

INSPECTION REPORT

HORSPATH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Horspath, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123121

Headteacher: Mrs L Kingsman

Lead inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie

Dates of inspection: 24–26 November 2003

Inspection number: 256509

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	136
School address:	1 Blenheim Road Horspath Oxford Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX33 1RY
Telephone number:	01865 872 702
Fax number:	01865 872 702
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Montgomery
Date of previous inspection:	08 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Horspath C of E Primary School is in the village of Horspath, about three miles east of the city of Oxford. The social and economic background of the pupils is above average. There are 136 pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11 years old, ten of whom are in the Foundation Stage. Most children have attended some sort of pre-school education. Children start school with overall attainment that is above that typical for their age. Nearly six per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority heritages, mainly from mixed White and Black African families. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. No pupils are entitled to free school meals. Five per cent have special educational needs for learning, behavioural or physical difficulties; this is well below average, nationally. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The school has benefited from involvement in the Small Schools Fund and the 'Learning to Learn' project with King's College, London. Over the past three years, the school has received a Gold Activemark award for physical education, the Investor in People award for staff development, The National Primary Centre Good Practice award and the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations' Good Practice award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23482	Diana Mackie	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
18214	Kevin Greatorex	Lay inspector	
33165	Sharon Harris	Team inspector	Science Geography History Music Religious education
18214	Elizabeth Lewin	Team inspector	English French Physical education Foundation Stage Personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school with many strengths and a high level of parental and pupil satisfaction. Teaching and learning are good and pupils have very good attitudes to school. Standards are well above average overall and pupils achieve very well. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction and the governors fulfil their roles very well. **The school gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher.
- The very good achievement and very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
- The good quality of the teaching and the very good curricular provision.
- The very good care and welfare of the pupils.
- The very positive links with parents.
- The very good governance of the school.

There has been good overall improvement since the last inspection in June 1998. Key issues raised have been dealt with rigorously. The marking and presentation of pupils' work is now good and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are now well above average. The curriculum for children in the Reception Year is planned well and further development of suitable activities within the mixed-age class is in hand. Statutory requirements are fully met in the completion of registers and inclusion of necessary information in the annual governors' report to parents.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	B	A	A
mathematics	A*	A*	A	B
science	A	B	A	B

Key: A-very high; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Overall achievement is very good, and standards are well above national expectations by the end of Year 6.

The school's performance in national tests for pupils in Year 6 has been at least good over the past three years, and in mathematics in 2001 and 2002, the school's results were in the top five per cent nationally. In comparison with all schools nationally, the 2003 results in Year 2 were good overall, but in comparison with similar schools, pupils performed well below average in reading. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs who took the tests in that year was larger than usual. Pupils now achieve very well in Years 3 to 6, and achievement is good in the and Years 1 and 2. Current pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to attain well above average standards in mathematics, science and ICT by the end of the school year. Standards in English are well above average in Year 6 and above average in Year 2. In Years 1 to 6, standards are well above average in art and design and music, and they are above average in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. Children in the Reception class are on course to exceed the nationally expected goals for their age by the end of the school year. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well in relation to their prior learning. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages achieve in line with their peers.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.

Pupils have very good attitudes to school and they behave very well. They work hard, are very responsible and show respect for other people's cultures, faiths and views. Attendance is very good. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good and teaching and learning are good overall. A significant proportion of teaching is very good or better.

Teachers plan interesting lessons that are well matched to pupils' needs. They engage very well with pupils, listening to what they have to say and valuing their answers and opinions. Pupils respond by being enthusiastic learners who concentrate on their work and are productive in lessons. Teachers seem to enjoy lessons, too, and they work very well as a team with the learning support assistants. All staff have high expectations and manage the pupils very well. Teaching is good in English and very good in mathematics. Teachers ensure that literacy, numeracy and ICT are developed well in other subjects.

The very good curriculum provides an exciting range of experiences for pupils to learn in interesting and stimulating ways. There is very good provision for pupils' personal, health, social and citizenship education. Planning is very effective in including all pupils in all activities.

Pupils are very well cared for, and they are guided and supported very well in their learning.

Links with parents are very good, and parents contribute very well to the school's success. There are good links with the community, including the parish church. Links with other schools and with colleges are very good so that pupils transfer smoothly between the different phases of education and benefit from activities linked to educational innovation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are very good.

Leadership by the headteacher is excellent and she is very well supported by senior staff, especially the assistant headteacher. Overall, leadership and management of subjects are very good. Governance of the school is of very good quality. Governors fulfil their roles conscientiously; they are keenly involved in school self-evaluation and the setting of priorities for development. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents view the school very favourably and feel that it does a very good job. Pupils enjoy school. They like being there to learn and to be with their friends. They think this is a very good school and the teachers help them to do well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

No significant areas for improvement were identified during the inspection. In order to improve further, the school should maintain the very good quality of its self-evaluation and follow the school's existing development plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Standards in all the core subjects are well above average by the end of Year 6, and are at least good in all other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain overall high standards and achieve very well by the end of Year 6.

Commentary

1. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6, results in English were well above average compared with similar schools results nationally. In mathematics and science, they were above average. Targets set for English and mathematics in 2003 were met and the school is on track to meet challenging targets set for 2004. At the end of Year 2, results in 2003 compared with those of similar schools nationally were well below average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. There were a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 in 2003, and tracking of pupils' progress since they started school shows that they achieved well to gain the results they did in the tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (17.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.7 (15.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.9 (28.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.7 (30.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.1 (29.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Evidence from the current inspection shows that pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of the school year. In Year 2, pupils are on course to achieve above average standards in reading and well above average standards in writing, mathematics and science. The excellent quality of the headteacher's educational direction, the enthusiasm and commitment of subject co-ordinators and the good teaching have a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving very well from their individual starting points because of the very good quality of support they receive. All pupils, regardless of gender, capability, ethnic heritage or faith, achieve very well during their time at the school.

3. Children in the Reception year achieve well and are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.
4. In English, speaking and listening are promoted well in Years 1 to 6 so that pupils can ask questions and express their ideas clearly. Because of the school's systematic teaching of letter sounds and regular learning of lists of words, standards of spelling are very good. Throughout the school, pupils write for a good range of purposes. Handwriting, which has been an area of development in the school, is good for most pupils. Reading and writing are promoted well in other subjects. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 write short stories with a clear sense of narrative. By Year 6, pupils produce longer pieces of work with more intricate themes.
5. In mathematics, pupils in Years 3 to 6 build effectively on what they have learned in Years 1 and 2. Basic skills, such as knowing multiplication tables and being aware of the value of each figure within larger numbers, help pupils to work quickly and avoid silly mistakes by the time they are in the older classes. Learning is very well developed in shape, measurement and data handling, where pupils' very good achievement is based on a great deal of practical work. In science, achievement is very good. Pupils understand the idea of fair testing but need more opportunities to set up their own investigations. Pupils write up their findings well, with accurate and attractive drawings to illustrate their work. Standards in ICT are very good because of the professional expertise in the school, the improved equipment and the pupils' enthusiasm.
6. Evidence from discussions with pupils and co-ordinators and scrutiny of displays and pupils' written work, indicates progress and achievement in the humanities (geography and history) are good. Pupils become increasingly aware of the significance of features in the neighbourhood of the school, and begin to ask questions about human interaction with the natural world. They study how societies have developed and how they have been organised, and how significant people in history still influence society today. In creative, aesthetic and physical subjects (art and design, design and technology, music and physical education), pupils achieve well overall. They achieve very well in art and design and music because of the very good quality of the school's provision. In religious education, pupils achieve well and standards are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. In their learning about Christianity, pupils benefit from links with the parish church. They also become increasingly aware of the main faiths practised in modern Britain.
7. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages achieve well and benefit from the school's inclusive and caring approach. In some classes there are many more boys than girls. Boys and girls achieve equally well and the standards they attain are similar.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils are happy to come to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is very good. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and play an active part in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to take responsibility.
- Relationships are very good and are well nurtured by the caring ethos of the school.
- Pupils are confident and have high self-esteem.
- The school caters well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and, as a result, this is very good.

