

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wallingford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123065

Headteacher: Mrs Jenny Forder

Lead inspector: Mrs Joyce Cox

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 257731

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:	199
School address:	St. John's Road Wallingford Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX10 9AG
Telephone number:	01491 837305
Fax number:	01491 837217
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr. James Garnett
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. John's is a community primary school, situated in Wallingford in south Oxfordshire, which caters for 199 pupils aged between four and eleven. The school is smaller than other primary schools and has seven classes. The number of pupils entitled to free schools meals is below the national average, although in some year groups, such as last year's Year 6, this figure is higher: 10 per cent. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs varies from year to year and is currently below the national average and no pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. In some year groups, this percentage is closer to the national average.

Socio-economic circumstances of the area are mixed with a significant minority of pupils who come from local authority housing. The percentage of pupils whose home language is not English is slightly higher than in most schools but no pupil is at an early stage of English acquisition. An above average number of pupils leave and enter the school between Years 1 and 6. In the case of last year's Year 6 this figure was 48 per cent, which is very high. The children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but the attainment of the current reception children is similar to that of other four-year-olds.

The headteacher was unfortunately taken ill shortly before the inspection and the school's Primary Leadership Consultant, who is a local headteacher, in conjunction with the assistant headteacher worked with the inspection team.

The school is involved in the Primary Leadership Programme; a national initiative intended to raise standards in English and mathematics and to improve the quality of leadership and management. It has also been involved in the Better Ways to School programme, which has led to a school Travel Plan and a grant from the local education authority. The school is working towards a bronze award in a bid to become an ECO school. It is also working towards achieving a Healthy Schools Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25074	Joyce Cox	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage <sup>1</sup> English Religious education Art and design Special educational needs
19079	Ann Moss	Lay inspector	
31525	Sue O'Sullivan	Team inspector	Mathematics English as an additional language Geography History Music
20097	John Griffiths	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Ltd  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL53 7JX

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** and improving quality of education within a warm and caring ethos. It succeeds in including every pupil in all aspects of school life. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and good in art and design and in mathematics lessons. Standards are average in mathematics, science and information and communication technology and below average in English at the end of Year 6. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in art and design. Teaching is satisfactory overall and much of it is good. The headteacher is a good leader. The school shows good capacity for a bright future and provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, assistant headteacher and governing body provide good leadership and have succeeded in creating a cohesive, hard working staff team who are all very committed to raising standards.
- Standards are currently below average in English at the end of Year 6.
- The school has good assessment procedures, which clearly track pupils' achievement.
- Good support for pupils' moral and personal development ensures that most pupils have good attitudes and behave well.
- Work provided for higher attaining pupils is not always sufficiently challenging.
- Pupils' achievement is good in art and standards are above average.
- Some teachers' marking does not indicate what pupils need to do to improve their work and homework is not used effectively by all teachers.
- The school provides a good programme of enrichment activities.
- There are very good links with the local community and other schools and good links with parents.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in terms of effectively tackling all the weaknesses identified in the previous report. For instance, good improvements have been made to the information and communication (ICT) provision and curriculum resulting in raised standards. Standards in some subjects at the end of Year 6 are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection. Many changes have occurred in the last two years, which have a bearing on the school's overall performance. Over a quarter of the Year 6 pupils taking the tests in 2003 had special educational needs, which had an impact on the school's overall attainment and achievement in national tests. In addition, the high number of pupils joining and leaving the school make raising standards more difficult. The leadership team is committed to school improvement and is involved in the Primary Leadership Programme; a national initiative intended to raise standards in English and mathematics and to improve the quality of leadership and management.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	E	C
Mathematics	C	B	D	B
Science	C	B	D	B

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

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

**Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily.** Four to seven-year-olds achieve satisfactorily. Some Year 6 pupils' achievement is hindered by weaknesses in the development of literacy skills. That said, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in mathematics lessons. The

work seen during the inspection indicates that:

- children in the reception classes are on course to meet the national standards (the Early Learning Goals) in all the areas of learning;
- pupils reach average standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT by the end of Year 2;
- pupils reach average standards in mathematics, science and ICT by the end of Year 6 and standards in English are below average;
- Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in art and design.

In national tests for 11-year-olds in 2003, results were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science when compared with all schools. When compared with schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2, results are average in English and above average in science and mathematics indicating good achievement.

The school makes **satisfactory** provision for pupils' spiritual development and **good** provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development, which ensures that most pupils have good attitudes and behave well. Attendance is in line with the national average.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall with good features and is consistently good or better in the Year 4 class and in mathematics and art and design lessons throughout the school. Particular strengths in teaching are the warm relationships, skilful handling of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and the way ICT is used in all subjects. However, marking is not always used to set short-term targets for individuals to overcome in order to reach the higher standards and literacy targets are not used consistently by all staff and pupils. Homework is not used effectively enough. The majority of the teaching assistants make an invaluable contribution to pupils' learning. Assessment is good and teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work for pupils of different abilities. In the case of the higher attaining pupils, work provided is not always sufficiently challenging. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is good provision for extra-curricular activities. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance. There are good links with parents and very good links with other schools and the local community.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** and the leadership team are committed to school improvement and relentless in pursuing ways to raise standards. Subject co-ordinators provide good leadership and management and work hard to lead their subjects effectively. School funds are targeted where they are most needed and the school administration officer and the governing body monitor spending carefully. Governance is good. Governors are keen and very committed and carry out their responsibilities well. The chair of the governing body is an experienced governor and makes a significant personal contribution to the work of the school.

