

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CE VA PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Carterton

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 133532

Headteacher: Mrs T Farley

Lead inspector: Mr D J Curtis

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th June 2004

Inspection number: 257707

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 150

School address: Bluebell Way
Shilton Park
Carterton
Oxfordshire
Postcode: OX18 1JF

Telephone number: 01993 843124
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Reverend Roger Billings

Date of previous inspection: This is the school's first inspection

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school first opened in September 2002 in temporary buildings. It moved into brand new buildings at the start of the summer term in 2003, with 66 pupils on roll. Since then, the school has grown, with an increase in the number on roll to 150. Many pupils join the school when families move into the new housing development that the school has been built to serve. In addition, a number of pupils have transferred to the school because of its voluntary aided status. About 25 per cent of pupils come from families with links to nearby RAF Brize Norton. A significant number of pupils join the school at times other than of normal admission.

Currently, 46 pupils are identified with special educational needs, which is above the national average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need; this is below average. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage, with a small number coming from minority ethnic families. The school provides an out-of-school care session each afternoon for 14 pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20893	Mr D J Curtis	Lead inspector	English, science, information and communication technology and physical education
9052	Mrs H Barter	Lay inspector	
16038	Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	Art and design, design and technology, music, the Foundation Stage and special educational needs
20671	Mr J Palethorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history and citizenship

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school which provides very good value for money. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, together with high-quality teaching, are significant aids to achievement. Despite this, the high number of pupils joining the school at times other than of normal admission is a barrier to achievement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In Year 6, standards are well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics; pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching is very good and has a positive impact on the standards achieved.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher are excellent.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and their behaviour is very good; they are motivated and enthusiastic learners.
- The school provides a rich and exciting curriculum for its pupils.
- Relationships in the school are very good at all levels.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

This is the school's first inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Standards achieved are **good**. Children start school with standards that are below those expected for four-year-olds, especially in social and language development. As the result of good teaching, the achievement of children in reception is good. The majority of children are likely to meet the goals expected nationally by the age of five in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. The majority will not meet them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development.

The standards achieved by pupils in Years 1 and 2 are good as the result of high quality teaching. Results in the current Year 2 are affected by a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs within a very small year group. Although pupils make good progress, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) meet national expectations. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is good. Standards in science are well above average, with those in English and mathematics above average. Standards in ICT meet national expectations. In geography and history, standards exceed expectations for 11-year-olds. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good. There is no significant variation in the achievement of boys and girls.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, ¹ compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	N/A	N/A	A	A
Writing	N/A	N/A	C	D

¹ The table for Year 6 is omitted because only one pupil took the National Curriculum tests in 2003.

Mathematics	N/a	N/A	B	B
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Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals

Pupils' personal development is **very good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching is **very good**, with strengths in the teaching of key skills in literacy. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and very high expectations of what they can achieve. As a result of these high expectations, especially in pupils' understanding of what they are expected to achieve in lessons, they are motivated and enthusiastic learners. Teachers make very effective use of teaching assistants. Assessment of pupils' learning is very good.

The quality of the curriculum is very good. There is a very strong emphasis on developing effective and meaningful cross-curricular links which contribute to pupils' very good use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. The school enriches the curriculum with a very impressive range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Pupils benefit from the very good quality of accommodation and resources in this newly-built school. Pupils receive very good care and support. The way in which the school seeks and acts on the views of pupils, especially in their learning, is very good. Links with parents are good as are those with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **excellent**. The headteacher has clarity of vision and a determination to provide a very high quality of education for her pupils. She has achieved this in a very short space of time. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the strong teamwork amongst teachers and teaching assistants. There are significant strengths in the quality of monitoring of teaching and learning by subject leaders. They have an in-depth understanding of how to further improve teaching and learning in their subjects. Governance is very good. Governors have a detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. They fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school and most are supportive of its work. They are confident that the school is well run and particularly appreciate the dedicated teaching staff. They say that their children are very happy at school and that they have enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning. Most parents feel that they are well informed about their children's progress through regular meetings with teachers and written reports.

Pupils are very happy at school and enjoy both lessons and the other activities provided for them. They appreciate and understand the targets that are set for them. Pupils enjoy serving on the school council. There are particular strengths in the way in which they are encouraged to work with the headteacher in contributing their ideas into improving the school grounds.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- to implement the targets set within the school's own school improvement plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The standards achieved are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are well above average in Year 6, with those in English and mathematics above average.
- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, although standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2.
- Pupils' use and application of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum are good.

