

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **STEPHEN FREEMAN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Didcot

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123079

Headteacher: Mr Mike Jenkins

Lead inspector: Dr John Collings

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> December 2003

Inspection number: 260709

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	284
School address:	Freeman Road Didcot
Postcode:	OX11 7BZ
Telephone number:	01235 814718
Fax number:	01235 511078
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Annie Birchall
Date of previous inspection:	5 <sup>th</sup> October 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stephen Freeman Primary School is bigger than most other primary schools. It has 303 pupils, 35 of whom are in the Foundation Stage. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and a School Achievement Award. The number of free school meals is 21 per cent, just above the national average. Pupils are predominantly white British. The number of pupils with special educational needs including statements is 15 per cent and a little below the national average. The number of pupils with Statements of Special educational Needs is above the national average at 1.7 per cent. The socio-economic status of school catchment is below average and attainment on entry to the school is wide ranging but broadly below average. The number of pupils entering and leaving the school at times other than usual is higher than most schools, and is due in part to demographic changes.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20752	John Collings	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology
1165	Peter Dannheisser	Lay inspector	
32123	Penny Price	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History Religious education
12116	Christina Morgan	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art Design and technology Music

The inspection contractor was:

Parkman Ltd. in association with *PkR*  
 35 Trewartha Park  
 Weston-Super-Mare  
 North Somerset  
 BS23 2RT

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Standards are broadly **average**, leadership and management are **good** and teaching **satisfactory**. The school is committed to including all pupils to achieve their full potential and gives **satisfactory value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management of the school is good.
- The governance of the school is good.
- Improved standards for Year 6 pupils in science.
- The school's value added rating in 2003 was very good.
- Improving standards in Years 1 and 2 in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are well cared for and supported.
- Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are good.
- There is a good curriculum that is developing increasingly meaningful links between subjects.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to enjoy an enriched curriculum including out of school activities.
- Links with other schools and colleges are very good.
- Attendance is very good.
- Accommodation and resources are good overall, however, accommodation with free access to a secure outside play area for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- The teaching of and pupils' standard of writing in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory.
- Standards in science and information and communication technology at Year 2 are below expectations.

The effectiveness of the school remains **satisfactory** since the last inspection. The strengths in the last report have been maintained and the weaknesses addressed. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, and teaching in Year 1 and 2 are both now satisfactory.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory overall**. Although wide ranging overall, children enter the Foundation Stage **below average** in attainment, but most reach the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> before entering Year 1 and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement at Year 2 is **satisfactory**, and standards in reading, mathematics and in writing are **average**. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' achievement in the current Year 6 is **satisfactory** in science, mathematics and reading but **unsatisfactory** in writing.

<sup>1</sup> The Early Learning Goals are a set of knowledge, understanding and skills that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five in six areas of learning; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal and social development.

The development of pupils' attitudes and personal qualities are **good** and they behave **well**. Provision for pupils' social development is **good** and attendance is **very good**. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** throughout the school with examples of good and very good teaching in Years 1 to 2 and Years 3 to 6. Teaching is satisfactory in science and mathematics throughout the school. In English teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 to 2 but the teaching of writing is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The school has identified the areas needed for improvement and is in the process of addressing them. Assessment is satisfactory overall. There is rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress to enable the school to set targets for each cohort of pupils and this, in combination with monitoring of teaching and learning, has led to the identification of weaknesses in pupils writing in Years 3 to 6. However, the results of monitoring are not used sufficiently to plan lessons, to challenge the full range of abilities in classes.

The curriculum is **good**. The school is improving the curriculum by increasing the number of cross-curricular links between subjects so that the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject can be consolidated and applied in another. Enrichment of the curriculum including out-of-school activities is **good** and overall the school's accommodation and resources are **good**. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are **good** and links with parents are **satisfactory**. Links with the community are **satisfactory** and those with other schools **very good**.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **good**. Leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is **good**. Management and the governance of the school are **good**.

The governing body are very supportive and understand well the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Finance is well directed to ensure stability with changing circumstances over the longer term and is rigorous in ensuring statutory duties are fully implemented. The headteacher and key staff have a very clear view of the improvements necessary in order to improve standards. Since the last inspection there have been a number of staff changes. Since his appointment in 2001 the headteacher has managed the school well to create a committed staff through good delegation and team building. This has resulted in a team keen and enthusiastic to improve the quality of education in the school. The school development plan is a working document that has improved standards in Years 1 to 2 and is regularly reviewed to address evolving issues.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The positive views of parents reflect satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision. A significant minority of parents express some concerns about behaviour and bullying but the inspection team did not substantiate these. Overall parents are supportive of the school and they think it is generally well managed. They think their children are taught well, treated fairly and expected to be responsible. A significant minority of parents would like the school to seek their views more actively. Overall pupils are happy with school and feel they have to work hard, are listened to and teachers are caring and supportive. However, they would like more time for art, physical education and design and technology.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Raise standards in writing, and in speaking and listening in Years 3 to 6.
- Raise standards in science and information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2.
- Create free access to a secure outside play area in the Foundation Stage.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Standards in English and mathematics are **average** in Years 1 and 2 and improving, but **below average** in science. In Years 3 to 6 standards in mathematics, science and reading are **average** but **below average** in writing. The school's value added was rated **very good** in 2003. National tests in 2003 indicate that pupils' achievement was **satisfactory** in Years 1 and 2 and **good** from Years 3 to 6. Current achievement is **satisfactory** overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good progress and standards improving in Year 1 and 2.
- In 2003 the school's value added rating was very good.
- Current standards in writing and speaking and listening at Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory.
- Standards in reading are satisfactory throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in Year 1 and 2 but a number on school action make less progress in Years 3 to 6 because of insufficient classroom support.

#### Commentary

1. Although wide ranging, pupils enter the school with attainment that is below average. Their achievement through the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and the vast majority reach Early Learning Goals before entering Year 1, although few pupils exceed this.
2. Standards at Year 2 have varied over recent years. Pupils' average point scores<sup>2</sup> for the 2003 national tests show that standards of pupils in Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and well below in mathematics. When compared to similar schools pupils' standards were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. As a result of concerted effort by the school inspection evidence suggests this has improved significantly and pupils are now broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.8 (18.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.5 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7 (15.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 52 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. For pupils in Year 6 standards have also varied over past years but overall standards to 2003 rose, with high standards being maintained in English, mathematics improving since 2001 and science improving significantly from 2002.
4. The average point scores for national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 show standards were above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Compared with their prior attainment when these pupils were in Year 2, standards show they were above average in English and science and average in mathematics. However, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and

<sup>2</sup> All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a point score. The expected average points at age seven are 15 and at age 11 27. The national average score for all pupils taking the tests are then used as a comparison to grade reading, writing and mathematics and Key Stage 1 and English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 in individual schools each year. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national averages before grades are given. The grades are shown in the summary report.



science. When compared to all other schools the value added progress that Year 6 pupils in 2003 made from their previous national tests, was very good.

