

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **BOTLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Botley, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123067

Headteacher: Mr M Prowen

Lead inspector: Georgie Beasley

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 266460

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	251
School address:	Elms Road Botley Oxford Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX2 9JZ
Telephone number:	01865 248573
Fax number:	01865 244127
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Ahern
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Botley Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Oxford. It is a medium sized primary school with 251 boys and girls on roll. Nearly all pupils are of white UK heritage. A small number are of other white, Asian, Chinese and mixed backgrounds. Seven pupils speak English in addition to another language which is high when compared to the national average. A below average proportion of pupils have free school meals although this does not reflect the school's socio economic circumstances which are about the same as most schools nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. There is a well above average proportion in the current Year 6. The majority of special educational needs are for moderate learning difficulties. A below average proportion have a statement of more significant needs. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year and each year group has a wide range of abilities. Overall it is below average because of the above average proportion of special educational needs in some year groups. The school was awarded an Activemark for its sporting achievements in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27899	Georgie Beasley	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology, music, physical education, personal, social and health education and citizenship, provision for children in the Foundation Stage
9053	Vivien Phillips	Lay inspector	
27290	Christine Huard	Team inspector	English, geography, history, special educational needs, English as an additional language.
32367	Jo Pike	Team inspector	Mathematics, religious education
35191	Lindsey Pearson	Team inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Botley Primary is a good, effective school.** Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good. Leadership and management at all levels are good. There is a positive atmosphere throughout the school because adults and pupils care about each other. Relationships are strong and behaviour is very good. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and very well in art and design
- Behaviour is very good because expectations are high and the 'values education' programme is very effective
- The headteacher works well with staff, pupils, parents, governors and the local community to ensure everyone is involved in the drive for improvement
- Teachers use varied and interesting activities in lessons so pupils are motivated to learn
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity in science and mathematics to plan and carry out independent investigations
- Teachers do not do enough to make sure that pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve their work
- Assessment information is not used consistently to ensure work is closely matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities
- The good range of additional activities make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement particularly in art and music

**There has been good improvement since the previous inspection in 1999.** Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning to speak English in addition to another language is now good. Standards have risen and higher attaining pupils are reaching the levels they should be in English and mathematics. Assessment procedures are in place for all subjects and are satisfactory overall. Weaknesses in provision for children in the Foundation Stage have been tackled well and provision is now satisfactory with some good features. There are still too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills in mathematics and science.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Achievement is good.** When children start school attainment is below average overall. Achievement by the end of the reception year is satisfactory although many children are still not reaching the expected goals in some areas of learning. Achievement is good in reading, physical development and personal, social and emotional development and most children reach the expected goals in these aspects. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. In the current Year 2, standards seen are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards are at expected levels in religious education (RE) and information and communication technology (ICT) and achievement in these subjects is satisfactory.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	C	B	B
Mathematics	C	B	C	C
Science	B	C	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Over the past few years, results in the Year 6 national tests have been improving at a faster rate than for most schools. In 2004, results were above average in English, and average in science and mathematics. Achievement for this group of pupils was good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science. Since then the school has put additional strategies into place to improve achievement in mathematics and standards are average this year despite more pupils having special educational needs than is usual for the school. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average in English because pupils do not do so well in writing as they do in reading. Considering their starting points, achievement for this group of pupils is good in English and mathematics. Achievement is satisfactory in science, ICT and RE and standards are average. All pupils who are learning to speak English in addition to another language achieve well and are reaching the levels of which they are capable. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons and when working in small groups outside the classroom. As a result, they achieve well. Achievement is very good throughout the school in art and design because teaching is very good in this subject. Standards are well above average by the end of Years 2 and 6.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are fostered well.** The school provides lots of opportunities that develop pupils' social skills and there is a very strong emphasis on learning about right and wrong. Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave very well. Attendance is satisfactory and most pupils arrive at school on time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall.** Teachers consistently make lessons interesting and relevant by using stimulating resources to grab pupils' attention. They make good links between learning in different subjects. Sometimes teachers talk for too long and this reduces the amount of time pupils have for independent learning. Teachers' marking does not guide pupils' learning well enough so pupils are not always clear about their targets and what they need to do to improve. The checking of pupils' progress is not rigorous enough in science and ICT so work is not always planned to challenge higher attaining pupils. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning in lessons.

