

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEEN'S DYKE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Witney

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123020

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Wright

Lead inspector: Mr John Burnham

Dates of inspection: 17 - 20 May 2004

Inspection number: 257253

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	395
School address:	Burwell Drive Witney Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX28 5JW
Telephone number:	01993 704770
Fax number:	01993 706423
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Stew
Date of previous inspection:	22 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Queens' Dyke Primary School is located in the south of Witney. It is a larger-than-average primary school for 5 to 11 year olds. There are 395 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are from white British families with about 10 per cent of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, representing seven different ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils at an early stage of English acquisition, at just over one per cent, is lower than is usually found. There are 17 per cent of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs which is broadly average, but represents a significant increase over the past three years. The pupils' needs include moderate and specific learning difficulties, social, emotional and physical needs. Just over one per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs which is about average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is broadly average for infant and junior schools at 7.1 per cent. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds. Pupil mobility is broadly average. The attainment of pupils when they start school is just below normally expected levels, especially in communication and social skills. The school has successfully retained Investors in People status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
5020	John Burnham	Lead inspector	English Music Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs
11104	Michael Fleming	Lay inspector	
31619	Ingrid Lemon	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Art and design History Geography
33167	Carol Witherden	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education
24104	Michael Marsh	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Limited
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Queen's Dyke is a good school which provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Standards at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are good overall and pupils achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum provided are good. The school is very well led and managed, and gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school and develop a good understanding of their own learning.
- The headteacher, well supported by the senior management team and the governing body, provides very good leadership and very effective management.
- Much of the teaching is very good throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy school and are highly motivated because of the very positive ethos.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently give sufficient guidance about what pupils need to learn, and there is some inconsistency in the setting of homework.
- Arrangements for setting in mathematics do not consistently provide enough challenge for the most able pupils.
- The work of learning support assistants has a very positive impact on the achievement of pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive very good support and make good progress.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All of the key issues identified in the last report show improvement. Curriculum planning for speaking and listening, religious education and for children in the Foundation Stage is now good. Pupils are given more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Higher attaining pupils are now more consistently challenged although this is not always the case in mathematics lessons. The provision of accommodation and resources for Foundation Stage children has also improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar Schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	A	A
Mathematics	C	A	B	B
Science	C	B	A	A

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, attaining levels that compare favourably with national averages. Standards have risen in line with the national trend over the past three years. Standards achieved in English and science in 2003 were well above average in comparison with similar schools when judged in relation to pupils' prior attainment. Over a half of pupils achieved Level 5 in English and science in 2003. In mathematics, standards were above the average and nearly a third of pupils attained Level 5. In the work seen, standards are suitably high, being above those expected of pupils of the same age in English, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 2, although pupils' reading, writing and speaking and listening are developing successfully, results of national tests were below average in 2003. Results in mathematics were above average. Overall trends in results at the age of seven have fluctuated over the past three years, but standards in the work seen are high enough and pupils' achievement is now good. Throughout the school, standards are also above expectation in information technology, religious education, history, design and technology and music and in line with

expectations elsewhere. By the end of the Reception Year, most children will attain the expected learning outcomes for their age and in some aspects of communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development they will exceed them.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have very good attitudes to school. A small but significant group of pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties but they are supported very well. Pupils' attendance is very good and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. None of the teaching was less than satisfactory, and much of it was very good. Daily planning provides good guidance to focus on the language and oral work which is a major emphasis of teaching and learning in the school. Teachers employ a very effective range of teaching methods and good resources and ensure a brisk pace to learning. Teachers help pupils to understand how well they are learning. They set high standards for pupils' behaviour. Learning support assistants are very well briefed and make a significant, positive contribution to pupils' learning. A broad curriculum is offered to all pupils and there are plenty of additional opportunities for sporting, artistic and musical activities and out-of-school educational experiences. Pupils are given good opportunities for enrichment outside the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. The level of care for pupils, and concern for their well-being, is good. Links with parents and the wider community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership is very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and has given a very clear direction to the school during a period of significant change. She is well supported by the senior management team. Governance is good. Governors are well informed and prepared to take effective action to improve standards and provision. **Management of the school is very good.** The staff form a strong team who work very hard and in a very well organised way to develop all aspects of school provision.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have positive views about the school; they are happy with the standards that their children achieve and with the quality of teaching. A significant number of parents do not feel that they receive sufficient information from the school about homework.

The pupils view their school very favourably. They enjoy their lessons and feel well supported in their learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure greater consistency in the marking of pupils' work to guide their future learning, and the setting of homework; and
- review the arrangements for teaching and learning in mathematics to ensure that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the time pupils leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved significantly in English across the school, being usually above average, and are often well above average in speaking and listening by the age of eleven.
- Mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) standards are above average.
- The school has successfully maintained the above-average standards and good progress in science reported at the time of the previous inspection.
- Standards in religious education are above average by the ages of seven and eleven.
- Most children in Reception Year are well on course to meet their learning targets before they join Year 1.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs that ensures good achievement.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- Achievement is good throughout the school, but is not as good as it could be for the most able pupils in mathematics.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in nearly all subjects.
2. Since the previous inspection, the school's own baseline assessment of children on entering the Reception reveals a decline over time in respect of communication and language skills, and in the children's personal and social skills. However, most children in the reception class are on target to attain in the expected learning outcomes for their age by the end of the year, and in some aspects of communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development they will exceed them. Currently, standards in the work seen in Year 6 are above expectations in English, mathematics and science, with particular strengths in English. In Year 2, overall standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science, and average in writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (15.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.1 (13.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.1 (16.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The results of national tests for pupils at the age of seven have fluctuated significantly in the past five years, reflecting differences in the year groups. In 2003, results in reading and writing were well below the average for similar schools. Pupils' performance in writing has improved, and the successful efforts made by the school to raise achievement through improvements in

teaching and learning, and in speaking and listening, are beginning to result in higher standards attained in national tests in writing for seven year olds. Boys have tended to perform better than girls in reading in the past three years, and in writing in 2003, but there is currently no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Results in mathematics were average, representing an improvement over the past three years. Teacher assessments in science showed standards to be above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.3 (26.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.5 (28.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.0 (29.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Commentary

4. Overall results for pupils aged eleven in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average in 2003. When judged in relation to pupils' prior attainment and in comparison with similar schools, results were well above average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. There was a significant increase in the number of pupils attaining Level 5 in English. The improvement in results is broadly in line with national trend over the past five years. Prior attainment comparisons are favourable, indicating pupils tested in 2003 had made good gains in learning from their results at the age of seven, and value-added comparisons for this group were well above average. Although there has been some fluctuation over time, there has been a steadily rising trend in all three subjects over the past three years. Overall, there have been no significant variations in the performances of boys and girls during this period. Targets set for 2003 were met at Level 4 and substantially exceeded at Level 5. In mathematics, results were just below target at Level 4 and just above at Level 5. The school has set suitably challenging targets for 2004 and 2005.
5. Throughout the school, pupils' reading skills are successfully developed as a result of good quality teaching of phonics, and they soon read a wide range of books for pleasure. Pupils talk knowledgeably and critically about books they read and identify valid reasons why they enjoy some authors' style to others.
6. Pupils are beginning to apply their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding more widely across the curriculum, although the arrangements for teaching mathematics does not provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' knowledge of chronological order, calculation skills and awareness of space, shape and measure is used effectively.
7. Improvements in speaking and listening and pupils' very positive attitudes have contributed well to raising achievement in other subjects. In science, pupils are enthusiastic and collaborate well on scientific tasks. Teachers' questioning is very good, often leading pupils on to a higher level of thinking. In religious education, pupils reflect sensitively on their own and others' feelings, and group discussions are a particular strength of lessons.
8. Pupils show confidence in using different applications in ICT. They combine text and graphics, make discriminating searches of the internet, send e-mails with files attached and use graphics programs with good levels of skill.
9. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well; a significant minority attain expected standards in national tests. The school is rightly proud of the progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and those who find concentrating difficult. The very good management of