- Pupils rise to the challenge of high expectations set by the school, and as a result, their behaviour is very good.

Commentary

8. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and contribute significantly to their high achievement. These were strengths at the last inspection and continue to be so. Good relationships are fostered between home and school and pupils are happy to come to school from the very start. Children in the soon settle into school routines and keep the simple classroom rules. They learn to share equipment and take turns, and develop a sense of responsibility as they help with jobs, such as clearing up at the end of lessons. The school's thoughtful provision helps these children to behave well; for example, in the way they are brought into assemblies last, so that they do not have time to get fidgety. The very good relationships throughout the school result from mutual respect and trust. The caring ethos positively promotes self-awareness. Acknowledgment of one another's achievements and respect for different points of view result in all pupils developing self-confidence and high self-esteem. Pupils are hardworking and enthusiastic. They are well motivated and respond to encouragement and praise. As well as developing a high level of independence, they work well together both co-operatively and collaboratively, sharing resources and supporting and helping each other. Pupils rise to the challenge of high expectations set by the school and, as a result, their behaviour is very good.
9. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and has a positive impact on their very good attitudes and behaviour. This is a caring school with everyone recognising their part in the shared collective responsibility, reflected in the school motto: 'Everyone is always on the lookout'. Pupils understand that their views and contributions to school life are greatly valued. Moments for reflection during collective worship and the high quality and enjoyment of singing provide an uplifting start to the day. Pupils are encouraged to think of other people who are less fortunate than themselves. The school raises money to educate two Indian children through the work of the Joe Homan Trust. The amphitheatre, quiet garden and wild-life garden all contribute towards special times in school life. Animals in classrooms are well cared for.
10. Pupils are developing a very good sense of right and wrong. All are familiar with and respect the school's 'golden rules'. Pupils take a pride in having their efforts, including good behaviour in and around the school, recognised by the school's rewards system. Staff have high expectations of good behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs for behavioural difficulties are helped to overcome their problems so that they become increasingly responsible and well behaved. Relationships are very good, with all showing care and respect for each other. For instance, before starting school, Reception children receive letters from older pupils who become 'buddies', ensuring that they settle into school well and have someone they can go to for help and support.
11. Older pupils have a range of responsibilities including answering the telephone at lunchtime. Pupils are keen to conserve energy and care for the environment. Their interest in 'Eco Warrior' recycling bins is in evidence around the school and staff encourage the sorting of waste. Pupils have a strong corporate voice through the School Council, so that they share views on matters that impact on school life. Pupils are very proud of their school and feel they play an active role in its success and growth.
12. Provision is good for cultural development, which is promoted through the curriculum, the school's very good links with the local community and a good range of visits. Music is a strength of the school and pupils experience a range of music and musical instruments from different cultures. In art and design, pupils study the way pictures are made in a variety of countries; for example, when they create pictures in the style of the Aboriginals of Australia. French has recently been introduced, providing all pupils with the opportunity to learn another language. Pupils understand the importance of festivals and traditions and other outward signs of religion. They respect the views of others, understand that this is important and are

well prepared for life in a multicultural society. Resources, such as books, artefacts and musical instruments, are being developed to support pupils' understanding of other cultures.

Attendance

Attendance is very good. There is virtually no unauthorised absence and most pupils are punctual.

Commentary

13. Attendance has been well maintained since the last inspection and is very good. Attendance registers are completed accurately and efficiently at the start of the school day and after lunch. The system of information transfer, from the registers to the computerised database, produced an inaccurate figure for the school's authorised absence. This incorrect information was submitted on the annual return to the local education authority. The actual figure for attendance at the school is well above the national average and is very good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	0.0
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.

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions at the school in the last year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good.

Teaching and learning

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	10 (23%)	28 (65%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	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.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with examples of teaching of high quality in all classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is very good.
- The high quality of the leadership ensures that teaching is monitored and supported very effectively.
- Teachers encourage pupils and engage very well with them.
- Pupils work very well independently and collaboratively.
- There are high expectations of good behaviour.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught and supported.
- Classroom support assistants are deployed very well to help pupils.
- Teachers ensure that all pupils are well involved in activities.

Commentary

14. Teachers have a secure knowledge of what is to be taught and a clear idea of how to teach it. The excellent leadership of the headteacher ensures that teachers work as a team with consistent approaches to teaching, so that good practice is sustained throughout the school. Senior staff and subject co-ordinators monitor what goes on in the classroom and share their findings with the teachers, who are keen to improve the way they teach.
15. The teaching of Reception age children is good. Parents are pleased with the way the staff introduce children to school life and give them a happy start to their education. The staff clearly understand the needs of young children. An appropriate balance of directed and freely chosen activities is being developed to help children to make decisions and become increasingly independent. Children are enthusiastic learners and make good progress because of the thorough teaching of the basic skills. Children with special educational needs are identified early and given very good support, with the advice of the co-ordinator for special educational needs.
16. During the inspection, teaching was good in English and science and very good in mathematics and ICT. Teaching over time, from evidence in pupils' books and from test results, has been very good. Literacy and numeracy are promoted well across the curriculum. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their ideas and extend their vocabulary in all subjects. Pupils with weaker attainment in literacy are supported very well; their progress is monitored rigorously by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, who works closely with the class teachers.
17. Because teachers' expectations are high, pupils rise to challenges and want to meet the targets set for them. All pupils, regardless of capability, gender, faith or ethnic heritage, are expected to do their best. Pupils with special educational needs know the targets in their Individual Education Plans and are held accountable if they slacken their pace in working towards them. For example, staff remind pupils with learning or behavioural problems to read and remember written targets, which are close to them on the desk during lessons. It is attention to details such as this that accounts for the very good achievement in the school. There is no hiding place for slackers. Gifted and talented pupils are supported and encouraged to excel in their areas of strength. Extended and more challenging activities are planned for these pupils so that they enjoy learning and do not become bored or disenchanted with school.
18. Aspects of mathematics such as data handling and measurement are practised and extended in ICT, science and geography. ICT is used and practised effectively in other subjects so that pupils hone and extend skills taught and learnt in the ICT suite. In most other subjects – art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education – no judgement of current teaching is given because little direct teaching was observed. However, from teachers' planning and scrutiny of photographs and pupils' work, teaching has been of at least good quality over time. As a result, pupils make at least good progress.
19. Teachers listen very well to the pupils and every pupil is treated with respect; none needs to feel left out or at a loss about what to do. Teachers know the pupils well and value what they have to say; all pupils are included thoughtfully in all lessons, and work is set at the appropriate levels so that every pupil can achieve success. Pupils behave very well and are ready and eager to learn because they know that the teachers have something interesting to share with them. Occasionally, the pace of lessons slows down and interest begins to flag, but pupils are amazingly polite and quiet.
20. The planning of lessons is very good, and teachers plan lessons that include a variety of interesting activities for pupils to learn as a class, in groups and as individuals. Teachers carefully explain the work they intend pupils to do, and give them clear instructions. The learning intentions for each lesson are shared with pupils; in subjects such as physical education teachers' good demonstrations and strong emphasis on evaluation and improvement enable pupils to achieve well.