Commentary

1. Children start school with standards that are below expectations for their age, especially in early communication, language and literacy skills and in their social development. As the result of good teaching, children's achievement is good. However, the majority will not meet the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development. The majority will meet the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.6 (N/A)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.6 (N/A)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.1 (N/A)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. As a new school, 2003 was the first year that pupils took the national tests so it is not possible to identify any trends. The number of pupils who took the tests was small and caution is needed in interpreting the results. In addition, the number of pupils joining the school in Years 1 to 6 is high and they arrive with a significant range of previous learning.
3. Results of national tests for pupils in Year 2 were well above average in reading, above average in mathematics and average in writing. In the current Year 2, standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The difference is explained by another small year group which includes a much higher proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs than in the previous year. However, pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress in their learning because of effective teaching. In science, standards are well above average. In ICT, standards meet national expectations. Pupils are confident in using their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects.
4. The table for Year 6 is omitted as only one pupil took the Year 6 tests, one week after joining the school.

5. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics. In English, pupils read confidently and with good expression and show particularly good skills in reading for information. In mathematics, they show good skills in measurement and in drawing graphs. In science, pupils' investigative and experimental work is of high quality. Pupils use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully in other subjects, including science, design and technology, geography and history. Standards in ICT meet national expectations, with strengths in pupils' use and application of word processing and desk-top publishing skills.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as measured against the targets in their individual education plans and their achievement is good. They benefit from effective teaching and high-quality support from teaching assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school. Behaviour is **very good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall, with strengths in moral and social. Attendance and punctuality are both **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, and to work, are very good.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- The vast majority of pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Spiritual development is good in practice, but is not an integral part of planning.
- Relationships are very good throughout the whole school community.

Commentary

7. Pupils are keen to come to school and often don't want lessons to end! Teachers motivate pupils well so that they approach their work with enthusiasm and interest. This is enabling them to achieve well in the work that they do. Their enthusiasm extends to extra-curricular activities, which are well supported by older pupils.
8. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. They have the opportunity to create their own class rules in addition to the school's Golden Rules. Together, these are having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and of the impact of their behaviour on others. A good deal of spiritual development takes place during the course of a school day, but most is incidental and happens because teachers are caring and committed. Planning for spiritual development does not feature as a central part of teachers' planning. Pupils' cultural development is good, especially through effective cross-curricular work.
9. Relationships are very good and have a positive impact on learning. Pupils co-operate well together in work and play. A particular strength is 'talking partners', where pupils discuss points before offering them to the teacher or the whole class. Pupils relate well to adults and value the support given to them.
10. Attendance is above average and makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievement. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time, which reflects pupils' positive attitudes to school. There have been no exclusions in the previous year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)²

Authorised absence	
School data	N/A
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	N/A
National data	0.4

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

²No data is available for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good** and impact positively on pupils' good achievement. Assessment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of key skills in literacy is very good.
- Pupils are motivated and enthusiastic learners because teachers set very clear expectations in lessons.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Teachers make very effective use of assessing pupils' progress in the development of skills.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (7%)	13 (42%)	11 (35%)	5 (16%)	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.

11. A significant feature of pupils' good achievement in English is the very effective teaching of key skills in literacy. In the Foundation Stage, there is a strong emphasis on the teaching of phonics (letter sounds) and in the early key skills of writing. From Year 1 onwards teachers successfully build year on year the development of more advanced reading and writing skills. This is achieved through successfully adapting the National Literacy Strategy to meet the learning needs of pupils. Guided-reading sessions are planned carefully and pupils are taught more advanced skills, such as reading for meaning and developing comprehension skills. There is a structured programme for the teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation so that pupils are constantly building on previous learning. A strength of teaching is that pupils are then expected to use and apply these skills when working in other subjects and they do this most successfully.
12. Pupils work hard in lessons and show impressive levels of concentration. There are strengths in collaborative work, especially in paired discussion and in group work. Pupils take great care and pride in the way they present their work, which is often of very high quality. Pupils are motivated because they know what they are expected to achieve in lessons. Teachers use lesson objectives based on WALT (What are we learning together?) and WILF (What I am looking for?) which immediately involve pupils in understanding the purpose of the lesson. In addition, particularly from Year 3 onwards teachers set challenges based on 'must, should and could'. The must is what all pupils should achieve, should is what the majority are expected to achieve and could is a challenge, particularly for the more able. As a result, pupils settle quickly to their work and show a determination to succeed.

