

INSPECTION REPORT

St Barnabas CE VA Primary School

Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123211

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Jane Thomas

Lead inspector: Mrs Mary McNaughton

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 June 2004

Inspection number: 266042

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	247
School address:	Hart Street Oxford Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX26BN
Telephone number:	01865 557 178
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stephen Brown
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd February 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves an area of diverse cultural, ethnic, social and economic backgrounds just to the north of the city centre. Since the time of the last inspection LEA reorganisation has changed the status of the former first school to a primary school catering for 247 pupils aged 3 to 11 years with effect from September 2003. The school retained all pupils from year 4 for the last two years and these pupils are now the present year 6 who transfer to secondary school in September 2004. The deputy was appointed acting head in September 2003. She has now been appointed to the permanent headship as from September 2004.

The percentage of pupils whose home language is not English is higher than average. There are 23 pupils at the early stages of learning English who receive additional support. The predominant languages are Chinese, Japanese, Hebrew and Korean. However, there are 24 international languages spoken. The percentage of pupils entering and leaving other than at the usual time of transfer is above average. Many families are of visiting academics who return overseas.

The proportion entitled to free school meals (10.6 per cent) is about average. The number of pupils with special educational needs (14.9 per cent) is broadly average and three pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is below average. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties, and a small number have speech or behavioural difficulties.

The majority of children enter the nursery with skills that are in line with those expected for their age in all areas of learning. All have attended pre-school nursery provision before starting school. A small proportion of reception children are taught in the nursery class. There are two reception/year 1 and two year 1/2 classes. In years 3 and 4 pupils are taught in mixed age classes except for literacy and numeracy. Years 5 and 6 are taught in single age group classes. This organisation is historical and is to be changed in September 2004 to single age classes.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1926	Mrs Mary McNaughton	Lead inspector	Mathematics Physical education
13911	Mrs Julie Gallichan	Lay inspector	
27777	Mr Rob Greenall	Team inspector	English History Geography English as an additional language
22967	Mrs Muriel Griffiths	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Music
24342	Mrs Denise Franklin	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Barnabas is a **satisfactory** school with some good features and the capacity to improve. It provides satisfactory value for money. Standards by the end of year 6 and year 2 are broadly average. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and the majority of pupils achieve appropriately. The acting headteacher and the governing body provide sound leadership and management.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' good attitudes, the inclusion of pupils from the wide international community and the school's links with the community are very good
- Standards in speaking and reading are good but are not high enough in writing across the school. In year 2 standards are above average in science and improving across the school
- Teaching and learning in years 3 to 6 are good but weaker teaching in some mixed age reception, year 1 and 2 classes slows pupils' progress in English and mathematics
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well because of the good care and attention to individual needs
- There is no school improvement planning in place beyond this academic year based on rigorous analysis and evaluation of what needs to be done to raise achievement
- Staff have not received training in child protection issues recently
- Some statutory information is not included in the governors' annual report to parents

Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The recent changes and high staff turnover with some disruption at senior management level have impacted on the overall effectiveness found at the last inspection. Standards generally have been sustained but in information and communication technology (ICT) they are lower due to different expectations nationally. Transition to accommodating years 5 and 6 pupils has been successful. Curriculum polices and the planned work have improved and take better account of pupils' abilities. Improvement to the provision for the children in nursery and the reception classes is just being implemented. The systems are in place for checking the quality of teaching and learning but school development planning links to the budget have varied in effectiveness. Governors are more fully involved in the process; however the last improvement plan and the interim plan do not completely address the weakness identified at the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	A*	B	A	A*
writing	A	C	A	A
mathematics	A	B	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Achievement across the school is **satisfactory** overall. Children come into school with average levels of attainment and make satisfactory progress in nursery. By the end of reception their personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening skills are good. They achieve the goals children are expected to reach at the start of year 1. Pupils in year 1 continue to make at least sound progress but teachers' expectations vary across the mixed age classes and some pupils could achieve more. Results in national tests at the end of year 2 have generally been well above average and pupils achieved well and were in the top five per cent (signified A*) in reading. However,

the inspection found standards to be average overall in reading and mathematics but below average in writing. This is due to the varied range of ability and inconsistencies between classes as a result of some weaker teaching. Standards in science are good and pupils achieve well.

There were no year 6 pupils in 2003 and consequently no comparison with schools nationally can be made. Standards are average in English, mathematics, science and ICT in year 6 but are higher in years 3 and 5. Pupils in year 6 have achieved as expected with more able pupils achieving well. In years 3, 4 and 5 pupils make good progress because of good teaching. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. There has been insufficient evidence to make a judgement in other subjects.

Pupils' respect for each other and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. They have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Attendance is very good; punctuality is good because pupils are keen to learn.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory**. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall within a range of very good to unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching, mainly in nursery and years 3 to 6, has high expectations and plans challenging activities. As a result pupils work industriously and concentrate well. The weaker teaching in mixed age reception, year 1 and 2 classes does not develop writing and number skills adequately so pupils' lose interest and progress is sometimes minimal. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The good opportunities for enrichment, especially through the very good local community links, visits and visitors, are a strength. Parental involvement is good and this support pupils' learning well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Leadership of key staff is beginning to set the direction for improvement. The commitment of staff creates good team work resulting in a very positive ethos for learning. The smooth day to day management is well supported by the administrative staff. The governing body is well organised, supportive and actively involved. However, not all statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are positive about the school and the support their children receive. A minority of parents were concerned about the lack of information on their child's progress and inspectors agreed with their views. Pupils like their school and the new school council that gives them a voice in decisions.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in writing
- raise achievement in the nursery and reception and in years 1 and 2 in English and mathematics
- establish a long term plan for the school's improvement

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- include all the required information in the governors' annual report to parents
- ensure all staff are trained in child protection procedures.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in reception, years 1, 2 and 6 is **satisfactory** and for pupils in years 3 to 5 it is **good**. In year 2 standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. In year 6 they are average overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are not high enough across the school
- Standards in science are improving across the school
- In years 3 and 5 pupils achieve well in mathematics and standards are improving
- Throughout the school pupils show good achievement in speaking and listening
- Pupils who are gifted and talented, those with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English achieve well