21. At the beginning of lessons, teachers focus on the learning and achievement of the whole class. Learning support assistants are then deployed very effectively to work with groups of pupils, while teachers provide accelerated learning activities for particular groups each day. In this way, all pupils benefit from both focused teaching matched to their needs, and time to practise and consolidate skills. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' attainment and progress.
22. Teachers keep pupils interested, stimulate their thinking and get them to find things out for themselves. The 'hands on' approach during many lessons gives pupils a sure understanding of what they are learning. Very good questioning takes place during practical sessions as teachers go from group to group asking challenging questions and making pupils think hard about what they are doing. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the younger pupils labelled the edges of a variety of boxes and the older ones worked in pairs, using components from a construction kit to make shapes. They were investigating how many corners and edges the shapes had, and made excellent progress because they could see and feel the shapes and were able to learn from their mistakes when shapes 'went wrong'. The level of adult support was very good as the teacher and the learning support assistant engaged very effectively with the pupils and helped them to tease out their ideas.
23. Teachers know the pupils well and in most classes use a range of assessment methods to promote learning. For instance, questioning is used to find out what pupils already know or understand before new work is started. In the Reception class, good use is made of day-to-day observations to collect and record useful information systematically about children's learning. This information is then used to inform planning and support children's future learning. In all lessons, learning intentions are always made clear to pupils. This helps to engage them in self-evaluation and to get them to make informed judgements about their own and each other's learning. Work is regularly marked and teachers give pupils feedback on it, including oral feedback. This is useful in helping pupils recognise how well they have achieved learning intentions, and how they might improve.
24. Assessment is recognised by the school as an important tool for raising standards and has recently been a focus for development. Involvement in the 'Learning to Learn' project, with King's College London, has enabled the school to benefit from current research findings and improve classroom practice. As several staff are new to the school, there are plans to familiarise them with the project. The co-ordinator for assessment plays a leading role in the monitoring of standards. She keeps staff well informed to ensure that assessment information is used effectively by teachers in all classes to promote pupils' learning. Responses to the National Curriculum tests are systematically analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning at individual pupil, whole class and year group level. The recent focus on target setting enables teachers to have high expectations, and to keep track of pupils' achievements.
25. The school recognises that parents are the children's most important teachers. Parents are encouraged to share in what their children are learning at school, by helping with homework. Teachers set homework regularly and are ready to discuss it with parents when necessary. Pupils benefit from the extra work done at home; it extends and enhances what they have learnt in school.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of interesting curricular opportunities, and a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Inclusive practice and equality of opportunity for all pupils, with very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good levels and quality of classroom support.
- Continuous curricular development including innovative practice.
- Good links between different areas of the curriculum.
- Sometimes Reception children do not have enough opportunities to explore and be active during lessons.
- Library resources in some curricular areas are limited in quantity and out of date

Commentary

26. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and for collective worship. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are planned effectively in all subjects. A wide range of sporting and cultural visits, well chosen to link with the curriculum, is organised to extend and enrich pupils' experiences. The school has close links with the church and the local community, and Christian festivals are celebrated regularly as part of the religious and social life of the school.
27. Provision for children in the Reception Year has improved since the last inspection and it is now good. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been implemented well and outdoor provision is now good. The organisation of lessons for Reception children, who are in a class with pupils from Year 1, is being adapted to allow for more opportunities for the younger children to choose and explore activities independently.
28. The school's careful evaluation of its curriculum and willingness to seek innovative ways of further developing it have proved to be very successful. For example, the 'Learning to Learn' project is having beneficial effects on assessment practice throughout the school. Staff, including learning support assistants, are well qualified and keen to improve their teaching through further professional development. The school has a flexible and positive approach to change wherever it better meets the needs of pupils. For example, the profile of physical education, particularly for boys, has been raised very successfully by timetabling one lesson in the morning for every class. The school has worked hard to obtain a Gold Activemark award in physical education. In response to parents' suggestions, French has been introduced in Years 1 to 6 since September and it is proving to be popular with both pupils and parents. Different groupings of pupils and creative timetabling are used where these have a beneficial effect on learning. For example, on days devoted to particular subjects or topics, such as 'Grounds Day' or 'Victorian Day', collaborative work is promoted as pupils from different classes learn together. There is a long-established musical tradition that unites the whole school community. There is a comprehensive programme for personal, social and health education, which includes sex education and relationships, and drugs and alcohol misuse. Pupils in the and in Year 6 are prepared very well for the next stage of their education.
29. The well-trained and dedicated team of learning support assistants works very effectively with pupils who have Special Educational Needs. Class teachers ensure in their lesson plans that appropriate provision is made for pupils with particular learning needs. Information from assessment is used well so that pupils build effectively on what they already know. Learning support assistants monitor and record pupils' progress and provide an appropriate blend of help and challenge. Support for pupils with statements of special educational needs is very good.

30. There is a very good range of interesting extra-curricular activities; for example, a sewing club, ICT and Internet clubs, infant and junior sports and an Eco warriors club. Homework is used well to support and enhance pupils' learning. The youngest pupils are encouraged to take part in activities which will be fun for both parents and pupils and require them to work together. A wide variety of homework tasks is set, including reading, learning spellings and tables, literacy and numeracy tasks to support classwork, book and film reviews, science investigations and individual research. In addition, Year 6 pupils have more formal homework to help them to prepare for the next stage in their education. Through project work pupils are encouraged to develop research and presentational skills, as well as to learn how to organise their time effectively to meet deadlines. Some very good work was seen in Year 6 as part of a class 'science museum'. Pupils looked for information about the human body and made an extensive range of excellent three-dimensional models of human organs, such as the heart and the brain. These were displayed effectively, with labels, written information and diagrams.
31. The accommodation is adequate and the school makes the most of the space available. It is monitored periodically to make sure that all available space is being used to the best effect. Areas are developed where necessary—for example, the secure outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage, the development of the library facility, and the establishment of the ICT suites. The accommodation is well cared for by the cleaner-in-charge. Outdoor areas are safe, pleasant and well resourced and maintained. Good use is made of the outside environment to enrich the curriculum. All pupils benefit from being able to use the school's swimming pool regularly during the summer term. Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the school is open to all, the multi-level nature of the building makes it inaccessible to wheelchair users. However, there is a comprehensive programme in place to improve access for other types of disability. The quality and range of learning resources in most areas of the curriculum are broadly satisfactory and they are well managed. Some areas require extra resources to improve pupils' learning experiences; for example, the library's stock of non-fiction needs updating. Subject co-ordinators have identified the need for additional resources, such as measuring instruments in science, and artefacts in history and religious education, as priorities.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of children's personal needs. It very effectively promotes pupils' welfare and health and safety in a secure and caring environment. It provides very good support and guidance for pupils and is very effective in taking their ideas and opinions into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are very effective.
- Security, health and safety are very effectively promoted.
- The headteacher and other staff are good role models and are committed to supporting the pupils' personal development.
- Staff are regularly available to offer support and guidance to the pupils.
- Class and school councils are highly effective.