5. The overall standards of the current cohort of pupils in Year 6 are broadly average. Inspection evidence shows that these pupils are average in reading, mathematics and science but below average in speaking and listening and writing. This represents satisfactory progress in reading, mathematics and science but unsatisfactory progress in speaking and listening, and writing during Years 3 to 6. Through good assessment procedures the school has recognised this, and is addressing it rigorously in order to raise standards. They are paying particular attention to writing so as to increase the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5, and ensuring that those pupils capable of Level 4 achieve it.
6. The main reason for a change in standards and achievement in the current Year 6 is a combination of pupil mobility and earlier inconsistencies in teaching particularly in writing for this cohort. Improving writing across the school is a significant part of the school improvement plan.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in Years 1 and 2 but some pupils on school action make less progress in Year 3 to 6 because of less classroom support because the available resources are focused in Years 1 and 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (27.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.8 (28.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.6 (27.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

8. Many pupils enter the school with a restricted vocabulary and there is a clear focus in Years 1 and 2 on developing pupils' language skills. Standards in reading and speaking and listening are satisfactory across the school. In Year 2 pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can name a number of books they enjoy. By Year 6 the majority of pupils are independent functional readers and can describe different literary genres and compare and contrast different books they have read. The quality of pupils' writing is satisfactory in Year 1 and 2 but currently unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 due to a lack of consistency in the teaching of writing. As a result standards particularly in writing are below those at the time of the previous inspection.
9. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory in all areas of the mathematics curriculum across the school. Achievement in mathematics is rising in all year groups because the school has correctly identified the need to improve pupil's investigative and problem solving skills and this has impacted on pupils' ability to apply and consolidate the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt.
10. Pupils' standards in science are below expectations for pupils in Year 2, and meeting expectations for pupils in Year 6. Pupils' ability to carry out investigations is not as secure as other areas of the science curriculum. This is because a significant majority of pupils are not developing the skills necessary to raise questions, plan and carry out an investigation independently of the teacher. Potentially higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they could because planning does not always include sufficiently challenging work.
11. In information and communication technology the school is aware that standards vary across different attainment targets. However, overall standards are below expectations in Years 1 and 2 and in line with expectations by the time pupils reach Year 6. Strengths are in word

processing and use of the Internet and use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Areas requiring some improvement are control and modelling.

12. Insufficient evidence was seen to make a secure judgement on standards in the creative subjects of; art and design, music, design and technology and physical education, or in humanities; geography and history. Standards in religious education are satisfactory in Year 1 to 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.
13. Pupils who have special educational needs are making good progress in Year 1 and 2 because of the additional support in lessons these pupils get. However, pupils in Years 3 to 6 who do not have specific classroom support allocated to them make less progress because there is less support in lessons for these pupils.

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

Pupils make **good** progress in their personal development and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well. Attendance and punctuality are good and the school actions to promote good attendance and punctuality are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The ethos promotes good relationships, attitudes and personal development.
- The staff ensure that pupils quickly know the difference between right and wrong by involving them closely in the formation of rules and choosing the 'citizens of the week'.
- Opportunities to promote spirituality are exploited but generally unplanned.
- Pupils' understanding and experience of this multi-cultural country is promoted very well.
- The school council is well established but there are few other formal opportunities for pupils to develop roles of responsibility.
- Good attendance and punctuality is fostered by vigilant staff and very good systems.

### **Commentary**

14. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and parents agree that this is the case. This is a similar picture to the one described in the previous inspection report. Most pupils are well behaved, and respond very well to the caring ethos of the school. In class and in the playground, there are very few incidents of challenging behaviour. This is because of the expectation of the school and the presence of knowledgeable and sensitive teachers and teaching assistants in classrooms. In an assembly for all pupils from Year 3 on, just one adult held everyone's attention. There was a pleasant buzz as pupils enjoyed a 'pass the parcel' game in which the symbols and meaning of the Christmas story literally unfolded. The very few examples seen of unsatisfactory behaviour in class were associated with unsatisfactory lessons that were slow and resulted in disaffected pupils. In several lessons, behaviour was very good when imaginative teaching, challenge and pace, stimulated pupils' interest and involvement; for example when Year 4 / 5 pupils were exploring the properties of polygons.
15. Most pupils enjoy school, and say they like it. They like their teachers and know that any problems will be quickly and efficiently dealt with. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and as the table below shows, one pupil only was excluded in the previous year after considerable efforts had been made on the pupil's behalf. Parents and pupils say that past problems have now been sorted out. Pupils enjoyed the international week and have confidence that the staff are there to help, and will listen to them if they have concerns. They say that they learn 'in a fun way' and they like the timetable, which they feel, is now better organised than it was. Nevertheless they wish there were more time for art, physical education and design and technology. They appreciate the school's cross-curricular work – such as the history within literacy and the literacy within information and communication technology.

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	284	1	1

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

16. Pupils' relationships with most adults and each other are good. This 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, enjoy the praise and look forward to small rewards that are given. Successes of all kinds are celebrated in special assemblies. Each class elects a 'citizen of the week' giving recognition to special actions including efforts made out of school.
17. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, which is promoted from a very early age. Behaviour targets and class rules are prominently displayed in classrooms. Pupils contribute to the formation of rules and often put their own signatures to the resulting codes. They benefit from the good role models set by the adults in school. Pupils' positive attitudes are rewarded alongside their academic achievement. The school's programme for personal, social and health education makes a significant contribution through the whole-class discussion periods known as 'circle time'.
18. Residential trips for pupils in Years 5/6 provide a good opportunity for pupils to develop maturity. Pupils are encouraged to participate in all school activities, including the school clubs and charity fund raising. There is a well-established school council. Pupils from each class are elected and meet regularly. They make decisions about the way in which money pupils have raised may be spent. Although several pupils take on jobs around the school, such as litter collection, there is room to formalise these tasks so as to enhance their status and ensure that all pupils have the chance of volunteering (or even applying) for these positions to further their sense of self-worth, encouraging independence and initiative.
19. There is a spiritual component in some of the work that the school undertakes, including science lessons and the assemblies. This aspect could be enhanced through more visits and subsequent work, for example, artwork. There are certainly moments within lessons that take them beyond the mundane learning of facts and skills. For example children in the nursery were spellbound as the teacher lit Hanukah candles one by one and told a story. In Year 6, pupils clearly understood the Buddhist concept of inner peace. In lessons other than religious education however, these moments tend to be unplanned.
20. Pupils are not as yet provided with a curriculum that promotes a very wide experience of a range of culture in art, music, dance, literature, drama and film. Despite the number of visits, there are few to cultural centres. However a poet and an artist in residence have made a contribution. Pupils' understanding and experience of this multi-cultural country is promoted very well through religious education in which pupils learn about the major world faiths and the school has built up a good bank of multi-cultural material and pupils visit a variety of faith centres.
21. The absence rate is below the national average and there were almost no unauthorised absences in the last year. The school has effective procedures for encouraging good attendance and punctuality. Almost all pupils arrive punctually for the start of school, and this is similar to the situation noted during the previous inspection. There is close cooperation with the local authority's educational welfare officer.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.5