Commentary

1. From an average starting point nursery children make good progress in their personal, social, speaking and listening skills. They achieve satisfactorily overall. By the end of the reception classes they exceed the expected standards at the start of year 1 in personal and social development, speaking and listening. They meet the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical, physical, and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children achieve satisfactorily as a result of sound teaching, but not all teachers understand what children should achieve and their ability is sometimes underestimated.
2. Standards in national tests at the end of year 2 have been well above average, as the tables below and in the summary indicate. Pupils also do better in tests than those in similar schools. The school's intake is unusual in the exceptionally large clusters that form at the upper and lower ends of a very wide spectrum of attainment. Variations in the balance between these clusters cause fluctuations in overall performance year on year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.1 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.2 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.9 (17.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The inspection found standards to be broadly average overall. This is because of the wide range of attainment across the year 2 classes and some weaker teaching combined with lack of continuity, through change of teacher, during the current year in one class. Standards in writing are lower than in reading, speaking and listening, and mathematics. Standards in science are above average. This marks an improvement from last year when teachers' assessments indicated that standards were average.
4. Year 1 pupils attain average standards, except in writing which is below average. The mixed age classes have different levels of expectation, particularly for year 1 pupils. Some average attaining and some more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should because work is either

too easy in reception/year1 classes or too hard in year 1/2 classes. The school has recognised the need to improve continuity for learning and to take account of the achievement of all pupils. Currently a small group of year 1 pupils are involved in a pupil led pilot programme for gifted and talented pupils to meet their needs and to challenge their thinking. A new foundation stage unit for nursery and reception children and, where possible, single age classes in years 1 and 2 are to be introduced in September 2004.

5. There were no year 6 pupils at the school in 2003 consequently there are no test results to compare with national data. However, the year 6 pupils' test results at the age of seven were average in reading, well below in writing, and below average in mathematics. All pupils have made at least the normal rate of progress from their year 2 test results, and teacher assessment indicates that about a third of pupils achieve the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. Additional provision for gifted and talented pupils in year 6 has raised their attainment and their progress is accelerated. Consistently good teaching enables pupils in years 3 to 5 to achieve good standards in mathematics and science. More than half of the pupils are ahead of expectations for their age. The good progress is in part due to teaching separate age year groups for both literacy and numeracy but also because of challenging and interesting teaching. Standards are average in information and communication technology (ICT) but there was insufficient evidence to judge standards in other subjects.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school identifies pupils at an early age and as much support as possible is provided for them. Pupils who join the school with little or no previous experience of English receive good support and achieve well, sometimes very well, in learning English. Many join the school at a late stage, and some for only a limited period. They too achieve well during their time at the school. Most pupils for whom English is an additional language are effectively bi-lingual and achieve as well as or better than other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have **good** attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance is well above the national average and punctuality is good. The overall provision for and standards achieved in relation to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour is good throughout the school day because teachers have a calm, consistent approach to behaviour management and set high expectations
- Pupils enjoy coming to school so they attend regularly
- Assemblies are of very good quality and strongly promote pupils' personal development
- Pupils in years 3 to 6 are encouraged to become independent learners

Commentary

7. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes respond well to the clear routines and high expectations set for them by the adults who teach and care for them. Their personal development is good. They share toys, have learnt to take turns nicely and chatter to their friends cheerfully. Across the school pupils behave well and concentrate well during lessons. In assemblies pupils are particularly attentive and in several during the inspection behaviour was impeccable. When pupils had to move across the floor, representing the parting of the Red Sea for Moses and the Israelites, they did so very sensibly and with consideration for those around them. There are clear rewards for good behaviour and effort, which help to motivate pupils. Pupils are keen to learn and this is reflected in very good attendance rates. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

8. Very good provision is made for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Assemblies and the 'value' for the term make a strong contribution. During the inspection pupils were thinking about 'trust'. A prominent display in the entrance hall makes this focus clear to the whole school community. During assemblies 'trust' was explored in different ways using stories, some from the bible, and pupils' own experiences to promote clear understanding. The school community reflects the rich cultural mix of the city. Pupils whose home language is not English are fully integrated in all activities. Other pupils respect and value them, and give sensitive help when any language difficulties arise. These pupils contribute greatly to the international character of the school, and to its cultural richness and harmony. This is promoted as a strength of the school which is celebrated by events such as International Evening. Good opportunity is taken for pupils to learn from others of different nationalities and faith groups. For example, Jewish pupils explain to their class friends how they celebrate their special feasts and festivals.
9. Pupils are given increasing responsibility for school routines and their own learning as they get older. The youngest pupils keep areas of their own classes tidy whilst older pupils take on wider school responsibilities, such as organising playground equipment and helping at lunchtimes. From years 2 to 6 pupils can become school councillors to represent their friends ideas at school council meetings. Homework is well organised and pupils are very clear about the expectations. Tasks are set that relate to work in class and many are designed so pupils have to find out information for themselves, reinforcing and encouraging independent learning.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.8%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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 overall quality of education is **satisfactory** because there are some weaknesses in teaching. The curriculum is broad and balanced but a shortage in resources in some subjects restricts learning. Pupils' learning is well supported in school and by their parents at home. Strong community links enrich the curriculum.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations encourage pupils to work hard
- Imaginative approaches in lessons capture pupil's attention and their contributions are valued
- Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils can do to plan effectively to meet their needs but opportunities are missed for checking and reinforcing learning
- Teaching assistants and other staff support pupils' learning well

Commentary

10. Teaching in the nursery is consistently good. Teaching is satisfactory overall in reception and years 1 and 2 because there was not enough good or better teaching in these mixed age classes. There are weaknesses in some lessons in literacy and mathematics and this slows the progress of some average attaining year 1 and year 2 pupils. Teaching in years 3 to 6 is predominantly good with some very good teaching in English, mathematics and geography.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	2 (10%)	21 (51%)	14 (34%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

