

INSPECTION REPORT

WITNEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Witney, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123018

Headteacher: Mr P Corrigan

Lead inspector: Ms A Coyle

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th June 2004

Inspection number: 258464

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: 3 -11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 261

School address: Hailey Road
Witney
Oxfordshire

Postcode: OX28 1HL

Telephone number: (01993) 702 388
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr T Manning

Date of previous inspection: 9th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Witney Community Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Witney. It is of a similar size to most other primary schools nationally and there are 261 girls and boys on roll, including 19 children in the Reception class. Twenty-two attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Most begin full-time education in the term of their fourth birthday, and attainment on entry varies, but is average overall. Only two per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority families and none are at an early stage of language acquisition. Eighteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is similar to most other schools nationally, but a high percentage have statements for their special educational needs. Their needs include specific or moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural needs, speech and communication difficulties, hearing impairment and physical needs. The school had a unit for pupils with special educational needs until 2003, but pupils are now integrated within mainstream classes. The school received the School Achievement Award in 2002 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2003. It is currently involved in the 'Comenius' project, which links English schools with those from overseas.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20603	Ms A Coyle	Lead inspector	Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language
1165	Mr P Danheisser	Lay inspector	
10422	Mr M Greenhalgh	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Music
8056	Mr H Probert	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History
17288	Ms M Warner	Team inspector	Science Physical education Foundation Stage

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	8 - 12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12
- 13	
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN THE AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	14 - 26
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Witney Community Primary School is a **good school** that is effectively led and managed by the headteacher. It provides good value for money and the teaching and learning are good overall. Standards are in line with the national expectations in most subjects, including mathematics; they are good in science and art and design, but not high enough in writing. The school has accurately identified English as a subject for further improvement.

THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- Standards are good in science and art and design, but below average in writing.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They behave very well and show very good social and moral development within a highly inclusive caring environment.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, and often very good throughout the school.
- The headteacher provides good leadership.
- Good links with parents, very strong links with the Witney partnership schools and plenty of opportunities for extra-curricular activities support pupils' learning well.
- The roles of the subject co-ordinators are not fully developed.
- The most capable, gifted and talented are not challenged enough.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.

The school has improved satisfactorily since 1998 and rectified the three key weaknesses that were identified. The school development plan and financial planning have been improved to a satisfactory level, with suitable involvement from the governing body. Assessment procedures have also been improved and the information is used appropriately to guide teaching and learning. Standards have improved to a satisfactory level in information and communication technology (ICT) because the provision has been developed, with the addition of a computer suite, increased resources and more training for staff.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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.

Achievement is sound overall. It is notably good for pupils with special educational needs. The above table shows that standards at the end of Year 6 have varied over the last three years. In 2003, they were in line with the national average and with those of similar schools. The inspection evidence shows that standards are currently in line with nationally expected

levels¹ by end of Years 2 and 6 in mathematics. They are above average in science by Year 6, but below average in writing. Most pupils make sound progress in relation to their capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve considerable success. However, the most capable, gifted and talented pupils in the junior classes are not challenged enough.

Children in the nursery and Reception classes are provided with a good start to their education. The adults make sure that all are catered for well. As a result, children acquire a wide range of skills and achieve the expected goals² in the areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage³, as indicated in the school's assessment records and the inspection findings.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**, are **good** overall. The majority of pupils display good attitudes and very good behaviour. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 1 to 6, and in the Foundation Stage; they are often very good and occasionally excellent. The curriculum is extended by good links with local schools, a very good range of after-school activities that includes sports, and a highly inclusive atmosphere in which all pupils are valued equally.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a clear educational vision that is focused upon ensuring that pupils do well. He provides calm, effective leadership and emphasises a very strong pastoral focus on the work of the school. The senior management team and governors are supportive, and the staff work well together as a good team, although the roles of the subject co-ordinators are not yet fully developed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. However, a few parents feel that they are not well informed about their children's progress or that they do not receive enough information in good time about school events. Pupils, whose opinions were sought through a questionnaire and in conversation during the inspection, like being at the school and almost all are confident that there are adults to whom they can talk if they have any concerns.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

¹ **LEVELS** - by the end of Year 6, pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected levels. By the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected levels.

² **EARLY LEARNING GOALS** - these goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of the Reception Year in the following areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development, and personal, social and emotional development.

³ **FOUNDATION STAGE** - This stage of learning refers to children aged between three and six years. In this school, it refers to children in the Reception class.

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

- Raise the standards in writing, across the school.
- Strengthen and develop the roles of the subject co-ordinators.
- Improve the provision for the most capable, gifted and talented pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Achievement is sound overall and pupils attain standards that are generally in line with the national expectations by Year 6.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are good in science and art and design, and many pupils have achieved well by the time they reach Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.2 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.8 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.3 (28.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.4 (29.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.2 (30.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

COMMENTARY

1. **Pupils achieve satisfactorily in English.** The standards attained in the 2003 national tests were average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and the school has made sound improvements to its standards since the last inspection. There is no significant difference in the attainments of boys and girls, although the current pupils in Year 6 are not attaining as highly as last year's cohort and fewer pupils are reaching the above-average level. Nevertheless, the school is not likely to reach the ambitious targets it set for the proportions of pupils attaining Level 4 and 5. In Year 2, there has been some marked improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 in reading and writing, which shows an upward trend over the last few years. However, too few have attained the higher Level 3. Overall, standards in handwriting are below those expected nationally, with too many pupils in the junior classes printing but not forming letters properly. There are also pupils in the infant classes who have an awkward pencil grip that hinders their ability to write fluently. However, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans because they are supported very closely by teachers and assistants. In addition, pupils who perform less well than others are given effective additional support in booster groups.

2. **Achievement is sound in mathematics.** In the 2003 tests, pupils attained standards that were in line with the national average and the results of similar schools at the end of Years 2 and 6, although the results have varied from year to year, due to the capabilities of different groups of pupils. The current findings are that most pupils attain the expected Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and there was no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls during lessons. Pupils in Year 2 currently attain standards that are broadly in line with the national expectations.
3. **Pupils achieve well in science.** Standards have improved over the last five years with well above average standards reached in Year 6, in 2002. In 2003, pupils' performance was in line with the national average and the percentage of pupils who reached the higher Level 5 was above average. Overall, boys perform better than girls. The large majority of pupils in the current Year 6 are expected to reach the nationally expected Level 4 in the 2004 National Curriculum tests and three per cent are expected to reach the higher Level 5. The inspectors agree with the school that pupils are currently attaining good standards overall.
4. In **other areas of the curriculum**, achievement is generally satisfactory amongst most groups of pupils, which leads to sound standards of attainment overall by the time they reach Year 6. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve satisfactorily across the school, and the majority of children in the Reception class attain the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve very well, due to the highly inclusive and supportive provision. However, the most capable, gifted and talented pupils are not sufficiently challenged, and this is an area for improvement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' attitudes and personal development are **good**, and behaviour is **very good**. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The very inclusive, caring ethos of the school permeates all activities and helps to promote pupils' good relationships, attitudes and personal development.
- The very good role models provided by the staff ensure that pupils quickly know the difference between right and wrong and behave very well.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.