13. The school's skilled teaching assistants provide very effective support in lessons and this has a positive impact on the good achievement of pupils, especially those with special educational needs. In lesson introductions, teaching assistants sit with individuals or small groups and provide calm and quiet support by emphasising the main teaching points and encouraging pupils to listen carefully and to answer questions. As a result, pupils are confident in 'having a go' and they are included fully in whole-class discussions. Teaching assistants work successfully to support pupils when working in groups and there are strengths in the quality of their planning, preparation and relationships which mean that pupils work hard and successfully.
14. As well as having particular expertise in the teaching of key skills, teachers show effective use of their subject knowledge in other lessons. There are particular strengths in the quality of planning to develop effective links within subjects. For example in Year 4, pupils used their reading skills when researching information about the wives of Henry VIII on the Internet as part of their history work. In addition, pupils used their ICT skills to make individual presentations of their findings. Teachers make lessons interesting and fun for pupils through clear demonstrations and explanations which they pass on to pupils with great enthusiasm.
15. As a new school, time was needed to establish subject policies and schemes of work before introducing assessment procedures. Teachers now have developed a very impressive system whereby in each subject, pupils' progress is measured against the skills they are expected to acquire year on year as they move up through the school. As a result, teachers have a clear picture of where pupils are in their learning and this is a considerable aid in then planning future work.

The curriculum

The curriculum and opportunities for enrichment are **very good**. The accommodation and resources are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links are made between different subjects, giving the curriculum cohesion.
- Planning is thorough and provides for pupils of all abilities.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- The school provides very good opportunities for curriculum enrichment.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are a valuable asset to the school.
- The quality of the accommodation and resources is very good

Commentary

16. The schemes of work of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are used effectively as a basis for the curriculum, but then adapted and modified to suit the needs of this school's pupils. Particularly noteworthy is the impressive way that pupils are enabled to see connections across subjects. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were collecting data on their favourite sandwiches and representing it in graph form. They used their ICT skills in the computer suite to produce their graphs. This linked well with the story about the lighthouse keeper that they had been listening to in literacy, and later they made sandwiches for him, linked to design and technology.

17. The curriculum is planned carefully and taught successfully to provide equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. This ensures that all pupils are able to benefit, according to need, from what the school provides. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by class teachers and special educational needs assistants, enabling them to be fully included in all lessons.
18. There is a very good programme for pupils' personal development that is taught consistently throughout the school. There are health strands, which include information on drugs that are beneficial and harmful to us, and citizenship strands, where pupils reflect on significant issues. Outside specialists are used to good effect where they can enhance the provision, such as the school nurse for sex education. Good use is made of the development of the local area to encourage pupils' participation as citizens, and the school council gives pupils the opportunity to appreciate how democracy works.
19. A good number of visits and visitors make significant contributions to pupils' learning experiences. These are all carefully planned to give first-hand experiences directly associated with the topic being studied. Curriculum enrichment is furthered through extra-curricular activities, with a very good variety of clubs being run by teachers and parents. These are well attended, particularly by older pupils.
20. Teachers are keen and enthusiastic, and are working very hard to develop and implement policies and practices to reflect the ethos of the school. Teaching assistants are committed and hard working, and provide valuable support to teachers and pupils, especially those with special educational needs. The very good accommodation is being used effectively, and attractive displays have a positive impact on the learning environment. Development of the grounds has begun well with the 'Activity Trail', and further development, such as meadow, copse and bog areas, is planned. Sufficient high-quality resources are available to meet all the demands of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Pupils are provided with **very good** support, advice and guidance. The way in which the school seeks, values and acts on pupils' views is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils in the school are cared for very well.
- There are very good and supportive relationships between staff and pupils.
- Induction procedures for all pupils as they move into the school are very good.
- The school council is a very effective way for pupils to make their views heard.

Commentary

21. The school looks after and supports its pupils very well. This has a significant impact on their achievement because they feel safe and ready to learn. Health and safety procedures are very good and risk assessments are regularly carried out, particularly as the school grows and develops. Very good child-protection procedures are followed correctly when staff have concerns about pupils' welfare. Parents appreciate the care provided for their children and most of them feel comfortable approaching the school if they have any concerns.

22. Relationships between pupils and teachers are a particular strength and have a very good impact on pupils' learning and happiness. Pupils say that teachers are kind and friendly and that it is always easy to talk to them if they have a problem or are stuck with their work. Teachers use good assessment procedures to provide pupils with work which is well matched to their needs and to give them support when they are having difficulties. Teaching assistants work very well with teachers to provide pupils with very good quality support, guidance and care, not just in the classroom but also at break and lunchtimes.
23. The school is quickly growing as pupils move into the local area. Staff are highly adept at getting to know the pupils very quickly, helping them to make friends and to settle down to their learning. This pleases parents very much. Pupils say that they have had no difficulties starting at the school and that everyone helps each other to make friends because they have all had the same experience of being new. Induction procedures for children new to the school in the Foundation Stage are very good. Home visits by teaching staff and the headteacher mean that the children and their families are well known before they start at school.
24. The very good support and guidance and positive relationships give pupils the confidence to make their feelings known and to discuss matters that concern them, both in informal discussion with adults and in the more formal school council. Pupils speak positively about the way in which their views are heard through the council and that their suggestions, such as those for developing the playground, are taken seriously and acted upon. Overall, the very good care given to pupils has a significant impact on their personal development and means that they are well prepared for secondary education.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **good**. Links with other school and colleges and with the community are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have good views of the school.
- The school has quickly developed good and positive links with its families.
- The home-school association plays an important role in developing strong links with the school community.
- Links with the community and with other schools are already developing well.