the learning of these pupils contributes significantly to their good achievements. The very good support they receive in English and mathematics lessons means that their progress in these subjects is particularly good. Pupils with statements of special educational need make good progress in all lessons as a result of more consistent one-to-one support. Pupils who have special talents or gifts are encouraged to pursue their particular interests and have satisfactory provision within the limits of the school's resources. This has enabled pupils to perform well on a wider stage, such as in the arts or sport. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, particularly in English. Teachers and support staff are very aware of individual needs.

10. There are several reasons for the improvements in pupils' achievements. The school analyses test results and other data very closely and uses the information well to match individual attainment to appropriate levels in the curriculum. Writing targets are shared with pupils and parents. The quality of teaching is now good and much of it is very good. There have been good improvements to curricular planning, and speaking and listening skills have improved significantly since the previous inspection. All of the above have helped pupils to become more actively engaged in their learning and have helped to raise overall standards of achievement in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Their standard of behaviour is good overall. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are good; their cultural development is satisfactory. The level of attendance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils concentrate very well on their work
- Relationships are very good throughout the school
- Pupils work together very effectively

Commentary

11. As indicated at the time of the last inspection, pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to school and to their work. They form very good relationships with adults and with other children, regardless of gender, ability level or ethnic origin, and are happy at school. There is no culture of bullying: examples are rare, and pupils and parents report that most cases are dealt with effectively. Most pupils behave very well but there are some who find self-control difficult. This special need is recognised by the school and is handled very well by teachers and their assistants, so the behaviour rarely disrupts other pupils' learning. The school has not needed to exclude any pupils in the last year.
12. Pupils find their work interesting and pay good attention to teachers. They concentrate well and are keen to participate in their lessons; teachers' questions usually provoke a flurry of eager responses. Pupils get on well with all the adults in their classroom; they are confident to ask for help and that their contributions will be respected and valued. When asked to work together, for example by discussing a point in pairs, they co-operate very effectively. These very good working relationships help to sustain a happy atmosphere where all members of the school community are busy but calm, and which encourages pupils to achieve well.
13. The personal development of pupils is good overall. They effectively emulate the very good role models of co-operation provided by staff. Pupils' sense of social responsibility is demonstrated by their consistent politeness and by their participation in charity work. They are keen to represent their peers' views in the school council. Pupils understand routines and rules of behaviour. They understand the impact of their actions on others and empathise with others' feelings. Even the younger children show they are able to discuss moral concepts such as selfishness and sharing. Pupils treat people and learning resources with equal care

and respect. They enjoy learning new concepts. They are willing to use their imagination, to say what they think and to risk answers. Their work is often well presented and they are justifiably proud of their achievements. They value the expansion of their horizons through what they encounter in lessons, such as the opportunity for pupils in Year 5 to empathise with a Jamaican child, and also experiences provided by visitors to the school and by school visits. Residential visits are popular. Pupils participate well in extra-curricular activities and were observed enjoying musical and cycling activities.

14. Pupils view their school very favourably. They enjoy their lessons and feel well supported in their learning. Because pupils enjoy school they are keen to attend and the level of attendance stays consistently well above the national average. Their punctuality is good and they settle quickly in lessons. The number of pupils who miss school because they are taken away to go on holiday during term-time is increasing.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Asian
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Black or Black British – African
Chinese
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
365	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
19	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching, learning and assessment are all of good quality. There is a good, inclusive curriculum that is enriched effectively.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall and much of it is very good. The assessment of pupils' work is good. The quality of learning is good in Years 3 to 6, and very good in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.

- Planning for long, medium and short term is good, especially for literacy.
- Learning objectives are clearly shared with pupils.
- In the very good lessons, formative assessment is used well to match work closely to pupils' abilities.
- There is inconsistent practice in using formative assessment, and teachers' marking does not always help pupils improve their work.
- There is some inconsistency in the setting of homework.
- Arrangements for setting in mathematics do not consistently provide enough challenge for the more able pupils.
- Teachers engage pupils very well.
- Resources are used very well.
- Teachers make good use of a range of teaching and learning strategies to actively involve pupils in their learning.

Commentary

15. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good overall although there are significant variations in approach between the two classes. Good use is made of the assessment of children's progress to inform teachers' planning. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are very good and teachers' use of assessment information is good. Teachers are beginning to encourage pupils to evaluate the quality of their own work. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good and assessment is satisfactory. Inconsistencies in the quality of marking mean that pupils are not always sufficiently well informed about how they can improve their future work.
16. None of the teaching was less than satisfactory, and much of it was very good. One lesson was judged to be excellent. Teaching in the best lessons provides high levels of challenge, based on good assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do. There is a clear expectation that pupils will work independently or in groups on specific tasks and provide thoughtful evaluations of what they have achieved. A good example of this was in a Year 1 science lesson where the pupils were carrying out an investigation and had to identify the elements of a fair test and then share them with the class.
17. In Years 3 to 5 teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good; the majority of teaching is good or very good. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour successfully and give great attention to developing and refining pupils' skills. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not always make good use of formative assessment to ensure a good match of work to pupils' abilities.
18. A clear focus by staff on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills has led to improvements in pupils' learning and a subsequent raising of standards as pupils move through the school. As a result, pupils have a good understanding and use a wide range of vocabulary related to the subjects they are being taught. Teachers use a good range of interactive teaching strategies and these engage pupils well in their learning and encourage them to concentrate throughout the lesson. There is an inconsistent approach to the setting of homework, mainly in Years 3 to 6. This limits the opportunities for extending and reinforcing class work and, consequently, the rate at which pupils make progress.
19. The quality of learning for the more able pupils is usually good. However, the needs of the most able pupils are not consistently well provided for in mathematics, and there are times when these pupils are not challenged enough. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught well and make good gains in their learning. Clear lines of communication between all adults help ensure that good attention is given to pupils' individual learning needs. Learning support assistants in all classes play an important role in supporting pupils; they are skilled in asking suitable questions and in encouraging pupils to try their best, using positive praise as an encouragement.

20. The school has a good range of effective systems for assessing pupils' abilities and achievements, although these are not yet fully embedded and used consistently by some teachers. Where assessment is used well it is based clearly on a good understanding by teachers of what pupils can do and what they need to learn next in order to improve. The involvement of pupils in setting and reviewing their writing targets, ensuring that they play an active role in their learning, is an important, successful feature of the approach to teaching and learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 66 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	27 (41%)	28 (42%)	10 (15%)	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 curriculum

The curriculum is good. It serves to give pupils a broad education that motivates them to work hard.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported across the school.
- Pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Inclusion has a high priority at the school and is very good.
- Effective transition programmes operate between the different stages of education.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment, including after-school clubs and residential visits.
- There is some imbalance between numeracy, literacy and the rest of the curriculum.
- Pupils benefit from a strong team of learning support assistants.
- The accommodation presents particular challenges to teachers for classroom organisation.