The good curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of visits and visitors, and enjoyable school clubs. Good links with parents and the local community support pupils' achievement and the curriculum well. Good attention to pupils' care leads to good levels of self-esteem and confidence.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The headteacher provides good leadership with a strong focus on raising standards. Pupils' achievement has improved as a result. Key staff work together well as a team to realise the school's aims and values, and have a clear overview of standards and achievement in most subjects and aspects. Governance is good and ensures all statutory requirements are met. Governors are supportive, have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development and ask challenging questions of the school's leadership. Management systems give good support to the school's drive to raise standards.

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

Parents have positive views of the school and the great majority feel that their children are doing well. Recent information about homework arrangements is clear and now helps

parents support learning at home. Pupils are proud of their school and talk fondly about all the things they do.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Increase opportunities in science and mathematics for pupils to plan and carry out investigations independently
- Introduce more effective systems for marking pupils' work so they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
- Ensure assessment information is used consistently in all classes and subjects to plan suitable work to build more effectively on pupils' existing learning and skills



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Children's achievement in the reception year is satisfactory and standards are below average by the time children start in Year 1. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good. Standards are average overall in Years 2 and 6. They are below average in English at the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception year achieve well in reading, physical and personal development, so that by the time they start in Year 1, they reach national expectations
- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics, and very well in art and design
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well
- In mathematics and science, pupils do not develop their investigational skills well enough because they do not have enough opportunities to do so
- Higher attaining pupils usually achieve well in English and mathematics

#### Commentary

1. Children start school with skills that are below average overall. A significant number have well below average language skills and personal development. By the end of the reception year, achievement is satisfactory overall, and pupils with special educational needs and those learning to speak English as an additional language achieve well because of the good support they receive. By the end of the reception year pupils reach the expected goals in reading, physical and personal development. They do not reach these goals in other areas of learning.
2. Results in the 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils were average in reading, writing and mathematics compared to all schools nationally. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils taking free school meals, they were below average. There was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group so many did not reach the expected level. Most of these were boys so girls did better than boys last year. A good improvement since the previous inspection is the proportion of pupils reaching higher than average levels. This was above the national average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing. Standards seen during the inspection were average in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 2, achievement is good, as a result of the good teaching which pupils receive.

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	15.7 (16.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Mathematics	14.4 (14.7)	14.6 (14.6)
Science	16.1 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Achievement at the end of Year 6 is good. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 dipped after the last inspection, but are now rising faster than the national trend. When compared to schools nationally, and to schools whose pupils gained similar results in the 2000 Year 2 tests, results in the 2004 Year 6 tests were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The numbers of pupils reaching higher levels was well above average for English, and above average for mathematics and science. This

reflects the good improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils achieved well. In the current Year 6, standards are lower because there are more pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Standards are average in mathematics and science. Achievement in mathematics is good overall, because pupils work in ability groups and so are challenged in many lessons. It is satisfactory in science because challenge is not always provided for higher attaining pupils so fewer pupils are likely to reach above average levels this year. In mathematics and science, pupils learn investigational skills through tightly structured activities which hinder higher attaining pupils from developing independent skills in this aspect. Standards are below average in English because pupils do not do so well in writing as they do in reading. Although an expected proportion of pupils are achieving higher than average levels in reading, reflecting good achievement, fewer pupils are achieving these in writing so achievement in this aspect is satisfactory. Good focus is given to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills so, by the end of Year 6, achievement in this aspect is good and standards meet expected levels. This is particularly beneficial to those pupils who speak English as an additional language and, consequently, there is no difference in achievement between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (27.2)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.8 (27.7)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.6 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Standards are well above average in art and design at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve very well. Very good teaching and a very rich curriculum enable all pupils to develop good levels of skill and produce work of a high quality. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Year 2 and 6 are average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils benefit well from applying their computer skills to their work in most other subjects. Standards in religious education are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 reflecting satisfactory achievement in these subjects. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about standards and achievement in history, geography, music, design and technology and physical education.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. Adults working with them know their needs very well, and so they get the focused support they need to succeed in lessons. Pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language achieve well because the school moves quickly to obtain guidance and provide appropriate support when they are admitted to the school.
6. Good improvement in achievement since the last inspection is due to the school's focus on better support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and for higher attaining pupils.