Commentary

25. Parents are pleased with the school and most are supportive of its work. They are confident that the school is well run and particularly appreciate the dedicated teaching staff. They say that their children are very happy at school and that they have enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning. Most parents feel that they are well informed about their children's progress through regular meetings with teachers and written reports. A few would like more information about how their children learn, for example, in mathematics, as they do not understand modern teaching methods. Inspectors fully endorse parents' positive views.
26. The school has been pro-active in quickly developing a strong partnership with its families as they move into the area and the school. Parents already play an important role in the life of the school. They are very active in their support as governors, helping in classrooms and with after-school activities. They appreciate the availability of staff and the

headteacher at the end of every school day and say that they are really made to feel welcome.

27. Although the school is quite new, the partnership with parents is already well established and it is easy for parents to feel quickly part of the school community. The home-school association, with the active support of the headteacher, was started in the early life of the school and has played a vital role in helping parents and children to get to know one another through a varied range of successful fundraising and social events. It has also helped to establish the school's name in the local community.
28. The school makes good use of the community to enrich pupils' learning. Visits to the Ashmolean Museum, the Steam Museum and the Cotswold Wildlife Park are a few examples of recent opportunities for pupils' to extend their learning outside the classroom. Parents appreciate the school's good links with the church and the role it plays in supporting their children. The school has established good links with other primary schools in the area, and pupils and staff have opportunities to work with others. Joint concerts and swimming galas, for example, benefit pupils' social development well. Links with the community college are developing well as more pupils leave from Year 6. There are good opportunities for students from the college to undertake work experience in school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school by the headteacher is **excellent**. The governance of the school is **very good**. Leadership and management of key staff are **very good**. The effectiveness of management is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership driven by high aspirations.
- The headteacher manages the school and its development exceptionally well.
- The quality of co-ordinators' monitoring is a significant strength.
- Governors have a very good understanding of school's strengths and weaknesses, of the budget and the curriculum.

Commentary

29. The headteacher provides remarkably strong and perceptive leadership for the school. She is driven by a desire for the very best for all pupils and staff. She has embraced the challenge of establishing a new school as an opportunity to build 'excellence' into every feature of school life. Her vision of a school that is a very special and exciting place, where children love to learn and are deeply involved in the process, is shared by the deputy headteacher who supports her very well.
30. Because she is remarkably astute, she is exceptionally clear about how to move the school forward and achieve these high aspirations. Consequently, she both 'drives' and 'carries' the entire staff in the systematic development of policies and systems. These translate into every day practice fuelling the school's overall intention to strive for excellence. The result of such clear identification of what the school is aiming to do and how to achieve it is that the school has made extraordinary progress in a short space of time.
31. An example of the headteacher's determination being achieved in practice is the unusually high quality of subject co-ordinators' work. The school has successfully met its stated intention that all co-ordinators will be fulfilling their role completely by the end of this academic year. As a result of very good professional development offered by the headteacher and her deputy, co-ordinators identify the strengths and plan for improvement within their subject very closely.
32. The result of the governors' involvement in establishing a new school has been a very clear understanding of issues surrounding establishing its priorities. They are judicious in determining and sharing the school's goals and have rapidly learned how to manage a tight budget. The school has a current deficit of £22,089 arising from funding based on pupil numbers rather than a growing school population. However, the school will break even within the next financial year.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	314,754	Balance from previous year	N/A

Total expenditure	336,773
Expenditure per pupil	3,497 ³

Balance carried forward to the next	-22,089
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³ Based on 90 pupils

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the nursery and reception class is **good**.

33. The teachers in the nursery and reception class are in their first full year of teaching in a primary school and they are working with a constantly changing population of children. This is because children may join either the nursery or reception class at the beginning of each term. However, the potentially detrimental impact of the regularly changing groups is minimised because the teachers and assistants are extremely well supported by the headteacher. The Foundation Stage team make every effort to ensure children settle smoothly into school. A significant minority of children have experienced considerable change in their lives and approximately half of the group do not have previous experience of working in groups outside the home. In these circumstances, the school's thorough programme of home visits is of particular benefit to adults and children.
34. Together, the team shares a very good understanding of the value of children learning through practical and play experiences. This influences the planning of lessons, which places a suitably high emphasis upon play both inside and outside, and allocates adult responsibilities very carefully. With the headteacher's guidance, teachers and teaching assistants are developing their observation skills and assessment is good. Leadership and management are very good.
35. Most children have joined the current nursery and reception class with less developed social and language skills than is expected for their age. They learn and achieve well as a result of good teaching overall. This means that most children gain the expected levels of development in those Early Learning Goals that are less dependent on language. Nevertheless, in spite of the good teaching weaknesses in language and social skills remain. Therefore, most children do not fully reach expected levels of attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They reach the level of physical skills and most social skills expected for their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults successfully encourage children to have positive attitudes to learning.
- Adults provide a consistently very good example to children of how to behave.