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

Parents are happy with the quality of education and care which the school provides. They like the warm, supportive ethos and appreciate the many extra-curricular activities. Pupils are happy to be at the school. They enjoy art and design and mathematics lessons and taking part in all the out of school activities. Pupils like the staff and feel happy there. Older pupils appreciate the many responsibilities and additional privileges they are given.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- continue to raise standards in English;
- ensure that higher attaining pupils receive sufficiently challenging work;
- improve the quality of teachers' marking and the way in which homework is organised.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils attain **average** standards at the end of Year 2 in writing, reading, mathematics and science. Pupils attain **average** standards at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science and below average standards in English. Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** throughout the school. The current Year 6 pupils attained well below average results in reading and writing and below average results in mathematics in the 2000 Year 2 national tests. The school's comprehensive tracking system shows that the achievement of the pupils who have attended the school from Year 2 to Year 6 is satisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in reading and writing in Year 6.
- Standards in ICT are now average in Year 2 and have improved since the last inspection when they were below average.
- In some lessons the work provided for the higher attaining pupils is not sufficiently challenging.
- In Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils' achievement is good in many lessons.
- Pupils' achievement is good in art and design throughout the school and standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

#### Commentary

##### Foundation Stage

1. The attainment of the current reception children on entry to the school is similar to that of other four-year-olds. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall and the majority of children attain the expected Early Learning Goals on entry to Year 1. An analysis of last year's Reception Profile indicates that children's highest attainment is in their physical development whilst their lowest is in communication, language and literacy, particularly in reading and in their knowledge of sounds and letters.

##### Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.7 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.4 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.1 (16.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In national tests in 2003, Year 2 pupils attained average scores in reading and above average scores in mathematics and writing, indicating good achievement in reading and mathematics from when they started in the reception class. Compared with pupils from similar schools, pupils' results were well below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Pupils' results were lower in reading because several boys attained below the expected level. The school has put good plans in place to address this, including purchasing additional non-fiction texts to capture boys' interest and running an after-school reading club. Over the last three years, pupils' performance in reading and mathematics has matched the national average and exceeded the national average in writing due to clear planning of national strategies and the fact that pupils at risk of underachievement are targeted for support. Girls have performed slightly better than boys in mathematics.

- The current Year 2 pupils attain average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science and their achievement is satisfactory. Year 2 pupils attain above average standards in art and design and achievement is good. Achievement in ICT has improved since the last inspection and pupils attain average standards. There was no noticeable difference between the attainment and achievement of boys and girls.

## Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.7 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.9 (29.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- In national tests in 2003, Year 6 pupils attained very low results in English and well below average results in mathematics and science when compared with all 11-year-olds. These apparent low results were due to several factors. Firstly, there was a higher than normal proportion of pupils with some degree of special educational need who took the tests in 2003. The majority of these pupils achieved in line with what could be reasonably expected of them but did not reach average standards. In addition, 48 per cent of the 2003 Year 6 class joined the school late in their primary education. When compared with how well all pupils performed when they took the national assessment tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, results suggest that these pupils' achievement was satisfactory in English and good in mathematics and science.
- The attainment of the current Year 6 is average in mathematics and science and below average in English and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are average in ICT and above average in art and design.
- It is evident that in Years 3 and 4 pupils' achievement and attainment is good due to the effective strategies now in place, such as the good assessment and tracking systems and because of the good teaching they receive in many lessons. The school has set challenging targets for Years 4 and 5 pupils to attain in the 2005 and 2006 national tests and there is every indication that these will be achieved.
- The school has made good progress in improving standards in ICT since the last inspection. Pupils attain average standards and their achievement is satisfactory. Improved leadership, resources and staff training have ensured that all elements of the ICT curriculum are fully covered.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment and to targets identified in their individual action plans. They achieve well in mathematics because of the highly effective support they receive.
- There are no pupils currently in the school who are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are fully integrated into the work of the school and achieve as well as their peers.

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

Most pupils have **good** attitudes to school. Pupils' spiritual development is **satisfactory** and their moral, social and cultural development is **good** and, as a result, behaviour in and around school is also **good**. The attendance and punctuality of the pupils is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in the classrooms contribute to their achievements and standards attained.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are good. This is the result of the caring ethos of the school and the good examples set by the staff.
- Pupils are keen to take responsibility because they are given many opportunities to do so.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

## **Commentary**

10. Most pupils show good attitudes to learning in lessons. They listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically because of the high expectations set by teachers who maintain a good level of interest and set appropriately interesting tasks, which ensure that pupils are motivated and enthusiastic. A small number of older pupils are very hard to motivate and whilst not misbehaving have problems with concentrating and responding to teachers' questions.
11. Standards of behaviour are good in the classroom, in assemblies, the dining hall and the two playgrounds where pupils play harmoniously together. There are occasional incidents of boisterous behaviour but no signs of aggressive behaviour were seen during the inspection period. Both parents and pupils confirmed that any instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Pupils discuss and agree class rules and are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. Two pupils have been excluded in the past year and the inspectors found that the exclusion process had been used effectively as a necessary strategy for the sake of the whole school community.
12. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and willingly take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. Responsibilities range from acting as monitors to being class representatives on the school council and being involved in weather reporting through Radio Oxford. They also have an eco-council. They feel that the school listens to them and acts on their suggestions if appropriate. For example, pupils decided through school council meetings that they would like more playground equipment and they have been very involved in choosing it. They take their responsibilities of living in a community seriously, showing increased levels of maturity as they move through the school.
13. Pupils play harmoniously together and work well together in groups. For example, in a Year 4 art lesson pupils collaborated well in pairs showing consideration towards others and they enjoyed their activities. Staff give a positive lead in engendering good relationships, for example by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as good role models. Pupils are proud of their achievements and their work is displayed on classroom walls to celebrate their successes.
14. Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with a strong emphasis on their moral, social and cultural development. The good ethos of the school helps to promote spiritual development and subjects such as personal, social and health education, art and religious education make a good contribution. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and opportunities are now given in assemblies for pupils to reflect and marvel, for example, at the wonders of the living world. Pupils are given good opportunities to understand their own culture and that of people in far off lands, and the school is promoting their understanding of the rich diversity of contemporary society through religious education lessons and displays in classrooms and corridors.
15. Reception children make satisfactory gains in their personal, social and emotional development. There are good induction procedures, which ensure that children settle happily and quickly into school.

## Attendance

16. Attendance rates are satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly and arrive on time. The school promotes and monitors attendance satisfactorily and works closely with the educational social worker to improve attendance figures.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.1
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.2
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
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Parent/Pupil preferred not to say.