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

Pupils' attitudes to school are good and their personal qualities develop well in response to good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils of all ages behave very well and there are no exclusions. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good. These factors contribute well to pupils' achievement. Improvement since the last inspection has been steady.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' respond very well to high expectations of their behaviour, so they are ready to make the most of chances to do well at school

- Relationships are very good and help children of all ages to feel confident and to be willing to have a go with their work
- Pupils have a good sense of responsibility to others, helped by the 'values education' programme
- Although respect for others is good, the school overlooks opportunities to deepen pupils' appreciation of how different people live and to celebrate children's diverse backgrounds
- Although attendance is satisfactory, the rising number of term time holidays can have a negative effect on pupils' achievement

## Commentary

7. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities learn quickly how to behave in and out of lessons because adults and other children set a very clear example of what is expected. Younger children receive praise and rewards for listening and following instructions carefully, which helps them to develop good habits for successful learning. Pupils line up for assembly and lunch in a very orderly way that reinforces turn taking and self-discipline helpfully. Playtimes are lively but without any serious bad behaviour or bullying, which pupils feel is dealt with well if it happens. The atmosphere in the dining hall is very happy and civilised because of warm relationships where adults and children treat each other with great respect: "I have lots of friends and the dinner ladies cook nice food!"
8. Pupils appreciate the fact that "you can be friends with teachers and you don't always feel that they are just teachers" because this encourages an atmosphere of trust within which it is easier to ask for help, and accept that everyone gives the wrong answer sometimes. Most are confident enough to have a go and do not fear making a mistake. In a dazzling, Year 2 mathematics lesson, children were all inspired to work out exactly what coins they needed to 'buy' a soft toy. Their rapt attention enabled them to spot the teacher's deliberate mistake and grasp how this had taken their learning further. Older pupils do not always feel that their efforts are appreciated fully because some teachers are sometimes slower to praise than others.
9. The school encourages pupils to think about different values each month, not just in assemblies but in the work they do and the way they treat others. This has helped to create a strong sense of community within which pupils are aware of the need to think about people's feelings and to be kind and helpful. It ensures that they are aware of others less fortunate than themselves and use initiative to help people. Traditionally, they organise their own mini-fete to raise funds to sponsor schooling for two children in India. They made energetic efforts to raise money for the Tsunami appeal, with little adult prompting.
10. Pupils feel valued and take particular pleasure in being recognised for the good things that they do. They take justifiable pride in their best work and their contributions to some of the stunning displays on show. Some pupils expressed their disappointment by the patchy understanding they have of different beliefs and the lack of insight into the lives of fellow pupils whose cultural traditions are different. Low key displays of key features of other cultures, with less celebration than usual of diverse festivals, contribute to this. This is why the school fosters spiritual and cultural awareness in a satisfactory way while the development of other personal qualities, including mature understanding of moral and social values, is good.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. The school has justifiable concerns that term time holidays affect how well pupils do, with all the coming and going making it harder for teachers to plan and match work closely to individual needs. It works hard to ensure that parents understand the disadvantages of so many missed lessons.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education for its pupils. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The curriculum is good and enriched with a stimulating range of additional activities. Care and welfare are good. Links with other schools are satisfactory, and good with parents and the community.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good in Years 1 and 2
- Teachers use varied and interesting activities in lessons so pupils are motivated to learn
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well so relationships in lessons are very good
- While teachers plan suitable investigations in mathematics and science, these are guided too much by teachers so pupils have too little opportunity to develop their skills independently
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning
- Teachers do not do enough to make sure that pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve their work
- Assessment information is not used consistently to ensure work is closely matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	5 (14%)	17 (49%)	11 (31%)	1 (3%)	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.*

12. The quality of teaching has improved well since the previous inspection and is now good overall. In the excellent and very good lessons, learning was exciting and extremely well organised to meet the needs of each individual in the class. Time was used well to give pupils as much time as they needed to work independently on their tasks. Teachers explained clearly what pupils were to learn so pupils understood precisely what they were doing and why. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, pupils listened to the teacher for too long so had too little time to carry out tasks themselves, and work was not matched sufficiently well to the different abilities in the class. The excellent and most of the very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2 and in art and design lessons throughout the school.
13. Teachers use a range of interesting ways to engage the pupils in lessons. This ensures they listen attentively and take part in all activities enthusiastically. The use of the interactive whiteboards (a projector linked to a computer which projects images onto a white screen) enables teachers to demonstrate, and pupils to see, how to approach their work. They are used particularly effectively in ICT lessons to show pupils how to create different effects on screen. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to talk together in pairs to share thoughts and spark off each other's ideas before starting practical tasks. This ensures they have thought through what to do before starting and therefore are productive as soon as they start work. Relationships are very good and so pupils get along together very well when working in small groups and pairs.
14. Some teachers organise science and mathematics lessons so pupils are fully engaged in planning and carrying out their own practical investigations and when this happens learning

is good. However, this is inconsistent across the school and, in some classes, pupils generally follow the teachers' methods when completing tasks, thus hindering the progress of higher attaining pupils in particular. Drama and role-play are used effectively to extend pupils' vocabulary and motivate their learning. For example, Year 2 pupils created an interesting dance routine, portraying the way flames move in their sequences and using exciting words to describe their movement.

15. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in most lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and those who speak English in addition to another language have their needs identified on lesson planning so that support can be targeted to their precise needs. In ICT lessons, the technician provides valuable support to teachers in setting up the computers and in guiding pupils in their learning. Good subject and technical expertise ensures that time spent in the computer suite is used very productively.
16. The teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. At its best, pupils are given clear information about how well they have done in relation to the learning objective for the lessons. Often, however, comments do not link closely enough to pupils' targets. As a result, many pupils do not know what their targets are. These are often too general and so do not give precise enough guidance on how pupils can improve their work. Pieces of assessed work in pupils' individual progress booklets are much better because comments clearly point out the level each child is achieving and identifies clear points for improvement. While these are shared with pupils, because they are kept in a separate book, pupils cannot refer back to these in their day to day work.
17. Information gained from assessments of how well pupils are doing is used inconsistently across the school. It is used consistently well in reading and mathematics to ensure work is matched to pupils' individual learning needs and this has been instrumental in raising achievement for all pupils, but more able pupils in particular. The information is used less well in science and ICT because progress is not tracked so closely. While formal assessments are made, these are not regular enough to ensure teachers have a clear knowledge of each pupil's ongoing learning needs. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly in Year 2, and the information is used effectively to match learning to individual needs, so pupils achieve well in science and ICT in this year group.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. This is because their individual education plans are carefully written to meet their specific needs. Teachers and teaching assistants have established good means of communication through discussion and the keeping of notebooks in order to prepare carefully on a day to day basis. This provides sharply focused and effective support when pupils are taught in groups in and out of the classroom. This extra support ensures that pupils sustain concentration and make good progress. Carefully planned work means that pupils achieve their targets.
19. Class teachers are providing well for pupils with English as an additional language, mainly through the effective support of teaching assistants. Sometimes pupils are encouraged to use their first language in appropriate situations. For example, in an ICT lesson, 2 pupils sat together and were able to support each other well through discussion in their home language.

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched well. There is very good provision for both the arts and performing arts. Accommodation is good overall and satisfactory for the Foundation Stage. The match of support staff to the curriculum is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Enrichment activities for art and music are very good

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language is good
- Extra curricular activities and visits and visitors are used well to inspire pupils and promote learning
- Good links are made between different subjects across the curriculum
- Visits to places of interest and visitors to school inspire pupils and promote learning
- Insufficient planned opportunities to investigate independently in mathematics and science are hindering pupils' skills
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good

### **Commentary**

20. The curriculum has improved well since the previous inspection and is now good overall. Children in the Foundation Stage now have satisfactory opportunity to learn through structured and imaginative play activities. Planning over a two year cycle enables consistent coverage, and good links between subjects help make learning meaningful. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils' work on the Great Fire of London in history links well to making Stuart houses in design and technology, creating the movement of the flames in dance, painting houses in art and ICT, and using exciting and interesting words when writing descriptions and poems in literacy. These links enhance learning well. There are still too few planned opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out mathematical and scientific investigations independently and this hampers their skills in these subjects. Pupils are given good opportunities in many subjects to develop their speaking and listening skills, so they achieve well. Teachers are adept at using a variety of strategies to build pupils' confidence, such as role-play, discussion and skilful questioning. Pupils also have many opportunities to write at length in subjects such as history and religious education. Additionally pupils have regular practice with numeracy skills in subjects like science and geography where they frequently draw graphs to present data. ICT is used well to support learning across a range of subjects and the introduction of interactive whiteboards provides a valuable additional teaching tool. All statutory requirements are met.
21. Provision for personal, social and health education through the use of a 'values education' programme and science is a strength of the school. The annual residential visit for older pupils helps develop their personal and social skills well. Parents and governors are consulted about the teaching programmes for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness.
22. Since the previous inspection, there has been good improvement in the quality of support provided for pupils with special educational needs and those learning to speak English in addition to another language. There is close co-operation between the co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants in assessing and meeting the needs of pupils. This successfully ensures that all pupils have equal opportunity to engage in a broad curriculum and the good range of extra-curricular activities, both during and after the school day.
23. The school provides a good range and variety of extra curricular clubs both at lunchtime and after school. They include sports clubs, choir, French, recorder, art, drama and sewing and a small group who look after the school garden in the Quad. Sporting activities are well represented and in recognition of its work in this area the school has been given an 'Activemark' award. Performing arts is a particular strength of the school and high quality whole school performances are held each year. A good range of specialist teachers provide opportunities for pupils to learn to play a variety of instruments. Good use is made of visits, for example to the Opera and ballet, which make a particularly good contribution to provision for gifted and talented musicians. Pupils have been inspired by visiting artists and produced very good quality art work as a result. The broad range of extra curricular and

learning opportunities contributes to the high standard of achievement in music and art, and to pupils' personal development.