Commentary

36. Teaching in this area of learning is good in the nursery and reception class. Consequently, children learn well and attain the standards expected for their age overall. Adults care deeply about the welfare of the children and want them to learn well while enjoying themselves. As a result of this, boys and girls develop their confidence well and become increasingly willing to try new experiences, extend their skills and learn. This contributes to them persevering to the extent expected for their age at most activities when they are

working in small groups. Adults are unfailingly kind and patient. They provide children with consistent messages about how they are expected to behave and set a very good example to them. This results in most children sharing equipment and adult attention satisfactorily and developing a secure understanding of what is right and wrong. The weaknesses that most children have in expressing themselves means that they do not negotiate with each other to the extent expected for their age. However, overall most children attain the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their development.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults successfully stimulate children's interest in letters and their sounds.
- Teachers plan well to ensure children learn through play.

Commentary

37. Few children in the current reception class are on course to read and write to the extent expected for their age by the end of the reception class and will not meet the Early Learning Goals. This is because most children join the school with weaknesses in their speech and / or language and with little experience of making marks on paper. Teaching in this area of learning is good. In both the nursery and reception class, teachers select activities of interest to the children. Consequently, children achieve well and are increasingly fascinated by letters and their sounds. For example, children in the nursery thoroughly enjoy naming hidden objects that begin with their 'letter of the week'. Older children are motivated well by the idea of writing postcards and work very hard to extend their ideas into full sentences. Adults have a very good understanding of the value of children learning through the link between their playing, speaking and writing skills. Teachers plan very well to ensure that children work with adults in a wide variety of activities that extend what children have to talk about. In these situations, staff are skilled at asking questions that have more than one answer and so encourage children to develop their ideas. Occasionally, when children are working without an adult, opportunities to extend their language are missed.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults successfully promote children's interest in number.
- Teachers plan for a good emphasis on practical work.

Commentary

38. A wide variety of stimulating activities throughout the day successfully stimulate children's interest in number. For example, children in the nursery become accustomed to using numbers and begin to count through regularly singing number rhymes. In the reception class, children refine these skills through discussion built into routines, such as how many children are present and how many away. Because of the very good emphasis on practical work, children become increasingly confident in making small calculations; such as if there are three round table shapes and one round clock shape, there are four

altogether. However, in spite of the good provision and good teaching children do not use mathematical language to the extent expected for their age. While using numbers in conversation, they seldom use the language of shape or position spontaneously. The majority will not meet the Early Learning Goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- This extensive area of learning is very well planned.
- Adults successfully encourage children to embrace new experiences and increase their curiosity.

Commentary

39. The significant strengths in the headteacher's expertise in the early years curriculum has helped the whole team to ensure that this very wide area of learning is planned for fully. Teaching is good. Children in both the nursery and reception class have daily opportunities to work with computers and staff sensibly plan specifically to promote children's questions about why things happen and how things work. The previously mentioned strengths in the emphasis upon play and practical experience benefit this area of learning enormously. The good system of planning for adults' contributions with different groups of children means that individual needs are met well. In the nursery, for example, the teacher helps children to experiment with different materials to determine which make 'better boats'. Comments and questions are adjusted well to suit the children she is working with. In the reception class, children discover that it is easier to push dinosaurs through sawdust than through sand. Again, adults adjust their input to suit the children they are working with. Through experiences such as these, children make good progress in developing their curiosity and observation skills, which is good preparation for future science work. However, in spite of the good provision most children do not articulate their experiences, initiate activity to 'discover' something or ask the questions expected for their age. The majority will not meet the Early Learning Goals.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good understanding of the value of children learning through using their imaginations.
- Occasionally, adults provide too much or too little help.

Commentary

40. Because the early years team has a good understanding of the importance of children learning through using their imaginations, they give children regular opportunities to do so. Most children are more dependent on adults to prompt them in expressing themselves and to share ideas than is expected for their age. When they are working with an adult there are occasions when the adult prompting is pitched at just the right level, stimulating children, for example, to imagine they are on a train journey, or in charge of a 'small world'. However, there are times when in their desire to help, adults provide ideas or

'solutions' a little too quickly. At other times, children working in the 'shoe shop' or 'ticket office' in the reception class need occasional help to enable them to sustain a shared 'story'. Although children participate in music lessons and use paint with the confidence associated with their age, overall they remain more dependent on adults in creative activities than is expected. The majority will not meet the Early Learning Goals.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use children's imaginations well to develop their balance and co-ordination skills.
- The wide range of daily activities gives children plenty of opportunities to use small equipment.