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
184	6	
6		
5		
1		
1		
2		

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 school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching is satisfactory with good features. Assessment is **good** and assessment information is used effectively to plan work for pupils of different ages and ability. The curriculum is satisfactory and there are a good number of extra curricular activities. The school takes good care of its pupils and has good links with its parents, and very good links with other schools and the local community.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** overall, which ensures that pupils' learning is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are good in the Year 4 class and in mathematics and art and design lessons and satisfactory with good features in the other classes. Assessment procedures are thorough and are used well to plan work.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection when 10 per cent of it was unsatisfactory.
- Teachers have good relationships with pupils and high expectations for pupils' behaviour, which means that lessons are purposeful and most pupils are engaged and motivated.
- An experienced early years teaching assistant provides good support to the reception children.
- Targets to improve pupils' literacy skills are not used consistently by all teachers.
- Teachers do not have a consistent approach to the way they mark pupils' work or set homework.

- Effective assessment procedures have been introduced and are used consistently to plan work for different ages and abilities. Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some lessons.

### **Commentary**

17. There have been many changes in the school during the last two years and four of the staff are recent appointments since January 2003. Some of the new teachers are at a relatively early stage in their teaching careers but alongside other staff have developed into an effective and hard-working team who are committed to school improvement. The teaching of English and science is satisfactory overall and teachers have a secure understanding of how to teach these subjects. Infant teachers' competence in teaching ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection. Resources are organised effectively so that lessons can move forward with pace and purpose. Teaching assistants provide invaluable support in leading and organising additional literacy and numeracy groups.
18. Teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory. The teachers have a secure understanding of the needs of young children and have worked hard to plan an appropriate curriculum. There are good relationships between the children and the reception staff which mean that children have settled quickly and happily into the school. The early years teaching assistant provides good support to teachers and is a valued and experienced member of the team.
19. Although overall teaching is satisfactory, a significant number of lessons in the junior classes have good features and are leading to good learning and achievement. For instance, in a very good Year 4 literacy lesson the teacher skilfully planned work to meet the various range of abilities in the class, made very good use of ICT, had high expectations of work and behaviour and, as a result, pupils demonstrated very good achievement in learning how to plan and write a discussion text. The teacher began the lesson by referring to pupils' literacy targets, which ensured that pupils were effectively focused on ways to improve their work. This is very good practice, which was not evident in other literacy lessons. A particular strength is the way in which some teachers maintain pupils' interest and accelerate their learning by skilful demonstrations. For example, in a very good Year 6 art lesson pupils made very good gains in learning how to use clay to shape heads after the teacher provided an interesting, clear and precise demonstration. This was the first time that the pupils had used clay to sculpture and they rose impressively to the teacher's high expectations, producing work of an above average standard.
20. The most significant area for improvement in the satisfactory lessons is the way in which teachers challenge the higher attaining pupils. Detailed and thorough planning indicates that all teachers are aware of the different abilities within their classes but in reality work provided for higher attaining pupils is similar to that provided for average attaining pupils. There is scope in some lessons for teachers to challenge the more able pupils further to ensure maximum achievement and attainment.
21. Teachers and teaching assistants have good relationships with pupils and their high expectations for pupils' behaviour ensure that most pupils have good attitudes to learning, enjoy their work and apply themselves well. However, on some occasions a small minority of older pupils are very difficult to engage in learning. Pupils are not misbehaving but they are not giving their full attention to the teacher either and require considerable motivating and stimulating. Teachers' marking of pupils' work requires improvement as not all teachers' examples clearly identify what pupils need to do to improve their work.
22. In lessons where the quality of teaching is good and is clearly raising pupils' attainment and achievement, pupils benefit from having lively, challenging teachers with good subject knowledge, high expectations of pupils' behaviour and interesting techniques that engage and inspire the pupils. Teaching is good in art and design and mathematics lessons and, as a result, all pupils achieve well.

23. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs. In the good lessons pupils are effectively supported and achieve well because assessment information is used well to match activities to their needs. Year 6 pupils who have special educational needs are supported well by the headteacher for literacy and numeracy lessons. The quality of support from teaching assistants that pupils with special educational needs receive varies considerably from very good to satisfactory. A small number of the teaching assistants require additional training in the most effective ways to provide support.
24. Assessment is good overall but is of variable quality for groups and individuals. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issue from the previous inspection, which related to the use of assessment for planning. The school is taking part in a partnership initiative on assessment for learning, has adopted the county pupil record, and has created assessment files for each year group. In addition, it has improved its capacity to analyse performance data in English, mathematics and science through the use of appropriate software. In the Foundation Stage assessment is matched effectively to the Early Learning Goals.
25. As a result, assessment in relation to planning and to pupil performance in English, mathematics and science is good. Targets are set for literacy and numeracy but pupils' knowledge of how they can improve their work is variable and not all staff refer to pupils' targets sufficiently. Pupils with special educational needs are aware of the targets in their individual education plans and encouraged to contribute to reviews of their progress. The school is aware that it needs to refine its target setting to make it more meaningful for individual pupils, and to share information with teaching assistants. Marking is variable in the quality of its guidance to pupils.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4	12	12	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 school provides its pupils with a **satisfactory** curriculum. It enriches pupils' learning by a **good** range of activities including music, the arts, visits and visitors. The **satisfactory** accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to take part in activities outside the school day.
- The school has improved curriculum planning considerably since the last inspection.
- All staff work effectively together.
- Considerable improvements have been made to the ICT resources and to the outdoor accommodation for reception children.

#### Commentary

26. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage of learning is satisfactory, with all children having equality of access. Children are satisfactorily prepared for their move into Year 1. The outdoor accommodation has been improved considerably since the last inspection and provides good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills.
27. Good improvement has been made to curriculum planning since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The school now has fully implemented schemes of work for all subjects and teachers are particularly skilled at linking subjects together. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and personal, social and health education including elements of citizenship. Statutory requirements for

religious education and sex education are met and the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is effectively planned to meet their requirements.