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** across the school. Teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 2 and teaching is satisfactory in mathematics and science but is unsatisfactory in English in Years 3 to 6.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6 and therefore **satisfactory** overall. Teaching of English in Years 1 and 2 and mathematics and science across the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching in English overall in Years 3 to 6 is **unsatisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

*In Years 3-6 the teaching of reading is satisfactory but the teaching of writing unsatisfactory.*

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (9%)	14 (32%)	23 (52%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good relationships between teachers and pupils, which encourages pupils to work hard and ensures that all pupils are fully engaged.
- Insistence on high standards of behaviour.
- Too few teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge and skills to be able to develop pupils' writing in Years 3 to 6 and expectations are not high enough.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 but there is less support for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils work hard, are productive and work independently or collaboratively as required.
- There are good assessment procedures but they do not influence day-to-day planning sufficiently.
- Although satisfactory overall, some lessons lack pace because expectations are sometimes not high enough to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.
- The planning to apply and consolidate the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject is good.

### Commentary

22. There are good assessment procedures to analyse pupils' work and set targets in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but these are not translated sufficiently into challenging lesson objectives.

23. The strengths in teaching outweigh the areas for improvement, as the weaknesses although significant are in particular sections of the provision and not overall. For example, though there are good examples of the teaching of English in Years 3 to 6 the three unsatisfactory lessons seen in the whole school were delivered to this group so making the teaching of English to Years 3 to 6 unsatisfactory overall.
24. Teaching is monitored by the headteacher, assistant headteacher and subject coordinators. This however requires greater precision to ensure teachers' lesson objectives challenge pupils sufficiently to ensure all pupils' progress is sufficient to meet the targets set.

*There are good relationships between teachers and pupils.*

25. In the vast majority of lessons observed teachers' good relationships with pupils encouraged good behaviour and positive attitudes to work ensuring all pupils are included. This impacts on the standards attained, as pupils want to please their teachers, generally work hard and achieve well. For example, in a good Year 6 English lesson good questioning, engagement in productive discussion, collaboration and respect for each others opinions ensured pupils' thinking was challenged to consider greater use of vocabulary and phraseology to express themselves clearly.

*Insistence on high standards of behaviour.*

26. Teachers have good strategies to ensure pupils behave well. Significantly lessons are interesting and in the majority of cases have good pace, have clear expectations and challenge the majority of pupils. This in turn involves pupils in learning and consequently they do not behave inappropriately. Teachers are encouraging, which in turn, raises pupils' self esteem and pupils want to do well. A good example was seen in a Year 5 mathematics lesson where good pace, imaginative and challenging work and leaning from mistakes was supported so pupils were fully involved and not considering misbehaviour. This was also apparent in a Year 6 science lesson where pupils' involvement in devising their own means of investigation meant they had little opportunity to misbehave.

*Too few teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge and skills to be able to develop pupils' writing in Years 3 to 6 and expectations are not high enough.*

27. There are examples of good teaching in English in Year 6 as cited above. In Years 4/5 and 3 however, the three unsatisfactory lessons seen in the school were in English in Years 3 to 6. Combined with a scrutiny of work this shows that a significant proportion of teaching does not have sufficiently high expectations to ensure pupils make the expected progress in writing. In these unsatisfactory lessons there was generally a lack of teachers' knowledge and understanding to ensure assessment was used to demand sufficiently challenging work for the full range of ability in the class, particularly higher attaining pupils.

*Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.*

28. The school concentrates the use of teaching assistants in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. This is effective in supporting pupils in these classes. Teaching assistants are not as widely used in Years 3 to 6 and consequently have less effect in these classes. A good example of the use of teaching assistants was seen in the Foundation Stage when children were building towers they were encouraged to talk and discuss what they were doing. Another good example was seen in a Year a 1 /2 English class where their support ensured pupils with special educational needs made good progress.

*Pupils work hard, are productive and work independently or collaboratively as required.*

29. Teachers have worked hard to develop a school ethos where pupils in turn work hard and are productive. For example in a good Year 6 information and communication technology lesson related to history good cooperation and concentration on the task enabled pupils to combine much previous work to begin to create an imaginative 'Power Point' presentation on a workhouse life in the 1800's. Other good examples were seen in science lessons in Year 3 and Year 6 where small groups of pupils were encouraged to develop their own means of investigation and consequently were very involved and learnt well from making errors and in a

Year 3 English lesson where pupils developed dialogue for a play. A good example of independent work was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where pupils concentrated well on mapping the sequence of triangular numbers.

*There are good assessment procedures but they do not influence day-to-day planning sufficiently.*

30. Assessment procedures are good and very detailed. In the recent past these have been used very systematically to set realistic targets from the end of one year to the next. These targets however are not used sufficiently on an ongoing basis to ensure lesson objectives are explicit enough to ensure all groups of pupils within classes are challenged appropriately.

*Although satisfactory overall, some lessons lack pace and a suitably wide range of expectations to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.*

31. Where lessons were unsatisfactory a significant factor was lack of pace. Thus pupils disengaged and learnt little. Other lessons that were satisfactory overall also often lacked pace during parts of the lesson and prevented these from being good. In addition to the examples cited above in order to raise standards in subjects such as science and information and communication technology teachers need to plan work that is firmly based on pupils' previous attainment. They also need to ensure lessons include expectations at Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6 to ensure higher attaining pupils are able to realise their potential.