11. Nursery staff set realistic goals and expect the best from the children. The good role model given by the adults sets standards and establishes good attitudes to learning. The pupils in reception and years 1 and 2 continue to apply themselves well when working with a partner or in group activities. In the best lessons teachers ask demanding questions that make pupils think hard and, because the level of challenge is high, pupils, particularly the more able, demonstrate their knowledge clearly. For instance, in science, recalling how plants get their food and predicting how quickly coloured water will go through the stem of a piece of celery.
12. Throughout years 3 to 6 industrious concentration and good opportunities for talk generates good achievements. All pupils are included effectively in discussions. Their comments and ideas are sensitively developed and enable pupils to extend their understanding well. A very good, imaginatively taught geography lesson challenged year 3 and 4 pupils. Just by peeling an orange the teacher transformed three dimensions into two dimensions. This quickly triggered new understandings for the pupils of important similarities and differences between a globe and an atlas in the way they represent the world. As a result of clear expectations for each group, pupils gained a good understanding of poles, oceans and the north and south hemispheres. In years 5 and 6 pupils who found learning and behaving difficult were expected to make full contributions to each part of the lesson. The behaviour code was reinforced and well conducted discussions led to clear agreements for future conduct. As a consequence all pupils made progress in the lesson. Older pupils in particular are expected to present their work neatly and carefully although some is untidy in year 6. This neat presentation is not always expected of younger pupils.
13. Planning across the school is good. The work is carefully planned for the different ability groups. Most daily lesson plans are annotated and subsequent lessons take account of learning difficulties for each ability group. This has been addressed well since the last inspection. Now, new co-ordinators have focused on this area of development and this is beginning to improve consistency in all year groups. Good assessment procedures are used well to identify pupils' needs, to set targets and plan suitable programmes for pupils with special educational needs. This good practice has been maintained since the last inspection. Marking however is more variable across the school. In the best examples teachers make comments and mark alongside pupils during group work. Older pupils will then refer to these comments and use them for self assessment of their current piece of work.
14. In the weaker lessons and some satisfactory lessons in years 1 and 2 not enough time is given to ensuring that all pupils understand. Questioning focuses on the more able pupils who are confident to take the lead without questions to prompt them. There is not enough checking that average and lower attaining pupils have clear strategies for working out the answers in mathematics, or for developing ideas in literacy. In these lessons the emphasis is on delivering a set lesson plan rather than probing to see if an individual pupil understands. Pupils' interest wanes and they do not participate in activities during some introductions and plenary sessions. In these instances learning is not consolidated well enough. The concerns expressed by some

parents are largely founded in the younger age groups in the mixed age classes. However the organisation for literacy and numeracy in older classes is good and promotes pupils' progress.

15. Good use is made of learning support assistants to support pupils who find learning or behaving difficult so that they can achieve at least as well and often better, in relation to their ability, than other pupils in the class. Some pupils are withdrawn to follow specific learning programmes and this is appropriate to meet their individual needs. The quality of teaching and learning during these sessions is satisfactory.
16. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English have good support throughout the school. The good work of the visiting teacher from the ethnic minority achievement service provides expert assessment information. Her frequent visits enable her to work closely with each pupil once or twice weekly and to monitor progress. As a result, teachers and support staff have good information to guide their work with these pupils. Often this support is very good; at times, though, it does not clearly distinguish the particular language needs of those pupils from those of pupils with learning difficulties in the same group.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. There are **good** opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has a good focus on pupils' personal development
 - The school provides curriculum enrichment which is interesting and relevant
 - Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
 - Inclusion is good
 - Teaching and non-teaching staff are well qualified to meet the needs of the curriculum
 - Resources are insufficient in some subjects
17. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and there is an effective programme in place that ensures that pupils are well informed about aspects of their personal development. Weaknesses identified in curriculum policies at the last inspection have been addressed. There is now an appropriate curriculum in place for children in nursery and reception classes. A suitable policy with regard to sex education and drug misuse is in place and this contributes well to the pupils' personal development. The school is strongly committed to providing equal opportunities for all its pupils. All pupils are valued and the school's good ethos ensures that all pupils have the same access to the curriculum.
 18. The school has used expertise from outside the school to enrich pupils' experiences in a number of areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils have visited the Ashmolean Museum to look at the exhibits relating to the Anglo-Saxons and Ancient Egyptians and this has provided very good first hand experience. History was brought 'alive' resulting in some interesting art work and writing. Themed weeks enhance the curriculum. A recent 'Science Week' involved a number of parents who brought in various types of expertise and an 'International Evening' during 'One World Week' provided exciting opportunities to see dancers and puppeteers from a number of different cultures. Photographs showed the enthusiasm and appreciation of one another's cultures as pupils participated in the celebrations. Pupils in years 4 to 6 go on annual residential visits which provide good learning opportunities. Parents particularly value these activities that the school provides for their children. The pupils' understanding of one another's social and cultural backgrounds is heightened as a result and reflects the strong multicultural ethos of the school.
 19. The school has maintained the good provision for pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection. Although some parents expressed concerns, the provision for gifted and talented

pupils has improved and they now achieve well. Pupils are generally given appropriate work and make good progress. The needs of pupils whose home language is not English benefit from equal opportunities to enjoy and learn from all activities.

20. Teachers and non-teaching staff are well qualified to meet the needs of the curriculum. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall although the school has identified the outdoor areas for the Foundation Stage as needing improvements. There are insufficient resources for physical education and humanities.