24. The accommodation is good overall. The school is spacious and attractive with large grounds and a very good wildlife and pond area, which provides a valuable resource for environmental science and 3-dimensional art. The temporary accommodation for pupils in the Foundation Stage is adequate. High quality displays of pupils' work enhance the learning environment well. Resources are well managed and organised to support learning and the curriculum effectively. Teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils' individual needs and there are an appropriate number of qualified teachers to meet curriculum needs.

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

The school cares well for all its pupils and does a good job to safeguard their health and welfare. It gives reasonable guidance with academic work, based on satisfactory assessment and checks on progress. The school takes good note of pupils' views, which it values. Improvement has been good, as a result of a better focus on the needs of children of all abilities.



### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff get to know the children very well, which helps to ensure friendly, individual attention to pupils' needs and creates a warm welcoming atmosphere for those new to the school
- Pupils welcome the chance to do things for themselves and others through the school council, although they feel there is scope for even better involvement in issues that affect them directly
- Help with work is well-intentioned but imprecise at times, because of gaps in the use of marking and assessment

### **Commentary**

25. Everyday care of pupils is based on clear policies, well-understood procedures and good teamwork among adults who are well aware of individual children's characteristics and qualities. Governors and staff work hard to ensure that children's well-being has a high priority and that arrangements to keep them safe and free from harm, including those for child protection, are in place and fully up to date. The friendly, warm manner of office staff gives parents and pupils the initial confidence to ask for help and so feel that their problems will be resolved positively. Parents and pupils appreciate the kindness and care shown to those who are hurt or unwell. This friendliness helps new children to settle well. "Everyone made me feel welcome when I arrived at this school." For those starting school this is helped, as parents added, by "a good transition programme from nursery to school, including visits".
26. The school council is active in discussing how to raise funds for charity and in choosing how to spend money raised by FOBS (Friends of Botley School) to best advantage for pupils. For example, pupils have decided which play equipment needs replacing most urgently and what new games would be best, such as diabolos and volleyball nets. They want to discuss other improvements such as better changing facilities and toilets, as well as how to make the rewards system fairer. Pupils feel that although their efforts to do things for others are valued highly, they have a wider role to play in improving the school and their own experiences while there. Inspectors agree.
27. Pupils receive much encouragement to try hard in lessons and are grateful because "teachers help me when I need help". General help and reassurance are good, which ensures that pupils feel confident and persist with work they find difficult. However, because the quality of marking varies too much and checks on how well different pupils are doing are not precise enough, advice is sometimes too general and not specific to the pupil.

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

Partnership with parents is good. Links with the community are good and those with other schools and colleges are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, partnerships have improved as well as might be expected.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are keen to support their children and the school's work so take an active interest in what goes on in school life, which helps with what their children achieve
- Parents receive good, clear information, although reports do not always say clearly enough whether their children's progress is good enough
- A good network of links with the local and wider community makes a good contribution to the 'values education' programme and enriches pupils' experiences and personal development well
- Links with the local schools' partnership are developing well