*The planning to apply and consolidate the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject is good.*

32. The school recognises that it could take greater advantage of the application of knowledge, understanding and skills from one subject to another, but it has done much to exploit this approach thus consolidating learning. It is part of the school improvement plan to increasingly develop meaningful links. Good examples of this approach were seen during the inspection, for example; in English good links were made to history and Robert Louis Stevenson in Year 6 in writing biography and the use of 'e-mail' style in English to stimulate Year 4 / 5 pupils to write to recount the Christmas story. Good links were also seen where information and communication technology was used to support history through the interrogation of a database of the inhabitants of a workhouse and to support science in investigating whether body temperature increased with exercise.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good** overall with an increasing number of cross-curricular links between subjects, so that the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject can be consolidated and applied in another. The support advice and guidance given to pupils are **good** and links with parents **satisfactory**. Links with the community are **satisfactory** and those with other schools **very good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Appropriate emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy.
- Information technology is used effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- Cross-curricular links are built into teachers' planning.
- Provision for all pupils with special educational needs is good in Years 1 and 2.
- Provision for school action special educational needs pupils is less effective in Years 3 to 6 because of the focus of support in Years 1 and 2.
- Foundation Stage curriculum improved since last inspection.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, health and social education.
- The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are good.
- Curriculum innovation has been limited until recently but is now developing.
- The outside accommodation for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.

## **Commentary**

33. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and statutory requirements including those for religious education and collective worship are fully met. Literacy and numeracy are given prominence in order to raise standards and there are planned opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other areas of the curriculum. Information technology is promoted effectively both through discrete lessons and through other subjects.
34. Until recently, there has been little curriculum evaluation and development within individual subject areas. Government guidelines have been adopted without sufficient modification in the light of the school's individual circumstances. However, there is now more emphasis on developing a 'holistic' curriculum with cross-curricular links built into teachers' planning. This has given the curriculum an overall coherence and relevance.
35. Provision for all pupils with special educational needs including those with statements is good in Years 1 and 2. There is a good balance between addressing pupils' specific learning difficulties and enabling them to have full access to the curriculum. Targets on pupils' individual education plans are precise and measurable and skilled additional support enables them to make good progress.
36. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs in Years 3 to 6 are given good additional support and assessment identifies those pupils who will benefit from intervention strategies. However provision for school action pupils with special educational needs is less effective because there are too few additional support staff to address fully the needs of pupils who are not specifically entitled to additional support. Evidence from the analysis of pupils' work and from lesson observations indicates that teachers are not providing sufficient work which is matched to the learning needs of the range of abilities within the class and that some pupils struggle to complete tasks.
37. The school has a well thought out and planned programme for pupils' personal, social and health education. Local business supports the school's life education bus and the school nurse is involved in the sex education and drugs awareness programmes. Regular circle times are timetabled in all classes.
38. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities in sport and the arts. A variety of visits including a residential visit for older pupils are valuable in widening pupils' horizons and in developing their personal and social skills. Good use is made of visitors to the school to further enrich the curriculum. Visiting artists, poets and theatre groups all contribute to an enriched creative arts curriculum. Opportunities for developing pupils' greater awareness of a multicultural society are being developed.
39. There is a strong programme of coaching for team sports including netball, football and tag-rugby. The provision for swimming is good.
40. The school benefits from spacious accommodation and attractive and well maintained grounds. The recently developed garden is a particularly attractive feature. Resources are satisfactory overall and good in English. Two well stocked libraries are used regularly by pupils. The inside accommodation for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but the school recognises that outdoor facilities are unsatisfactory because reception children do not have continuous access to a secure outside area.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Pupils are well cared for and governors and staff have good procedures for ensuring pupils work in a healthy and safe environment. Pupils have good relationships with most adults in the school and are given the support and advice that they need. The school council enables pupils to raise their own issues and take an active part in the school's work.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Care is taken to ensure pupil's health and safety in school and on visits away from school.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are good.
- Staff provide a good personal, social and health education programme and pupils develop self-esteem and confidence.

## **Commentary**

41. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of its pupils are good. First-aid provision is good and staff are able to provide assistance in the event of an emergency. There are formal procedures to ensure that pupils and adults work and play in a healthy and safe environment. Professional checks on equipment are regularly done and the governors and staff have developed formal ways of undertaking regular risk assessments and audits to ensure that all aspects of the school are considered with respect to health and safety issues. Child protection procedures meet requirements and the school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care. However lunchtime staff have not, as yet, been trained in these and other aspects of their work to ensure that they can all make a full contribution to the positive ethos of the school.
42. Induction arrangements are good. There are school visits in the term before children join the nursery and before they join the infants. In addition, staff offer to visit children in their homes and the headteacher spends time with each new parent. These arrangements start the work of developing good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff which give pupils the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have concerns about their work, personal problems, or when they want to share a success or news of something special. Staff respond very well to such requests and, through personal knowledge and a well-structured personal, social and health education programme, pupils develop self-esteem and the confidence to talk with adults if they need advice or support.
43. Pupils are looked after at lunchtime and some monitors help to look after pupils, clearing plates and looking out for pupils who need company and who go to the 'friendship stops'. At lunchtimes in the playground, there has not been the same emphasis on ensuring that pupils' personal needs are met. Overall adults have had insufficient training to help support pupils and to encourage positive play and attitudes.
44. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Pupils are aware of their targets and contribute to the discussion of what they need to learn next or to improve. The monitoring and recording for pupils with special educational needs is good and annual reviews effectively meet requirements. There are good induction procedures for the pupils with special educational needs on entry to school and strong support is given for the next stage of learning.
45. The school council is a forum for elected pupils from each year group. They consult and feed back their outcome of their discussions to their class. This helps the school keep in touch with pupils' opinions. This apart, there is no other formal way in which the school seeks pupils' involvement so that they might act on their views.

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

The school has established a sound partnership with parents and the community. Links with other educational establishments are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are happy with what the school provides for their children.
- The Parent Teachers Association works hard to support the school.



- Reports to parents about their children's progress are very good, indicating how well they are doing and what could be done next to move to the next stage in their learning.
- There is a very good range of information available to families including information about the coming term's curriculum.