Commentary

32. The school continues to offer support and guidance of high quality and effectively promotes the welfare and health and safety of pupils in a warm, caring and secure environment. These positive features ensure that all pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, are fully integrated into the life of the school.
33. Support and guidance for pupils' academic and personal development, based on monitoring of very good quality, are very good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the high quality of the support they receive. In this small school, staff know the children extremely well and are well equipped to offer support when needed. Staff counsel

pupils very well, offering high quality support to those most in need. Led by the headteacher, staff are very good role models. Pupils confirm that they know whom to approach if they have a problem. All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in child protection. They understand the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused.

34. Site inspections are conducted regularly to identify potential hazards and prepare action plans for correction. Equipment is checked and tested regularly to ensure that it is fit for its purpose. Staff are safety conscious and watch for the security of the children. In subjects such as physical education and design and technology, including food technology, pupils are made aware of the importance of safety and hygiene.
35. The School Council, supported by the class councils, is instrumental in providing the opportunity for pupils' views to be considered. It has been in place and working effectively for several years and it has produced many initiatives. Class teachers and governors accept the ideas and opinions of their pupils very positively, and give clear encouragement to the children to offer their views. Older pupils help the younger ones to become familiar with the school and its practices. Amongst the many positive initiatives is the practice of older pupils writing to new children, welcoming them to the school before they arrive.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very effective links with parents. There are good links with the community. There are very good links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very positive about the work of the school.
- The Parent-Teacher Association is very supportive.
- Many parents and grandparents and members of the local community are involved in the life of the school.
- Annual reports for older pupils are not informative enough.

Commentary

36. The partnership with parents has been well maintained since the last inspection and continues to have a positive effect on the children's learning and personal development. Parents responding to the questionnaire and those attending the parents' meeting expressed strong support for the school and its work. They believe that the school has many strengths. They feel that they are consulted and listened to, in the development of their children's learning.
37. Information for parents is satisfactory overall; much of it is of good quality. Newsletters and the prospectus give parents useful information about the school and its organisation. Some reports, particularly in the Foundation Stage, give good quality information. They detail well what the pupils know, understand and can do, and they include good information about their progress. Reports for older pupils are less informative and in some instances personal comments could be phrased more positively.
38. Parents and grandparents are encouraged to get involved in the life of the school and a number of them respond extremely positively. They are a considerable help in the classroom and around the school, as well as on school trips and visits. The Parent-Teacher Association is very active and effective in fund-raising and social activities. Parents work with the children, providing good role models; for example, they look for interesting ways to raise money for the school and plan stalls to encourage people to spend. The school values highly the support and contributions made by parents and members of the community; they enhance children's learning and development. All parents are welcomed into the school.

39. The school enjoys positive partnerships with a wide range of groups and specialist agencies in the community, including the church and local businesses. As an active member of the Wheatley Partnership the school has very close pastoral and curricular links with Wheatley Park Secondary School. These help children to make a very smooth transfer to secondary education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction. The governance of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's excellent educational direction for the school.
- The very good management by the governing body.
- The highly inclusive atmosphere in the school.
- The searching approach to school self-evaluation.
- The commitment to continuous improvement.

Commentary

40. The very good quality of leadership and management has been maintained since the last inspection. It has a direct and positive effect on the very good quality of the education provided at the school. High standards are achieved because there are commonly understood values that permeate all aspects of school life. There are high expectations of all who work in the school. Pupils, regardless of capability, gender, faith or ethnic background, are encouraged to do their best at all times, to respect and support one another and to celebrate their family heritages. The feeling of optimism and success that exists throughout the school is not there by accident; it is the result of concentrated work over the years by those who have had roles of leadership and management.
41. The headteacher creates a strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff. She leads by example, both as a classroom teacher and a manager. She values every pupil and every member of staff, so that the Christian ethos of the school is well upheld and there is a strong sense of inclusion. The assistant headteacher plays a major role in leading the curriculum, and she does this very well. Co-ordinators fulfil their roles well. Teaching and learning are monitored so that there are consistent approaches; good practice can be shared and weaknesses can be addressed. Teachers new to the school are very well supported, and professional training for all staff is very well organised. Training for the further development of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been appropriately identified for the co-ordinator and the Reception teacher. The system for performance management for all staff is very well in hand.
42. School improvement is firmly based on what is best for the pupils. All members of staff are involved in school self-evaluation, with the clear intention to improve the quality of provision for pupils' academic and personal development. For example, when there was a drive to raise standards in ICT, every aspect of provision was explored – equipment, staff training, raising the expectations of pupils, curricular planning, monitoring of teaching and learning, and progress and timetabling of lessons – so that improvement was rigorous, very well managed and enjoyable for all concerned. It was very successful, too. The school development plan underpins the school's work very well because it is based on such good research.
43. Governance of the school is very good. The work of the governing body is steered very effectively by the well-informed chair of governors. Regular visits to the school, keen interest in analysis of results in national tests, informed involvement in school self-review and very good relationships with the staff make this a very good example of how a governing body should work. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, help to shape its direction

and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They explore what is going on in the school, listen to parents and challenge and question the headteacher and other members of staff. They listen to the pupils, too, and join in with school activities. As a result, there is consistent support and encouragement for the work of the school.

44. Financial management is of very good quality. The secretary fulfils her role very well; she ensures that day-to-day administration is carried out smoothly and teachers are not disturbed in lessons. The finance committee keeps a regular overview of the budget and monitors spending effectively. There is very good evaluation of spending in terms of benefit to the pupils' academic and personal education and achievement. Best value is a prominent feature of discussions at both committee and full governing body meetings. Specific funding for purposes such as special educational needs or staff training is clearly and properly directed and spent. The recruitment and retention of staff are well managed.
45. Governors have ensured that issues raised at the last inspection in 1998 have been dealt with effectively overall. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage, introduced nationally in 2000, has been planned effectively. Day-to-day structuring of activities within the mixed class of Reception and Year 1 pupils still requires refinement, but the school is aware of this and has it in hand. Other issues raised at the last inspection have been dealt with well, and improvements in ICT have been very good.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	316,591
Total expenditure	332,977
Expenditure per pupil	2550

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	44,989
Balance carried forward to the next year	28,603

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. It has improved since the last inspection.

Children start in the Reception class at the beginning of the term in which they will be five and are taught in a mixed-age class with Year 1 pupils. The majority of children have attended the private nursery located on the school site, with which the school has very good links. From an above average start, children achieve well and the majority are on course to exceed the expected Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching, learning and curricular provision are good overall. All adults set very good role models for the children and manage them very well. There is a good ratio of adults to children, ensuring that the needs of all are well met. Leadership is good, and staff work very well as a cohesive team, carefully monitoring all children's progress. Accommodation is satisfactory, with a new, attractive and secure outdoor area. Resources are satisfactory overall and have been extended to meet the needs of outdoor play. The school recognises the importance of developing the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and places a high priority on using the outdoor facilities as much as possible and promoting learning through play. Provision for Reception children in the mixed year group with Year 1 is improving to ensure that there are enough active experiences for the younger children throughout the day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and attain above average standards.
- Induction procedures are very good when pupils start school.
- Relationships are very good.
- Children maintain concentration and behave very well.
- There are too few opportunities for activities initiated by the children.