### **Commentary**

28. Parents are pleased with the school and their children's progress generally, particularly arrangements to help new pupils settle in, the fact that children like school and that they are expected to work hard. They have no serious concerns, although they are not wholly confident that information on progress and arrangements to set homework are as effective as other features of the school's work. Inspectors agree that although these are satisfactory, consistency and sharp focus on individual needs could be better. Reports are clear and give good quality information up to a point, but do not always spell out clearly whether progress in each subject is good enough, given the pupil's age and starting point. When parents expressed concerns about homework during the consultation process, the school responded quickly by sending clear guidance on content and arrangements. Parents are fully committed to helping their child with work at home and most understand the value of reading regularly with children. As a result, both homework and reading are strengths in teaching and learning. Other information in newsletters and formal documents is good and is clearly written. This helps to make parents feel well informed and involved in school life, including events that are organised by the very active Friends of Botley School. Parents help out in class, on visits and by sharing books with children at home, which encourages a good partnership that helps pupils to want to do well.
29. Pupils and parents value the fact that "the school makes a real effort to provide opportunities for learning outside of the curriculum." They appreciate the way that extra-curricular activities, linked to resources in the local and wider community, enrich pupils' experiences and are seen as a key factor in the sense of community and pleasure that pupils take in school life. "There are many fun events such as the mini-fete, pancake racing, Mother's Day lunch, Tsunami tea, sports day, May dancing and more." Parents praise the way the community is used to widen pupils' horizons.
30. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed of their children's progress. They are invited to review meetings and have the opportunity to share concerns with staff. Parents' views are taken into account when setting targets and individual plans are sent home so that they are aware of the particular support their children need.
31. Partnerships and links with other schools are as expected. Secure links with the partner nursery school and secondary school to which most pupils transfer help them move confidently from one school to the next. Recently the school has made good use of its partnership with West Oxfordshire schools to extend pupils' understanding of teamwork, fair play and sportsmanship through competitive matches. Pupils have benefited from stimulating work during 'Africa' week on mask making and drumming and staff meet regularly to discuss curriculum developments. Links with the local teacher training college are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. Leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good. The management and governance of the school are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides good leadership and focuses well on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning
- Governors are effective and provide good support and challenge for the school
- Subject leaders manage their areas well
- The school improvement plan does not give clear enough targets for improvement
- The school is well managed and runs smoothly and efficiently

### **Commentary**

32. Good leadership and management have played a significant part in the overall good improvements in the school and, in particular, raising the pupils' achievements. Two pivotal features are the focus on the raising of standards in writing and reading and the delegation of responsibility to other senior members of staff in the absence of a deputy head teacher. Both of these are helping to raise achievement across the school through team planning and evaluation meetings.
33. The headteacher has a clear vision of how the school should develop. He is committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can, and that everyone feels involved in the school's work. All members of the school community, including the pupils, have a voice in how the school is led and managed. In addition, the school has good arrangements ensuring pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language are involved fully in school activities and events. This is partly achieved through the ethos of caring support that permeates the school, and stems from the headteacher's vision of meeting the needs of all pupils. The headteacher has an open door policy which welcomes parents and the local community.
34. The governing body is fully involved in school decisions. It provides good support and fulfils all its statutory duties. Good relationships exist between staff and governors. Many governors regularly visit the school so have a good awareness of standards and achievement, and of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Regular meetings take place with subject leaders and provide a useful means of evaluating how well the school is tackling weaker areas. The governors receive good information on the curriculum through reports from the headteacher and operate effectively in committees, which deal with issues relating to the curriculum, staffing, finance and premises.
35. Relationships are very good. There is a very caring atmosphere and the whole staff work very well together with a strong sense of purpose. Subject leadership is good overall because staff have a good overview of their subjects. By carrying out observations of lessons and providing support for colleagues, subject leaders have helped to raise standards in most subjects. The good leadership and management of special educational needs has created a positive ethos in which teachers and teaching assistants work closely and successfully together to cater well for the individual needs of those pupils who need extra help. Teachers new to the school feel welcomed. They are given good support and guidance so they quickly get to know the school's procedures and policies.
36. The headteacher has introduced good systems for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Effective use is made of the wide range of information in English and mathematics, but practice is not so good in science. Actions for improvement in English and mathematics are planned on good and rigorous analyses of data. Performance targets are well organised and based on the priorities in the school's improvement plan. The school's strategic plan is satisfactory. Clear priorities are identified for whole school pastoral care and development, and for English, mathematics, and ICT. The plan does not, however, have clear targets related to standards that would help the school to confirm that improvements have been successful, especially in science.
37. The financial management of the school is good. There are good procedures in place to ensure that the budget is effectively and efficiently managed. These are regularly checked by both the head and the governors' finance committee. Financial planning is good, with the budget being clearly set to ensure that the school's current and future planned priorities are considered with care. The school had a healthy balance from last year. It is larger than recommended because much of it includes funds put aside for refurbishment projects completed but not yet paid for.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	714,635
Total expenditure	658,595
Expenditure per pupil	2,623

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	16341
Balance carried forward to the next	72381

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the reception year is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in personal, social and emotional development, reading and physical development due to good teaching and learning in these aspects.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are confident learners by the time they start in Year 1
- Staff know the children well so learning in focused group work and for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good
- Staff do not intervene enough in the children's play when they are taking part in self-chosen activities
- Information gained from assessments is not always used effectively to plan work to meet the needs of all children
- Links with the local nursery and with parents are good so the children get a confident start to school
- The accommodation is just adequate to support the required curriculum