## Commentary

46. Parents have positive views about the school and the education that it provides; the level of parental satisfaction in almost all areas of the school's work is good. There are meetings for parents at the start of each term at which they receive information on the topics that are going to be covered with suggestions as to how they may support their children's learning. Those who cannot attend receive these through pupil post. This good practice is unusual in primary schools and is appreciated by parents. Parents who are rarely able to come into school receive a considerable volume of useful written information. There is a fortnightly newsletter. The school has set up a regularly updated web site providing another way in which families of pupils and potential pupils may keep in touch. In addition, parents feel that the staff are always willing to make themselves available to them, though a few would appreciate the senior staff being more evident in the playground to help encourage communication with the more reticent. Parents have been consulted from time to time; for example, over relationship education and religious education policies.
47. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed about their child's progress and have good opportunities to discuss targets and reviews of individual education plans with teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator.
48. The annual reports on pupils' progress contain a good level of detail. They demonstrate the personal knowledge that teachers have of pupils and inform parents about the work that their children have completed and their attitudes. Reports provide parents with clear guidance as to what their children need to do to progress to the next stage of their learning – especially in English, mathematics and science. The school is therefore providing many opportunities for parents to help in their children's learning. Parents are able to support their children well at home by sharing books with them and helping them with their homework – commenting if they wish in home/school liaison books. However the take up and involvement of parents is limited, and there are many parents unable or unused to coming in to school. The numbers coming to school to see the pupils' Christmas performance were substantial but there are few regular planned and informal occasions for parents to enjoy meeting each other and the children.
49. A hardworking committee runs the Parent Teacher Association with staff taking an active part. It raises funds to provide additional resources and learning opportunities for pupils. It has organised successful events for pupils and their families. The association is helping to forge links with the community, receiving some sponsorship from local firms – for example the joint sponsorship of a Life Education Mobile Classroom.
50. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. The school has close links with the two nearby secondary schools and pupils have used some of their facilities and have been visited by teachers. For example Year 4 / 5 pupils very much enjoy French lessons given by a specialist secondary teacher – followed up by their own class teachers. There is a thriving partnership between these and many local primary schools that provides useful opportunities for staff training and for constructive collaboration.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The governing body provides **good** governance for the school. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is **good**. Management is also **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and key staff have clear vision and are committed to raising standards and ensuring all pupils do as well as they can.
- The headteacher delegates well and creates effective teams.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The links between performance management, assessment information and staff development are very good.
- Monitoring of teaching although satisfactory is not rigorous enough to ensure that elements of good teaching are shared across the school.

## Commentary

51. Since his appointment the headteacher has provided good leadership because he delegates responsibilities well. As a result staff are enthusiastic, keen and work hard as a team to improve the quality of provision. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection and the headteacher since his appointment has been instrumental in managing stability through good induction procedures, which ensure staff settle quickly. The school is applying for Investor in People status. At present there is no leader in the Foundation Stage but a new manager has been appointed for January.
52. Overall managers provide good and effective leadership and are very clear about developments in their areas, for example, the assistant headteacher and the leader of Years 1 and 2 provide good leadership of their year group teams. The leadership of special educational needs coordinator is good and she is trying to improve the resources to support school action pupils in Years 3 to 6. As a result of good delegation others are being well supported to develop their roles, for example, the new numeracy and literacy coordinators. Effective strategies are in place to address the past inconsistencies in teaching through the setting of targets for pupils, monitoring their progress and linking these to the performance management of teachers and their training needs. However, although long-term targets are clear there is still insufficient clarity in day-to-day planning to ensure all pupils in classes are fully challenged.
53. The comprehensive school development plan has brought about improvements in standards in information and communication technology as well as the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 and the curriculum since the last inspection. As a result of good self-evaluation, the school recognises the need to ensure all pupils do as well as they can through closer monitoring of teaching and learning. This is now a priority for the senior management team as through monitoring they are aware there have been inconsistencies in the past that there are still some weaknesses in teaching that need improvement. For example, the expectations of a few teachers remain too low in aspects of English and more capable pupils are not challenged as well as they might be in lessons. This is because assessment procedures are not used sufficiently to plan for different ability groups in these lessons, which has resulted in insufficient support being given to a number of pupils who do not make the expected progress in tasks such as writing. As a result of good self-evaluation the school has reviewed its practice to address these weaknesses and is giving considerable support particularly to Year 6 pupils to enable them to achieve at higher levels.
54. The governing body ensures the school fulfils its statutory duties. The supportive relationship between staff and the governing body means governors are well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This enables them to challenge the senior management team to improve the standards of education in the school.
55. The school's most recent audit report was undertaken a considerable time ago and the main recommendations were acted upon appropriately at the time. The local education authority now operates a self-evaluation audit in this school. Inspection findings, confirm that essential management functions are covered well and are not unduly bureaucratic, allowing teachers to

get on with their job of teaching the pupils. Well-organised and well-monitored accounting systems help the school achieve their key educational priorities. This includes past and current building development, and projected demographic changes, which accounts for the large balance carried forward last year.

56. The governing body is aware of the 'best value' principles of challenge, comparison, consultation and competition and applies these in decision-making in such areas as setting targets, planning for improvement and allocating resources to priorities. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	735,767	Balance from previous year	192,186
Total expenditure	719,673	Balance carried forward to the next	213,830
Expenditure per pupil	2,187		

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Children enter the nursery in the term after their third birthday and transfer to the reception class in the term they are five. At the time of the inspection there were 15 children in the reception class attending all day. In the nursery children aged three and four attend half-day sessions. There is a satisfactory ratio of adults to children and this ensures that the needs of all are met.

Although wide ranging overall children enter the Foundation Stage with attainment levels below the expectations for their age. By the end of the Foundation Stage these are broadly in line to meet the Early Learning Goals before children join Year 1. Their achievement is satisfactory overall and few pupils exceed the Early Learning Goals before entering Year 1. Induction procedures are good. Parents and staff share information about children, and as a result children settle quickly and happily.

The curriculum is now satisfactory and ensures coverage of all six areas of learning. Planning is not yet consistent across the nursery and reception class; for example, learning objectives are not always clearly identified and this means that sometimes there is insufficient challenge. The use of assessment is still at an early stage of development. The lack of structure to the play curriculum also limits progress for some children and more capable children are not sufficiently challenged.

Leadership of the Foundation Stage is now good and a new enthusiastic coordinator has been appointed for January. Management is satisfactory overall and monitoring of provision is adequate, but the links between nursery and reception need to be developed further. The accommodation inside is satisfactory. However the school recognises that outdoor facilities are unsatisfactory because reception children do not have continuous access to a secure outside area.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weakness**

- Relationships between adults and children are caring and supportive.
- Children have good attitudes to learning and behave well.

#### **Commentary**

57. Adults are caring and provide good role models for children, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. As a result children quickly become confident, develop trusting relationships and succeed. Children feel part of the class and take responsibility for looking after equipment because adults provide these opportunities and praise helpful behaviour. Children know the routines well, settle to tasks with the minimum of fuss, and behave sensibly. Teachers are skilful at encouraging reluctant children to join in. Children show increasing independence in choosing and carrying out activities. For example, many nursery children are able to put their own aprons on before painting. However they are not always encouraged or reminded to hang them up afterwards. In reception children become more independent, getting dressed themselves. Most children concentrate well but some tend to move quickly between activities because they are not sufficiently challenging or engaging. Boys sometimes dominate outside play. Children develop an understanding of different religions and are interested in different religious celebrations. The personal, social and emotional development of children is generally as expected for their age.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weakness

- Opportunities are not always taken to develop the children's language skills.
- Children enjoy looking at and sharing books.