Care, guidance and support

There is **good** provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. Pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance based on teachers' monitoring. Pupils have **good** involvement in the life and development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are cared for well during the school day and adults strive to meet their individual needs
- There has been no recent staff training in child protection procedures
- Links with outside agencies to support pupils with specific needs is good
- The establishment of a school council has given pupils a real voice in decisions which affect their school life

Commentary

21. Children are sensitively introduced to the nursery. A series of visits to the nursery class for parents and children help them to become familiar with their surroundings, teacher and helpers before they join. Throughout the school adults care for pupils well and have their best interests at heart. Pupils are confident that adults will help them if they have a problem or need help to improve their work.
22. Good attention is paid to matters of health and safety. A good number of staff hold first aid qualifications and deal with any minor accidents, which are recorded, in a designated medical room. Fire drills take place regularly and much effort has been made to ensure a safe and secure work and play environment for pupils. However, the designated teacher responsible for child protection procedures has yet to undertake training and there has been no recent training for staff to support them in this area.
23. The 'Time Together Programme' is available to help those pupils who need support to develop their social skills. The programme is overseen by the special educational needs co-ordinator but is organised on a weekly basis by two teaching assistants who have received specific training. Other pupils with identified needs receive good support from a range of outside agencies, which ensures that the specific needs of pupils who find learning or behaving difficult are appropriately met. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English receive good guidance and support for their progress because the visiting specialist teacher understands their linguistic needs and liaises well with class teachers.
24. A school council is now well established and pupils appreciate the opportunity to make their views known about aspects of school life. School council proposals and discussions have resulted in a positive response from the school's managers. For example, more playtime equipment is now available at break times and pupils who have school dinners or sandwiches can sit with their friends instead of being separated.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **good** and support pupils' learning well. The partnership with the community remains **very good**. The partnership with other schools is **satisfactory**, being re-established following reorganisation of schools in the area.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' learning opportunities are enhanced through the varied community links
- Parents' involvement in the life of the school is good
- Information for parents needs to be improved
- The school has made a good start in establishing transfer procedures for year 6 pupils moving to secondary schools

Commentary

25. Links with the community were a strong feature at the time of the last inspection. The school continues to work in partnership with the community to offer additional learning experiences for pupils. For example, visits are made by staff from the University to share their particular expertise with pupils. This gives pupils an opportunity to trial new resources and helps them to develop new skills. Close links continue with the church and local businesses are visited, such as a pizza restaurant where pupils learn how to make a pizza. This contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual and cultural development and to their understanding of the world of work. The premises are frequently used by a number of community groups.

26. Parents are positive about the school and the support their children receive. The school offers a warm welcome to all parents and encourages them to come into school to discuss their children's progress or if they have concerns. Governors offer parent surgeries, which gives parents another opportunity to express their views. Parents are actively involved in the life of the school through the PTA, helping in classrooms or at specific events. Many parents supported 'Science Week' and a local restaurant owner supplied food for the 'International Evening'. This gives parents an insight into the curriculum and the chance to use their expertise alongside the teachers which extends the learning opportunities for the pupils.

27. Parents are encouraged to play an active part as partners in their child's education, but there is an inconsistent approach to informing parents about what their children will be learning. Curriculum information is posted on classroom windows but this is not supplied to parents who do not come into school regularly. Other written information for parents needs to be improved. The governors' annual report for parents is missing some information required by law and annual reports for pupils do not show clearly enough how pupils have progressed or their actual level of attainment. The recent introduction of a regular newsletter keeps parents well informed about forthcoming events and activities.

28. This is the first year of transfer procedures for a year 6 group moving to secondary school; good arrangements have already been made. Pupils will be visiting shortly to meet their teachers and spend a day at the secondary school. Secondary science staff have been in to take the class as part of a transition project¹. These arrangements help prepare pupils well for their next stage of education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of both leadership and management is **satisfactory**; governance is also **satisfactory** overall but does not fully comply with statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

¹ Work that is begun while pupils are in year 6 and then completed in year 7 at the secondary school.

- The governors' knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses underpins secure governance for future needs but there are some omissions in their annual report to parents and training for staff required by law
- The acting headteacher is highly committed to school improvement and to developing pupils' achievement
- The interim school improvement plan and co-ordinators' action plans do not adequately link financial planning to the priorities
- All members of staff work closely as a team and create a positive climate for learning
- The school's commitment to inclusion, promotion of equal opportunities and concern for the needs of all individuals are good

Commentary

29. Central to the transition period has been the governing body. The management of change has not been without its difficulties. Significant changes in teaching staff and governors and a temporary senior management team operating without a deputy head have placed greater onus on the chair and some church foundation governors. Throughout, the governors have been supportive and the significant experience of the chair of governors has ensured the school has operated smoothly. The recruitment processes for senior management and governors have been thorough. Appointments in areas of expertise that have been lacking in the curriculum and management have been secured. Good use has been made, for example, of the professional financial knowledge of a new governor. This has resulted in improved budget planning and efficient systems for future financial management. This is well managed by the administrative assistants who contribute well to the day to day running of the school.
30. The governors generally fulfil their statutory responsibilities. However there are omissions in the governors' annual report to parents. The care, well-being and safety of the pupils are paramount and clearly demonstrated by the good inclusivity of all of the school community. The staff awareness of child protection issues is satisfactory. However the acting head is awaiting formal training and subsequent whole staff training is yet to be undertaken.
31. Over the last year the acting headteacher used her previous knowledge of the school's needs to provide stability into the new primary age range. As she takes up the permanent headship in September she knows what needs to be done. There are good strategies in place for moving the school forward. For example, to improve provision and curriculum continuity she has initiated and planned changes for single age classes at the start of the next school year.
32. As yet a long term plan for school improvement is still to be written and is now a key priority. The acting head is in the process of involving and consulting with staff, governors and parents. Current evaluation of previous priorities merely states what has been done. It is not focussed sufficiently on the difference it has made to pupils' achievement nor does it identify how standards are to be improved. Whilst action plans indicate a notional time allocation this is not supported by progress check dates or clearly identified financial costs. Consequently there is not enough information against which governors can monitor and evaluate spending decisions to ensure improvement or best value for money.
33. Many of the leadership team are new to the school and some are relatively inexperienced. They have worked hard, supporting the acting head well. Their knowledge and skills make a positive contribution to raising standards. They are beginning to influence teaching methods but have had little time to evaluate the effects on learning. Systems for monitoring teaching and learning are more focussed than was found at the last inspection. New co-ordinators, with the acting headteacher, have observed lessons and made suggestions for development. For instance, newly qualified teachers have appreciated the professional support they have received. The leadership and management of the experienced special educational needs co-ordinator are good and ensure the wide range of abilities and needs of the pupils are catered for very well. As a result, these pupils achieve well. The special needs governor is supportive and, although only in

post for a very short time, is effective and has a clear view of provision in the school. Very good relationships amongst all staff generate respect and total commitment to helping all pupils do the best they can. As a result of her own professional development and support from the chair of governors and a headteacher mentor, the acting head is beginning to quietly and firmly establish her expectations and standards.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	503,000	Balance from previous year	56,000
Total expenditure	546,000	Balance carried forward to the next	13,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,516		