28. Parents are very happy with the good selection of after-school activities and the inspection team agrees with their comments. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in the good selection of extra-curricular activities that are offered during the year. These include weaving, ECO schools and an introduction to first aid. A music club provides good opportunities for pupils to enjoy playing stringed instruments. There is also a choir and separate art clubs for infant and junior pupils. The infants have a gardening club. There are many sports clubs, such as football and cricket. The school football team recently won the small schools six-a-side tournament. These activities successfully reinforce and build on what has been taught in lessons. A good range of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum further. All pupils have access to all of these activities and they are well attended.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The special educational needs co-ordinator has successfully introduced a wide range of intervention strategies for both learning and behaviour. The procedure for the identification and assessment of pupils is satisfactory and all pupils have clear and relevant individual education plans with small measurable targets. Reviews are completed regularly and parents are kept fully informed. Detailed documentation is kept on each pupil.
30. The staff are suitably qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum and develop it further. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the quality of learning in the classrooms and parents enhance this provision further. The caretaker and cleaning staff maintain the school buildings to a good standard. Administration staff provide a warm welcome to the school and the lunchtime supervisors and kitchen staff are hard working and valued members of the team. A specialist room for ICT has been established since the last inspection, which supports the curriculum effectively. In addition, the two libraries are well resourced with a satisfactory selection of good quality books that effectively support the curriculum. The outside area is secure and includes two separate playgrounds and its own field nearby. The accommodation is satisfactory. Resources, including equipment to teach ICT, are satisfactory. The accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and much improved since the last inspection as the reception children have daily access to a large climbing frame and wheeled toys to provide for their physical development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care and welfare are **good**. The school provides pupils with a **good** level of support, advice, and guidance. There is a **good** level of pupil involvement through seeking, valuing and acting upon their views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good care for the individual child, generating a firm feeling of belonging to the school.
- Relationships are friendly and supportive.
- Pupils do not receive enough guidance about how they can improve their work.
- Pupils' views are actively sought, listened to and acted upon.

### **Commentary**

31. The school has good health and safety procedures. Child-protection procedures are in place and work well. All members of staff are very aware of child-protection issues as they have good guidelines. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are good and a good number of staff has been trained in first aid. Supervision at lunch and play times is good. A satisfactory annual health and safety audit is carried out. Risk assessments are regular and thorough and health and safety practice is good throughout the school.

32. Parents feel strongly that their children are well supported and cared for. There is a strong bond of trust between pupils and all adults who work in the school. Adults know the pupils very well. Personal development is monitored through class notes and reports. The academic guidance pupils receive, especially through the comments teachers write in their books, does not always provide them with enough advice on how work requires improvement.
33. Pupils' views are sought consistently and regularly through the elected school council, circle time and assemblies. This has resulted, for example, in improvements to resources available for pupils to use at playtimes. In addition, the elected ECO school council has been instrumental in getting the school ready for an environmental award under the Eco-School Project.
34. There are good arrangements for children when they start at the school. Parents and children feel well prepared for their new experience. A weekly story club for pre-school children enables them to feel welcome and safe before starting school. The fact that parents and children and younger siblings are encouraged to come into the reception classes at the beginning of the day means that children enter school happily and younger children become very familiar with the reception classes before they start school.

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

The partnership with parents is **good**. Links with the community and other schools are **very good** and make an important contribution to pupils' personal and academic development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good contribution parents make to their children's learning at school and at home makes a positive contribution to their achievement.
- The very good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum.
- The very good links with other schools ensure that pupils transfer happily on to the next stage of education.

### **Commentary**

35. Parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel comfortable about approaching it and are happy with the procedures to deal with any concerns or complaints. They feel their children like to come to school and that they are encouraged to be mature and responsible. They also appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities offered to the pupils. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning by providing good help in the classrooms by, for example, hearing the children read. They also help on educational visits and raise significant funds through the St. John's School Association. The family learning events are appreciated by the parents and are well attended.
36. Parents are kept informed about the school through the prospectus, regular newsletters and frequent other correspondence. They are well informed about the curriculum and topics to be studied by their children. There are regular consultation evenings and parents are also welcome to discuss concerns at any time. Questionnaires are sent out to parents by the school to ask for their views, and parents feel that their views are acted upon when appropriate to do so. For example, the timings of the consultation evenings were changed at their request. Parents have also been consulted about the single point reception entry in September 2004.
37. A small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying at the school, but the inspection team found no evidence of oppressive behaviour and any incidents of inappropriate behaviour were acted upon quickly and efficiently. This was confirmed by conversations with the pupils. A few parents felt that the use and marking of homework was inconsistent across the school and the inspection team agrees with this view.
38. The very good links with the community include involvement in the Wallingford Carnival, an ICT link with the Oxfordshire Records Office and pupils participating in weather reporting on Radio Oxford. They also work with South Oxfordshire district council on waste management. The

school building is used by local choirs and a drama group. The school makes good use of the community as an educational resource. For example, pupils visit places of interest such as Little Wittenham Nature Reserve, the church, the library and the museum. They also use local businesses whenever possible, such as a wood company and a designer, and they sing for elderly residents.

39. The school has very good links with other local schools. These links include participating in sports projects, such as a rugby tournament and providing work experience. Staff link with partnership schools for specific training, such as 'assessment for learning'. The school is improving links with feeder playgroups to better prepare children for their entry into the reception class and there are good mechanisms in place to help pupils to transfer easily to the secondary school for the next stage of their education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. Leadership of other key staff is **good**. Governance is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the headteacher is good and has been effective in securing improvements.
- Governors support and challenge the school well.
- The leadership team has a strong drive to improvement and takes effective action.
- Strategic planning, based on the monitoring of performance and evaluation, is good.
- The leadership and management of other key staff are good.

### **Commentary**

40. As the headteacher was absent during the inspection, owing to illness, judgements about her leadership and management are based on observation of the impact they have had on the performance of the school.
41. The headteacher's vision and sense of purpose have led to the school's early participation in the Primary Leadership Programme. This is benefiting the leadership capacity of the whole leadership team through joint evaluation of performance, team discussion and by taking effective action. The areas of focus have been to improve the use of ICT in all subjects, and to improve the use of assessment to raise standards. In both aspects, there is evidence of significant improvement and both are now good. Strategic planning is good. The school development plan identifies the key priorities for improvement and provides clear guidance on strategies to achieve them.
42. The response from governors, parents, staff and pupils shows that the headteacher and other leaders provide good role models for staff and pupils. The strong commitment to providing well for all pupils, regardless of their sex, race or disability, contributes to the warm and caring ethos of the school. The leadership and management of the curriculum by co-ordinators, and of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, are good. There are good induction procedures for new teachers, who quickly feel part of the team.
43. The school monitors the pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science well. Lesson observation by senior leaders has led to the identification, by the whole staff, of strengths and weaknesses and to subsequent improvements in action planned. While this has led to a more consistent approach to lesson planning and to a good focus on the learning intended, there is still a need to find ways to ensure better consistency in the quality of teaching and in raising standards, especially in literacy and for higher-attaining pupils.
44. The governing body is very committed and provides good support to the school. Action has been taken on all the key issues identified in the previous inspection and improvement on these has been good. Governors fulfil their statutory functions appropriately. As link governors, they visit the school regularly and receive reports on progress. They contribute well to strategic

planning and to setting overall targets. Through the planning process, they challenge the school to improve its performance and are well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Financial management is satisfactory and adheres well to the principles of achieving best value for money in order to achieve educational priorities. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	456,883	Balance from previous year	54,617
Total expenditure	406,002	Balance carried forward to the next	50,881
Expenditure per pupil	2,388		

The balance carried forward is earmarked for specific purposes in relation to improvements to the accommodation and for contingencies.