### Commentary

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and most children are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. Although speaking and listening skills are broadly average some children do not speak clearly. Adults extend children's vocabulary through questioning such as when children were making potato cakes in nursery. This made them think about and choose appropriate words to describe what they were doing. The next step is to ensure every opportunity is taken to extend children's vocabulary, speaking skills in all six areas of learning. Most children listen well because they know this is expected. However role play areas such as Santa's workshop could be better resourced to promote language and communication skills. Children enjoy reading books and can recognise rhyming words and some initial letter sounds. They handle books carefully and choose from a reasonable range on offer. Although children learn letter sounds, many do not yet use these word building skills to read unfamiliar words and write simple words. There are limited opportunities for children to see adults model writing and this means some children are not aware of the links between speaking, reading and writing. Letter cards used to support writing in reception provide satisfactory support but the presence of capitals and lower case letters together means some children are confused about which to use.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weakness

- Teaching of number and counting is good.
- There are too many worksheets in reception.
- Children's calculating skills are less well developed than other areas of mathematical development.

### Commentary

59. Overall standards are at the levels expected for their age and teaching and learning is satisfactory. A wide range of interesting activities is provided to help children count, and children achieve well. However children are less confident calculating because there are fewer practical opportunities to do this. Worksheets used in reception restrict learning because they do not provide enough practical first hand experiences and the more capable children are not sufficiently challenged. The next step is to encourage children to use their own methods to solve simple mathematical problems. As part of a shopping topic Nursery children learn about shape in packaging, numbers in bar codes and this means they begin to understand the importance of mathematics in real life. Reception children use mathematical names for two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and are interested in talking about them because adults use effective questioning to focus talk. Sometimes opportunities to model the use of mathematical words like curved or straight in sentences are missed by adults.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weakness

- Children are developing positive attitudes because they are interested and enjoy practical activities.
- Staff use questioning effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

### Commentary

60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and children make reasonable progress. Most are working at the levels expected for their age. This is because interesting activities are planned to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. For example nursery children explore salt dough and use cutting tools safely when making decorations for the Christmas tree. They follow the teacher's instructions carefully and discuss their work because the teacher uses questions well to encourage talking. Reception children begin to understand the difference between the past and present when they sequence pictures of themselves from babies to the present time. They are keen to draw pictures of themselves as grown ups because the activity is interesting and extends their imagination. A computer is available in each class which children enjoy using.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weakness

- The outdoor provision for reception children is unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

61. A satisfactory range of activities are provided to develop physical skills in classrooms. This means children learn how to use pencils, scissors, paint brushes and glue spreaders accurately and safely. The nursery outdoor provision is adequate but does not provide clear designated areas for riding large toys and so learning in other parts of the outdoor area is sometimes disrupted when these are being used.
62. However there is no secure outdoor area for reception children and few planned opportunities to use the nursery outdoor area during lesson time. This does not provide the necessary free access to outdoor play that is required for the youngest children and limits the development of physical skills. Good use is made of the hall and this helps compensate for this. Teaching of a physical education lesson seen was satisfactory. Reception children use space well and show increasing control when using equipment such as a small ball and bean bag. They develop an understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and safe. Standards are as expected for this age group.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weakness

- Close observation of objects improves the quality of artwork especially in the nursery.
- Role-play areas do not always extend learning.

## Commentary

63. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through role play, art and music, especially in the nursery. As a result they develop positive attitudes and achieve satisfactorily. Drawing skills are extended because children look closely at real objects and pictures and this enhances the quality of their work. However some art work in reception is very adult led. A nursery teacher made good use of resources to stimulate children's imagination, resulting in children acting out a story about Father Christmas delivering presents with her as part of a group. Reception children also act out the story of the nativity with the teacher. However skills developed in teacher-led sessions are not yet being used by children to extend their own play into story making because role play areas are not linked to similar themes.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading across the school are in line with those expected nationally.
- Standards of speaking and listening and writing are average in Year 2.
- Standards of speaking and listening and writing are below average in Years 3 to 6.
- The overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- The school's support for pupils with special educational needs including those with statements is good in Years 1 and 2 and good for pupils with statements in Years 3 to 6 but less effective for pupils on school action in Years 3 to 6.

## Commentary

64. Standards in reading are satisfactory across the school. In Year 2 pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can name a number of books they enjoy. More able readers are independent and use a range of skills to decode unfamiliar words. Less able readers are more reliant on adult support, have a limited sight vocabulary and struggle to apply their knowledge of letter sounds to their reading. By Year 6 the majority of pupils are independent functional readers of the group reading books read in school and most can name other authors that they read for pleasure. They can describe different literary genres and compare and contrast different books they have read.
65. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of basic literacy skills combined with high expectations of the presentation and quality of pupils' work. Marking is evaluative and reinforces these expectations. Marking has a clear focus and makes regular references to pupils' individual targets such as 'use more interesting words in your writing'. Most pupils achieve well in terms of their prior abilities.
66. Many pupils enter the school with a restricted vocabulary and there is a clear focus in Years 1 and 2 on developing pupils' language skills. Although phonic skills are taught on a regular basis, a majority of pupils in Year 1 and a minority in Year 2 still struggle to apply their knowledge of sounds to their reading and writing activities. The school has a policy of early identification of pupils with specific learning difficulties and regular, good quality additional support enables pupils to make good progress in these years.
67. The quality of pupils' writing is currently unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There is a lack of consistency in the teaching of writing and as a result standards in these years are below those at the time of the previous inspection. Joined writing is not firmly established, standards of spelling and punctuation are erratic and the quality of vocabulary in pupils' writing is below

average. Pupils' understanding of the purposes and uses of spoken language is below average and this restricts their ability to communicate and explore ideas effectively. This lack of ability to use language expressively and creatively is reflected in the quality of their writing.