Commentary

46. New children soon settle into school and follow both class and school routines with ease because of the very good induction procedures. Older pupils write to them and become their 'buddies' when they start school and continue to care for them, ensuring that they settle into life at the school well. Children show interest in what they are doing, concentrate well and are eager to learn. They are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the . During assemblies of the whole school, and at other times they are able to sit still and listen attentively. They work well together and co-operate in pairs-for example, as they take turns when working on the computer. Supportive relationships are established, enabling the children to feel secure, confident and happy. Children demonstrate a high level of independence such as when changing for physical education. They readily help and support each other without prompting by an adult; for example, one child helped another with a zip, and in a mathematics lesson children helped each other with counting to ten.
47. Effective use is made of the available accommodation, both indoors and outdoors. The outdoor area is well used, not simply for physical activities but also for curriculum work. For example, the children had plenty of space to move around with puppets, using different voices as they acted out stories they were creating. Children develop a clear sense of what is right and wrong and behaviour is very good. They are developing a good sense of responsibility; this is evident at the end of lessons when they contribute to clearing up the classroom. They respond well during activities led by the teacher, but have too few opportunities to engage in activities that they initiate themselves or to make choices.

48. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are well organised and the best use is made of adult support, with activities presented in a lively and practical way. Although this area of learning remains a strength since the last inspection, the school recognises the need for further development in order to ensure a better balance between adult- and child-initiated activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.
- Children are confident speakers.

Commentary

49. Children's language is developed effectively. Observation of lessons and the analysis of work show that achievement in speaking, listening, reading and writing is good. Children achieve well and are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the . This is in line with standards reached at the time of the last inspection. Children listen attentively and speak with confidence. They are extending their vocabulary effectively, exploring the meaning of sounds as they use different voices to represent different characters. Speech is clear and audible as children demonstrate an awareness of an audience.
50. Children have positive attitudes towards reading, and readily choose books to look at. They have a clear understanding that print carries meaning, and that it is read from left to right; they turn pages correctly. Higher-attaining children recognise some words such as 'the', 'cat' and 'saw' and make good use of illustrations to make sense of the story. They enjoy listening to stories and particularly enjoy the story of 'Elmer the Elephant'. When 'said' was the word of the day, they took great delight in holding up their card every time the word was read, demonstrating good listening skills.
51. When writing, children make good use of their knowledge of sounds to spell words with increasing accuracy. They hold writing implements correctly and write on white boards and large sheets of paper recognisable words with letters correctly formed. There is already an awareness that sentences and names begin with capital letters. Children are developing appropriate skills when working on the computer, and can confidently add text, such as their names, to their drawings.
52. Teaching is good, enabling children to make significant gains in learning. Lessons are well introduced with clear explanations of learning intentions, capturing the children's interest from the outset. Going over work again is used well to confirm and consolidate prior learning. Children are provided with excellent opportunities that capture their interest and fire their imagination-for example, when they ran around outside with puppets of elephants, making them fly whilst using different voices as they considered various characters for their stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- A wide range of interesting activities is planned to support learning, enabling children to achieve very well.
- The learning support assistant makes a significant contribution to lessons.

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are very good. A very good range of activities is planned to promote mathematical understanding, which capture the children's interest and engage them fully. Most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the . Standards have improved since the last inspection. Children count beyond ten and already understand the idea of subtraction-for example, when they help 'Spike', a puppet, to recognise that when five cuddly toys have fallen down, there are five left. When playing a game of 'peek-a-boo', in which regular shapes-including squares, rectangles, circles and hexagons-are slowly revealed, children are able to accurately recognise their properties, and use correct terminology, such as 'straight sides', 'curved', 'point' and 'corner'. They are also able to select a shape inside a 'feely bag', describe its properties and accurately name it. To support their mathematical development, children can choose from a range of activities designed to consolidate their learning. This helps them to be creative and imaginative.
54. The learning support assistant makes a significant contribution throughout lessons, observing children during the sessions with the whole class, and making useful notes to assist with future planning. During parts of the lesson when children have a free choice, she supports the teacher by focusing the children on the learning intention, and by encouraging the use of correct mathematical language. This range of practical activities prepares the way for future learning very well, and is very appropriate at this stage of development, ensuring that children sustain interest and enjoy learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The activities planned by the teacher ensure that good learning about science, technology and the wider world takes place.
- Direct teaching of ICT results in very good achievement.
- Children achieve well and are on course to exceed the expected goals.

Commentary

55. Children have good opportunities to explore, observe and describe the movement of objects, and they experience the forces of pushing and pulling, which makes learning fun. Direct teaching of ICT enables children to use a mouse effectively to select a variety of tools from a menu. The children have opportunities to design and make books with flaps that lift and puppets that move. The school grounds and local environment are used well for environmental education. Walking between home and school has meant that children have become familiar with the local environment. Their understanding of past and present events in their own lives and in those of their families and other people was enhanced by visiting a toy museum, looking at old and new toys and talking to grandparents. They join the rest of the school in celebrating Christian festivals – most recently, Harvest Festival. Visits to the local church, and visits to school by the local vicar, all serve to address important questions, such as why we go to church.
56. Teaching and learning are good. The wide range of opportunities, based on learning from first-hand experience, provides a good grounding for future learning. Standards achieved have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals for knowledge and understanding of the world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to be active through a wide range of activities.
- Facilities for outdoor play are good.

Commentary

57. Children have plenty of opportunities to engage in physical activities both inside and out of doors. They have direct access to a newly created outdoor space that is well equipped and in a safe and secure area outside the classroom. The area has been developed well to include a road and crossing, where children can learn about road safety while playing on large wheeled toys. Inside, when working in the school hall, children demonstrated their ability to find different ways of moving and controlling a ball. Teaching is good. Clear demonstration of skills by the teacher leads to children being attentive and confident enough to have a go. Children's spatial awareness is good and they succeed in trying out a variety of techniques for sending a ball to each other. At the end of a lesson, during the plenary session, children are able to clearly describe how the skills that they learned helped them to control a ball effectively.
58. Children develop their finer motor skills well by handling a range of equipment with dexterity. Attention is given to the correct use of pencils, pens of different types, paintbrushes and scissors. Good teaching and supervision ensure that pupils are on track to exceed the expected goals for physical development by the end of the Reception Year. This represents considerable progress since the last inspection.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and attain above average standards.
- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- Musical development is very good.
- There are insufficient opportunities for role play.

Commentary

59. Children are on track to exceed most of the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning by the end of the Reception Year. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and staff encourage children to express their ideas and feelings.
60. In art and design, children have opportunities to experiment with pattern, working with different natural and man-made materials; they also learn how to combine various materials. As they make symmetrical patterns, children consolidate learning in mathematics, and they experiment with paint. In a very good lesson, children worked very well together to print a large, collaborative picture, using a variety of differently shaped objects. They have opportunities to observe different shapes and explore mathematical language. Children benefit from the school's strength in music, and they have many opportunities to sing and to listen to different kinds of music. Story times are used very effectively to stimulate children's imagination; the teacher gets the children to relate to the different characters in stories. However, during the inspection there was little evidence of role-play to develop children's imagination. The use of

the home corner and of sand and water play - all of which are located outside the classroom - is not organised well enough to ensure opportunities for children to benefit from these activities in the colder weather. Children gain confidence as they take part in school concerts and perform for a larger audience in school events, especially at Christmas.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are very good in all aspects of English by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Feedback to pupils is very good, enabling them to know what they have done well and how to improve.
- Speaking and listening skills are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes are very positive and behaviour is very good.
- Presentation of pupils' work is good and has improved since the last inspection.
- The library needs further development.