34. A deficit budget was set in agreement with the Local Education Authority in 2003/04. The transitional grant to meet the change to a full primary school and other grants have been used appropriately. A three year budget plan has been prepared to ensure a balanced budget is maintained. Decisions about linking priorities for improvement to this budget planning are still to be finalised.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for the youngest children in the school in the Foundation Stage (the nursery and the reception classes) is **satisfactory**. It is good for their personal, social and emotional development because of the good care and guidance that they receive. Children come into school with levels of attainment which are average for this age group. Children make satisfactory progress throughout nursery and reception so that at the start of year 1 their skills are in line with what is expected for children of this age. Currently, older reception children are taught in classes with year 1 and the younger reception children are taught in the nursery. The school has plans in place for a Foundation Stage unit which will mean that, as from September, reception children will be taught together in one class and will benefit from access to shared areas with the nursery. This will provide a more appropriate curriculum for reception children in order to improve their learning. The recently appointed co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is effectively driving these plans forward.

Teaching is **satisfactory** overall with some good teaching observed during the inspection. Planning is good and provides appropriate learning experiences, and assessment procedures are satisfactory although there are some inconsistencies in teachers' understanding of children's attainment in the early learning goals. The overall improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and as a result, the children are settled and happy
- Relationships between children and adults are good
- The daily routines offer security and help children to become independent
- Children behave well and develop positive attitudes to learning

Commentary

35. The majority of the children are on course to reach or exceed the expected levels in this area of development. All adults ensure that children quickly learn the correct way to behave. As necessary, they correct the children firmly but gently, supporting self-esteem. Staff in both the nursery and reception classes work well together as a team and provide a calm well-ordered and secure environment. Several times during the inspection children were seen working together for extended periods, behaving sensibly and sharing resources. For example, a group of nursery children playing with the puppet theatre performed a 'story' happily together and others were the 'audience' and watched and listened sensibly. Reception children understood about taking turns when they were pretending to be Baby Bear in a role play activity. Children in the nursery quickly become used to the daily routines and know that the sound of the tambourine means that they must come and sit on the carpet by the teacher; older reception children have learned to line up sensibly when they go out to the courtyard.
36. All adults encourage the development of social skills in a variety of ways. The secure, caring environment that is provided means that children learn to be independent. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well integrated. All staff work hard at promoting good relationships with children and as a result all children are happy and relaxed and benefit fully from the range of activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's skills for speaking and listening are developed well because of the good focus on this area of learning
- Strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of sounds, forming letters correctly and starting to read
- More work is needed to develop the way teachers assess how well the children are doing and what they need to do next

Commentary

37. When they reach year 1, overall standards will be average. Children are making good progress in developing speaking and listening skills and satisfactory progress in reading and writing. Staff spend time listening to what children have to say and give them praise and encouragement. Children in both nursery and reception talk confidently to adults and to each other and express themselves well. Children develop speaking and listening skills well through many opportunities in the daily class routines. In the nursery during the inspection, they enjoyed discussing the puppets that they were going to make and older reception children thought of words such as 'wild', 'cute' and 'cuddly' to describe a toy that they were discussing.
38. All adults reinforce early writing skills and there is a good supply of paper, pencils and crayons available for children to use for writing activities. Good attention is given to the development of writing skills in reception. Teachers are good role models as they write for the children and there are opportunities for children to write independently such as when writing about a letter from Goldilocks to the three bears. Higher attaining children in reception are beginning to write independently and, because of the teacher's gentle encouragement, they were confident about trying to sound out simple words for themselves when they wrote about going to different places in a space rocket.
39. The development of reading skills also has a high priority. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents. There are many opportunities for children to listen to stories and to enjoy looking at books. During the inspection, children in reception enjoyed the stories that their teacher read to them and enjoyed acting out the story of Baby Bear going to the moon and afterwards talked about their books enthusiastically and obviously enjoyed reading. There is some inconsistency in teachers' understanding of children's attainment in reception classes which results in their attainment being underestimated in this area of learning. This does not always move learning on sufficiently and impacts on the overall average standards.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults question children very well to extend their thinking and use a wide variety of activities to support learning
- There are missed opportunities for children to practise their mathematical skills in independent activities in the mixed age classes

Commentary

40. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning and the majority will reach the expected level by the end of reception. Higher attaining children in reception are able to do simple addition and subtraction sums, work out shopping sums, have some knowledge of tens and units and order numbers to over 40. Careful questioning helps children to understand how they have worked out the answer.
41. There is a good range of activities to promote children's learning. The younger reception children enjoyed an activity with their teacher when they were learning 'positional' words and learned where to put the red teddy when it was 'beside' the blue brick or 'behind' it. Older reception children counted carefully the number of squawks that Colin the Crow puppet made and carefully put their clock faces to tell the correct time when they were learning 'o'clock'.
42. Opportunities are used appropriately in the nursery for counting activities during the day. However, older reception children are taught 'lessons' in a closely managed timetable and there are few opportunities to further develop their mathematical skills across several linked curriculum areas.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in these three areas is **satisfactory** and most children will attain the expected levels by year 1.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the world and creative skills are well planned
- Outdoor play provision needs further improvement

