. This helps to motivate pupils well. Visits are made to local churches but as yet none are made to other faith communities. Some use is made of ICT to extend pupils' learning, for example, to search the Internet for information.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*Art and design, music and physical education were sampled. Design and technology was not inspected.*

71. One lesson in **art and design** was observed. However, scrutiny of displays, photographic evidence of art and design work recently completed and planning indicate that standards in art and design are above average, an improvement since the last inspection. In the satisfactory lesson observed, good cross-curricular and multi-cultural links were made with geography and literacy as the teacher recalled aspects of Australia studied and Australian stories read. Pupils went on to create interesting pictures in the Aboriginal style using sticks instead of brushes. However, insufficient time was left for reviewing learning at the end of the lesson and the criteria for the pupils to use when comparing the quality of completed pictures were not explained.
72. Planning for art and design and a scrutiny of work show that pupils explore a full range of techniques and media in art and design and this is valued by teachers and displayed to good effect. Monet and Georgia O'Keefe are two of the artists studied, with pupils producing work in the related style. Pupils fold and dye Japanese paper, visit the school pond to study reflections (part of the work on Monet), draw using a variety of pencils and papers and improve their tie-and-dye techniques. The co-ordinator, recently appointed to the post, is knowledgeable and enthusiastic with a clear vision for future development. Resources are good overall and the school uses its grounds well as a source of inspiration.
73. In **music**, in the one well-taught lesson observed, both the Year 1 and 2 pupils achieved well as they made appropriate use of a good variety of percussion instruments to compose a simple sequence representing the different sounds heard out in the street. The pupils co-operated well together in their groups and the teacher questioned them and intervened effectively to keep them focused well on their task. As a result, by the end of the lesson, the groups had practised playing their compositions and performed them to the rest of the class successfully. The lesson built well on previous learning and good links were made with geography with pupils following a map, showing where the sounds had been identified.
74. The co-ordinator, who is a music specialist, supports colleagues effectively. Her skills and enthusiasm, as she led a singing practice involving most of the school, were reflected in the response of the pupils. They sang in unison and in two parts tunefully with clear diction, making appropriate use of dynamics and with evident enjoyment. Pupils have good additional opportunities to develop their musical skills through, for example, an ocarina club that is held for part of the year, through school musical productions and singing in the local churches and at community events.
75. Only games lessons were observed in **physical education** and consequently no overall judgements can be made about the subject. Standards in games are satisfactory overall, an outcome similar to the last inspection. Teachers plan together and work from similar planning sheets. Nevertheless teaching varies from unsatisfactory to good. In the unsatisfactory lesson the pace was slow, there was little challenge to pupils to improve their skills and resources were not adequately prepared. In the other lessons a sharper focus was maintained on the main purpose of the lesson and the pupils were encouraged to begin to evaluate their own performances. Teachers introduced a clear progression of skills, each building well on the one that went before, and demonstrated what was required well.
76. The co-ordinator has reviewed the scheme of work and introduced additional ideas that offer staff more support when planning gymnastics. She represents the school in the local sports co-ordinators' project and works in partnership with colleagues from other schools. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory although the shape of the hall does make supervision of some activities difficult.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

*Personal, social and health education (PSHE) was sampled.*

77. The school uses the Family Links Nurturing programme very well to plan very appropriate PSHE that is both linked to other subjects and taught in its own right. The curriculum for drugs education has improved since the last inspection. Health, sex and drugs education are taught through science, the 'Parents Role in Drugs Education' and other programmes and supported by the community police officer. There were two lessons seen during the inspection. They were both well taught and gave pupils good opportunities to express their feelings about each other and to learn that we are all different and worthy of respect. The PSHE programme is having a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour and personal development and its success is reflected in the good attitudes and very good relationships throughout the school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*