#### Commentary

38. Achievement in **personal, social and emotional development** is good because all staff constantly reinforce expectations of behaviour and routines. The children look after their personal needs well; for example, many change for physical activity independently. All are confident to have a go at activities because the atmosphere in the classroom is so positive. Children keep themselves safe, demonstrated by the way they waited for the person in front to finish on the obstacle course before starting their turn. Children with special educational needs and those learning to speak English are given good support so are beginning to talk to and play with each other in small groups. Children treat resources with respect, tidying away the things they have used carefully at the end of each session. By the end of the reception year, nearly all children reach the expected goals in this area of learning.
39. The children's achievement in **communication, language and literacy** is satisfactory. It is good in reading because teaching and learning are good. Skills are developed well through a good range of focused adult led activities and learning is matched well to individual needs. Consequently, most children achieve the expected goals in this aspect. All children, but in particular more able children, are reading with confidence by the time they start in Year 1. Speaking and listening skills are developed through a satisfactory range of activities including drama and role-play and at snack time when children enjoy the chance to share their achievements with the rest of the class. Writing activities are usually linked to learning in others areas so are always relevant. However, staff do not focus so well on developing the children's writing skills in the same way they do in reading. As a result, most children are still at the mark making stage of writing, many not yet using recognisable letters and words to convey what they want. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in these aspects and few children reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year.
40. Achievement in **mathematical development** is satisfactory because teaching and learning are satisfactory. During focused group activities learning is often good. At these times, adults use questions well to probe the children's understanding and develop their counting and understanding of measures. For examples, when making porridge good adult support and skilful questioning enabled pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language to achieve well. They were able to count accurately and

match bowls one to one with other children. The activity was made relevant through good links to the story of the Three Bears being learnt in literacy sessions. Practical sorting and matching games are regularly planned so most children recognise and name squares, circles, rectangles and triangles without help. More able children name some 3-dimensional shapes and some of their properties because of well planned extension activities. While focused group work is good, too often activities that the children choose to do themselves have little adult input so learning is only satisfactory at these times. By the end of the reception year, only a few children will reach the expected goals in this area of learning.

41. The children's achievement in developing their **knowledge and understanding of the world** is satisfactory. Chances to explore games on the computer is leading to satisfactory ICT skills and knowledge of a satisfactory range of favourite programs. Good opportunities to design and make a range of models in adult led activities is leading to good levels of skill in this aspect. During the inspection children were engrossed in designing and making boats from a range of materials, and were keen to test these out to see whether they would float and could be 'blown' across the water tray. The support from a teaching assistant who asked pertinent questions to make the children think for themselves how to join and secure the different components of their boats, ensured they made good progress in this task. The outdoor area is used well to develop the children's natural curiosity about the world in which they live. The children are often left to their own devices at these times without planned adult input so learning is satisfactory rather than good. The school is looking forward to putting into practice many new ideas when the new premises become available. Few children reach the expected goals by the time they start in Year 1.
42. There is good achievement in **physical development** because learning is planned well, both in designated physical education (PE) lessons and when children are engaged in structured play activities they choose themselves. As a result, children are confident when taking part in physical activities, and when moving about the classroom and at playtimes. All but a few reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year, and some exceed them. Children are challenged in lessons to work and try hard with their co-ordination and ball skills. Children are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy PE lessons. They use the space in the hall well, showing good co-ordination and control when running and moving in other ways. The majority are able to throw and catch a ball with increasing accuracy. In a lesson seen, all children followed the teacher's clear instructions and worked well together in pairs and small groups. The wide range of opportunities for children to draw, write, paint, cut and join materials is leading to good levels of finger and hand co-ordination and manipulation skills.
43. Achievement in **creative development** is satisfactory and only a few children reach the expected goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. This is good improvement since the previous inspection when aspects were unsatisfactory. In particular the children take part in a wide range of role-play and other structured play activities which helps to develop their imaginative play and language well. Musical activities provide satisfactory opportunities for children to explore the sounds that instruments make and to add relevant sound effects to a favourite story. Opportunity for more able children to explore and develop skills in small groups is less well planned so they are not yet creating repeating musical patterns when adding accompaniments. A good range of activities for children to explore paint ensures they all have a good knowledge and understanding of colour and pattern by the time they start in Year 1.
44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Systems to record the children's developing skills are satisfactory. Staff regularly observe the children as they work and play and record the information against the relevant assessment goals. This provides satisfactory information about how well the children are doing. When adults work with small groups of children on a focused task, learning is often good. However, there is too little planned interaction with children when they take part in the structured play activities they choose

themselves. As a result, the information recorded about each child's progress is not used effectively at these times. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well because they receive good support from staff when working in small groups and when at play. The curriculum is planned well and offers a good balance between adult led activities and those that the children choose themselves. Good and effective links with parents and the local nursery school ensure a smooth transfer to school so all children settle quickly. The leadership and management of learning for children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall and have led to weaknesses identified in the previous report being tackled effectively. The continual putting back of the start date for the new building has added an unnecessary hurdle to continued improvements. While the school is working to ensure that curriculum provision is in place, the long term developments are continually being put on hold while the school waits for the building to start.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is good.