Commentary

61. The school's results in National Curriculum tests for Year 6 in 2003 show that standards in English were well above average. All pupils reached the expected level and the proportion of those achieving the higher level was well above average. Targets for English in 2003 were met and the school is on track to meet targets set for 2004. Results from the 2003 National Curriculum tasks and tests for Year 2 show that standards were well below average in reading and average in writing in comparison with standards in similar schools. This was particularly evident with the higher-attaining pupils. In this cohort the number of pupils with special educational needs was greater than usual in the school. However, standards seen during the inspection did not match those reflected in the Year 2 tests; they were above average. Pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils, achieve very well by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported. Work is carefully planned to meet their individual needs and they receive very good support and encouragement.
62. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average throughout the school. Pupils listen very carefully to adults and each other. They speak confidently and clearly and are able to discuss effectively in pairs and larger groups.
63. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve very well in reading, with the development of their knowledge and enjoyment of books going hand in hand with development of reading skills. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well because of the school's commitment to the regular teaching of letter sounds and spelling patterns. In all classes, there are good opportunities during the day for pupils to read silently. All pupils are encouraged to read with parents and carers at home. Well-kept records help pupils to progress well and understand where improvements need to be made. Pupils are clear about the strategies they need to use to work out how to read words and sentences, and most tackle new reading material confidently. Pupils, especially older ones, are developing firm preferences for the work of different authors. They make good use of the school non-fiction library and have well-developed research skills. There are plans to carry out an audit of the library in order to discard out-of-date and worn books, and then to extend the range and to include fiction. The good range of books in classrooms is not shelved alphabetically by author to help pupils to find particular books more easily.

64. Staff have worked hard to raise standards in writing, resulting in pupils making very good progress and achieving very high standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils have opportunities to write in different genres and for different purposes. For instance, when older pupils were working on biographies and autobiographies, the very good teaching motivated them to research and write a biography of someone they know well. The heavy emphasis on phonics and spelling with the younger pupils has helped to improve both pupils' reading and their spelling. Pupils' handwriting is good, and presentation of work has improved considerably since the last inspection. There have also been considerable improvements in the quality of marking and the use of ICT.
65. The quality of teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils learn effectively. Lessons are well planned with clear learning intentions, which are shared with the pupils. Learning intentions are revisited throughout lessons to ensure that learning is on track. The school's involvement with the 'Learning to Learn' project with King's College, London is resulting in effective marking and feedback to pupils. Pupils know how well they have done in relation to the learning intention, and receive clear guidance on how to improve. Questioning is used skilfully, not only to check what pupils already know, but also to clarify their understanding of learning and to promote thinking. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and recognise where learning is successful. Pupils' contributions are valued and feedback is positive; teachers make clear what has been done well and where improvements are needed. Relationships are very good. Pupils show respect for adults and each other; this is evident in how well they work together. They are very well managed and behave very well, enabling them to work both independently and collaboratively. Learning support assistants are deployed very well throughout the school to support groups and individuals.
66. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well. She is enthusiastic and keen to improve standards. Her monitoring of lessons and feedback to teachers have proved valuable. Comprehensive systems are in place for tracking of individual pupils and groups, to evaluate performance and the effectiveness of teaching. A flexible and tailored approach to the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, extensive staff training, resources of good quality, well-targeted support and extension programmes all contribute to the high standards achieved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. Literacy is well taught and applied across the curriculum. Pupils are taught correct subject-specific terminology and use it well. Library skills are well developed, enabling pupils to locate and retrieve information in subjects such as history and geography. Pupils have plentiful opportunities for discussion in lessons, enabling them to develop their speaking and listening skills. They are able to engage effectively in self- and peer-assessment - for example, in physical education lessons when evaluating their own and each other's performance.

French

Commentary

68. The subject was sampled. It is taught once a week in every class. In the two lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6 pupils achieved very well. Pupils listen carefully and speak with enthusiasm and confidence. All pupils know how to ask someone's name and to respond appropriately. They count with remarkable speed and confidence and enjoy singing French songs. Older pupils correctly use personal pronouns, 'je', 'tu', 'il' and 'elle'. They have made very good progress in the few weeks that they have been learning French.
69. Teaching is very good and results in good learning, enabling pupils to speak with accuracy and confidence. Good pace is maintained throughout lessons and the use of a variety of teaching strategies motivates pupils, who respond enthusiastically. Pupils listen well to questions and responses, which are very well modelled by the teacher. As a result pupils' pronunciation is

very good. Good use is made of explanations in English to increase pupils' wider understanding of French. However, with the older pupils, the teacher sometimes resorts to translating into English rather than persisting with the use of French.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average
- Teaching is very good
- Very good learning is strongly based on practical activities
- Pupils enjoy the subject

Commentary

70. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to attain well above average standards by the end of the school year, and pupils throughout the school achieve very well. No significant difference was observed between the performance of girls and boys in lessons, and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers. Standards have risen since the last inspection. The school has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy very successfully. The most important factors leading to the pupils' high achievement are the positive ethos of the school, the very good leadership by the co-ordinator, the high quality of the teaching and the correspondingly high standard of pupils' learning.
71. Throughout the school, teachers' questioning encourages pupils to try different approaches when solving problems. In the first part of lessons, brisk mental arithmetic keeps pupils 'on their toes', and they are challenged to solve problems involving money, time, measurement and fractions. The high standards in Year 2 are reflected in pupils' knowledge and understanding of place value of digits within larger numbers, and in their very good mental recall of multiplication tables. Pupils apply their number skills very effectively to all aspects of measurement. They classify a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes and use correct mathematical language confidently. Pupils in Year 6 solve more complex problems, sometimes written in words, in well-ordered ways. The majority of pupils have a very good understanding of the equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages. They study the properties of triangles and quadrilaterals and find the angles contained in more complex figures. They recognise the different processes, such as addition or multiplication, which need to be employed to get the right answer, and check their answers to see if they are sensible.
72. Mathematical language is very well taught and developed. It enriches pupils' understanding and confidence in problem solving. Many pupils in Year 1 already refer confidently to 'faces', 'vertices' and 'edges' on three-dimensional shapes. In mental arithmetic sessions, pupils explain their methods for solving problems and are prepared to answer queries from other pupils. Teachers allow pupils to explore different ways of finding answers, so that they tease out their ideas instead of being told a method of working which they may not understand. Pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics. They enjoy practical work, have high levels of motivation and are very well behaved. Teachers manage pupils very well, and relationships are very good, so that pupils can question each other and turn to the teachers confidently when they are unsure of things.
73. The overall quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are taught at a very good pace that maintains pupils' interest, and work is very well planned to meet the needs of different age groups in the classes. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and committed to maintaining high standards and making the subject enjoyable for staff and pupils. The quality of teachers' questioning is very good. Problem solving is a major feature in mathematics lessons, and teachers engage very well with pupils to elicit their

understanding and extend their learning. Teachers make very good use of assessments to set targets so that every pupil can improve. Information from assessment is used regularly to inform teachers' planning, so that topics can be revisited if there is any doubt whether pupils have a secure understanding. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and comments usually help pupils to see where they have gone wrong. They could sometimes provide more helpful and supportive comments so that pupils are clear about what they need to do in order to improve. However, teachers often work alongside pupils, to clarify understanding and to work through examples, and pupils know that their efforts are valued and respected.

74. Learning support assistants play a significant role in helping pupils to achieve as well as they can. They are well trained and work closely with class teachers to support pupils of all abilities. The high quality of support for pupils with special educational needs contributes positively to their achievement and helps them to make very good progress. Teachers provide very good support for pupils who are gifted or talented. Activities in lessons extend these pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively, and lessons held at weekends in conjunction with other schools add further challenge. The setting of homework reinforces all pupils' learning well. Extra practice at home contributes significantly to the very good rate at which pupils learn.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. Pupils are confident when they apply their mathematical skills to other subjects - for example, in geography and science, when they create graphs about the weather, measure the growth of plants or compare the height of their classmates. In ICT, pupils collect information and present it in a variety of interesting graphs and charts. In art and design and design and technology, pupils explore shapes, do accurate drawings and measure materials. The use of numeracy throughout the curriculum effectively enhances pupils' understanding of the importance of number in everyday life, and gives them opportunities to apply and extend their knowledge.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they plan interesting and relevant tasks.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils and manage them very well.
- Pupils use a wide and relevant scientific vocabulary.
- Clear links are made with other subjects.