Commentary

41. Encouraging children to imagine that they are cycling or to imagine themselves as a part of a train is effective in encouraging them to exercise and develop their control of large movements. This kind of teaching method is used equally well in the nursery and reception class. Overall, the teaching of this area of learning is satisfactory. Children have the expected level of opportunities to use scissors, paint brushes and pencils or crayons and adults seldom intervene in these situations because children are mostly exercising the level of control expected for their age. Children meet the Early Learning Goals.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of key skills is very effective.
- Pupils' use and application of literacy skills is impressive.
- Pupils take great care and pride in presenting their work.
- The way in which pupils listen to and value the opinion of each other is a significant feature of whole-class and paired discussions.

Commentary

42. Pupils in Year 2 took the national tests for the first time in 2003. Results were well above average in reading and average in writing. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average in reading and writing. Standards are not as high because within a small year group, there is a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards are affected by the number of pupils joining the school from a wide range of previous experiences. However, in Year 2, pupils' achievement is good. The results of the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 6 were not published because only one pupil took the tests. The current Year 6 is a very small year group. Inspection findings are that standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good.

43. Standards in speaking and listening are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. In lessons, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and follow instructions carefully. They are keen and enthusiastic in asking and answering questions. Most willingly enter into conversation with visitors. A significant strength is paired work where pupils really do listen to each other and value each other's opinions and this has a significant impact on their success in collaborative learning. Older pupils are confident in presenting, for example, results of science investigations to the rest of their class.
44. Standards in reading are below average in Year 2, but above average in Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in their reading and the majority read accurately, although fluency and use of expression are less well developed. More-able pupils are confident in reading and in understanding mathematical problems. By Year 6, pupils are confident readers and they read with good expression. They talk confidently about authors and their preferences for favourite stories. Pupils' comprehension skills are strong. Skills in using reference books and the Internet to research information are particularly good.
45. In writing, standards are below average in Year 2, but above average in Year 6. In Year 2, pupils write using accurate punctuation and mainly good spelling. They enjoy writing for a range of purposes, but lack the range and depth of vocabulary expected. In Year 6, pupils write imaginatively for a wide range of purposes and different audiences. Stories and poems show imaginative use of vocabulary. In science, pupils show good skills in presenting reports of investigations and experiments. Handwriting skills are good because pupils are expected to use and apply the key skills taught in handwriting practice when they write in English and in other subjects. Again, as the result of high expectations from the teachers, pupils take great care and pride in presenting their work.
46. Teaching is very good and has a positive impact on pupils' good achievement. Starting in the nursery and reception, key skills are taught successfully. As a result, pupils make good progress in reading and writing through the successful building of key skills as they move up through the school. Teachers have adapted successfully the National Literacy Strategy to have a strong emphasis on teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation. A significant strength is that pupils are then encouraged and expected to use these key skills when writing in English and other subjects, with the result that by Year 6, standards are above average. Teachers set very clear objectives for each lesson, based on what pupils must, should and could do. This has a very positive impact on pupils' learning, with the result that they work hard in lessons and show impressive levels of concentration in their determination to succeed in achieving the 'must'.
47. Leadership and management are good and make a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement. There is a detailed policy and a strong emphasis on skills progression at the heart of the teaching and learning policy. The co-ordinator recognises that standards in writing need to be improved further and this is the main focus for her action plan for next year. The co-ordinator has produced a high-quality assessment plan aimed at further improving the quality of assessment of pupils' learning. There are significant strengths in the quality of monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. This is a significant area of strength. Pupils are expected to use and apply their literacy skills whenever they work in other subjects. Reading skills are used especially well in carrying out historical research using reference books and the Internet. Writing skills are

developed successfully through writing instructions and recipes in design and technology and in the results of investigations in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average, whilst those at the end of Year 2 are below average.
- Most teaching is very good and contributes to the good standards achieved..
- The quality of support by teaching assistants is high and supports pupils' learning effectively.
- The co-ordinators jointly provide strong leadership.
- ICT is used well by teachers, but is underdeveloped in its use by pupils.