**Most significant aids or barriers to raising achievement**

45. The high level of mobility of pupils and staff turnover, partly driven by the high cost of housing locally, make raising standards more difficult. The school is helped by its good leadership, its hard-working and dedicated team of staff and the emerging impact of the Primary Leadership Programme.

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

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

46. The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**. The school has maintained the satisfactory provision seen at the time of the last inspection but good improvements have been made to the outdoor accommodation and to curriculum planning and record keeping. The attainment of children on entry to the school varies from year to year with particular weaknesses in children's communication, language and literacy skills. The attainment of the current reception children is similar to that of other four-year-olds in all the areas of learning. By the end of the reception year, the majority of the children attain the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning. Their achievement is satisfactory in most of the areas of learning and good in their physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
47. At the time of the inspection, there were 27 full-time reception children placed in two mixed reception/Year 1 classes. The school, following the local education authority guidelines, admits children at three times during the year and so the youngest children spend only a term in the reception classes. Good relationships have been established between the reception staff and the children, which means that children have settled quickly into class routines. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator, in conjunction with other staff, has worked very hard in a short period of time to plan and organise the curriculum and to establish effective record keeping systems.
48. The teaching is satisfactory overall. The school works closely with parents to ensure that children have a smooth start to their education. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. In just over a year the new co-ordinator and the other reception/Year 1 teacher, who is in her second year of teaching, have established a unified team of adults who work hard to provide an interesting and stimulating curriculum for the children. The early years teaching assistant, who is experienced and has a good understanding of how young children learn, is a valuable part of the team. The school is aware that other teaching assistants require additional training in organising and managing reception aged children to ensure that they achieve well. Assessments are used directly to plan work at the correct level for all children, including those with special educational needs. The school intends to place all the reception children in one class from September when the local authority moves to a single point of entry, which will make planning and organisation much easier.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Good relationships between children and adults mean children have settled well into class routines.
- On rare occasions the children's play is unstructured and becomes too boisterous.

#### **Commentary**

49. The children's achievement is satisfactory and teaching is satisfactory. The staff cope well with having three intakes of reception children each year. The good induction procedures and good relationships with parents mean that children quickly settle into class routines.
50. Most children concentrate well, approach new learning with confidence and share resources sensibly. They dress and undress themselves unaided. They have appropriate opportunities to make choices and decisions about their work, which promotes their independent learning skills. The majority of children are well behaved and happy and settled into class routines and on course to attain the expected levels by the end of the reception year. The lack of planning for

structured, purposeful play on some occasions inhibits aspects of their personal, social and emotional development as they become too noisy and over excited in the classroom.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Early reading and writing skills are taught satisfactorily.
- Some role-play areas are not particularly stimulating or interesting and do not encourage children to extend their vocabulary.

### **Commentary**

51. All children achieve satisfactorily in developing their language skills, although an analysis of last year's 'Reception Infant Profile' indicated that children's knowledge of sounds and letters and early reading skills were weaker than other areas of learning. Reception children appear to know the names of the letters of the alphabet but some children are not so familiar with the sounds and therefore it is not easy for them to read unfamiliar words as some cannot put sounds together to form words, such as 'cat'.
52. The children are taught to listen to one another as soon as they start school and this is reinforced in many areas. Because of this, most reception children listen carefully to adults and to each other. They are also effectively encouraged to express their thoughts when working with adults in small groups. However, some role-play areas are not conducive to discussions, as they are not particularly attractively displayed with inviting and stimulating resources.
53. Most children can write their names and higher attaining children are writing simple sentences unaided. In a good lesson, all the reception children wrote at least one sentence about 'Jack and the Beanstalk' because of good support from the teacher and the early years teaching assistant. The sharing of books, listening to stories, playing games and singing rhymes are planned very carefully so that children begin to develop an interest in books and stories. Higher attaining children read simple texts well whilst others enjoy sharing a book with an adult and discussing the pictures and the characters.
54. Teaching is satisfactory and the majority of the children attain the Early Learning Goals on entry to Year 1.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff place a high emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- Teachers do not always clearly define separate learning objectives for reception children and Year 1 pupils.

### **Commentary**

55. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children achieve satisfactorily, with the majority attaining the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children are encouraged to use mathematical language more confidently through play activities such as counting out cups of flour and salt to make playdough. By the end of the reception year, most children have a satisfactory understanding and knowledge of number. Higher attaining children create a repeating pattern of 2/3 shapes and correctly use vocabulary, such as rectangle, square and circle. Most children count in sequence to at least 5 and higher attaining children count in sequence to 20 but not back. The children's learning is enhanced by the good range of counting songs, which they learn to sing. Children have good opportunities to explore mathematical

concepts through sand and water play. On some occasions teachers' planning does not clearly indicate what the reception children are to achieve.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is best when children are taught as a separate year group.
- Good use is made of the outdoor area to develop children's scientific awareness.