Commentary

43. Good planning successfully provides children with valuable experiences for finding out about and appreciating the world around them. Children in both nursery and reception confidently use the computers in the classroom and know how to control the mouse.
44. There is a satisfactory range of planned opportunities for physical development both outdoor and indoor. Nursery children enjoyed riding tricycles and were developing good awareness of the space around them. Older reception children confidently climbed on ladders and beams in the school hall. Indoor opportunities provide many opportunities for cutting, shaping and building to improve children's skills in handling different materials and tools.
45. The range of activities provides children with appropriate opportunities for developing their creative skills. Children's art work is attractively displayed and, in the nursery, they have recently enjoyed painting pictures on the computer using a 'Colour Magic' program and, during the inspection, older reception children were enjoying printing activities, experimenting with potatoes cut into different shapes. Children in reception enjoyed role play in Baby Bear's spaceship.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are not high enough, despite the school's current efforts to raise achievement in this area
- In years 3, 4 and 5, pupils achieve well in all aspects because the teaching is good, and sometimes very good
- In most year groups, a significant number of pupils reach high standards for their age in spoken English and reading
- Teachers use good systems to monitor pupils' progress and to match work and support to their needs
- Pupils who find literacy difficult, or who are at an early stage of learning English, have good support and usually do well

Commentary

46. Attainment is average in year 2 and year 6, and achievement in these year groups is satisfactory. Standards are lower in writing than in reading and speaking and listening. This has been the case for some time, although overall standards vary from year to year. Test results in reading and writing at the end of year 2 have been very up and down since the last inspection, though girls and boys have done equally well. The school has a strongly international and multi-lingual character and many pupils who join the school, often long after the normal age of entry, are at an early stage of learning English. These pupils are quickly integrated and well supported and they make rapid progress, particularly as their confidence in English grows. However, they do not always reach nationally expected standards in English by the end of either year 2 or year 6. In some year groups, such as the current year 6, this factor combines with a larger number of pupils who find literacy difficult, and this depresses overall performance.
47. Standards in speaking and listening are above average across the school and most pupils achieve well, even though the use of assessment and targets is relatively limited in this area. Most teachers create good opportunities for role-play or for pupils to confer in pairs or small groups to develop, agree and express their ideas. Many pupils are highly articulate and contribute confidently, clearly and thoughtfully to both formal and informal discussion. They often take a lead in the learning activity and set a standard, thereby helping the learning of others who are less articulate or are at an early stage in learning English.
48. In reading, the school has good systems and resources to promote good routines, basic skills, attitudes, confidence and understanding. Standards vary between year groups but are high in years 3 and 5. Most homes support achievement well. By the end of year 6, many pupils have developed mature strategies for deciding what, how and why they read, and for using books to aid their learning. They discriminate sensitively between authors, and show advanced skills in 'reading between the lines' and in explaining how a text is constructed or how a particular language feature influences the reader's response. The school gives pupils good variety of opportunity to read, and has developed good systems for tracking individual progress. This works well for pupils with English as an additional language and in years 3 to 5. As yet, it is less effective in raising the achievement of a significant number of pupils, particularly in younger mixed age classes, who are clearly not doing as well as they should.
49. In writing, the picture is similar, but with more widespread underachievement and lower overall standards. Many pupils do well and develop secure understanding and accurate control of a range of different styles and technical skills. Higher attaining pupils write with flair, imagination

and obvious enjoyment. Some of their stories have a richness of narrative interest and language that reflects their responsiveness to literature as readers. On the other hand, many pupils continue to need additional support with written expression and a significant number underachieve. The school has identified writing as a key curriculum priority. It is monitoring the effect of more focused guidance and more extended opportunities. These provisions are helping, but are not yet consistent or rigorous enough.

50. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but marked variations lead to inconsistencies in achievement. During the inspection teaching in years 3 to 6 was good with some very good features, whereas in years 1 and 2 it was satisfactory with a few unsatisfactory features.
51. In the more effective lessons, teachers kept specific learning objectives in view, and developed new learning with pace, clarity, enthusiasm, engaging rapport and high but realistic expectations for different groups of pupils. Teaching was steadily interactive and made regular use of pupil talk to check, share and improve the quality of new learning, particularly at the end of the lesson. A significant common strength is the skilful interweaving of activities so that reading, writing, speaking and listening support each other to enhance learning. Ambitious work on 'Alice in Wonderland' in year 6 provided an extended opportunity for pupils to adapt and edit their script and plan a performance for the whole school.
52. Weaker features of the less effective lessons were:
- A tendency to focus more on teaching than on learning
 - Lack of pace, rapport and enlivening interest
 - Tasks that were either too easy or too hard for some pupils
 - Missed opportunities, or lack of methods, for checking and reinforcing pupils' learning during and at the close of lessons
53. Leadership and management of the subject is temporary. As a consequence:
- The acting co-ordinator is rather out of touch with standards in the junior classes
 - The action plan tackles the right issue, to improve writing, but it lacks a long-term view of development
 - How the success of the specific initial actions will be judged in relation to the very broad overall aim is unclear

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Overall, English and the rest of the curriculum satisfactorily support each other. Pupils in year 6 readily identify good opportunities, particularly in history and religious education, which have challenged them to use books and develop more independent research skills to support their learning. Many use writing well in the ways relevant to subjects such as science, history and geography. However, opportunities are not consistently shaped by overall policy or matched to pupils' actual language needs, and computers in classrooms are seldom in use during English lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in years 3, 4 and 5 achieve well because teaching is good
- Planning is good overall but in year 1 the work is not always adapted appropriately to meet pupils' needs
- Teachers use support staff well to support pupils' learning