68. Although there were examples of good teaching in Years 3 to 6, a large proportion is unsatisfactory. Overall, too few teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge and skills to be able to develop pupils' language or to support pupils' writing development. Too many lessons lack a clear learning objective and the activities lack an obvious rationale. The pace of many lessons is too slow and this occasionally leads to pupil inattention and disaffection. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and some teachers 'manage' lessons rather than engage in direct support for specific groups of pupils.
69. There is a comprehensive range of assessment and recording procedures in place and the results of national tests are analysed, however, teachers do not provide a range of tasks to meet the needs of the very broad range of attainment in all classes, most particularly in the mixed age classes. Lower attaining pupils struggle to complete many of the tasks, particularly as there is too little additional adult support provided. Equally, there is little challenge in many of the activities for the more able pupils. Although tracking procedures are in place and targets are set on the basis of assessment, the accuracy of some of the assessments is doubtful as some teachers' understanding of the criteria is limited.
70. The co-ordination of English is in a transitional phase with a new co-ordinator being supported with a view to assuming management of the subject. The existing management of English is satisfactory and the co-ordinator has arranged a great deal of in-service training to improve the quality of teaching. However, there has been insufficient monitoring to ensure that new initiatives are understood and adopted consistently and systematically across the school. Although lessons have been observed and planning scrutinized, there has not been sufficient rigour in ensuring that the planning is translated into effective teaching and learning. However, the school is addressing these issues through ELS in Year 1, ALS<sup>3</sup> in Year 3, for pupils in Year 6 to attend booster classes and independent work using new computer programs.
71. Until recently the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented with little adaptation or modification. The school has recently moved to blocking specific units of work but there has been insufficient innovation, revision and evaluation of the curriculum to ensure that what is taught is selected to meet the needs of the pupils. Resources are good, particularly for the teaching of reading. The libraries are well stocked and used regularly by pupils.

### **Language and Literacy across the curriculum**

72. The school is specifically focusing on developing cross-curricular links and opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes in other curriculum areas are built into teachers' planning. For example in a Year 4/5 history lesson, pupils were encouraged to write poems to ancient Egyptian Gods using a word processor. This was linked to a recent day pupils had spent with a visiting poet. Information and communication technology is also well used for writing stories, completing a computer based work sheet on moving prepositional phrases and, for example, in a wide range of presentations linked to history to create a 'Power Point' presentation related to their work on the 'Wallingford Workhouse'.

### **MATHEMATICS**

The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory** overall and improving.

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<sup>3</sup> ELS = Early Literacy Strategy and ALS = Additional Literacy Strategy. These are additional strategies to improve literacy in specific groups of pupils.



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management are good.
- Achievement is rising.
- A wider range of teaching methods is improving teaching and learning.
- Assessment information is not used consistently well to challenge different groups of pupils in lessons.
- Support programmes for less capable pupils are not yet in place.
- Lesson objectives are not always shared clearly with pupils.

## **Commentary**

73. Achievement in mathematics is rising in all year groups because the school has correctly identified the need to improve pupil's investigative and problem solving skills. This is the result of careful monitoring of pupils' work and analysis of test data by the assistant headteacher and new numeracy coordinator with good support from the local education authority. Most teachers now give pupils regular opportunities to use and apply what they have learnt in other areas of mathematics such as number, shape, measures and data handling. As a result the quality of teaching and learning is improving quickly. For example, during the inspection three quarters of the teaching seen was at least good. A wider variety of teaching methods including practical interactive activities are making learning more interesting and this extends pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding well. Lesson plans from the National Numeracy Strategy have helped improve teaching in Years 3 to 6 by raising expectations of what pupils can achieve and showing teachers how to include problem solving and investigative work in most lessons. Standards are average in Year 2 and average in Year 6.
74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall because the improvements in teaching are very recent and inconsistencies still exist across the school in:
- the teaching of mental jottings to help pupils think mathematically;
  - improving pupils' use of mathematical language;
  - how well teachers make the learning intention clear to pupils;
  - the use of teaching assistants when all the class are together;
  - telling pupils how to improve their work.
75. A few teachers still expect too little of pupils and provide less challenging work, particularly worksheets. As a result some pupils make slower progress than they should. All teachers manage behaviour well and encourage pupils to work hard on the tasks they are given. In the best lessons such as those observed in Year 1, 4 and 5, learning is very fast because teachers discuss with pupils the errors they make in order to correct their misunderstandings.
76. The use of assessment information to meet the learning needs of all pupils is variable across the school. For example, test results are used well to form sets in Years 4 and 5 and provide additional support for those pupils who are falling behind in Year 6. These pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because they are given reasonable support. However the Springboard programme in Years 3, 4 and 5 has not been implemented and this means that those pupils who are falling behind in these year groups do not achieve as well as they should. The school has already identified that a number of Year 6 pupils have not been doing as well as they should in previous years and a number of strategies are in place to correct this. Even so it is unlikely that the school will achieve its targets for 2004.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

77. Pupils have reasonable opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects such as science, art and design and technology and this extends their mathematical understanding and helps

them apply mathematical knowledge and skills. Information and communication technology is being increasingly used, for example, pupils in Year 2 graph their favourite fruits and use the graph to identify the most and least popular. Pupils in Year 5 to 6 use spread sheets to model simple costings. However, opportunities tend to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at Year 6 are in line with expectations and there was significant improvement from 2002 to 2003.
- Good subject leadership has identified the science issues for the school and has improved standards in the recent past.
- There is good analysis of pupils' progress but this is not used well enough to plan lesson objectives so that all are sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour.
- There is a lack of opportunity for pupils to develop increasing independence in carrying out science investigations.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are below expectations.

### Commentary

78. At the time of the last inspection pupils both in Year 2 and in Year 6 were meeting expectations. Although standards of pupils in Year 2 have declined since the last inspection standards in Year 6 have risen to be above average in the 2003 national tests. The current Year 6 pupils are broadly average. However, overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. It is good overall as pupils come into the school attaining below expectations and leave at the end of Year 6 attaining at least expected levels and often above.
79. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good examples particularly in Years 3 to 6. For example, in a very good Year 3 lesson very secure knowledge and understanding of the class teacher, well paced and well matched challenging work inspired pupils to find ways to investigate the relative strengths of different magnets. This challenge was also evident in a good Year 6 lesson where pupils were given real opportunities to devise ways of investigating the effect of light sources on objects. However, these good examples are not repeated systematically across the school.
80. There are good assessment systems in place to monitor pupils' progress. However, these are not being used sufficiently to plan work to meet the needs of the full range of ability in classes. As a result, except in the good examples cited above, expectations are generally not high enough to challenge pupils, particularly the more able ones.
81. Pupils carry out a sound range of practical work but the difference between practical work to consolidate knowledge, understanding and skills, and an investigation that uses evidence to answer a question raised, is not always clear. Generally this leads to limited opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to questions they have raised for themselves and consequently overall, pupils' ability to carry out an investigation independently is limited. However, pupils show real enthusiasm for the subject.
82. The use of science to support the development of English, mathematics and information and communication technology is satisfactory. Teachers plan links and exploit opportunities when these arise; however, more use of the systematic planning found elsewhere in the school

would enable this to be extended. A good example was seen where pupils used a 'datalogger' to monitor their body temperature during exercise.