Commentary

49. With such small year group numbers, and the fact that so many pupils have only recently joined the school, it is unwise and unsafe to make valid comparisons with other schools. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is below the national average. This is not a reflection on the work of the school, for so many pupils are new to the school, and about 25 per cent of this year group have special educational needs, which means that they are achieving well for their ability. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 is above average because the quality of teaching in Year 6 has been very good. Their achievement is good.
50. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' good achievement. Good and very good teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' interest in the subject and on their progress. Lessons are well planned with different tasks to challenge different ability pupils. Learning intentions are made clear, with a good emphasis on key words of mathematical vocabulary. Very good use is made of interactive whiteboards for the main teaching part of the lesson, but this is not always followed up with programs for pupils to use to support their learning. Group work is always very well organised, with particularly good use of teaching assistants, who are very capable and support pupils very well, particularly those with special educational needs. This ensures that all pupils are included in the lesson. There are very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. This creates a good learning environment where pupils are able to concentrate and work hard.
51. Leadership and management are good. There are two co-ordinators, one shadowing the other in preparation for taking over. This is a very good management strategy for professional development. The subject is very well led, with a policy and scheme of work in place, and assessment developing well. Monitoring is very good, and includes lesson observations with action points identified. Analysis of pupils' results in tests is thorough and contributes well to pupils' targets and teachers' planning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. There are many good examples of mathematics being used in other curriculum areas. For example, pupils use time lines in history, grid references and reading temperature scales in geography, and data collection in several subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very strong focus on investigative and experimental work.
- Pupils show very effective use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in the subject.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is of a high quality.

Commentary

53. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is good. In Year 2, pupils have a particularly good understanding of materials and their properties and show good skills when they carry out an investigation into 'Which is the strongest wool?' In a lesson in Year 4, pupils showed a good awareness of the needs for birds, animals and insects to have a wide range of different habitats. They put this knowledge to good use in their plans to develop the school grounds, with a number of different wildlife areas. By Year 6, pupils know the importance of predictions, fair testing and identifying variables when carrying out experiments. The quality of their recording of experiments is particularly good, including charts, diagrams and graphs.
54. Pupils take great care and pride in presenting their work. Because of high expectations from the teacher, they are successful in using their literacy skills when they produce reports of investigations and experiments. The spelling of key scientific vocabulary is good. Pupils make good use of numeracy skills in accurate measurements and in presenting results in accurately drawn graphs. Effective use is made of ICT skills where, for example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were using a data-logging program to record temperature changes in their investigation into grass decomposition.
55. Teaching is very good and makes a positive impact on the standards achieved. Teachers place a very strong emphasis on the investigative and experimental aspects of science. Pupils are encouraged to think scientifically and to use correct vocabulary. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make lessons interesting and exciting for pupils. The use of lesson objectives based on 'must, should and could' is a very strong motivating factor in pupils' knowing exactly what is required of them in lessons. As a result, they work hard, with particular strengths in the quality of collaboration in paired and group work.
56. Leadership and management are very good and have a positive impact on pupils' good achievement. The subject co-ordinators have carried out thorough and detailed monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject and the outcome of this is that teachers are given developmental points as to how they can even further improve teaching and learning. There is a very strong emphasis within planning on the development of key skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' use of key ICT skills in other subjects is good.
- Teachers make effective use of the ICT suite.

Commentary

57. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards meet national expectations. Pupils' achievement is good because teachers are meeting the learning needs of pupils who join the school with a very wide range of previous ICT skills and experience. By Year 2, pupils know how to log on to the school's network. They are confident in the use of the mouse and keyboard, particularly in using the mouse to 'click and drag'. Pupils are competent in word-processing skills and they know how to use the tools in graphics programs to create colourful pictures. They show good skills in entering commands into a floor or on-screen robot for it to follow a planned route. In Year 3, pupils show very impressive skills in adding sound to their storyboards telling the life of Tutankhamen in work linked to Ancient Egypt. In Year 4, pupils use the Internet successfully to research information on the wives of Henry VIII and are competent in copying and pasting key information and pictures into their own presentations. In Years 5 and 6, pupils show good skills in using the interactive whiteboard and a data-logging program to measure temperature changes in an investigation into grass decomposition.
58. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' good achievement. Teachers have confident subject knowledge which they pass on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. Teachers' planning shows that there is a very strong emphasis on pupils using and applying key skills when they work in other subjects so that ICT is an integral part of any topic studied. Teachers make very effective use of the ICT suite, especially with larger classes. Here, the class is split in two, with one half in the suite and the other back in the classroom. Through the support of highly-skilled teaching assistants, this means that pupils in the ICT suite have a computer to themselves which maximises their learning. Pupils benefit from this and from very clear expectations in lessons based on what they must, should and could do. As a result, they are motivated and work hard.
59. Leadership and management are good and contribute effectively to pupils' good achievement. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. He has produced a very clear policy and detailed scheme of work with the focus of linking key skills to the topics being studied by each year group. Monitoring of teaching and learning is good, with strengths in developmental feedback. Assessment is good and is based clearly on the importance of skills progression.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. This is very good. Pupils make very good use of the Internet to use their literacy skills when carrying out historical research. Older pupils use spreadsheets accurately in work linked to numeracy. Younger pupils develop mapping skill successfully when programming a robot to follow a set route. Older pupils are very confident in using the interactive whiteboard to support learning in science.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected on behalf of the governing body by the Diocese of Oxford.