Commentary

21. The Foundation Stage curriculum meets the needs and interests of the youngest children. Effective planning ensures that there is a good balance across all areas of learning. Practical, stimulating, first-hand experiences are provided indoors and out. There are good links with Year 1.
22. The school offers a broad curriculum that meets statutory requirements including provision for religious education and collective worship. Literacy and numeracy are planned effectively, particularly literacy, and closely follow the national guidance. These areas of the curriculum do, however, take up a large percentage of each week's timetable. As a result, there is some imbalance in the curriculum, and links between different subjects are not as coherent as they could be. The school is aware of this and has already taken positive action in respect of innovative approaches to speaking and listening. Provision in science continues to maintain the success it enjoyed at the time of the previous inspection.
23. Pupils are encouraged to work in groups and individually. Where pupils work in groups they co-operate well; they put forward their own ideas confidently and listen patiently to the views of others. The school has several successful transition programmes in place. Good support is given to pupils when they move from the reception class to Year 1 and from Year 2 to Year 3. Teachers from the local secondary schools visit Year 6 and work alongside them. This allows the Year 7 teachers to get to know their future pupils, and it also promotes pupils' confidence.

24. The arts have a high profile in the school. There are several displays showing pupils' artwork in the style of artists such as L. S. Lowry and Tony Hudson. There is an active choir in school that meets weekly and, during the inspection week, Year 2 pupils visited Tower Hill to sing in a concert. Pupils also take part in Christmas concerts and carol services. In design technology, pupils are taught the skills necessary to create their own designs and make them into models.
25. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular opportunities including an art and craft club, choir and instrumental tuition, and a very popular mountain bike club, during which pupils are taught how to use the road safely. Over the year most pupils have the opportunity to take part in clubs. Year 6 pupils take part in a residential visit to Dartmoor. This occurs annually and is closely linked to their curriculum. The school does not clearly communicate its expectations about homework to parents, and homework is currently sporadic in its support for the curriculum and learning throughout the school.
26. This is an inclusive school in all its practices. Throughout the school, provision is very good for pupils with special educational needs, and is good for those who speak English as an additional language. All these pupils achieve well because of the calibre of the provision. In mathematics, arrangements for setting do not fully support the needs of the most able. Elsewhere, provision for more able, gifted and talented pupils is good.
27. There is clear evidence of aspects of personal, social and health education in many lessons and provision is satisfactory overall. Pupils are valued by this provision. They are expected to respect each other; teachers remind them to work co-operatively and discuss issues of behaviour with the class. Pupils are given suitable guidance in respect of the misuse of drugs, sex education and personal hygiene. The daily assembly is an uplifting experience that strengthens pupils' self-esteem and the importance of working with and for one another, both in school and in the wider community. Much praise is given to pupils as they work.
28. Accommodation is adequate. The majority of classrooms are small and their shape makes organising furniture and groups of pupils difficult. Teachers cope very well and use the space available as imaginatively as possible to minimise any adverse effects on pupils' learning. Teachers and learning support assistants are deployed effectively, and use the good resources available imaginatively in providing learning experiences for the pupils. Learning support assistants are very effective; they encourage pupils to work independently while giving them the individual support they require to access the content of the lessons.
29. Resources are mostly good. Good opportunities to use ICT facilities are offered to all pupils. There is a shortage of more specialised resources in areas such as control equipment, sensors and digital microscopes to further enhance pupils' experiences and skills in design and technology, mathematics and science.

Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support are good. The school cares for pupils well. Good academic and personal support and guidance is provided.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils receive very good guidance on how to learn.
- Learning support assistants are very effective.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide as much guidance as it could.
- Good account is taken of pupils' views.

Commentary

30. The interests of pupils pervade all aspects of the school's work, and pupils have justifiable confidence in the care and support they receive. The majority of pupils are already familiar with the school from their attendance at the pre-school group on the school site. Appropriate information about all newcomers is gathered, including for pupils with special educational needs. Parents are confident that their young children are cared for well.
31. Staff develop and maintain good knowledge and understanding of individual pupils' progress. This is based on data from the extensive assessment procedures and on frequent discussions among staff. Teachers develop very good relationships with pupils, and this provides further support for their understanding of pupils' progress and needs. Pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language receive very good support from teachers and from learning support assistants. More able pupils and those with special talents are supported well. All pupils benefit from explicit verbal guidance in lessons, including explanation of techniques of learning and encouragement to experiment. This helps them to achieve as well as they can. However, although personal targets are discussed with pupils, their work is not always marked in the best way to help them know how to improve.
32. The school works hard to ensure pupils' welfare and security. Due attention is paid to all health and safety matters. For example, pupils are instructed carefully about the safe use of tools, and the use of the internet is considered carefully. Suitable risk assessments are carried out before lessons and visits. Systems for recording and dealing with accidents are sound and there is a sufficient number of trained first aiders in the school. Procedures for ensuring child protection are effective.
33. The school council provides a good and regular opportunity for pupils to play an active part in decision making and for the school to understand their views. They value the attention that the school pays to their opinions and the reasoned explanations that are provided if their suggestions cannot be implemented.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school maintains a good partnership with most parents. Pupils benefit from the school's good links with other schools and the wider community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works hard to satisfy parents
- Most parents are supportive of the school and its work
- Some parents find communications from the school inadequate
- There are effective links with other educational institutions

Commentary

34. Most parents have positive views about the school. They report that good arrangements are in place for settling new pupils and that their children are happy. Parents are happy with the school's expectation that their children will work hard, with the progress their children make and with the standards they achieve. Parents value the quality of teaching and believe the school helps their children to mature effectively. A significant minority of parents are less than satisfied with some aspects of the school, their main concerns focusing on communications about developments and changes.
35. Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views of the school. For example, much very good teaching was observed, and the standard of care is good. However, inspection findings show that, contrary to what some believe, good account is taken of parents' views, including

through surveys and by the school's openness to their approaches. All reasonable steps are taken to deal with issues and questions raised by parents.

36. The information parents receive about the school and about the progress of their children is satisfactory overall. Information about forthcoming events is given in newsletters, although these are not as regular as would be appreciated. Annual reports give parents a satisfactory view of their children's achievement. The prospectus and governors' annual report include all the required information and encourage parents to support the school and their children's education. Parents help by participating in School Association events, by assisting during lessons or school visits, and by supporting their children with reading or other work at home.
37. Good relationships are maintained with other Witney schools, both in terms of staff liaison and in subjects such as the Bubbles project for science. These links help to ensure the effective transfer of pupil data, for example about special educational needs, and contribute well to the preparation of pupils for the next phase of their education. Pupils benefit from good links with, and support from, the wider community, which include stimulating input from visiting speakers and good support from a range of support agencies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership.
- The senior management team is very effective.
- School improvement planning is thorough and systematic.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed, and all staff strongly promote an inclusive school community.
- Governors are knowledgeable and carry out their duties well.