83. No significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls was identified during the inspection and all pupils are supported and included in class discussion including those with special educational needs.
84. Leadership of the subject is good. The coordinator is enthusiastic and committed to raising standards. She has identified many of the reasons for past low attainment and is addressing these successfully as shown by the significant increase in the attainment of pupils in Year 6 in the last national tests in 2003.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are in line with expectations at Year 6 but below average at Year 2.
- Achievement is good at both Years 2 and 6.
- There is good leadership and management of the subject.
- There is clear planned use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- There is limited analysis of pupils' progress to ensure they are achieving as well as they can and consequently a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.

### **Commentary**

85. Achievement is satisfactory. Provision has significantly improved in the last year with a significant review and updating of resources. Standards now meet expectations in Year 6 but remain below average for Year 2.
86. The school based training is beginning to have a significant effect on raising standards. There is greater use of the interactive white boards installed in the school and increasing awareness of cross-curricular opportunities to use and apply information and communication technology skills in other areas of the curriculum. The school also runs a computer club for pupils and is developing courses for parents. The school now possesses a large computer suite and good resources for the subject.
87. Teaching is satisfactory overall with no unsatisfactory teaching seen and examples of good teaching in both infant and junior classes. For example, Year 6 pupils use information and communication technology well to apply a range of skills, such as, word processing, art work, and the Internet. They are developing skills to create a 'Power Point' presentation related to their work on the 'Wallingford Workhouse'. Pupils observed were inspired by the approach, worked hard and consolidated and applied a range of previously taught skills. Good application of teachers' knowledge and understanding was also seen in another Year 4/5 lesson where pupils used a 'datalogger' to investigate whether body temperature rose as a result of exercise.
88. Overall lessons are well structured and develop the knowledge, understanding and skills identified in the nationally approved scheme of work modified for use by the school. Lessons have sufficient pace to maintain pupils' interest and pupils behave well, work hard and are enthusiastic about the subject. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately and all pupils' contributions are valued. A significant feature of the lessons seen was the good relationships between pupils and their teachers.

89. As a result of a review assessment of pupils' progress in information and communication technology is undergoing change to ensure curriculum planning resulting in higher attaining pupils being challenged sufficiently.
90. As a result of very good leadership and continuous review of practice the subject has a high profile in the school, and pupils achieve well.

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

91. The use of information and communication technology is a developing strength of the subject and of the school's curriculum planning. Opportunities are systematically sought to find meaningful links where the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject can be applied and consolidated in another, for example, the history and science examples cited above. However, the school is well aware that constructive opportunities to use information and communication technology as a 'tool' in other areas of the curriculum are possible and is actively seeking to develop them.

### **HUMANITIES**

Timetable arrangements and the focus of the inspection meant that there was insufficient evidence seen to make a firm judgement on provision in history and geography. However work in these subjects was sampled and one history lesson was seen.

#### **History and Geography**

92. In the one history lesson seen teaching was good because the teacher had good knowledge of the ancient Egyptians and used resources well to make learning interesting. As a result pupils developed positive attitudes to learning and achieved well. Planning and scrutiny of pupils work indicates the necessary curriculum is covered in both geography and history. This is enhanced by links made with other subjects such as art and literacy.

#### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

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

- Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 6 and in line in Year 2.
- There is an effective scheme of work.
- The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Resources are good.
- Leadership and management are good.

#### **Commentary**

93. Standards are at least in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and above this level in Year 6. This is mainly the result of an effective scheme of work, improved resources and the good leadership and management of the subject by the coordinator. A significant number of Year 6 pupils achieve above expectations in relation to the aspect about learning from religion. For example, one pupil commented, "If something happens and you can't do anything about it then let it go. Then you can be at peace with yourself."
94. Teaching in religious education is good overall. It was very good in a Year 1 lesson and satisfactory in a Year 3 lesson and a sample of pupils' work showed higher than expected standards in Year 6. Teachers provide interesting activities and use a wide range of resources to build on pupils' own experiences. These include cross curricular links with

music, art, drama and literacy. The study of other faiths such as Judaism and Buddhism ensures pupils are well aware of the multi cultural nature of Britain today. Whole school activities such as the recent Peace Day and participation in the Didcot Partnership religious education Festival further enhance the curriculum. As a result pupils enjoy the subject and it contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

95. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator supports teaching and learning well. For example she provides assessments for teachers to use when assessing pupils work and this has resulted in more challenging work for pupils. Planning and pupils work are regularly checked and this means areas for improvement, such as extending the links with information and communication technology, are correctly identified.

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

There was not enough evidence to report on any of these subjects individually because not enough teaching was seen and so firm judgements on provision could not be made. However work was sampled and discussions were held with staff. Design and technology was not inspected.

### **Art and Design**

96. There is a good scheme of work which provides structure for the planning of art lessons across the school. The scheme covers all elements of the curriculum including printing, three-dimensional work and textiles and ensures that skills are built on systematically as pupils move through the school. There were particularly good examples of observational drawing in displays around the school. Pupils develop a knowledge and understanding of a wide range of artists and also the art of other cultures. These are linked effectively with topic work in history and geography. Art is used effectively to support learning in other curriculum areas and represents part of the school's approach to making meaningful links between curriculum areas. Good use is made of information and communication technology to develop aspects of the art and design curriculum.
97. The co-ordination of art has recently been taken over by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who is keen to raise the profile of the subject further.

### **Music**

98. Music has suffered from frequent changes of coordinator in recent years. The current co-ordinator is aware of the need to increase staff expertise and raise the profile of the subject across the school. A number of extra-curricular activities including a recorder group and a guitar group supplement the normal provision. Pupils also take part in music festivals and there are regular school productions of a high standard.

### **Physical education**

99. There have been frequent changes of coordinator in recent years. The current coordinator took over the role in September 2003. She is enthusiastic and has a clear action plan to develop the subject. There has been an emphasis on dance this term and observations show this focus is having an effect on developing this aspect of physical education. The school offers a well-supported range of extra-curricular activities which include; football, netball, rounders, cricket and athletics. All clubs are open to boys and girls and there is a girl's football team that represents the school. Pupils are assessed on the Oxfordshire Pupil Profiles and the school is reviewing how these can be used to ensure all pupils are suitably challenged.

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

No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision. This is however a significant part of the school's work. The programme for personal, social and health education includes work on healthy eating, general health, sex, drugs and opportunities to discuss important issues. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities, for example, representation on the school council.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
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	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
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).*