### **Commentary**

56. Teaching and learning are good and help to ensure that children achieve well. Most children attain the expected levels on entry to Year 1. Children are provided with numerous opportunities to learn about their world. Visits to the local library, to Little Wittenham to study seeds and leaves, and Victorian days together with good outdoor accommodation strongly support this area of learning and help most children attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. More interesting and stimulating role-play areas would enhance the provision even further. In religious education, the children celebrate many of the important festivals of the year by dressing up at Christmas or making special food. They are currently achieving well in learning about Noah's Ark by listening to the story and joining in with songs and number activities.
57. This term the children are enjoying learning about plants and animals and are developing an understanding of what seeds need to grow by planting sunflower seeds in compost. The outdoor play area has been significantly improved since the last inspection and includes a garden, where children carry out mini beast searches and learn to care for a variety of plants. Computers are used regularly and children move the mouse confidently to make pictures.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities both indoors and outdoors for the children to develop skills of co-ordination, control and movement.
- The outdoor play area has been significantly improved since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

58. Teaching is good and children do well and attain the Early Learning Goals. Teachers make good use of indoor facilities to teach specific skills, such as handling pencils, scissors, paintbrushes and other tools, which the children work hard to master.
59. In an outdoor physical education lesson, the children were given time to develop and practise skills in controlling a ball. Quickly they learnt a variety of throws, catches and bounces.
60. There have been considerable improvements to the outdoor area since the last inspection and children enjoy using the large climbing frame and the wheeled toys very much, demonstrating that they are developing good control and co-ordination. The garden is large and interesting and contains a good variety of plants and shrubs, which are ideal for investigative work.

## **Creative development**

61. No creative development lessons were observed but it is evident from displays and teachers' planning that children's achievement is at least satisfactory and that most children will meet the expected levels on entry to Year 1. Children are effectively taught the skills needed to mix paints and to use scissors and paintbrushes correctly. Children regularly take part in music

making sessions and are quickly building up a good repertoire of favourite songs and rhymes. They enjoy music lessons and are learning to sing 'The animals went in two by two' using instruments to make the noises of the animals and the rain. These sessions are successfully and skilfully extended to the outdoor area and some children have enjoyed designing and making impressive wind chimes at home to hang in the outdoor play area

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management.
- Years 3 and 4 pupils achieve well in literacy lessons.
- Pupils with the potential for higher attainment do not always achieve as well as they could.
- Most pupils show positive attitudes to the subject.
- Literacy targets are not used consistently by all staff,
- Marking does not consistently inform the pupils what they need to do to improve.

#### **Commentary**

62. The standards seen during the inspection were average overall by Year 2. In national tests in 2003 for pupils aged seven, standards were just above average in writing and average in reading. In the tests for pupils aged eleven, standards were well below average overall, and well below in the proportion reaching Level 5. A slightly higher proportion of pupils may attain Level 5 this year but this statistic is likely to remain well below average overall. Standards are average in speaking and listening and below average in reading and writing at the end of Year 6. Achievement has been satisfactory in relation to the pupils' prior attainment in Year 2.
63. Achievement is satisfactory overall for pupils by the age of seven and eleven. The high levels of mobility in some years have led to fluctuations in achievement. Year 2 pupils have experienced considerable disruption as their teacher has been absent on long-term sick leave and they have had several supply teachers. During the inspection, Years 3 and 4 pupils achieved well in literacy lessons as a result of good teaching. The standards found in the inspection show that attainment and achievement, which have dipped in the last two years, are now rising. This is due to significant improvements in the leadership and management of English. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. The co-ordinator's role has widened and improved since the last inspection, and she is now fully involved in overseeing and evaluating the subject. There is effective monitoring of pupils' performance through an improved assessment system. Senior managers evaluate the information thoroughly, highlighting strengths and weaknesses. This is giving a detailed overview of how well pupils achieve in each year. The information is beginning to be used successfully to identify what teachers need to do to raise attainments in each year group. Pupils with special educational needs attain satisfactorily in English because they receive satisfactory support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with the potential to achieve a higher level by the age of eleven are not sufficiently challenged to do so in some lessons.
64. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with several good lessons also seen. The English co-ordinator provides a very good teaching example for others, as she has considerable expertise and enthusiasm. In one lesson, she skilfully used ICT resources to inspire and motivate pupils to make very good progress in planning and recording discussion texts. Teachers make sure that pupils know what is expected of them by sharing learning objectives and they use the school's strategies for managing behaviour very effectively. In most lessons, pupils concentrate and behave well. A small minority of older pupils are difficult to engage and motivate and take little part in class discussions. Although teachers plan lessons carefully and provide activities to match different ability levels, the work for higher attaining pupils is not

always set at a higher, and more demanding, level. Teachers have provided pupils with clear targets to achieve in literacy but these targets are not used consistently by all teachers to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their literacy work. Teachers' marking varies considerably from very useful comments which clearly tell pupils what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve to brief supportive comments or ticks. A few parents felt that the use and marking of homework was inconsistent across the school and the inspection team agrees with this view.

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

65. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. Staff work hard to ensure that the skills taught in literacy lessons are used well in other subjects. Pupils produce well-written accounts in history and religious education and junior pupils are developing a clear style for recording their observations in science relevant to the investigation being undertaken. The majority of pupils use speaking and listening skills effectively in class discussions and in the school council, knowing and adhering to conventions of speaking, such as turn taking, and asking relevant questions. Teachers make good use of 'response partners' in many subjects to encourage pupils to discuss their learning and to formulate new ideas. This was very evident in a Year 3 religious education lesson where pupils maturely and sensitively discussed Rebecca's role in the Jewish nation.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The assessment of pupils' work and the related target-setting help pupils to improve.
- Pupils' attitudes in lessons are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils with the potential for higher attainment do not achieve as well as they could.
- Marking is not consistent.

### **Commentary**

66. The standards seen during the inspection were average overall by Year 2 and Year 6 In national tests in 2003 for pupils aged seven, standards were just above average, with an above average proportion reaching Level 3. In the tests for pupils aged eleven, standards were below average overall, and well below in the proportion reaching Level 5. A slightly higher proportion of pupils may attain Level 5 this year but this statistic is likely to remain well below average overall.

67. Achievement is satisfactory overall for pupils by the age of seven and eleven. Although the majority of pupils achieve average standards by the end of the Foundation Stage, the high levels of mobility in some years in the main school have led to fluctuations in achievement. In addition, pupils in Year 2 have experienced disruption in teaching this year as their class teacher has been absent on long-term sick leave. Most pupils with special educational needs attain well in mathematics because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with the potential to achieve a higher level by the age of eleven are not sufficiently challenged to do so.