Commentary

38. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Since her appointment two years ago she has played a key role in leading the school through a period of significant staff change. She has successfully brought together the whole staff to enable them to make rapid improvements. She has created a strong senior management team; they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, provide a clear lead for staff and undertake important management tasks very successfully. Much has been achieved to ensure pupils of all abilities receive high quality education and to raise standards. Teamwork is very good and everyone pulls together with a common purpose. This has a significant, positive impact on the achievement of all pupils, including gifted and talented pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Together, staff and governors have addressed the key issues from the previous inspection and good improvement has been made.
39. The school is managed very well. Staff are part of a very well-managed team, and this is one of the key factors in the school's success. Clear planning and well-established routines ensure that everything runs smoothly. Teaching and support staff are well trained and the system for setting targets for school improvement is securely in place. Teaching, learning, standards and achievement are monitored very well. Full use is made of all the data about the school's performance. This information guides future plans as the school evaluates its performance very effectively. There is regular and good quality monitoring of teaching. The feedback is constructive, and this supports the very good improvements made to teaching and learning. This is linked to an effective process for managing the performance of teaching and non-teaching staff. New staff are carefully monitored and supported. There are good links between staff needs and the training provided.

40. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements. There are good policies in place to ensure pupils are taught in a secure and inclusive environment. There is an effective committee structure which oversees the work of the school. The governors have given strong support to improvements to the accommodation, working closely with senior staff and the local authority. They receive regular information about pupils' attainment. Individual governors have played a key role in supporting improvements, for example in respect of health and safety and provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	888 555
Total expenditure	979 503
Expenditure per pupil	2 479

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	90 948
Balance carried forward to the next	5 404

41. The finances are managed well. Funding for staffing and accommodation costs is used effectively. The school makes appropriate use of all its funding, including specific grants, and expenditure supports key initiatives. Funding for special educational needs is used very well because the subject leader ensures that pupils have the right targets and the support to achieve them.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Children have a good start to their education and achievement is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A broad and stimulating curriculum across all areas of learning offers a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities both indoors and out.
- Learning support assistants support children very well.
- Children enjoy their time in school; they are enthusiastic and motivated to learn.
- Much of the teaching is good and very good although there is some variation across both classes.
- A formal structure of monitoring learning and teaching is not as yet in place to improve the satisfactory teaching.

Commentary

42. When starting school, children are well supported which enables them to feel secure and settle in quickly to school life. Almost all children have had pre-school experience and most have attended Little Oaks Pre-school on the same site. Teachers have established very effective links with the playgroup and there is good communication with pre-school staff, children and families before they transfer. This helps to make for a smooth and happy move from the playgroup to school.
43. Baseline assessments show that the attainment of children on entry to the school is just below average, although there are some very able children. Children are making good progress in all areas of learning so that by the end of the Reception Year most children will attain the expected learning outcomes for their age, and in some aspects of communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development they will exceed them.
44. Most children make good progress and therefore achieve well. The quality of teaching seen in the two reception classes was consistently at least satisfactory; much of it was good and, in one class, teaching was frequently very good. The curriculum is very well planned with clear objectives that identify what the children are expected to learn from the planned activities. Children with special educational needs are identified at an early stage, their needs are met well and this enables them to make good progress.
45. The good and very good teaching is characterised by high expectations which are consistently reinforced. This secures success in learning, raises children's self-esteem and promotes positive attitudes. Interaction with the children is of a high quality; it is well focused and sensitive to the needs of each child. Children are given opportunities to explore and investigate, and the learning is exciting and fun. Adults maximise incidental learning opportunities and make links across all the areas of learning. Praise is used well to motivate the children and the adults have a very good knowledge and understanding of the children's abilities and needs.
46. The learning environment is well planned, relevant and stimulating and provides opportunities for children to play, explore, talk and enquire. Children are aware of classroom routines and respond well to expectations. Observations of children's learning are used effectively to inform future steps in their learning.

47. The Foundation Stage staff work well as a team and the support staff provide very good support, both in small groups and at an individual level. Other adults support in the classroom and through effective guidance from the teacher, their contribution enhances the children's learning. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior managers recognise the importance of high quality Foundation Stage provision to raise standards and have prioritised its development. As a result, improvement since the previous inspection has been good. They recognise the need to have more formal monitoring of learning and teaching in order to improve the satisfactory teaching. The Key Stage 1/Foundation Stage leader provides effective leadership and the day-to-day organisation is well managed by one of the reception teachers. There are good links from Foundation Stage to Year 1. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good balance of child-initiated and adult led activities promote independence, good behaviour and enable children to have choices, make decisions and take risks.
- Children work and play together cooperatively and learn from each other.
- Children's self esteem is high because their contributions are valued.

Commentary

48. Children are happy at school and are enthusiastic to join in all activities. The broad range of adult-led and child-initiated activities that are planned encourage children to co-operate, exercise independence and make decisions. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and most children meet or exceed the levels expected in this area of learning.
49. Personal, emotional and social development securely underpins the learning and teaching across all areas of learning. Adults are clear about their expectations although, at times, these are not positive enough. Children work very well in small groups; they share and take turns, for example, when playing with the farm and in the sand. They are eager to explore new learning, to solve simple practical problems and show a high level of independence. Children are given many opportunities to talk together and to celebrate each other's work. The positive ethos supports children of all abilities well. Overall, teaching and learning are good although there is some variation in the effectiveness of teaching styles between the two classes. The good, and often very good, teaching seen resulted in very good achievement in children's social development, independence and behaviour.

Communication, Language and Literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum promotes speaking and listening well, contributing to good overall achievement.
- Children enjoy writing and are motivated well through the many opportunities provided.

Commentary

50. Communication, language and literacy skills are developed well. Most children will meet the goals expected by the end of the year and in some aspects will exceed them. The quality of teaching is often good, resulting in rapid progress and good achievement, especially in the

development of speaking and listening skills. A wide range of stimulating opportunities is provided for children to develop and extend their skills. Most adults have high expectations and they value children's efforts. Children listen attentively and enjoy stories, songs and rhymes, showing good responses throughout sessions. They communicate well with their peers in role-play situations. Children follow a series of instructions in PE lessons and they learn new vocabulary to describe their movements.

51. Most children are becoming confident 'emergent writers'; they make meaningful marks on paper, which contain recognisable letters and words. Most children recognise and write their names. Through effective teaching children name letters and know their sounds and many write familiar words independently. Children are encouraged to have a go when writing stories with their pictures and there are opportunities for children to use writing in other learning experiences, such as role-play and independent mark-making areas. For example, children used clipboards in the outside area to write letters to their toys, they understand the purpose of writing and write with deep concentration and enjoyment.
52. Books are used well to encourage children to enjoy and listen to favourite stories, handle books with care and understand how print conveys meaning. Reading skills are taught effectively and children quickly develop positive attitudes to reading. Children are encouraged to read at home and the use of book bags is well supported by parents.

Mathematical Development

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's interest is promoted well when they use mathematics for practical purposes.
- The independent activities do not often enough promote mathematical development.
- Whole class teaching does not always enable children to be sufficiently involved. On these occasions progress slows.

Commentary

53. By the end of reception most children will have met the early learning goals for mathematics. There are opportunities to learn numbers through songs, rhymes and practical experiences. Children learn to count and match fingers as they count. There are some opportunities for children to explore and investigate concepts of number, shape, size and time in independent activities but this could be developed further.
54. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Appropriate emphasis is placed on practical counting opportunities and using mathematics for real purposes. For example, when making cherry cakes, children were encouraged to decide how many were needed for the group and to use correct vocabulary when weighing. They order the numbers, and the more able children are beginning to add and subtract in practical situations. In one class, registration is used effectively to teach counting and matching numbers to 30. Many children work out the number of children absent that day by counting on from 26 to 30 in their heads or using their fingers. However, in one whole-class lesson on shape, progress was slow as very few children were actively involved and questioning did not challenge the more able.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor environment is used effectively to promote exploration and investigation.