COMMENTARY

5. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. The generally positive picture found at the last inspection has been maintained. The vast majority of pupils are very well behaved, polite and courteous, and respond well to the very inclusive, caring ethos of the school. A few pupils display challenging behaviour and staff work very well together to consistently reinforce good behaviour. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and only one pupil was excluded from school last year for poor

behaviour. Children in the Foundation Stage respond positively to the school routines and are eager to learn. Pupils in the rest of the school also enjoy learning.

6. Pupils have a very good moral understanding of right and wrong that is promoted from a very early age. They benefit from the very good role models set by the adults in school. When pupils show qualities such as honesty, politeness, and helpfulness, they are rewarded alongside academic achievement. Social development is also very good and all pupils are very aware of the rules, which they help to formulate. As a result, the school is a very orderly community. There are opportunities for pupils to enhance their social development through taking responsibility, which they do with commitment and pride. For example, the elected school council meets regularly and the members take their responsibilities very seriously when making decisions on behalf of others. Pupils in Year 5 act as 'reading buddies' for Year 2; these relaxed and friendly sessions provide an excellent learning and social experience for both age groups. Pupils are encouraged to be honest, trustworthy and well mannered. They follow a curriculum that promotes a good understanding of western culture in subjects such as history, art and design, music, and English. Their understanding of different cultures is promoted during their involvement with schools in Cyprus and Spain through the 'Comenius Project' and 'European Week'. This has made a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of the world beyond their immediate locality. The language club, supported by teachers from the secondary school, adds to this provision effectively.
7. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are good, which has a positive impact on learning. Pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are valued. They respond well to the help provided and appreciate the praise that is given, and pupils with special educational needs take a full and active part in lessons and at playtimes. Pupils have a few opportunities to work independently and they work well in pairs and small groups with computers and in music lessons. The older pupils help to organise information for pupils to take home, and are given a raft of jobs including library, assembly and office duties. Despite the very hot weather during the inspection, pupils remained on task and attentive. Pupils with special educational needs generally have good attitudes to learning and are managed very well by staff so that they generally fit in well when they are in class and receive very good support in small groups or individually.
8. Attendance is well above the national average and levels of unauthorised absence are very low. Almost all pupils arrive punctually for the start of school. Almost all parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually, though some parents do withdraw their children from school to take holidays during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

EXCLUSIONS

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	266	1	0
White – any other background	1	0	0
White – any other mixed background	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are good overall, and some lessons are very good or excellent. Pupils are cared for well and the school's links with parents and the community are **good**.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is occasionally excellent in English, music and physical education.
- Pupils are encouraged well and all staff insist on high standards of behaviour.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in most lessons.
- Planning is generally good, but the use of assessment information is not fully developed.
- Pupils work very well with each other, but there are too few opportunities for them to work independently on research topics.

COMMENTARY

9. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. It is very good or better in almost a third of lessons, and occasionally excellent. In the best teaching, such as in English in Year 1, excellent planning and organisation, very good class control that is relaxed but effective, and a strong sense of fun promote pupils' learning well. Excellent teamwork amongst staff enables pupils to achieve well; for example, in an outstanding music lesson in Year 2, the activities started with a lively voice 'warm-up', after which superb discipline led to total silence and the pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour. In physical education, the teacher's very good subject knowledge and very clear lesson objectives led to considerable achievement, with pupils reaching well above average standards.
10. All staff insist on high standards of behaviour amongst pupils and they encourage them to do their best. Children are cared for sensitively in the Foundation Stage and activities are very well organised to make sure that purposeful learning takes place. For example, thoughtful teaching in a Reception/Year 1 class enabled children to share their experiences with one another when considering the idea of 'Trust'. Good behaviour was a factor in the very good achievement of pupils in Year 1, when very good teaching and learning took place in a music lesson. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and was skilled at helping children to understand the dynamics of loud and soft sounds, and how to evaluate the results of their playing. Similarly, the teacher's very strong subject knowledge in an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson in Year 2 enabled pupils to reach good standards.
11. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in most lessons. They are generally well deployed, particularly in the mixed Reception/Year 1 classes. In a well-planned Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, the teacher had good subject knowledge and challenged the pupils well. The lesson had pace and the pupils put effort into their work. The teacher used good questioning techniques and activities and demands were matched well to the needs of different pupils. There was good teacher interaction supporting the pupils' learning and the final session was used very well.
12. The planning of lessons is generally good and is based upon teacher's secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. In Years 5 and 6, teachers have very good subject knowledge of history and ICT, as seen in the very good teaching when pupils achieved well. Excellent opportunities are frequently given for older pupils to develop caring tolerant relationships with younger pupils, such as when Year 6 pupils talked about their half-term experiences with Year 2 pupils in a 'Buddy' session. This kindly, friendly and very relaxed short period led to good standards of social skills between pupils.

13. Assessment is used extensively in the nursery and group or one-to-one teaching to ensure that children achieve well. However, the use of assessment information is not as well developed in Years 1 to 6, although it is satisfactory overall. As a result, the most capable, gifted and talented pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow for them, although it meet the needs of the lower-attaining pupils very well. For example, in two physical education lessons not enough time was given to coaching pupils as they practised skills as a class before working with a partner or in a group. Sometimes, such as in an English lesson, teaching assistants are passive during the teaching session and assessment does not sufficiently show the teacher how to build on the pupils' own knowledge. Whilst many opportunities are given for pupils to work together in groups in all classes, there are not enough activities for them to work independently, such as in carrying out research in the library or on computers.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (6%)	13 (25%)	23 (45%)	12 (24%)	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 overall quality of the curriculum is **good** and provides effective breadth and balance.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Good cross-curricular links are made for English and ICT.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Effective international links are created through the 'Comenius' Project to enhance the quality of the curriculum.