Commentary

76. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed well in science. There is a clear understanding of what is being taught. Standards are high in Year 2 and very high in Year 6. One lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2, two were seen in Years 3 to 6, and inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work. Pupils in Year 2 use scientific words, including 'gravity', to explain why an object rolls down a slope. They understand that the strength of a push determines how far an object travels. Throughout the school, teachers plan and organise lessons well so that pupils are interested and engaged. Pupils have the opportunity of working individually and collaboratively. This helps them to learn at a good rate. For example, in a good lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils worked well in small groups to demonstrate their understanding of different types of food by producing informative posters about healthy diets. Pupils have good attitudes to science and record their work neatly and accurately in charts, tables and graphs. In Year 6, pupils interpret line graphs, showing how pulse rate changes with exercise, drawing conclusions that are consistent with their results. Pupils are keen and confident to share ideas

with the rest of the class. They have a very good command of scientific vocabulary because teachers model its use effectively. For example, the level of vocabulary used by pupils in Year 6 in a topic on the human body was very high.

77. The school achieved very high results in last year's national tests. Analysis of test results and good marking of pupils' work helps teachers to improve pupils' learning and achievement. Although no investigative work was seen during the inspection, teachers make sure that pupils are encouraged to be enquiring young scientists in a variety of ways. For example, pupils in Year 2 discover that only certain types of metal are magnetic, find out how toys move in different ways, and why, and look at the structure of flowers to understand the functions of different parts in plant reproduction. Teaching seen during the inspection was good, and evidence from pupils' work throughout the school indicates that teaching has been very good over time. Teachers are very aware of the range of scientific ideas that need to be taught for each age group. Well-focused work is planned effectively and carefully matched to the differing abilities of all pupils. Teachers expect pupils to do their best and behave well. Pupils respond very well and enjoy the subject. Learning is extended through the use of research skills and homework. Learning support assistants ensure that pupils get the help they need. All pupils, regardless of background or capability, are well provided for. Pupils from ethnic minorities are fully integrated in lessons, work confidently and achieve well.
78. Links with other subjects are promoted well, and pupils use scientific ideas and vocabulary effectively to extend their learning. Pupils use computers to enhance their learning in science. For example, in Years 5 and 6, they have made and interrogated a database about variation in humans, and used the Internet to find out about planets in the solar system. Pupils apply and enhance their mathematical skills through making measurements of temperature and forces, and by communicating their findings as graphs. They use literacy skills to research and present information. Pupils in Year 3 apply their understanding of electric circuits to make burglar alarms. The school grounds provide a useful resource for investigative work on the environment. Teaching resources are well organised in topic boxes, but need enhancement in some areas, such as that for measuring forces. The library has a wide range of books across all areas of science.
79. The subject is well led and managed by a well-qualified and experienced co-ordinator, who has recently taken over the role. Through monitoring and evaluation she has identified several areas to develop, which will contribute towards even higher standards in the subject. The further development of pupils' investigative skills and creating more challenge for higher-attaining pupils have both been highlighted for improvement. Staff have plans to tackle these. Some tweaking of what is taught in different year groups will ensure pupils can make maximum progress. The school has successfully maintained the high standards achieved at the time of the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the subject is excellent.
- Pupils are keen and interested.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Resources are well chosen to extend pupils' skills.

Commentary

80. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach well above average standards by the end of the school year. They achieve very well because of the very high quality of the leadership in the subject and the very good teaching. There has been very good improvement in leadership, standards and teaching and learning since the last inspection.
81. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use the equipment confidently, handling the keyboard and mouse very competently. They use icons confidently to access programs and are quick to pick up on advice from classmates and staff. Throughout the school, pupils are aware of the importance of technology in modern society. Word processing skills are good; pupils record their written work effectively and add pictures confidently. Most pupils access information from the Internet independently. In all year groups, pupils explore the possibilities within drawing packages and create pictures in a range of styles, linking well with work in art and design. In Year 6, pupils create spreadsheets and use them to solve problems. Links with design and technology are strong. The school has an enviable history of success in competitions against other schools for designing model vehicles and controlling them around specific courses in a given time.
82. Pupils often work in pairs to investigate problems and organise their findings. They listen to one another well and are willing to try out new ideas; they show respect for one another, the staff and the equipment. Pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the subject are enriched by a very good range of imaginative opportunities that motivate their interest. Subject teaching is enhanced because ICT programs provide different perspectives on how problems can be explored, and how information can be ordered. In Year 6, pupils use interactive programs to give presentations to the class. Pupils create websites and look for ways to convince and inform their audience by displaying text and images in interesting ways, and adding movement and sound to their work.
83. The co-ordinator is very well informed and technically very competent. She is able to advise teachers on how new skills can be taught and can deal with problems when machines go wrong. Staff are aware of the good range of software available, and this leads to very good teaching in the computer suite, where teachers use carefully selected programs that help pupils to gain skills at a very good rate. Teachers keep simple, regular records of pupils' progress through the school's helpful schemes of work. This ensures that pupils build effectively on what they already know, understand and can do. Teaching and learning have been monitored so that there is consistency in how the suite is used and how skills are extended in the classrooms. Professional development for all staff, including the learning support assistants, has been of a very good quality so that teaching throughout the school is very good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good, and pupils are given good opportunities to use CD-ROMs and the Internet. There is a whole-school plan to show how skills can be used and developed systematically in all subjects, and all co-ordinators are involved in planning this. Teachers plan the use of ICT well and provide opportunities for the practice of skills and exploration of possibilities within programs. ICT is used widely for data handling - for example, in mathematics, science and geography. The use of electronic equipment is planned to take place in the summer term - for example, for measuring temperature in science.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong links with the parish church enhance pupils' learning.
- Pupils learn about a good range of other faiths.

Commentary

85. Only one lesson was seen, but from samples of pupils' work throughout the school, examination of teachers' planning, and discussion with pupils and the co-ordinator for the subject, it is evident that pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are taught effectively about other world faiths including Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism as well as Christianity. They are encouraged to reflect on how studying the beliefs of other people relates to their own lives and are helped to learn from religion, not just about it.
86. In the well-organised lesson seen, pupils in Year 4 discussed their ideas about how we can look after our world. These pupils have learnt about the five pillars of Islam, and the teacher skilfully related the lesson to the Muslim concept of kalifah, which means taking responsibility for God's world. No overall judgement is given on teaching, because so little was seen.
87. There are close links with the church, which help to reinforce learning and make it more relevant. Well-known Bible stories are taught in all classes, and the school joins with the parish community to celebrate Christian religious festivals. Pupils in Year 1 have considered the role of the vicar and why people go to church. Work on harvest and advent is enhanced by going to church and by regular visits to the school by the vicar, who takes assemblies regularly. Religious education provides excellent opportunities for pupils to express their ideas and discuss values such as courage, happiness, trust and love. Making pupils culturally and morally aware is one of the school's main aims in the teaching of religious education.
88. Pupils are taken to see other places of worship, including a synagogue and a mosque. This broadens their understanding of the importance of religion in many people's lives, and prepares them for life in contemporary British society.
89. Pupils present their work well, often illustrating it with lively drawings. Literacy is promoted well, and pupils use ICT for word-processing and to find information from CD-ROMs and on the Internet. The subject is led and managed well. The curriculum is planned effectively so that teachers help all pupils, including those from ethnic minorities and those who have special educational needs, to achieve well.