- The wide range of activities enables effective learning.

Commentary

55. Children make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Most children will meet the early learning goals in this area of learning. Teaching is mainly good because it provides high quality interaction, stimulates children's thinking and their ability to ask relevant questions themselves, and solve simple problems. Activities such as making cakes and painting with water in the sun enabled children to ask questions about why things happen and to show an awareness of change. There are good opportunities to investigate the natural and man-made world and to discuss the properties of materials. For example, children working together in the sand pit, mix water with the sand to make 'building cement'. They showed great excitement when mixing the materials, and effective interaction challenged their thinking. Other children were experimenting with pouring water down guttering to make objects slide. They talked enthusiastically together about their findings.
56. Children are developing good observational skills. They use magnifying glasses to examine objects such as mini-beasts and they are encouraged to talk about their observations. Children select their own tools and techniques to build and construct, make their own decisions and develop their own ideas using a wide range of materials. The lack of space does not enable larger construction to be used inside. Children use the computer with confidence and enthusiasm. They use a mouse with increasing control when painting pictures of mini-beasts

Physical Development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a wide variety of opportunities to develop their skills and achieve well.
- The outdoor area enhances the provision but the lack of a covered outdoor space prevents these opportunities being available at all times.

Commentary

57. Most children will attain the expected outcomes for their age. There are opportunities indoors for children to climb and balance using the large apparatus. In one lesson observed, the children developed their skills of travelling under and over the apparatus. They showed a good awareness of space and control of their movements. The children are enthusiastic and work very well together, taking turns and learning from each other. They are confident and are engrossed in their activities. Because the teacher has very high expectations, is clear in her instructions and encourages the children to succeed, the children make good progress and standards are high.
58. Teaching is good, and learning is often very good. High priority is given to this area of learning and opportunities to develop skills are maximised. As a result, achievement is good. Children develop manipulative skills well as they play with a range of construction toys and malleable materials such as wet sand and play-dough. They are confident and show increasing control of tools and small equipment when sticking, cutting, drawing, painting and joining things.

Creative Development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have access to a wide range of media.

- The children are enthusiastic and their attitudes are very positive.

Commentary

59. Creative experiences are well planned and children are given opportunities to explore, experiment, design, respond imaginatively and make choices about how they express their ideas creatively. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and pupils achieve well. As a result, most children will attain the expected outcomes for their age. The good and very good teaching extended the children's learning through good interaction and positive encouragement. Children explore colour, shape, space and form, for example through drawing, painting, printing and pattern making. In one class during the inspection they made patterns by rolling balls and marbles dipped in paint round a bowl. The children made choices about the size of ball and bowl and colour of paint. With very good support from the learning support assistant they manipulated the bowl to make the pattern they wanted and made different colours by mixing colours together. The children showed great pride in their achievements and these were valued by the adult. Children become deeply involved in these activities and concentrate for long periods of time. There are good opportunities to explore their ideas through imaginative play in role play areas and in small world play, inside and out. During the inspection, one role-play area was set up as a mini-beast museum. This area provides opportunity for consolidating newly learned language and in extending their knowledge and understanding of the world. The children use the role-play areas enthusiastically, take on a variety of roles and play together well.
60. Children enjoy singing and using instruments. They join in with songs and rhymes from memory many of which are accompanied by actions. In a music session, they sang songs linked to their topic 'mini-beasts'. They sang with enthusiasm, were keen to take part and their attitudes were very positive. Very effective teaching and sensitive guidance from the teacher ensured that all children were actively involved and progress was good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the time they leave.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- Very good leadership and management have significantly improved provision and raised standards.
- Provision for developing pupils' speaking and listening is very good, and standards are above average.
- The library does not fully support pupils' progress in using books to find information.

Commentary

61. Standards have improved since the last inspection, and pupils throughout the school achieve well. By Year 2 they are above average in reading, speaking and listening and broadly average in writing, and above average by Year 6. The higher standards stem from better planning of the curriculum, more effective teaching and learning and a focus on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills from an early age.
62. The impact of these improvements is most clearly seen in speaking and listening in which standards are now above average throughout the school. Improving skills in this area enhances learning for many pupils, and good care and relationships across the school support the development of spoken language. Teachers value pupils' efforts and thus promote very

positive attitudes, regularly providing well-planned opportunities for pupils to talk in pairs or small groups to support each other's learning. Teachers also make very good use of appropriate opportunities that arise to generate discussion. They successfully challenge pupils to articulate their thoughts and to explore ideas through discussion and images.

63. Pupils' writing is beginning to show the benefits of an increased emphasis on speaking and listening. The basic skills of handwriting, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure are taught consistently and rigorously, and standards in writing are broadly average by Year 2. Classroom displays usually celebrate pupils' written work. Most teachers achieve well in these respects, although the presentation of pupils' work is not consistently well promoted in Years 3 and 4. Teachers set high standards and encourage pupils to analyse good quality texts of different kinds. As a result, pupils increasingly understand why and how texts vary and the purposes they serve. For example, pupils in Year 4 analyse the language used in advertisements and in Year 5 pupils carefully choose adjectives and prepositions which enhance and extend their story-writing ideas. Poetry writing is promoted successfully through the school, and pupils enjoy the challenge of switching between formal writing and stories to the discipline of poetry writing. They successfully find evocative phrases to express themselves through their poems. Pupils are taught a good range of strategies, including visualisation techniques, to help them write. By Year 6, standards are often above average, and higher attaining pupils write with confidence, controlling length and structure in their writing.
64. Standards in reading are also above average by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils achieve well in reading because good systems and effective teaching support the development of basic reading skills. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to talk and write about what they have read. This enhances their understanding and fuels their desire to read, and as a result many pupils become, and remain, avid readers. In Years 1 and 2, lower attaining pupils tackle unfamiliar words by using their increasingly good knowledge of phonics. Guided reading sessions help all pupils, but especially the more able pupils who use a range of skills to read advanced texts fluently. They readily offer their ideas about characters and simple story plots. By Year 6, many pupils identify different levels of meaning in more complex story texts. As they move through the school, pupils tackle information books with increasing assurance, although for some their knowledge of how to use the school library is less secure than it might be.
65. The quality of teaching and learning in English is very good overall. It is particularly good in Years 2 and 6. A significant factor is the very good teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants. This is coupled with a very good understanding of literacy teaching and supported by clear, helpful planning. Teachers use questioning skills effectively to challenge pupils' thinking, and learning usually proceeds at a good pace. Pupils of all abilities, and those at an early stage of acquiring English, are fully included in a supportive environment where learning in this subject is made enjoyable. Whilst there are examples of good and very good marking practice, marking in English is too variable throughout the school. At its best, marking constitutes a genuine dialogue between pupil and teacher and, in these instances, pupils clearly know what they have to do to improve.
66. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The very good leadership and management of the subject have been particularly effective in driving these improvements and in building more rigorous systems which are strengthening pupils' sense of how they can do better. An increasing use of ICT, better opportunities for reading, writing, and speaking and listening opportunities in other subjects help the consistent drive for higher standards in literacy. Although results in reading and writing were well below the average for similar schools in 2003, pupils' performance in writing is improving. The overall results for pupils aged eleven were well above the national average in 2003, and well above the average for similar schools when judged in relation to pupils' prior attainment. There was a significant increase in the number of pupils attaining Level 5 in English, and results have improved in line with the national trend over the past five years.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. The school is taking good steps to encourage pupils to use and develop their literacy skills in other subjects. As a direct result of the school's recent initiatives, planned opportunities are regularly taken for pupils to develop their skills in spoken English and their listening skills through other subjects. This is having a significant impact on improving standards in reading and writing, and paves the way for further cross-curricular working. Pupils are becoming increasingly aware that standards that apply in English apply in other subjects. Teachers make every effort to ensure classroom and year-group book collections are available to support learning and the development of literacy skills through other subjects. Access to library reference material for some of the older pupils is not easy, and this hinders the further development of their research skills.