68. Teaching and learning are good. In the Year 4 class, teaching was very good and pupils made very good progress. Although teachers plan lessons carefully and provide activities to match different levels of capability, the work for more able pupils is not always set at a higher, and more demanding, level. Teachers use analysis of performance data in mathematics well to set targets for pupils. Pupils find these helpful as a guide to what they need to do to achieve more. However, marking is inconsistent. In the best practice, teachers give good, individual advice but this is not universal. Pupils' enjoyment of lessons shows that they respond well to practical work and active learning strategies. When given practical problems to solve, they work well in applying their knowledge of mathematics and coming up with good answers. A few parents felt

that the use and marking of homework was inconsistent across the school and the inspection team agrees with this view.

69. As the co-ordinator for mathematics was away on sick leave, there was too little evidence to make a judgement on leadership and management. Analysis of documentation and discussion with the assistant headteacher show that there have been considerable efforts in the past to evaluate performance and to improve teaching. Improvement since the previous inspection is good since, although standards at the age of eleven fell below average last year, there have been several improvements in mathematics, for instance in the frequent use of ICT in mathematics, in better monitoring and assessment, and in the setting of targets.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

70. Pupils apply their knowledge of mathematics well in their use of ICT and have good opportunities to use their skills in other subjects. In Year 2, pupils use an ICT program to create symmetrical patterns, and in later years they create a good variety of bold and imaginative patterns in art. In Years 3 to 6, pupils use ICT to create bar charts, graphs and spreadsheets to record the results of surveys and investigations. In geography, pupils in Year 4 use their mathematical knowledge well in collecting and recording data measuring weather conditions for the Metlink project. Many pupils have opportunities to research topics on the Internet, for instance in geography and in history. In music, pupils develop an awareness of aural repeating patterns and learn how to record these in musical notation. In science, pupils apply their knowledge of measures in relation to volume, length, temperature and other measures. In the past, pupils have applied their mathematical knowledge well in helping to plan the Jubilee garden.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Investigation skills are good throughout the school.
- There are some good examples of marking but this is not a consistent practice across the school.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards attained by the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are average. The majority of pupils are working at the expected level for their age. No significant difference is noted between the attainment of boys and girls, and pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their ability. In the 2003 national tests, Year 6 pupils attained below average standards but over the last three years pupils' performance has been in line with the national average.
72. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory overall and during the inspection there were examples of good teaching, particularly in Years 2 and 6. As a result, pupils make sound progress throughout the school. Teachers in all years teach science with a high proportion of practical and investigative activities, which have a clear focus in teachers' detailed planning. As a result, pupils are developing a secure understanding of living things, materials, forces and light and sound. They are learning to predict what might happen when they investigate and to explain why things happen in their results. The planning of lessons is good with work planned for the differing ability groups within each class. However, the higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in order for them to reach their full potential
73. There are some examples of where the marking of pupils' work in science is good, particularly in Years 4 and 6. In these classes, detailed comments are made in books, not only to encourage effort but also suggest how pupils can achieve better results. However, this is not a consistent practice throughout the school. Before the start of the day, teachers effectively brief teaching assistants, who have a book to write down the main points of the science lesson. At the end of the lesson they evaluate the session, noting the progress and learning of the pupils they assist.

Teaching assistants help to keep pupils with special educational needs interested and motivated by asking and clarifying questions to make them think. As a result, these pupils achieve well.

74. Teachers work hard to ensure the correct scientific vocabulary is used in lessons and that pupils understand what the words mean and put them into context. There are examples of good cross-curricular links in science; for example, in Year 4 where the class is investigating pulse rate, the teacher had sensibly linked literacy, numeracy, ICT and also physical education. The collection of data takes place in the classroom and playground with the taking of pulse rates before and after exercise. Pupils use numeracy skills to work out pulse rate per minute. They go into the computer suite to learn how to construct a line graph and then use literacy skills to title and interpret the graph. Year 6 pupils are setting up a problem solving investigation and are endeavouring to design, plan, data record and interpret the whole investigation as a paperless exercise in conjunction with the school's application in the Eco-School project. The whole project will skilfully draw upon literacy and numeracy skills as well as science and information and communication technology skills.
75. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Planning and teaching is carefully monitored to ensure that the science curriculum is satisfactorily covered. Test results are analysed carefully to pinpoint areas of weakness. Good improvement has been made to the science provision since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers are both confident and competent in the subject.
- The school has a well-resourced ICT suite.
- The use of classroom computers is limited.

### **Commentary**

76. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are average; this represents good improvement since the last inspection. The school has worked hard to develop resources, train teachers and improve planning. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The clear and detailed planning, much improved since the last inspection, ensures that pupils cover the required programmes of study. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their ability because of the good support they receive. By the end of Year 2, pupils successfully use ICT to record work in written and image form and investigate imaginary situations using ICT. By the end of Year 6, pupils confidently use ICT to structure, refine and present information in different forms and styles. They exchange information and ideas with others in a variety of ways including using e-mail. Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically about their experiences of ICT and how it is used in the outside world.
77. The development of the computer suite has had a marked effect upon the teaching of the subject and on pupils' attainment and achievement. There is a plentiful supply of computers allowing that no more than two pupils in a class share a computer. The new suite allows pupils to develop their knowledge using a variety of software and computer skills. However, in some subjects, pupils have limited opportunities to extend their ICT skills and knowledge using the classroom computers.
78. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although during the inspection there were examples of good teaching particularly in Years 4 and 6. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, although older pupils, whilst still achieving satisfactorily, are acquiring good computer skills and applying them to other subjects of the curriculum well. A particularly good feature of the teaching is that staff make good use of their specialist knowledge. For instance, the Year 4 teacher who has good specialist computer knowledge

takes the Year 5 class for ICT whilst Year 4 pupils have the benefit of the Year 5 teacher's considerable art expertise.

79. The co-ordinator who has been instrumental in bringing about the improvements in information and communication technology is providing a good lead, through monitoring, sharing expertise and by effectively supporting colleagues.