Commentary

55. Standards in test results have varied from year to year. By the end of year 2 and year 6 standards are average which is lower than found at the last inspection by the ages of seven and nine. A significant proportion of pupils attain the higher levels and achieve well. The majority of pupils in years 1 and 2 are confident in adding and subtracting numbers mentally. Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables to solve problems. In year 6, given the high proportion of pupils with specific learning difficulties, the majority have achieved well.
56. Effective teaching has a positive impact on the steadily improving standards in years 3, 4 and 5. The wide variation in pupils' attainment in years 3 to 6 is well catered for in the single age group organisation for teaching numeracy. Some more able pupils in year 4 and year 5 are working at levels expected for pupils in years 5 and 6 respectively. This high degree of challenge, combined with the teachers' good subject knowledge, ensures gifted and talented pupils work to their capacity. It also raises the overall achievement of other pupils who are confident about having a go. For example, more capable pupils in year 3 worked quickly and accurately adding three digit numbers to 1000, whilst year 4 pupils ordered fractions in sequence. Year 5 pupils accurately converted fractions to percentages.
57. Across the school lessons are planned effectively using appropriate objectives from the national numeracy strategy. In mixed age year 1 and 2 classes lesson planning is detailed with activities appropriately planned for pupils of different abilities. Indeed, in the mixed groupings of year 1 and 2 pupils, some more able year 1 pupils achieve as well the more able year 2 pupils because the teachers' expertise is good. This is not consistent, however, across the year 1/2 classes. Neither is teachers' expectation high enough for year 1 pupils in reception classes. For example, the year 1 pupils completed a worksheet labelling a series of clocks. However, the more able pupils could read a digital clock and knew, for instance 9:40 is the same as twenty minutes to ten. In an equivalent lesson in the year 1/2 classes pupils solved number problems correctly, adding, for example, 1 hour 45 minute plus 10, 20, or 30 minutes. This difference in planning and expectation depresses the achievement of some younger year 1 pupils.
58. Strong features in the good and sometimes very good teaching in lessons for older pupils were:
- Vibrant teaching and very good questioning
 - Correct use of mathematical words
 - Investigation and problem solving activities
 - Effective marking
- Progress became rapid because pupils were interested and motivated. They gained confidence because discussion and marked work helped them to improve. Learning is also reinforced by homework, mainly using a commercial scheme. However the same level of challenge is not evident in this work.
59. Teaching assistants are well briefed and deployed. They give effective support to pupils with English as an additional language that enables them to make at least as much progress as the other pupils. They conscientiously work alongside lower attaining pupils in lessons, re-phrasing teachers' questions or by using additional resources. As a result these pupils are confident about participating fully in whole class sessions and make steady and sometimes rapid progress.
60. The newly appointed co-ordinator is keen and is establishing a firm foundation for future development through:
- Implementing improved systems for planning and assessment
 - Monitoring teaching and learning
 - Identifying pertinent areas for development
- However, the action plan could be set within a sharper time frame to monitor and evaluate progress to further improve standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Mathematics is used well in other subjects. For instance, pupils design symmetrical patterns in Islamic art, use grid references in geography and tables, graphs and measurements in science. Recent training has taken place for using ICT in the subject. This is broadening the range of planned opportunities for using a range of programs and programmable toys.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- More pupils than in previous years attain the expected levels or above by year 2 but in year 6 a significant proportion do not reach expected levels
- The quality of teaching is good, although there is a weakness in planning in year 1
- The science curriculum is enhanced by activities such as a 'Science Week' and links with the local secondary school, resulting in an improvement in investigative work

Commentary

62. By the end of year 2 standards are above the national average and achievement is good. This is better than in the test results last year, which were as expected for pupils of this age, although the number of pupils reaching the higher level 3 was better than in other schools. The more able pupils understand the job of the root and stem in maintaining a healthy plant. They describe accurately properties of materials using vocabulary such as transparent, opaque and flexible. Standards have also improved since the last inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory.

63. By the end of year 6 attainment is wide-ranging but average overall. Samples of pupils' work, lesson observations and teachers' assessments indicate that a higher than normal percentage of pupils achieve the higher level 5 in science. The more able pupils have a comprehensive understanding of scientific terms such as filtration, condensation and evaporation. They understand that forces are measured in Newtons and use a formula giving the relationship between force, mass and acceleration to calculate their results. However the current year 6 also has a high proportion of pupils who have found learning or behaving difficult and many of these pupils are working below the expected levels. Only a very small number of pupils are actually achieving the expected level 4 in science. Achievement of all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, is good because of the good quality teaching they are receiving.

64. Good teaching throughout the school is having a positive impact on standards achieved by all pupils. This is particularly so in years 3 to 5 where standards are improving and pupils do better than expected. Strengths in teaching include:

- High expectations and good use of resources
- Effective use of scientific vocabulary
- Good procedures for assessing pupils' progress

This ensures pupils are confident and gain good scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils with learning difficulties have good support in lessons and so generally make good progress. Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils know to plan suitable activities to meet the needs of the pupils. However, there is a weakness in the planning in years 1 and 2. Whilst teachers are following the same topics, it is evident from pupils' work that year 1 pupils who are currently in the year 1/2 classes are working at a much higher level than the year 1 pupils who are in the reception/year 1 classes.

65. The science curriculum has been made more interesting and exciting through the organisation of activities such as 'Science Week'. Pupils visited places such as the University's Museum of Natural History and the Dome for a 'Hands on Science' experience. These experiences are

having a positive impact on standards. The school has identified a weakness in pupils' investigative work. This has been successfully resolved and there are good opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out their own investigations. For instance, year 2 pupils investigate appropriately which is the best material for a tent whilst older pupils learnt about recycling as part of the university waste free lunch challenge. Working in this way has a positive impact on the standards pupils' achieve.

66. Leadership and management are good because:

- The co-ordinator knows what needs to be done and how to achieve it
- The quality of teaching and learning is effectively monitored
- Information on pupils progress and other data is analysed.

As a consequence, standards are improving.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like the subject but their skills are not as well developed as found at the last inspection
- The subject is well led and managed and is beginning to improve teachers' expertise
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well and promote good inclusion

Commentary

67. Most pupils are working within the expected levels by the end of years 2 and 6 and a small number exceed this. At the time of the last inspection standards were well above average by the end of year 2 and above average at aged nine. However, national expectations are much higher than they were at that time. All pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English.

68. Pupils enjoy using the computer in class and in the computer suite. By year 2, pupils independently log onto computers and select appropriate programs. They confidently collate information and transfer this to a block graph. Word processing skills are satisfactory. For example, pupils write instructions for making a milkshake. Most can save and print their work. However, the teachers are developing confidence in using new technology and are not yet extending pupils' skills beyond that which is expected.

69. Good teaching in years 3 and 4 enables pupils to exchange information and ideas with others in different ways. The teacher's confident subject expertise used a large screen teaching aid to demonstrate effectively how to open and reply to e-mails. As a result pupils made good progress in the lesson. By year 6 most pupils can add to, amend and combine different forms of information from a variety of sources and satisfactorily complete the required skills needed for transferring to secondary school.