COMMENTARY

14. The curriculum covers all aspects of the National Curriculum and meets statutory requirements for religious education. It meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, there are instances when the highest-attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they might. The curriculum is enriched through a very wide range of after-school activities, which are much enjoyed by pupils. These activities promote the arts and physical education well. Visitors to the school and visits to places of educational interest, including residential trips, enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum. The school has embraced the 'Comenius' Project initiative, which encompasses a good opportunity to experience the cultural dimensions of different countries such as Cyprus and Spain. Personal, social and health education is taught systematically across all classes and this is a very good feature of the weekly curriculum.
15. Pupils learn to write for different purposes and to collect and display information within the context of a range of subjects, so making the development of literacy and numeracy skills more purposeful and relevant. There are also good examples of the use of ICT to enhance the provision of subjects across the breadth of the curriculum.

16. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school's systems for identifying and supporting pupils are highly organised, and the staff work very well together to make sure that all pupils with learning difficulties are given the help they need. Close links with external agencies and parents benefit the pupils because their involvement is sought conscientiously by staff on a regular basis. As a result, individual education plans are of a high quality and specific targets are used well throughout the school to help guide pupils' learning.
17. The school has a good number of teaching staff and teaching assistants. Its accommodation is very good, with a large amount of space both inside the school and within the school's grounds. These facilities include a specialist ICT and music room, a swimming pool, an environmental area, an enclosed area for Foundation Stage children and spacious classrooms and playgrounds. Learning resources are good overall.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Pupils are given **good** support and advice, and are cared for well. Governors and staff have satisfactory procedures for checking that pupils and staff work in a safe environment.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Arrangements for pupils starting school or moving on to the next stage are very good.
- Provision for first aid is good and safe practice is promoted well in lessons.
- Training for health, safety and the protection of pupils has not been updated recently.

COMMENTARY

18. Induction arrangements are very good, both when children start at school and when they move to the secondary school. These arrangements start the work of developing the good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff that give pupils the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have concerns about their work, or a personal problem. Staff provide a good response to such requests and they help pupils to make progress by providing them with well-informed support, advice and guidance and clear targets as to what they need to do to improve their work. For example, pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. The purposeful, calm and encouraging personal teaching for pupils who may be experiencing difficulties is a strength of the school. However, there is no similar provision for pupils who are gifted or talented. The school successfully seeks pupils' views through the school council, which in turn asks for comments and maintains a suggestion box, although pupils do not formally evaluate their own academic progress.
19. First aid provision is good and some staff are qualified to provide assistance in the event of an emergency. Safe practice is promoted well in lessons, for example when eight- and nine-year-olds learnt about the dangers of electricity in science. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils are satisfactory, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Staff and governors are involved in checking the premises and site, and risk assessments related to visits are undertaken. Child protection procedures meet requirements and the school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care. However, there has been no up-to-date training on this or on how to support pupils who may not be living at home.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The partnership between school and home, other schools and the community is **good** overall. It was judged a strong element at the time of the previous inspection.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Parents are very happy with what the school provides for their children.
- The committee of the Parent Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA) works hard to support the work of the school.
- Information to parents is too infrequent, although pupils' annual reports are good.
- Links with local schools are thriving.

COMMENTARY

20. The positive views of parents reflect an overall good level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision. A small minority of parents expressed some concerns about the information that they receive. This may stem from occasions when information about school events arrived too late for some parents to take part. In addition, some parents feel that one formal meeting at the end of the year about their children's progress is not enough. The school has recognised that there is room to improve communications with parents. Inspectors support the positive views of parents.
21. Many parents support their children well at home by sharing books with them and helping them with their homework. Few help in school on a regular basis. The Parents Association is run by a small but hardworking committee and successfully raises funds to provide additional resources and learning opportunities for pupils. Through events such as the 'Summer Fayre', they have been able to fund the purchase of new play equipment for the younger children.
22. The newsletters and general information provided to parents are satisfactory, though infrequent, and the annual reports on pupils' progress are good. Reports demonstrate the good knowledge that teachers have of pupils and inform parents about the work that pupils have completed and their attitudes. All teachers make the first Monday of the month available to parents after school as well as other times. However, some working parents feel this is not enough. Unfortunately, the hall is too small to include parents in class assemblies in the way that they are currently organised. The school has few arrangements to survey parents and gain their views. The school normally manages to resolve any concerns of parents informally. However, in the event that a parent should wish to make a formal complaint, there is an effective complaints procedure.
23. Links with the community and a range of visits and visitors provide good enrichment of the curriculum and support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs of others through charitable projects. The school is used by a few outside groups, and groups of pupils have sung at church and for elderly people. The school would like to develop this aspect of its work. Links with other schools are very good, thanks to a thriving partnership of schools in the area. This helps teachers meet their colleagues in other schools and share professional information and experience and this benefits pupils by providing them with coherent and progressive experience as they move between schools. Links with the

major secondary school support the transfer of pupils at the age of eleven by providing opportunities to visit and gain an understanding of what secondary schooling will be like.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. The leadership and management provided by other key staff and governors are **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The headteacher provides good leadership and a very strong emphasis on the pastoral care of pupils in a nurturing environment.
- Governors are more involved in strategic and financial planning than they were at the time of the last inspection but they still do not challenge the senior managers enough.
- The role of the subject co-ordinators is not fully developed to include sufficient monitoring.

COMMENTARY

24. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a clear vision of what is needed to raise standards. He has created a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who are committed to ensuring that pupils at the school have the best possible education. Changes in the management team have meant that progress has been interrupted but the climate for learning remains good. Management planning is now satisfactory. The school development plan is a useful, positive tool that is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.
25. Governance is good. Since the last inspection, the governing body has developed its role effectively and ensured that all statutory requirements are fully in place. All governors monitor the school's work through a well-established system of committees, visits, meetings and discussions with pupils, staff and parents. The governing body is determined to support the headteacher and the school in raising standards. However, it does not meet with the senior management team or challenge their ideas sufficiently as a 'critical friend'.
26. Leadership by key staff is variable. The deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management group work well as a team but the effectiveness of the roles of the subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently well developed. There are some examples of effective co-ordination, for example in science. However, in a number of subjects, particularly outside the core, there are no systems in place to monitor teaching and standards. Conversely, the management of the provision for special educational needs is very good. This aspect is very carefully co-ordinated and is a strength of the school because the headteacher and senior managers spend a lot of time and energy putting structures and systems into place to support pupils with learning needs.
27. The school's strong and successful commitment to including all pupils in all aspects of its work means that everyone benefits from equality of opportunity, although, at the moment, gifted and talented pupils are not identified and given full opportunities to develop their skills. However, all pupils, boys and girls alike, are given many opportunities to explore a wide range of activities and events.