Geography and History

Commentary

90. Pupils' work was sampled in geography and history, and one lesson was seen in history. The evidence gathered indicates that standards are above expected levels and have been maintained since the last inspection. In both subjects, a range of visits and visitors plays an important part in making the work interesting and relevant.
91. No geography lessons were timetabled during the inspection, but evidence was gathered through discussion and looking at pupils' work. Pupils in Year 2 have completed an interesting local study. They write their own questions when interviewing members of the local

community to find out the importance of different people's roles. They use computers and digital cameras to record their work. They draw their route to school, identifying local landmarks; this study is complemented well by the road safety 'Footsteps' programme. Pupils' achievement is good as their work shows improvements in detail and presentation over time. In Year 6, pupils locate rivers on world maps and show good understanding of the water cycle. They use geographical vocabulary such as 'meander', 'delta' and 'flood plain' with confidence, and can explain their meanings.

92. In history, pupils in Year 2 study toys from the past and are beginning to develop their enquiry skills through handling artefacts and looking closely at pictures. They can give opinions about likes and dislikes and are beginning to develop an awareness of how things change over time. This work is both interesting and relevant. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 are encouraged to be 'history detectives' by using sources of evidence, such as pictures, to find clues to a range of questions. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 study how the childhood of the Aztecs differed from their own. In the lesson seen, they enjoyed talking about other cultures and were interested in how things were different in the past and why. In a good discussion, pupils made relevant comments and demonstrated previous knowledge well, through clear links with similar information from the Egyptian period. Pupils are developing a good range of historical vocabulary.
93. Teachers mark pupils' work well in both subjects. Work is well presented, showing an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan work that matches pupils' differing abilities, enabling all pupils, including those from ethnic minorities and those with special educational needs, to achieve well. Leadership and management of these subjects are good overall. The co-ordinator, who manages both geography and history, has a clear view of how to develop the subjects. An identified area for development is to encourage greater use of research skills through more extended use of the library.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Commentary

94. Work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. In all four subjects, pupils' work was scrutinised and curricular documentation and teachers' planning were examined. Photographs of school displays and events were also scrutinised. The high quality of pupils' work indicates that teaching has been at least good. The small amount of teaching seen was good in design and technology and physical education. No lessons were seen in art and design or music, but from the evidence collected indicates that standards are well above average and pupils achieve very well in both of these subjects. In design and technology and physical education, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. The quality of leadership is very good overall. It is inspirational in music. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from opportunities to explore materials and express their ideas in subjects where the written word, though important, does not inhibit their enjoyment. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds can celebrate their cultures and share them with their classmates.
95. In art and design, pupils work with a wide range of materials to create imaginative pictures and three-dimensional pieces. Art from a variety of countries and cultures brings a multicultural richness to pupils' work - for example, when they paint in the Aboriginal style. In work on Picasso, pupils in Years 1 and 2 created stunning portraits in his style. Visiting artists inspire pupils to take risks and explore ideas - for example, when they created a mural about the jungle. Painting on silk by older pupils is of very high quality. The carefully painted motifs are beautifully executed; some are displayed in the parish church. In the Arts Week organised by the Arts Council of Great Britain, pupils worked with a professional artist, using photographs to explore texture and enhance their paintings. Well-organised sketchbooks help pupils to hone their drawing skills and collect ideas to enhance their work. Pupils use

their artistic skills to enhance work in other subjects - for example, when pupils in Years 1 and 2 painted pictures of significant features of the village as part of a local study. Bold paintings of buildings and of the village green bring life to the classroom display.

96. In design and technology, the main strength of pupils' work is their ability to design and make objects with a clear view of their purpose. In a good lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, pupils remembered skills they had learnt earlier and employed them to solve the problem of how to make a toy mouse 'run up the clock'. Enthusiastically and with great concentration, they worked in pairs and used dowelling and string to suspend the mouse and then wind it up. The teacher did not tell them all the answers; she let them investigate and find out what to do, but was there to encourage and support so that all groups were successful. Older pupils combine design and technology with ICT, again with the clear purpose of constructing a vehicle by remote control and driving it along a defined route. Skills are taught progressively through the school so that pupils have a bank of ideas on which to draw when they need them to solve problems. Children from different age groups work together during special 'design and technology' days. For example, they planned and made shelters that were tested for their waterproofing quality when the headteacher threw a bucket of water over each one. A great deal of laughter ensued and everyone learned a great deal, too.
97. Music is a strength of the school. The leadership of the subject is inspirational and the co-ordinator succeeds in promoting its high profile and in conveying her own obvious enthusiasm to staff and pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident when performing. They listen attentively and respond to music very well - for example, as they dance in physical education lessons, when recorded music is used. Singing is a particular strength. Pupils sing together with good diction and pitch, with an awareness of using different dynamics. The teaching of whole-school singing is very effective because new tunes are modelled a line at a time and then repeated by pupils. Very good provision in music ensures that all pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to play the recorder, and a significant number learn to play other instruments. Pupils perform in school assemblies and concerts and join pupils from other schools in major events - for example, the Golden Jubilee celebrations at the Oxford Apollo Theatre and the National Youth Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. Instrumentalists at different stages of accomplishment play together confidently in small ensembles.
98. In physical education, pupils have good opportunities for participating in dance, games, gymnastics and swimming, and they achieve above average standards in all areas of physical education, including swimming. They are developing a good understanding of the importance of exercise for fitness and health. In games, they work together in teams and compete against other schools. In dance, too, pupils practise and hone skills and then join with other pupils to work together imaginatively. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked in groups and followed a group leader to compose a sequence of movements using rolls, balances and jumps at different levels and speeds. They evaluated and refined their work as they went along, and during the discussion at the end of the lesson, each group's work was evaluated by the rest of the class. Pupils readily praised what was good, and shared good ideas for improvement. Teaching and learning were good in the physical education lessons seen. Pupils concentrated, behaved very well and worked well together. These features contributed to good progress and achievement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Commentary

99. This aspect of education is dealt with very effectively in the school, and the Christian ethos of care is evident in the thoughtful way that pupils relate to one another. Pupils are prepared very well for later life. There are appropriate arrangements for the teaching of sex education and making pupils aware of drugs and alcohol abuse.

100. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour are the result of the commitment by staff and governors to educating pupils as people of the world, and not just pupils of Horspath School. Teachers plan time for pupils to express their views and air their ideas. In the Reception year, children learn social skills such as taking turns, sharing and helping one another. In 'circle time', pupils in each class sit in a circle and discuss social issues. The subject is taught throughout the school day - for example, in assemblies and when teachers promote ideas about healthy lifestyles in physical education and science lessons. In religious education, pupils gain a growing understanding of the wide range of faiths and cultures and become more aware of the multicultural diversity of contemporary British society.
101. Older pupils undertake duties in assemblies and at playtimes, and at lunchtimes their good example contributes very well to the very good behaviour of younger children. Responsibility and citizenship are promoted in the School Council. Pupils gain confidence and begin to take their part in the wider community as they represent the school in sports events and take part in big musical concerts with pupils from other schools. Support for charities through fund-raising events helps pupils to show concern for and to help people less fortunate than themselves.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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