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

80. Teachers make good use of ICT to enrich other subjects. For instance, ICT contributes significantly to pupils' learning in design and technology, literacy, art and science. Pupils use their skills of *click and drag*, and *copy and paste*, to complete tasks, such as planning how to make a sandwich or designing a cover for a religious education folder. Particularly striking is the way pupils access and retrieve information to support their studies of artists' work, such as Kandinsky and David Hockney. A highly effective feature of the ICT provision is the fact that computer skills are not taught in isolation. Classes enter the computer suite with data to present and interpret. Year 4 pupils analyse pulse rate after rest and exercise, whilst Year 5 pupils research Tudor inventories. Year 6 pupils are setting up a longer-term investigation in science and attempting to make it a paperless exercise. All work will be done on screen in an attempt to save paper. This is organised in conjunction with the schools' entry for an award under the Eco-School project.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Religious education**

The provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils' positive attitudes, responses and good behaviour in lessons.
- Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to successfully implement a scheme of work based on the local authority syllabus.
- Pupils make good use of their literacy skills to record their religious education work.

#### **Commentary**

81. Improvements since the last inspection are improved teaching of religious education in all classes and the implementation of the local agreed syllabus. By Year 6, most pupils achieve the expected standards in line with the locally agreed syllabus. They have a secure knowledge of a range of religions and begin to recognise similarities and differences.
82. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of religious education, which results in pupils having a clear understanding of different world religions. All pupils achieve satisfactorily overall and in some lessons pupils achieved well as a result of good teaching. The school has successfully adapted the syllabus to include many world faiths. Skilful teaching helps pupils to consider and understand some subtle but important concepts such as 'Christian values'. Good use is made of pupils' literacy skills to record their religious education work as teachers use very few work sheets. The quality of the presentation in religious education books in Year 4 is very good, with sensitive and mature use of language and illustrations to depict the life of Bernadette of Lourdes, for example. ICT is also used well; for instance, Year 6 pupils have used the Internet to research Shahadah and Year 1 pupils effectively used computers to draw pictures and write text when learning about the symbols associated with Jewish weddings.
83. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils listen attentively to adults. Pupils of all abilities show respect for each other's point of view. Teachers are good at encouraging all pupils to communicate their thoughts. Year 3 pupils maturely and sensibly discussed Rebecca's role in the growth of the Jewish nation.
84. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She has only been co-ordinator for five months but has very good subject knowledge and is keen and enthusiastic and would welcome

the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning further to have a clear picture of standards across the school. Procedures to assess pupils' attainment and achievement are currently being developed. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **History and geography**

85. These subjects were sampled because no lessons were seen in either and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about provision overall. Pupils' work in both subjects, in exercise books and on display, was analysed. Standards in history and geography by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with national expectations. Coverage of the curriculum in each subject is satisfactory.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good**.

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

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Good teaching and learning results in good achievement.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management.
- Pupils have enthusiastic attitudes to the subject and behave maturely in lessons.

#### **Commentary**

86. The school and parents have correctly identified art and design as a strength of the school. Standards are above average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Displays in all classrooms and around the school clearly indicate the high standards attained and pupils' good achievement. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed well as pupils learn about the lives and work of different artists and work together on group projects.

87. Year 1 pupils paint vivid, colourful pictures of sunflowers, inspired by carefully observing real ones. All pupils have good opportunities to develop their knowledge of other artists. For example, pupils in Years 5 have studied the work of Kandinsky and produced their own stunning interpretations. Year 6 pupils have expertly painted plates using repeated patterns based on a careful observation of the work of William Morris. This work is of a particularly high standard. Pupils produce high-quality textile work using a range of materials. Pupils in Year 3 have studied the work of the Dutch artist Escher and also Bridget Riley and produced impressive black and white pictures using paper and inks. This work shows they have used a good range of techniques. All pupils have many opportunities to work together to produce exciting pieces of artwork using different materials. There are good opportunities to visit art galleries and museums, such as the Ashmolean in Oxford.

88. Teaching is good and pupils achieve well. Teachers work hard to develop pupils' understanding of specific vocabulary, such as 'horizon' and 'landscape'. In addition, art skills such as sketching and the need to look carefully when drawing, and how to mix colours when painting are reinforced very effectively. As a result, pupils enthusiastically listen to instructions and work hard, inspired and motivated by teachers' expertise and enthusiasm.

89. ICT is used well to support the subject. The school has maintained the high standards of work seen in the last inspection. The co-ordinator has considerable expertise and enthusiasm and provides good leadership and support to colleagues. Good use is made of her considerable artistic talent as she teaches art to Years 4, 5 and 6.

## **Design and technology**

90. No lessons were observed during the inspection. However, work seen on display in corridors and classrooms suggested that pupils are receiving their full entitlement to design technology. Little work was available to show pupils' practical making skills. Photographic evidence of other models shows a satisfactory range of activities and suitable materials being used, but it was not possible to judge the quality of pupils' making skills. Curriculum planning has improved and teachers follow the national guidance to plan lessons. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.

## **Music**

91. No lessons of music were seen during the inspection and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on provision. On the limited evidence available, standards in singing in unison, in creating musical ideas and in using notation are in line with national expectations by the age of eleven.

## **Physical education**

92. It was not possible to observe any lessons in physical education during the inspection but the level of sporting success in the school indicates that the games element of the subject is well catered for. There is a good range of sports clubs including football, netball and cricket that enhance the curriculum. Swimming opportunities exist within the statutory curriculum and all pupils learn to swim 25 metres and beyond. Pupils take part in a good number of inter-school games and tournaments with a good degree of success, such as in football. These activities make a positive contribution to pupils' social development.

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

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good programme is in place for personal, social, and health education (PHSE), which includes work on diet, sex education and personal safety.
- The school council is involved in school life.

### **Commentary**

93. The personal, social and health education curriculum is successfully linked to the religious education scheme of work and to the school's effective promotion of social and moral responsibility. Personal, social and health education is promoted well through circle time, assemblies, debates, health education in science and specific lessons on sex education and drugs education. The curriculum is enhanced by citizenship visits and by specialist visitors to the school. Circle time sessions are enhanced by the good relationships and the feeling of mutual trust and respect that exist between pupils and staff.

94. The school council is regarded highly by pupils and staff and has a real impact on provision in school. For instance, they have been involved in selecting play equipment to use at lunchtimes. Older pupils carry out their responsibilities maturely and sensibly and all classes have monitors to effectively support class organisation. It is the trusting relationships between staff and pupils that is the hallmark of the success of the personal, social and health education programme.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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