Example of outstanding practice

A particularly good example of the use of visualisation techniques was seen in a Year 6 class who were preparing to write poems.

The teacher successfully encouraged the pupils to sit quietly and to gradually focus their thinking. She then skilfully led them, by means of a mental 'journey', towards visualising something that made them feel happy. The pupils were used to this way of working and readily entered into the activity, many closing their eyes. Music was played softly in the background to further help create a tranquil mood as they concentrated, focusing and organising their ideas. They used these, often vivid, images to describe and share what they had seen, in small groups, and then drew up outline structures for their poems using a simple grid. The teacher supported this planning stage very effectively and sensitively by reminding them of how they might consider nouns, verbs and adjectives that would bring 'local colour' to their imagined scenes or objects. As a result, pupils made very good gains in their learning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- The subject leader provides good leadership and the subject is very well managed.
- Very good support is given to all pupils by the learning support assistants.
- There is sometimes insufficient challenge for the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6, although the school has identified this as an issue and is developing practices to overcome it.
- The setting arrangements for pupils in Years 3 to 6 limit the good match of work to pupils' abilities that is seen in class lessons.
- Pupils' test papers are analysed effectively and the information gathered is used well.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for learning and personal and social skills are good.

Commentary

68. In relation to national averages standards attained by seven year olds in 2003 in mathematics were very high, and average when compared with similar schools. Results at the higher level (Level 3) are above the national average and in line with the attainment in similar schools. The school has significantly increased the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 and above by the age of seven. Pupils' achievement is good, with all pupils achieving well, as a result of effective teaching.
69. Standards attained by the eleven year olds in 2003 in mathematics were above the national average, although below the average for similar schools. Results at the higher level (Level 5) were in line with the national average but below average for similar schools. However, standards attained in relation to prior attainment were above average in 2003. Mathematics results in comparison with similar schools have fluctuated over the past three years: they were above average in 2002 and dipped to below average in 2003. The overall trend in results at

Queen's Dyke is rising at the same rate as seen nationally. In lessons observed and from a scrutiny of pupils' work, achievement is judged to be good.

70. Overall, teaching and learning are good. The planning, in both key stages, has clear learning intentions that are shared and made explicit to pupils; they are then revisited throughout the lesson to ensure that learning is on the right track. Teachers are using assessments made of the strengths and areas for development of the lessons they have taught to inform their planning for the next lesson. Learning is also linked to previous and future lessons giving pupils a clear framework to their learning. As a result, learning is effective. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work hard to develop pupils' understanding and use of mathematical vocabulary. The management of pupils' behaviour is good, enabling them to work both independently and collaboratively. Clear explanations, variety in the activity and a brisk pace to lessons help pupils to maintain concentration. Very good use is made of learning support assistants across the school. They have a good understanding of teachers' planning, know what they are doing and support all pupils very well. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent; it does not always inform pupils of how they can improve their learning in future. The setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 limit the match of work to pupils, particularly for the most able pupils, which results in them not always being sufficiently challenged.
71. Leadership of the subject is good. The improvement in attainment over the last two years has been brought about by the drive and vision of the subject leader, who is well supported by the senior management team. The subject leader has good knowledge and understanding of mathematics and acts as a good role model for the rest of the staff. There is a good subject development plan, which includes improvements in appropriate areas, which is frequently reviewed and evaluated, giving a clear direction to school improvement.
72. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards by the age of eleven have improved since the last inspection, particularly over the past two years, after a significant dip in 2000 and 2001 when the average point score shows that the school was performing below national expectations. Management is very good and the subject is well led. The strengths and weaknesses of the subject have been recognised through effective monitoring and evaluation techniques. These include classroom observations, scrutiny of teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work, and a thorough analysis of pupils' individual test papers and test results. There have been significant changes made to the curriculum and teaching and learning following the monitoring and evaluation procedures, and these are having a positive impact on raising standards in mental arithmetic and solving written problems. The subject leader has attended regular training run by the LEA and has worked closely with the LEA numeracy consultant to develop a whole-school approach to using calculations. All classrooms have a satisfactory range of resources for covering the basic areas of mathematics, and there is a satisfactory range of larger resources that are stored centrally and used well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

73. Teachers are beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. This is successful in science, parts of geography and history and in design and technology. Pupils' knowledge of chronological order, calculation skills and awareness of space, shape and measure are used effectively when appropriate. However, the teaching of mathematics across the curriculum for the older pupils is limited by the setting arrangements in the subject, which result in pupils having different learning experiences that they cannot readily adapt to other subjects as a whole class.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about science.
- Pupils collaborate well on scientific tasks, although scientific investigations are less evident in a small number of classes.
- The quality of planning and resources is good but there is some over-reliance on worksheets which do not sufficiently support pupils' independent thinking about science.

Commentary

74. Pupils achieve well, and standards are good by the ages of seven and eleven. In the 2003 tests, standards were above average in relation to similar schools at age seven, and well above the average for similar schools at eleven when compared with pupils' prior attainment. Pupils attained above-average standards at the higher levels, Level 3 and Level 5. Evidence from books, particularly in the upper junior classes, shows a sound knowledge and clear explanations of the concepts learned. The school has successfully maintained the above-average standards and good achievement reported at the time of the previous inspection.
75. The quality of learning is good. Pupils work well together. They are enthusiastic about the tasks they are given and concentrate well. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of the concepts they are learning and have enough background knowledge to allow them to access new knowledge confidently. In a class where the pupils had learned about the reproductive parts of a plant they were able to name the parts and explain their functions knowledgeably. Pupils in Year 2 carry out investigations. They have a good understanding of how electrical circuits work and the classification of materials.
76. The quality of written work in books is inconsistent. In the upper junior classes, pupils work independently with tasks planned for the different ranges of ability within the class. However, in lower junior classes there were fewer examples of pupils carrying out full investigations. Here, there was only limited evidence of tasks matched to pupils' prior learning, or of pupils working independently.
77. On balance, the quality of teaching is good. In all lessons seen the teaching was at least good and sometimes better. Teachers' questioning is very good, often leading pupils on to a higher level of thinking. Instructions are clear and the introductions to the lessons presented in a way that encourages pupils to take part enthusiastically. Teachers' knowledge of science is good. New concepts are introduced confidently to the pupils and this helps them to achieve a clear understanding. Pupils talk confidently about what they know; in a Year 1 class, for example, one pupil suggested that perhaps the car that went the furthest in an experiment had a larger spring.
78. Leadership and management in science are good. The school follows the local authority's scheme of work effectively. The subject leader supports staff well by ensuring they are confident to carry out the different units of work. She keeps detailed monitoring records and has produced a helpful advice sheet on the teaching of science for all members of staff. Resources are suitable for carrying out the science curriculum. They are very well organised by the subject leader, whose system of re-ordering ensures classes are adequately supplied.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management by the ICT subject leader are good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The new ICT scheme of work ensures that all strands of the ICT curriculum are covered.
- The school is improving its cross-curricular approach to ICT.
- Old hardware sometimes hinders pupils' progress in ICT.