Provision in **history** and **geography** is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- Good use is made of ICT.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors.
- There is a good emphasis on using evidence.
- There are good links with other subjects.
- The co-ordinators are very effective.

Commentary

61. Pupils' achievement is good and, by the end of Year 6, standards exceed expectations for 11-year-olds. In Year 2, they meet national expectations. Teaching is good. Lessons are always very well planned, with clear and appropriate learning intentions shared with the pupils, and very well prepared. Effective questioning engages all pupils and is used well, particularly at the start of the lesson to recap on previous work and to introduce the current work. Pupils are well motivated, often by very good use of the interactive whiteboard, and this creates a good environment where pupils are excited about their work and they want to learn.
62. Pupils have a good understanding of the variety of evidence bases. They use ICT very well, both as a research tool and to present their information. For example, Year 2 used the Internet to find out about Helen Keller. Pupils use book and photographic evidence equally well; for example, Year 1 looked at a variety of photographs to know the features found at the seaside.
63. Visits and visitors are an integral part of planning to give as much first-hand experience as possible, for the school believes in a 'hands-on' approach to learning. Links with other subjects are also identified at the planning stage. For example, when Years 5 and 6 study Victorian Britain, they visit Kelmscot Manor. There are obvious links with English through the literature they read and their writing of reports. They also look at the art of William Morris, and use ICT skills successfully to research information and to present their results.
64. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinators have worked hard to bring their subjects as far as they have in a very short time. They know what they want to achieve and how to achieve it. The programmes they have introduced meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum, and are designed to interest and excite pupils. The areas for development, such as marking and assessment, have already been identified.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not a focus of the inspection, and no lessons were seen in these subjects. However, samples of work were analysed and indicated that these subjects are linked very well with other subjects, such as English, mathematics, science and history.

66. There are examples of good quality work in **art and design** throughout the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 paint portraits with a good eye for detail and pupils in Year 3 produce good-quality landscape drawings inspired by the work of Van Gogh. Very useful links are made with history and Ancient Egypt when pupils paint landscapes with pyramids and work on texture and shading. The limited sample of work reinforces the school's stated intention to ensure that skills are taught progressively in order to ensure systematic development for pupils.
67. There are similarly strong links between **design and technology** and other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils design water clocks which they know were devised by the Ancient Greeks. They use measurement skills well when they draw their design 'to scale'. They use their literacy skills very well when they write full and individual evaluations of their designs and products.
68. The limited **music** evidence includes hearing pupils sing in assembly and hearing pupils playing recorders and working on rhythm in music clubs, all of which they did well. This evidence suggests that pupils benefit from having a music specialist on the teaching staff. Pupils sing tunefully and in 'parts' in assembly. The small recorder group played well and the pupils using pieces of furniture as instruments had a good sense of rhythm.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good whole-school programme for pupils' personal development.
- Personal development is closely linked to other areas of the curriculum.
- There is an effective school council.
- Pupils are given a good range of added responsibilities as they get older.

Commentary

69. The school's detailed programme for personal development is based on the Oxfordshire scheme, but with adaptations to suit the pupils' needs. There are lessons in 'Circle Time'⁴, which either cover units from the planned programme, or deal with issues as they arise in school. All requirements of the National Curriculum are met, including sex and relationships education, and attention to alcohol and drug misuse. Outside specialists are used where they can enhance the provision, such as the school nurse for sex education.
70. Various strands of personal education appear in different subjects, just as other subjects appear in personal education. For example, whilst Year 3 pupils were recognizing the similarities and differences between people, the teacher related this to earlier work in religious education, when pupils had found phrases to describe Jesus, and good attention was given to pupils' speaking and listening skills.
71. Through their involvement in the school council, pupils begin to learn how to play an active role as citizens. Councillors are elected from each class, and pupils provide the chairperson and secretary. The councillors have played a major part in choosing the

⁴ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference of interruption from other children.

equipment for the adventure playground, and the provision of a 'Friendship Bench' and lobbying for bicycle stands.

72. Year 6 pupils are given a number of good responsibilities in the school. For example, they prepare the audio-visual equipment in the hall for assembly. They help in the early years at lunchtime and, in their 'Golden Time', they often choose to help in reception. This is helping them to appreciate the responsibilities of living in a community and how they can help others. This is also found on a global scale when they raise money for charities, sometimes by running their own stalls.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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