28. Financial planning is satisfactory and governors have a clear understanding of the financial affairs of the school. The finance committee meets regularly and there are key governors who oversee planning. Governors are now more involved in the strategic direction and financial planning for the school than they were at the time of the last inspection. The principles of best value are central to management, not least in the financial implication of falling numbers on roll. The surplus fund held centrally and locally is specifically for a building and repair project which, in view of the large and extensive school building, is entirely appropriate.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	780,091
Total expenditure	752,217
Expenditure per pupil	2,239

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29,997
Balance carried forward to the next year	57,871

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

29. Children enter the nursery with more achieving below the expected levels than above, especially in numeracy. Standards at the end of the Reception Year are average, with a significant number not reaching the Early Learning Goals and hardly any children exceeding them. Thus, children make good progress and achieve well in the Foundation Stage. They are taught in three classes by staff who work very well in teams; the nursery-aged children and a few Reception children are taught in one classroom whilst the majority of the Reception-aged children are taught in two combined Reception/Year 1 classes. The latter are often taught separately in the shared area between the classes, either individually or in groups, usually by two experienced teaching assistants. From September, all of the Foundation Stage children will be taught together in the present nursery classroom. The nursery teacher already works closely with the on-site playgroup leader and it is proposed that these links will be strengthened further as children stay longer in the playgroup setting before moving into the school. A helpful brochure is provided for parents of children in the nursery.
30. The teacher and nursery nurse make a strong team in the nursery where there is a purposeful atmosphere and a lively, colourful and stimulating environment. Time is used well and the classroom and outside play area are well organised, with the result that teaching and learning are often very good. Planning is very good in the nursery; it contains a summary of activities, followed by details on previous experience, intended outcomes, resources needed and evidence of learning for each activity. Teaching in the Reception/Year 1 classes is good, overall. Teachers and teaching assistants have established a sound routine that enables Reception children to be taught on their own for much of the time in the shared area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Boys are particularly confident and enjoy initiating ideas and playing together.
- Reception-aged children have particularly good relationships with the teaching assistants.

COMMENTARY

31. About three-quarters of the children begin in the nursery at, or above, the nationally expected levels in this area of learning. By the end of their Reception Year, a similar proportion have achieved the Early Learning Goals. Children in the nursery are keen to share their news with the teacher and other children, and show that their interest in classroom activities goes beyond school, when they bring objects such as feathers, which they have collected at home but learned about in school, to show the class. Children select activities themselves both inside and outside the classroom. The boys in particular initiate new ideas, for example when they role-play having a barbecue. Girls are

less outgoing but also work well together when looking at worms outside or in the role-play area inside. The children enjoy playing at families on their own or with other children in the play house, although boys and girls seldom played together by choice. The teacher's very good use of praise raises children's self-esteem well and encourages them to take turns and share happily together. Pastoral care is good; for example, when children feel unwell, the nursery nurse comforts them and sometimes quietly reads to them in the shade of the tree outside.

32. The quality of teaching is good overall in the nursery and Reception classes. Useful opportunities are provided for reception children to initiate their own play but, as most are taught with Year 1 pupils, activities are mainly directed by the staff. However, better opportunities are given when the outdoor area is used, and on these occasions children work confidently and independently. By working with the older pupils, Reception children understand that there are agreed rules and they form very good relationships, especially with the teaching assistants who do much of the teaching of Reception-aged children. The children are beginning to understand right from wrong through stories and through discussions. A lesson on the topic of 'Trust' was very well conducted and helped pupils to understand that there are people who can be trusted but also some that cannot. When children learn about the seaside, their personal and health education is considered when they talk about what they should wear.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teachers are skilled in developing children's language through conversations.
- Good provision is made for children to listen to stories.
- Too few opportunities are given children to write incidentally or for a particular purpose.

COMMENTARY

33. Children achieve well and attain the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. They respond politely in the nursery when the register is taken, saying 'thank you', when fruit or birthday cake is shared. Most children speak clearly when talking about seeing shadows on the wall, or marks in the sand. Skilful teaching helps them develop language about such events as an aeroplane passing overhead. When singing songs, children enthusiastically offer alternative ideas to words. They are spellbound by the teacher's very good reading of stories in the nursery, which leads to sound levels of communication. Good provision is made for different ages, with the teacher and nursery nurse reading books that are well matched to the interests of different groups. Children enjoy browsing through books in the book corner, holding them up the correct way and turning pages over one by one and studying the pictures. Children in the nursery can recognise the initial letter of their name and are beginning to write simple words with letters that are recognisable.
34. Teaching is good overall in the nursery and Reception classes. It is occasionally very good or excellent. Reception children in the mixed-aged classes enjoy the books they take home and higher- and average-attaining children attempt new books with confidence. Lower-attaining pupils find words they recognise within the text and show

amusement when talking about the pictures. However, opportunities to develop speech are more limited in Reception classes than in the nursery, as Year 1 pupils tend to dominate when the two different year groups are taught together. Most children write sentences under the writing of an adult and some write independently: for example the three sentences, *'I lost my necklace with a red stone in it. I found it in my box. I was very happy'*. They know how to use a picture dictionary. They also sequence pictures to make story. Children recognise rhyming words and can add different first letters to make words, such as 'pin', 'tin' and 'bin'. They are beginning to know how sounds blend, such as in 'th', 'ch' and 'sh'. Sometimes, opportunities for writing are missed, such as in a long session about the seaside when no writing was done. Imaginative and incidental activities such as making a quick shopping list of things to take on holiday were not used to develop vocabulary. There was also a lack of assessment to target specific vocabulary in a literacy lesson where standards were below average.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Children achieve well overall.

COMMENTARY

35. Numeracy skills are lower than other areas of learning when children start school and standards are still below the expected goals at the end of their Reception Year. Children in the nursery have a wide range of attainment, ranging from children who were still recognising numbers to five to higher attainers who can order numerals to 20 and identify missing numbers without any difficulty. Children are beginning to be able to recognise mistakes and rectify them; for example, if a number is upside-down or in the wrong place. On the computer, they work independently, matching numbers to colours in a picture. When they are cooking, children learn about the measurements on the side of the measuring jug and count the pieces of jelly they cut up before adding water. They make patterns with two-dimensional shapes. When a story is read to them, they recognise the time 'three o'clock' when a picture is shown to them. Problem-solving activities, such as how many scoops will be needed to fill a container, also promote learning well. They learn to subtract through number rhymes such as *'Five ice lollies, sitting on a stick'*. Both nursery-aged children and higher-attaining reception-aged children achieve very well; they are able to order numbers, recognise shapes, solve problems and use mathematics language, such as 'larger' or 'smaller'.
36. Teaching is good in the nursery and Reception classes. Most work in Reception is practical. Children are encouraged to draw over numerals, add units such as $5+2=7$ by counting the dots on dominoes and show that they recognise different three-dimensional shapes by colouring them different colours. Using pictures to help them, they can subtract $7-4=3$. The standards reached by children of average attainment varies considerably and some complete much more recorded work than others. Cooking is used to teach children numeracy skills and in a lesson where children made biscuits, good teaching by teaching assistants helped them to understand weight. However, the focus on mathematics was not carried through to the end of the lesson and opportunities to measure correctly using a spoon were not taken. Nevertheless, assessment is generally used well and shows that children make good progress; for example, in the playground the nursery teacher carried out an assessment activity and children successfully counted bean bags from one to ten which they had not been able to do previously.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