Commentary

79. The standards of work seen in ICT were above national expectations, and pupils' achievement in lessons is good. By the age of seven, pupils confidently use a keyboard and mouse to support computer based activities in English and mathematics. They use simple word processing applications with increasing facility. By the age of eleven, pupils are confident with different applications and combine text and graphics in more complex publishing software. They also make discriminating searches of the internet and send e-mails with files attached.
80. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers use assessment well to inform their future planning. An example of this was seen in a Year 5 class where a teacher had used assessment information from the previous lesson to revisit and reinforce relevant points about presenting text. Very good support from learning support assistants helps promote effective teaching and learning for pupils who have special educational needs, enabling them to make good progress in developing skills in information and communication technology and in applying them when appropriate.
81. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader was appointed to the school last September. He has already done much work to improve the provision of ICT in the school. The scheme of work has been changed in order to give staff more guidance and training for staff has taken place. A detailed action plan is incorporated into the whole-school development plan that, if followed, should lead to further improvements in the provision.
82. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress. Standards have been maintained, teaching has been improved and new hardware and software purchased to give better support to teaching and learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. The subject leader has linked the schemes of work to the school's whole-curriculum, long-term map and this has resulted in ICT supporting other subjects well. In a Year 3 class, pupils produced copies of impressionist paintings using the tools available in an art package, and in a Year 5 class, the teacher reinforced literacy work on persuasive writing by asking pupils to design a poster to persuade parents to attend the school's summer fete.

HUMANITIES

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reflect on their own and others' feelings sensitively.
- Planning ensures a broad curriculum.
- Progression is embedded into the planning.
- Cross curricular links are evident.
- The teaching is good.
- Pupils work well in groups or individually, and co-operation within groups is a particular strength.
- Monitoring of lessons is not yet a fully integral part of the subject leader's role.

Commentary

84. Standards in religious education throughout the school are good and pupils achieve well in relation to the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In each of the lessons observed pupils were being encouraged to voice their opinions and collaborate with others to discuss reasons for outcomes, as in a Year 2 class where they were considering the characters of David and Goliath. "Goliath didn't win the fight because he was too busy boasting about how strong he was", was one very good response.
85. The achievement of all pupils is generally good. They talk about the content of the lesson and relate it to their own lives. They express their feelings clearly and show empathy for the feelings of others. Work in pupils' books also demonstrates this. Pupils work collaboratively together putting forward their own views to the rest of the group, but they also listen to what others have to say.
86. The teaching of religious education is good. Generally, teachers are knowledgeable about the aspect they are teaching and they give clear instructions to pupils. Good use is made of learning support assistants who support and encourage pupils to be fully involved in the lessons. Teachers present information in an interesting way that captures the pupils' imagination. For example, one teacher took the role of Mary and gave a first hand account of when Jesus turned the water into wine. The children enjoyed her performance and produced some very good plays of their own as a result. Teachers expect a high standard of behaviour from pupils who, in most cases, respond positively. Learning is good. Pupils are keen to learn and to listen quietly to the teacher as well as to each other. Work in pupils' books show a clear understanding of the aspect they have been learning, together with sensitivity of how these concepts may affect themselves and others in everyday life.
87. Pupils have enjoyed a variety of visitors to the school. A local vicar, a lay preacher who is also a parent, and a representative from the local synagogue have all effectively shared their beliefs with pupils. Year 5 pupils will also be visiting a Hindu temple as part of their study of the Hindu religion.
88. Leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader has a clear vision of how religious education is carried out throughout the school. She has made effective changes to the overall planning of the subject and these changes will be assessed at the end of the summer term. Religious education now has a higher profile in the school and as a result standards have improved. Since the previous inspection, improvement in this subject has been good. Regular monitoring of pupils' work has been carried out successfully by the subject leader. There are plans for this monitoring to be extended to lesson observations.

History

The provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of history is good.
- A wide range of teaching and learning strategies is used to motivate and capture pupils' interests.
- Good links are made with other subject areas, and English skills are used well.

Commentary

89. Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils throughout the school achieve well. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils are achieving above the level expected for their age. There are no significant variations in the achievement of boys and girls. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, more able pupils, and those for whom English is an additional language is good, and they make good progress. Lessons are planned well and teachers identify what pupils already know about topics by asking them questions at the beginning of lessons. This enables teachers to pitch the teaching at the correct level taking into account what the pupils already know.
90. Teachers are skilled at teaching history and use a variety of interesting and effective methods to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Learning support assistants make a very positive contribution to supporting pupils' learning. As a result, pupils display very positive attitudes to their work and the quality of their learning is good. In a Year 6 lesson that was first in a unit of work on Victorian Britain, the teacher used role play very effectively to bring the subject alive and enable active pupil involvement. This resulted in good achievement in the lesson, and pupils were highly motivated and enthused about the new topic
91. Research skills are used well. Year 5 pupils collect facts to present to the rest of the class information about a God in Ancient Egypt. They use a variety of sources including reference books and the internet. Good quality artefacts bring history to life for pupils. Time lines are used well to help pupils develop a sense of chronology. In Year 1, pupils ordered the toys that had been brought in from relatives in chronological order. They explained why most of the toys were about 30 years old and what the characteristics were that made them old. Good links were made between literacy and history, with pupils making labels and a guide book for their museum.
92. The subject is well led and managed and the curriculum planned provides good experiences for all pupils. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good. The good teaching ensures that pupils are motivated, build well on their prior learning and achieve well in their knowledge and understanding. Links with other subjects, and especially with English, are a positive strength. Visits are used effectively to enhance the subject and resources are good.
93. In **geography** only three lessons were observed. All were in Years 3 to 6, and there is insufficient evidence to form overall judgements on standards and provision in geography.
94. In the lessons observed teaching and learning were good overall. Pupils are well motivated by relevant practical activities. They work very well together in small groups and are given good opportunities for speaking and listening. They develop geographical skills using maps and atlases and learn geographical terminology when studying the stages of a water cycle. Good links are made to other subjects, for example when learning about life in Kenya, pupils in Year 5 study the work of artist Tony Hudson, whose work featured vivid images of Kenyan people.
95. A display in Year 1 shows that pupils look at places round Great Britain and the world through the travels of Barnaby Bear. Pupils visit the local area to support their work in school. In Year 6 there is a popular field trip to Devon. Resources are satisfactory. Insufficient background

evidence was gathered with which to make a judgement about any changes since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

Provision in art and design, design and technology and music was sampled rather than inspected at length.