70. The subject leader is competent, monitors effectively and provides the right support to colleagues. Most teachers are confident and have appropriate subject knowledge. However, the computer suite is relatively new and training to extend teachers' skills in using the new technology is currently being undertaken. Sometimes the equipment fails to work properly and consequently slows the pace of learning. As a result the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A comprehensive action plan clearly identifies the criteria and action needed to develop information technology across the school. This is having a positive impact on improving standards.

71. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a strong contribution to the lessons. They support individual pupils by making instructions for tasks clear. Together with the teacher they

keep up a brisk pace throughout lessons and have high expectations of behaviour. This ensures all pupils are fully included.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. ICT is used well to support work in science, mathematics, English and design technology as a result of recent training. For example, year 1 pupils use 'Colour Magic' to design symmetrical patterns in mathematics. Pupils in year 6 effectively used spread sheets, and computer simulation programs in year 5 science track changes in the environment.

HUMANITIES

73. In both **history** and **geography**, work was sampled. Only two lessons could be observed, and lack of evidence of teaching and learning therefore rules out a firm overall judgement on provision in either subject. However, on the evidence of pupils' work, teachers' planning, and discussions, the following points can be made:

- In both year 2 and year 6 pupils reach the standards expected for their age. Their achievement is satisfactory overall
- The new co-ordinator for humanities is well-equipped by experience and expertise to lead development in geography and history
- Plans to extend fieldwork and other opportunities for practical, first-hand experience and investigation are good
- The strengthening of mutually supportive links with other subjects, most especially literacy, is appropriate
- A serious lack of resources restricts learning opportunities and impedes developments in the upper junior years

74. In **geography**, well-planned units of work develop pupils' skills and understanding systematically. Local fieldwork and independent study skills are developed well by year 6. For example year 2 pupils have begun to read a world map and to know the relative positions of different oceans, land masses and countries. Pupils in years 3 and 4 have developed these skills well. They produce accurate large-scale plans of their classrooms and recognise similarities and differences when using a globe and an atlas. Good links with work in literacy enabled year 5 pupils to report on the effects of flooding in Oxford and year 6 pupils research agriculture, fisheries and the exports of St Lucia.

75. In the lessons seen effective teaching used practical demonstrations, role-play, questioning, statistical data and pupils' prior knowledge to build new learning well. A very good range of opportunities for pupils to talk together in pairs and groups supports learning well. This also enables the teacher to monitor that learning, thus ensuring all pupils understand and make progress.

76. Work sampled in **history** shows similar features and qualities. For example, a study of the Tudor period in year 5, clearly generated strong interest and good learning through its variety of approach and its practical demands. Pupils used their reading and writing skills well to research the everyday lives, occupations, diseases and diet of different social classes. In year 6 work on the Victorians and on World War 2 has built well on this learning. Many tasks required a higher level of social or political understandings to challenge the more able pupils. For example, based on evidence found in novels by Mrs. Gaskell and the Brontes these pupils were asked to write a letter from a Manchester mill-worker to his member of parliament.

Religious Education

This subject is reported separately by the Diocesan Section 23 Inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

77. Insufficient work was seen to make secure judgements about provision or pupils' standards and achievement in this subject. The artwork seen suggests that pupils receive an adequate curriculum and the work planned included printing, painting and observational drawing, although little three-dimensional work was seen.
78. Pupils in year 2 have had opportunities to do observational drawings and paintings of flowers, and pupils in year 6 have looked at Indian art and have created Rangoli patterns and also explored pattern in the Islamic tradition. Teachers' planning is focused appropriately on the development of skills and to enable pupils to build on their previous experiences. A local artist visits the school to work with pupils after school and they are currently developing skills in sketching with obvious enjoyment.

Design and technology

79. It is not possible to make a judgement on provision, standards, teaching and learning in design and technology because no lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence from pupils' work on display and in books indicates that the school is appropriately using the nationally recommended guidelines for design and technology. Pupils' work is in line with expectations and skills are developed systematically. For example, younger pupils in year 2 design a spider puppet and explain how the spider moves. In years 3 and 4 pupils consider various types of packaging and select appropriate materials to make their own Christmas boxes for sweets. By year 5 they appropriately consider the effects of their designs when making and evaluating slippers.

Music

80. No music lessons were seen so no judgements are made on the quality of provision or pupils' standards and achievement. During the inspection, younger and older pupils enjoyed rehearsing songs that they knew and sang tunefully and with enthusiasm. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a variety of musical instruments such as recorders, violins, clarinets and cello. During the inspection older pupils competently practised musical items at Orchestra Club ready for their Leavers' Concert. They played 'The Trout' by Schubert confidently and obviously enjoyed playing as a group. This supports parents' views that the quality of school performances is good. Currently, a number of older pupils are enjoying learning songs for a 'Festival of Voices' to be held at Dorchester Abbey. This activity enables pupils to perform for a large audience and they are clearly looking forward to this event.

Physical education

81. It is not possible to make a judgement on provision, standards, teaching and learning because no lessons were seen during the inspection. The subject is well planned and follows a sequenced programme of work. This develops pupils' skills well in gymnastics, games, dance and swimming. Pupils enjoy the subject, particularly sporting activities such as swimming and the team successes in football tournaments. The school is aware of shortages in resources and the need to upgrade worn apparatus.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planned programme supports pupils' development well

Commentary

82. There is a good focus on promoting pupils' personal development. Circle time, where pupils discuss personal issues, feelings and emotions in class, provides appropriate opportunities for understanding themselves and others. Year 2 pupils very sensitively talked about similarities and differences when grouping pictures of faces. They were helped to understand that everyone has similar needs and feelings and should be treated the same. There is a good programme for year 6 pupils to understand about making life choices and for drugs education. Other professionals such as the school nurse and youth workers help to prepare year 6 pupils for puberty and to cope well at secondary school.
83. Citizenship, responsibility and a sense of community are strong features within the school. The school council is a good initiative, further extending pupils' understanding of rights and responsibilities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