37. This area of learning was sampled during the inspection. Children in the nursery know the days of the week and which day follows another. They know that they do not come to school on a Saturday or Sunday. They have looked at old and new teddy bears and engines, visited a farm and gone shopping to buy ingredients for cooking activities. They draw simple maps. The school cook has talked to them about her job and they have watched the workmen making seats for the grounds. When eating their snacks, they talk about the fruit they are eating and the places they come from. Children have also learned

about other people's festivals. On a hot day, they enjoy feeling ice and watching it melt. They use a torch when presenting a puppet play and have observed changes in the school pond. They enjoy using the computer and have used a programmable floor turtle and made a simple electrical circuit. They build and construct using different construction kits in class and a barbecue in the playground. They mix sand and water to make 'burgers' to 'cook'. Boys are particularly purposeful in their play, whatever activity they choose.

38. Reception children mention seaside holidays they have been on and look at where these places are on the map. Through discussion with the teaching assistant, they discover that the seaside is not always sandy with small shops near to the beach but may have cliffs and rocks. In a science lesson, work was well matched to the needs of different groups and children enjoyed recognising loud and soft sounds before expressing them through paint. In an art lesson, children learned how to use a wash of paint for a background of water, having painted fish. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to develop art when children learn to use different thicknesses of lines and colours. ICT is taught well in small groups; children are confident with what they have already learned and keen to learn new skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

39. This area of learning was sampled during the inspection. Children develop their hand and finger muscles by working with play dough and pasta to make a birthday cake. They enjoy and discuss the feel of the different textures and size of the lengths of pasta with the nursery nurse, developing numeracy skills at the same time. They ride bicycles and scooters with confidence and a low bridge construction provides opportunities for them to climb.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

40. This area of learning was sampled during the inspection. There is a good standard of creative artwork in the nursery. Children use fabric and foam to make pictures and mobiles and are learning to mix colours to paint pictures of butterflies. They have also used pastels to copy pebbles, wheat and red peppers. After looking through a magnifying glass, they draw what they have seen when studying feathers, a pineapple or plants. Children use computers to 'paint' pictures. They are beginning to learn to sew and, in musical activities, they communicate clearly when they sing songs such as 'Down at the seaside' or 'Boogie Woogie', using hand actions. Reception children sing tunefully, as a result of very good role-modelling by the teacher, when they join in with seaside songs by asking, 'What can I see and what can I taste when I go to the seaside?' or singing 'Oh! I do like to be beside the sea-side'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils make good use of speaking, listening and writing skills across the curriculum.

- Lessons are usually well planned, but the most capable, gifted and talented are not sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well so that they make significant progress.
- The quality of handwriting across the school is unsatisfactory.

COMMENTARY

41. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in all aspects of English from Reception through to Year 6. As a result, standards are in line with the national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. There is no significant difference in the attainments of boys and girls compared to that expected nationally. However, the attainment of pupils for the present Year 6 is not as high as last year and fewer are attaining the above-average level. These pupils did not perform well at the end of Year 2 and thus the progress they have made is in line with what might reasonably be expected. Nevertheless, the school is not likely to reach the ambitious targets it set for the proportions of pupils attaining Level 4 and 5. Conversely, in Year 2, there have been good gains in the proportions of pupils attaining Level 2B and above in both reading and writing since last year, which continues the healthy upward trend seen over the last few years. However, fewer pupils have attained the higher Level 3. Overall, standards in handwriting are below those expected as too many junior pupils print their writing and do not form letters properly. Some infant pupils have an awkward pencil grip that hinders their ability to write fluently. However, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their targets set in their individual education plans because they are supported very well by teachers and classroom assistants. In addition, pupils who are seen to be performing less well than expected are given effective additional support in booster groups.
42. Speaking and listening skills are in line with the national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve satisfactorily. The school has recognised that some pupils lack confidence and has identified the need for more opportunities for pupils to extend these skills in the classroom. As a result, pupils have more opportunity to discuss and debate, especially in whole-class lessons such as PSHE. On the whole, pupils listen attentively and collaborate well with each other during partnership and group tasks. When they have the opportunity, the more able pupils think carefully about the points they want to raise and then put them forward articulately. In some classes, pupils are still self-conscious and lack confidence when presenting their work.
43. Pupils' achievements in reading are satisfactory. Book areas in classrooms and in the open areas of the school are soundly organised and pupils have easy access to them. Key Stage 1 pupils take books home regularly and record books, to which parents contribute, are kept effectively. Year 2 pupils read simple texts accurately and most have effective strategies to help them sound out unfamiliar words and to re-read sentences once the context is understood. For example, a group of pupils with special educational needs who were working on the computer re-read their sentences and were able to correct 'of' for 'on' because of the careful way they read it back to themselves. Older pupils read confidently and independently. When analysing poetry, Year 6 pupils discussed well the finer points of the author's intentions well and read their own work with good expression and feeling.

44. Teachers have worked hard to help improve standards in writing as this has been a key focus for improvement. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are in line with the national expectations. There has been a gradual improvement throughout the school in content and structure. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes across the curriculum, using a wide variety of styles and formats, including stories, factual accounts and descriptions, poems and letters. This is particularly the case in science, history, religious education and PSHE. Handwriting skills are taught regularly but there are too many pupils whose standard of handwriting is below that expected.
45. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with good features; it is occasionally excellent in Year 1. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on helping pupils develop their literacy skills through purposeful activities during literacy time. Lessons are well planned and different activities are organised effectively to meet the range of attainment in each class. In a well-taught Year 6 lesson, pupils were effectively involved in analysing a poem and then producing their own that included some excellent phrases which, in the most successful cases, carried a great deal of depth and feeling. In all lessons, there is a good match between the tasks set and the range of attainment displayed by the pupils. Very good support is on hand from the teaching assistants and class teachers for pupils with special educational needs, which enables them to make very good progress. Teachers make effective use of ICT to support learning, and pupils have good access to develop their writing skills in particular. This was particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs who find it easier to convey meaning by using the computer rather than by hand. However, the most capable, gifted and talented pupils are not sufficiently challenged to reach the standards of which they are capable. This is a significant shortcoming.
46. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has made sound use of the data to analyse strengths and weaknesses in the subject and produced an action plan to address the areas causing greatest concern. As a result, much has been put in place to enhance the development of writing skills over the last year, which is beginning to have a positive impact on the progress pupils make. Target-setting is in place and is revised regularly. However, there is only a modest approach to setting ambitious targets for the pupils and also involving pupils in understanding exactly what it is they need to do to achieve a higher level of attainment.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Pupils' speaking and listening skills, and their basic reading and writing skills are developed effectively in other subjects. For example, pupils regularly discuss ideas with partners or in whole class groups. They review their work with one another and provide constructive criticism using appropriate vocabulary. There is much free writing in all year groups across the curriculum and this helps to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of subjects such as geography and history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching and learning are good overall and as a result, pupils enjoy the subject.