96. Only two **art and design** lessons were observed, one in Year 1 and one in Year 3. It is therefore not possible to make firm judgements about the quality of provision in art and design. There was enough evidence from displays and planning to judge that standards were at least average across the school and that pupils achieve well.
97. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work which they undertake with concentration and enjoyment. Displays around the school indicate that a wide range of materials, including paint, pastels, printing inks, paper, card, fabric, wool and clay are used to good effect to create picture, designs and models. Pupils are taught techniques used in art by studying the work of famous artists. For example, in Year 5, the pupils have used pastels to produce high quality pastel drawings about life in Kenya in the style of Tony Hudson. In Year 4, pupils use their observational skills when drawing fruit and then reproduce their ideas very effectively with fabric.
98. In the Year 3 lesson where the teaching was good, pupils were encouraged to explore their feelings when looking at a print of 'The Storm' by Turner. They then listened to a piece of music, 'Sea Symphony' by Vaughan Williams, to inspire their own creative ideas. Pupils worked well together in small groups and effective questioning enabled pupils to make progress. ICT skills are extended in art. In Year 2 pupils successfully use a computer program to make abstract pictures in the style of William Morris.
99. Good links are made with other subjects. Pastel drawings of life in Kenya, masks made on the Mexican Day and, in Year 2, pupils had responded creatively to music by making patterns with paint. Resources for art and design are good. The curriculum is enhanced by an art and craft club which is usually held after school and is organised effectively by two learning support assistants. This term a group of Year 5 pupils are taking part, creating designs for T-shirts, glass tumblers or plant pots. Pupils are motivated and proud of their achievements.
100. Only one **design and technology** lesson, in a Year 5 class, was observed. Discussion with the pupils, subject leader, and a study of pupils' books indicate that standards in design technology are good. Planning is thorough, providing a broad range of skills and activities appropriate to the age ranges of the pupils. Progression is built into the scheme of work that is used by all staff. In the lesson observed, pupils were using tools confidently and safely. The pupils were creating good quality models from their individual designs of a shaduf, an Ancient Egyptian machine for carrying water from one level to another. They talked about their designs and were successfully encouraged to evaluate them as they progressed. This also provided clear cross-curricular links with their history project. Year 4 pupils, in a previous project, had made burglar alarms that linked well with their science lesson where they were learning about electricity.
101. The leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader has a clear vision of the achievements he wants to see throughout the school. He is knowledgeable in the subject and is aware of the achievement pupils are making through unit assessments. This information identifies the attainment of all pupils. The subject leader has improved the planning for the whole school, although the subject currently has too few links with information and communication technology although this is planned.
102. Despite the shortage of working space in the majority of classrooms, pupils manage very well. Several displays show a high standard of work indicating that skills are taught well. The school

uses its present links with a local secondary school, to which the majority of pupils go at the age of eleven, very effectively. This has led to the enhancement of resources for controlling and modelling in respect of design technology.

103. No **music** lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, so it is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision. Evidence is gathered from a small number of lessons in Years 3 and 6, observations of singing in assemblies and other musical activities. There is evidence that music is a regular, planned experience for all pupils. Standards of singing by all ages in assembly are good. Pupils also respond very positively to the music which is provided for them to listen to as they enter and leave the hall for assembly, and is played during some lessons in other subjects as a stimulus for creative work.
104. Standards are above national expectations by the age of eleven. Pupils have good listening skills and are developing a good knowledge of instruments of the orchestra and the sounds which each produces. Pupils sing tunefully and with good control of dynamics, enabling them to sing softly to convey a certain mood when required. The school has a choir which regularly takes part in festivals with other schools. The school provides lessons in violin, cello and recorder.
105. Pupils in Year 3 discriminate successfully between different timbres and achieve well in lessons where a wide variety of instruments are used. They recognise and explore ways in which sounds can be used together, and can play and hold their own musical part in performances. The players of recorders, taught in a lunchtime club, are successfully encouraged to contribute to lessons. By Year 6, pupils know that a change of instrument can radically change the interpretation of some pieces of music. They are sensitive to the ways in which composers create different sounds and textures to reflect different intentions in musical passages.
106. Much of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is undertaken by teachers who have very good specialist knowledge and skills in this area. This arrangement contributes significantly to pupils' good achievement and the good standards achieved. The teaching and learning seen was very good: pupils rose to the challenge of complex musical tasks across the areas of listening and appraising, composing and performing.

Physical education (PE)

Provision for PE is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The PE subject leader leads the subject well.
- Lessons are well planned, with a clear learning focus and structure.
- The range of resources available for indoor and outdoor PE is good.
- The school has good sporting links with the local secondary school.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The timings of some PE lessons are too short to develop pupils' skills fully. This is particularly the case for the younger pupils.

Commentary

107. Standards for pupils by the age of seven and eleven are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 1 use a range of gymnastic equipment confidently and are aware of the health and safety issues involved when working with others. By Year 3, pupils are beginning to develop adequate skills in throwing and catching. However, the lessons observed in these years were rather brief. This meant there was insufficient time for the pupils to develop their skills as fully as possible. In Year 5, pupils are beginning to develop a good range

of tennis skills, such as back hand and forehand strokes and they are in the early stages of learning how to serve correctly. Pupils worked effectively in groups in all lessons and co-operated well, this helped to promote satisfactory and sometimes good achievement from all pupils.

108. Teaching is good, and learning is satisfactory in the subject. Lessons are well planned, having a clear learning focus, and they are well structured. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables lessons to be conducted at a brisk pace. Pupils are continually encouraged to evaluate their work and that of others. A good example of this was in Year 5 where pupils improved the quality of their serves after evaluating the technique of how they throw the ball into the air. Pupils enjoy the different aspects of this subject and this helps them to engage and maintain concentration throughout lessons. All pupils are encouraged to participate and there is good use of praise to make them feel successful.
109. Leadership of the subject is good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The subject leaders have organised a good range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended and that pupils enjoy. Recently, the school has been involved in a successful sponsored aerobics project that proved highly popular. Management is good. The subject leaders have monitored teachers' planning and have had the opportunity to feedback to staff on the evaluations. There is good liaison with the local secondary school and the school benefits from the use of the secondary school field and some of their resources. Resources for indoor and outdoor PE are good and deployed effectively.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

110. Only one personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson was observed, in Year 2, so it is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision. Evidence drawn from discussions with pupils, scrutiny of displays and pupils' written work indicates that overall standards are satisfactory. Teachers' planning shows that PSHE is taught as a discrete subject in all classes. Teachers also take appropriate opportunities to incorporate aspects of PSHE into work in other subjects, notably English and religious education.
111. From their earliest days at the school, pupils are successfully encouraged to take turns, for example when speaking or using resources. They display positive attitudes to PSHE. Teaching in the lesson seen was very good. The teacher used a puppet very effectively to promote ideas about sharing and friendship. Pupils were successfully encouraged to talk about their emotions and concerns in a well-structured and supportive context. Pupils explained the feelings of sadness in the story told by the teacher and related this well to their own experiences.
112. Assembly is a regular feature of the school day where the pupils come together in large community groups to share and celebrate their successes. The work of the school council is a good example of the provision of opportunities for pupils to make a contribution to the life of the school community. The self-esteem of pupils of all abilities is high by Year 6, and they feel confident to express their thoughts in class.
113. An awareness of healthy living is taught through the PSHE programme, which includes appropriate guidance about sex and relationship education and drugs education. The school is at an early stage of developing a programme to learn about citizenship. The content of PSHE lessons is based on guidance from the local education authority, but there is currently no effective overview of the use individual teacher's make of it. Insufficient background evidence was gathered with which to make a judgement about any changes since the previous inspection.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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