- Practical work and investigation are well developed but a continued emphasis upon problem-solving is required.
- Support assistants are used effectively.
- Some use is made of ICT in lessons but it is not used consistently across the year groups.
- Assessment is used to set targets and adapt work to meet pupils' different needs but higher attainers are not always fully challenged.

COMMENTARY

47. Pupils attained standards that were in line with the national average and the results of similar schools at the end of Years 2 and 6 in the 2003 tests, although the results have varied from year to year, due to the capabilities of different groups of pupils. Pupils in the current Year 2 attain sound standards and are achieving satisfactorily. They have a good knowledge of number work and shape, including triangles, hexagons and pentagons. They can tell the time and make simple money transactions. In one lesson, pupils were using mental calculations to solve $+$, $-$, \times and \div problems using the number 32 as the focal point. They made their calculations quickly and accurately. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to solve problems by collecting, organising and interpreting data using Venn and Carroll diagrams. By Year 6, pupils have made good progress in their understanding of number as well as shape, space and measuring and in handling data. Most attain the expected standards, are competent in all four operations and use formal written methods appropriately to calculate and show their working. In one lesson, the teacher made use of the interactive whiteboard to introduce the lesson. Pupils were covering data-handling and interpreting simple pie charts. One group of pupils was using the interactive whiteboard to enter given data on a pie chart. The work is at an early stage of development in the school and it is not used extensively to support learning in mathematics lessons.
48. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems in a variety of contexts, an aspect that was relatively weak in recent tests. The current emphasis upon this aspect of mathematics should be sustained to ensure that all pupils can devise strategies to solve problems unaided. ICT is not generally used well enough to help improve pupils' standards, although there are some examples of good practice. For example, pupils in Year 2 are using the 'My World Three' program to solve sums by identifying the correct sign.
49. Lessons are generally challenging and include all pupils very well. In Years 2 to 4, pupils work in their class groups, but in Years 5 and 6 they work in sets to help the teachers to focus upon stretching the various levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and generally are well supported in class by experienced support assistants. Assessment is used effectively to ensure all pupils are working to meet their set targets and pupils are aware of what is necessary for them to do so. However, there is no regular system for checking that groups of pupils are meeting the required levels, particularly the higher attainers.
50. Teaching and learning are good. The key features are:
- well-planned and structured learning with common planning across year groups so that pupils in parallel classes have similar experiences;

- the pace in most lessons is good and questioning is used well in the introductory sessions to encourage pupils to recall and explain reasoning;
- lessons are stimulating and relationships are good; and
- effective use is made of practical resources and equipment to support learning but, in group activities, higher-attaining pupils are not always fully challenged.

51. The subject has been led well by the two co-ordinators who work closely together to ensure that planning is in place, and there has been some monitoring of teaching in Years 3 to 6. They are aware that further training in ICT and assessment is a requirement. Sound improvements have been made since the time of the last inspection and the quality of teaching has been developed. Some improvements have been made in the assessment procedures, although this remains an area for further development.

MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

52. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in most subjects. For example, in science they make graphs to illustrate the growth of beans in Year 2, and in Years 5 and 6 they use keys for sorting. In ICT, pupils use data handling competently for practical problem-solving. Pupils are given a budget to work within and they use a program to monitor. In history, a time line is used for Tudor exploration and in geography, pupils refer to map references appropriately when they make studies of the local area.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Topics are studied in depth over a short period of time, through creative timetabling, and this contributes to the good standards reached.
- Investigative methods promote learning very well.
- Computers are used well to teach facts and assess what pupils know.
- Work is very well matched to pupils of differing attainment.
- Co-ordinators lead and manage the subject very well.

COMMENTARY

53. Pupils achieve well in the junior classes and attain good standards by Year 6. They have gained good scientific knowledge and understanding through investigations on forces, electricity, micro-organisms and dissolving substances. Pupils' work is reasonably neat and is set out very well. Teachers' marking is encouraging and constructive and helps pupils to improve their work. Pupils complete self-assessment sheets at the end of a topic, which are very helpful in that they show what pupils have understood and where they still need help. Higher-attaining pupils are reaching the higher Level 5 and are beginning to use more abstract ideas when reporting their findings. They draw their own conclusions, writing, for example, 'I think the bubbles died down and the balloon stopped producing gas' and, of a line graph on temperature and evaporation, 'The line isn't straight because the temperature could be hot one day and colder the next. This means it will evaporate some days quicker than others'. When writing about micro-organisms, they write sharp answers which show clarity of understanding. The work of the highest-attaining pupils is exceptionally well presented and pupils often answer the written

comments teachers make. They use a good range of methods for recording their investigations. Average-attaining pupils complete a large amount of work and use research methods to find answers to their questions, such as whether Pluto is the coldest planet. They reach the expected level 4 with confidence. Lower-attaining pupils complete a satisfactory amount of work and reach below average standards.

54. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils carry out a very wide range of investigations in Years 1 and 2. They study topics in a good degree of depth, with pupils of all levels of attainment gaining a considerable amount of knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils use reference books to find answers, predict what they think may happen and keep very good records on well-planned work sheets. They are able to carry out a fair test and measure results accurately. The wide variety of work sheets matches pupils' different levels of attainment very well, challenging the more able and supporting pupils with special educational needs. As a result, pupils of all levels of attainment achieve very well. Almost all pupils reach the expected Level 2 and the more able pupils reach the higher Level 3 in all aspects of the subject. In the lesson observed in Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning were very good and pupils achieved very well. The lesson was part of a series on electricity and the lesson in the parallel class was also observed for a short time. Pupils learned about safety in the home and the different ways electricity is conducted, through the mains and through batteries. Demonstration was used well to show pupils how to make a torch work and pupils, including those with special educational needs, showed considerable amazement when a circuit they had made, lit up a bulb. By the end of the lesson, the higher-attaining pupils had worked out that if two batteries are used, the bulb shines brighter than when one is used. Pupils worked very well in groups. Information and communication technology was used very well in the final part of the lesson, when the teacher drew the class together in front of the computer for further teaching and to assess what they had learned.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement and a strong focus on the subject. Teachers assess pupils at the end of each topic and the co-ordinator monitors and analyses the results. The organisation of the timetable, to teach different subjects in blocks of time, helps pupils to remember what they have learned and contributes to the high standards reached. The local education authority's science team and Oxford Brookes University have been involved well with projects in the school, and have recommended resources and observed teaching. This has helped to improve teaching and drive up standards significantly since 1998. For example, in Year 5 and 6, pupils achieved well when studying feathers and were fascinated by what they could see through microscopes. They enjoyed making aerofoils, investigating the upward thrust of air that propels an aeroplane or bird.
56. The joint co-ordinators lead and manage the subject very well. They have observed teaching and moderated pupils' work, with a particular focus on challenging the more capable pupils. The co-ordinators have adapted a published scheme of work to match the particular needs of the school. The school's outside resources are used well; for example, the garden area, pond and pleasant environmental area are used for studying habitats. The school organised a very successful science week last year, which was based on problem-solving activities and involved external visitors. Parents helped with hall activities and pupils studied, for example in Year 1, time zones and in Years 5 and 6, flora and fauna, by looking through microscopes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well.
- The computer suite enables the effective teaching of skills but is not ventilated sufficiently.
- ICT is used well to support learning across the curriculum, except in mathematics.

COMMENTARY

57. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection when standards and provision were unsatisfactory. The school, including the governors themselves, has put a great deal of effort into improving resources and general provision so that pupils now make good progress across all aspects of the ICT curriculum. However, although pupils achieve well, they are starting from a lower base than would be expected and standards are, at the moment, in line with the national expectation rather than above, at the end of both key stages. The newly-appointed co-ordinator has a clear view of how the subject can improve further and, as a result, the recent improvements should be sustained. The ICT lunchtime club caters well for pupils who express a keen interest in the subject and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved by these pupils.
58. The quality of teaching is good, with some very good features. The teachers' growing confidence and increased knowledge and understanding of the ICT curriculum requirements ensure that they are keen to use ICT to support learning across the curriculum rather than just in the specific ICT lessons conducted in the suite. Teachers demonstrate programs enthusiastically and this helps to stimulate the interest of the pupils. This was particularly the case in lessons in Year 5/6 when pupils were designing their own PowerPoint presentations using a range of design and sound features, and in Year 3/4 when pupils were using an art package to design wallpapers with common repeating patterns. There is effective use of the computer for word-processing purposes to support special needs pupils to produce writing to go with various class tasks set by teachers. In these instances, pupils are keen to produce the work expected by the teacher and the quality of their work is enhanced.
59. The co-ordinator has been in post since September. She has led the subject very well and produced a three-year plan to help ensure the considerable developments made recently in the subject are sustained. Assessment is at an early stage but pupils are encouraged to assess their own work, and a portfolio of work is in place so that teachers have benchmarks across the ICT curriculum to which they can refer when assessing the quality of pupils' work against the National Curriculum levels.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

60. ICT is used very well in most subjects to support learning across the curriculum. Examples include: composing musical phrases, using programs to produce graphs to support data analysis work, sequencing the growth of a plant from seed, using computer toys to predict sequences and to move along routes and using the Internet to find out

information to support topics in history. However, there is insufficient use of computers in mathematics to raise attainment further.

HUMANITIES

During the inspection, pupils' work from the previous year was examined and there was a general discussion with co-ordinators. The schemes of work and co-ordinators' files were scrutinised, which confirmed that appropriate schemes of work are in place. Two lessons were observed in history and two lessons in religious education. No lessons were observed in geography because the school focus at the time of the inspection was on history.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Good planning ensures that pupils make gains with their spiritual and cultural awareness.
- The respect shown to pupils by teachers contributes to the spirituality of lessons.
- Close links are made with the personal, social and health education programmes.
- Assessment procedures are not used well enough to indicate how the pupils are achieving.

COMMENTARY

61. A scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson plans and discussions with pupils indicate that standards of attainment throughout the school are in line with the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus. Thus, the school has maintained its standards satisfactorily since the last inspection. Pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory, including for those with special educational needs. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls.
62. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made studies of the Bible and what it contains. They learn about the Ten Commandments and the applications for their own lives. They study churches and their significant features. They learn about the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours, make their own Torah Scrolls and write their own versions of the Ten Commandments. No lessons were observed at this level.
63. In Years 3 and 4, pupils study the features of places of worship and, at the time of the inspection, had just completed a topic on the synagogue and were learning about the special features of a Muslim place of worship or mosque. By the end of the lesson they were able to identify the Minbar, Minaret, Mihab and prayer mats and explain why each part of the mosque is important. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 consider the Ten Commandments and develop their own code of conduct related to those ideas. They gain a good understanding about the Christian faith and are able to ask questions and suggest applications in their own lives.
64. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are secure and lessons have clear learning objectives. The quality of relationships between pupils, and also with class teachers, ensures success in pupils' learning and contributes to the spirituality of lessons and the ethos. Throughout the school, good use is made of ICT to support learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have used the 'Colour Magic' program for prayer mat designs. Teachers have also used search engines to research information about the mosque and synagogue. In Years 5 and 6, teachers have downloaded a writing

frame based upon the Ester story from the web, which was successfully used to support less able pupils.

65. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides informal support to other members of staff. She has had no opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching. Some feedback has been provided on courses she has attended. Use is made of the Oxford Pupil Record Sheet for assessment, but there is no assessment of pupils' work against the levels of the agreed syllabus or portfolios to check attainment and progress across the school.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is a good range of artefacts and materials available to support learning.
- Work is planned well and there is good subject coverage. Effective use is made of visits to sites of historic interest.
- Assessment procedures and the role of the co-ordinator are underdeveloped.

COMMENTARY

66. Pupils' standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and they achieve well. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, they have completed studies of historic figures, like Florence Nightingale and her experiences in the Crimean War. They have learned about the Great Fire of London and made studies of famous people of the time, for example, Christopher Wren and Samuel Pepys. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 so it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching and learning. In Years 3 and 4, pupils were studying a topic on World War Two and, in particular, the life of Anne Frank and the treatment given to the Jews in World War Two. In one lesson, pupils listened attentively to Anne Frank's story presented by the teacher. They were able to answer questions about the difficulties faced by Anne's family and how life changed for Anne when the Nazis took the Netherlands. The lesson was planned well and the teacher effectively questioned the pupils to assess what they had learned. Boys and girls, and those with special educational needs, made good progress. Years 5 and 6 have made detailed studies of Ancient Greece and discovered their beliefs and ways of life. At the time of the inspection, they were starting a new topic exploring life in Tudor times. The teacher made effective use of a timeline to illustrate the sequence in time of major events. Pupils were fully involved in the process and the teacher incorporated their ideas. All the pupils were keen and enthusiastic and made good progress in their understanding of where the Tudor Period was located over time.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and lessons are prepared well, although insufficient use is made of assessment information to help them plan for the most capable, gifted or talented pupils who are not adequately challenged. Good use is made of artefacts and evidence to add interest to lessons. Teachers and support staff are skilled in supporting pupils with special educational needs and these pupils do particularly well as a result.
68. The headteacher is the acting co-ordinator. Good work has been done to ensure that there are resource packs available to support the learning of history topics. Use is also made of CD-ROMs and there is a website for humanities. Planning also includes visits to historical sites at Cirencester, a Roman Villa at Northleigh and the Ashmolean Museum. However, the monitoring of lessons and assessment of work are not implemented systematically. Since the last inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement overall and a significant increase in the number of resources.

GEOGRAPHY

69. There was not sufficient evidence to judge the standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils make studies of their local area picking out the key features and identifying local routes. They start to develop their mapping skills by making a map of the school neighbourhood and designing a map of a town. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make extensive studies of parts of a river; the source, the course and the mouth. They develop the concept of a river map and include major and minor rivers. These include the Windrush, Thames and Mississippi rivers; linked with this topic is an understanding of the 'Water Cycle'. Overall, the subject is well planned and well covered within the topic programme.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only a few lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Clearly, these lessons did not represent all elements of the subjects and so there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the provision overall, except in art and design. However, discussions were held with the leaders of all four subjects, and subject files, other documents and samples of pupils' work were examined. Some evidence of pupils' musical abilities was observed in their lively and enthusiastic singing during assemblies and singing practice.

ART AND DESIGN

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are good and pupils achieve well.
- The role of the new co-ordinator is not yet fully established, but there are clear plans for developing the subject.

COMMENTARY

70. The work seen on display and in pupils' books shows that standards are good. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the subject, and were keen to show examples of their work that celebrates achievement and enhances the learning environment. Older pupils create crayon images in the style of European artists. Elsewhere, good links with other subjects are made when pupils produce sketches of buildings, and studies of works of art to represent the diversity of cultures within Britain. Whole-school themes, based on topics such as 'Butterflies' show that the school celebrates every pupil's success within its highly inclusive ethos.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the planning for lessons is good. Support staff are skilled in aiding pupils with special educational needs, and the expertise of one of the teaching assistants is used very well to promote the subject. The new co-ordinator has only been managing the provision since September 2003 but she has worked hard to audit, increase and re-locate the resources, as her first priority. She has also encouraged pupils to participate in national competitions and is planning to set up an after-school club. The recent Art Week for Year 5 successfully focused on the theme of 'Cotswold Wildlife Park', from which pupils' good work is displayed very well around the school.

72. In **design and technology**, not enough evidence was available to make a judgement on standards or provision. However, discussions with pupils show that they enjoy the practical nature of the subject and that the curriculum is covered appropriately. Staff have increased their subject knowledge through training on topics, such as moving toys and puppets, and they contributed well to the school's achievement of the Healthy Schools' Award in 2003 by asking the pupils to design and make healthy drinks and biscuits. The co-ordinator has developed the provision well by increasing and re-siting the resources, as well as organising an after-school club that linked with adults working in the motor industry, based on the theme of 'World in Motion'.
73. The newly-appointed **music** co-ordinator has made good progress in developing the music provision. A new scheme of work is beginning to be used effectively by the teachers who are growing in confidence in teaching music skills. Half termly assessments are made by all teachers but these are yet to be analysed and tracked to enable the co-ordinator to have a firm understanding of the standards achieved by pupils as they progress through the school, and to determine where there are particular strengths and weaknesses. In the two lessons seen in the infant classes, the standards of teaching were very good on one and excellent in the other. Both teachers demonstrated very good subject knowledge, and this enabled them to build very effectively on the pupils' previous learning. In one Reception/Year 1 lesson, the teacher made very good use of percussion instruments to demonstrate how to make loud and quiet sounds and to develop a sense of rhythm. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher showed great skill in encouraging the pupils to sing to a very good standard with a great deal of gusto.
74. In **physical education**, the evidence shows that pupils are given good opportunities for sporting activities. In Years 1 and 2, teaching was excellent and learning very good. This was because of the teachers' very good subject knowledge, her ability to demonstrate well, very clear objectives for the lessons and very imaginative activities. Pupils learned techniques for running by experiencing how the wrong techniques make running both difficult and slower, whilst correct techniques are more comfortable and help you run faster. Improvement within the lesson was considerable, with a good number of pupils running very well at the end of the lessons reaching well above average standards. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning was satisfactory. Years 3 and 4 pupils learned how to hold a tennis racquet correctly and serve underarm. One pair of players showed outstanding potential with over-arm serves and another two (both boys) were able to carry out a lengthy rally. The majority of pupils, however, were beginning to practise simple skills for playing tennis. The Years 5 and 6 lesson was particularly well planned, with three different cricket skills taught and practised. Where teaching was most successful, teachers made sure that pupils practised the skill correctly as a class before playing with a partner or group. However, in neither of the Years 3 to 6 lessons was this done and, as a result, progress was not as good as it could have been, as pairs and groups had to be corrected separately.
75. All pupils have the opportunity to swim in the school pool and 80 per cent of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to swim 25 metres. Adventure sports take place on residential visits. Links with the secondary school are strong and teachers from the secondary school have provided courses for the primary teachers. There is good provision for gymnastics, and dance is an area identified for development in 2004/5. Pupils are introduced to a very wide range of sports and the subject is very well resourced. The headteacher, who runs some of the extra-curricular sports clubs, and the specialist co-

ordinator have done much to promote the subject. The school performs well in all local competitions and has reached the county finals at Kwik cricket.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

76. A few lessons were observed in this curricular area and teachers' planning was scrutinised. From the information available, it is clear that the school makes very good provision for pupils personal, social and health education. Values are promoted very well through the school's programme, where a developing sense of citizenship is encouraged through the whole-class discussion periods known as 'circle time'. This approach permeates the whole school and there is a very well constructed programme that features specific themes in all classes. During the inspection, 'Trust' was an important component of several lessons and assemblies.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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