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

- Lessons are interesting so pupils are engaged and motivated to learn
- The school makes good use of assessment information to ensure work is at the right level for all pupils
- Pupils are not given clear enough guidance on how to improve their work because comments in teachers' marking are not linked closely enough to pupils' learning targets
- The quality of teaching and learning is checked regularly so the drive for improvement is good

#### **Commentary**

45. In recent years, results in the national tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6 have been rising at a slightly faster rate than the national trend. Standards in 2004 were average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. The previous inspection report said that higher attaining pupils were not doing well enough, but they did well in the 2004 tests, with a good proportion in both Year 2 and Year 6 reaching the higher levels. Achievement is good. Good leadership in the subject, the adept use of assessment, and good quality teaching are helping pupils to achieve consistently well in lessons. Teaching assistants' good quality support for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is enabling them to achieve just as well as their classmates.
46. Standards in speaking and listening are average by Years 2 and 6 and achievement is good. Teachers have developed the good practice of planning opportunities for developing these skills in subjects across the curriculum. This is achieved through sharply focused question and answer techniques and by encouraging pupils to take a lead in role-play, particularly in Year 2, and to listen and respond to others in a variety of situations during the school day. A typical example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson on the Great Fire of London, where the teacher carefully framed the question, 'How do you think you would feel if your father had started the fire that set London alight?' As a result of this type of approach, the pupils learn to reflect before giving their carefully thought out answers.
47. Standards in reading are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and a good number should reach above average standards this year. Achievement is good. Standards in the current Year 6 are lower than last year because more pupils have special educational needs in this year group. The teaching of reading in Years 1 and 2 is carefully structured to ensure pupils learn the various letter sounds and how to blend these to work out new

words. Regular small group reading sessions throughout the school focus on the specific learning needs of individuals. Consequently, higher attaining pupils are challenged and good support is available for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English in addition to another language. By Year 6, most pupils have developed good attitudes towards reading and take full responsibility for taking reading books home and keeping their diaries up to date.

48. The school has put good strategies into place to improve writing skills throughout the school and standards at the end of Year 2 are average. Pupils are not yet reaching the nationally expected level in writing at the end of Year 6 and few will reach above average standards this year. Standards are below average. Given that pupils in the current Year 6 started school with below average literacy skills for their age, achievement is satisfactory. The school works hard to provide interesting contexts to motivate pupils to write. As a result, all pupils write confidently. Most pupils in Year 2 write clear reports with correct use of capital letters and full stops. Stories have a clear start, middle and end and include some interesting words to describe action and add interest for the reader. By Year 6, some pupils write independently, organise their work into paragraphs and know the need to change the style when writing for different audiences. Many pupils are not yet consistently producing the required standard of work without considerable help from teachers and teaching assistants. Handwriting and presentation are good, reflecting pupils' good attitudes to their work.
49. The quality of teaching is good. Most teachers plan lessons which successfully engage pupils' interest. Strategies, such as drama and role-play, add impact and energy to some lessons. Good use of assessment ensures that teachers know pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses well and most teachers use this information to plan work at the right level for individuals and groups of pupils within their class, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and who speak English in addition to another language. Pupils are beginning to be involved in the evaluation of their own work. Although many teachers mark work conscientiously and constructively, comments are often too general and are not linked closely enough to pupils' targets identified in their progress books. As a result, pupils do not have enough guidance about how they can improve their work, so often repeat mistakes that could have been eradicated.
50. Leadership and management in the subject are good. Careful checks on the quality of teaching and learning are made by looking at pupils' work at regular intervals. As a result, there is a good sense of purpose and high expectation in the day-to-day teaching of the subject. Teaching and learning are based on secure judgements of pupils' strengths and weaknesses which are woven into the fabric of teachers' planning, thus creating a solid platform for further improvement. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

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

51. The school has gone a considerable way to ensure that opportunities for developing all literacy skills are embedded in teachers' planning. Consequently, opportunities to produce good quality writing are provided in many areas, such as history and geography where pupils write at length about the topics they are studying. Research skills are well developed and pupils are used to finding information on the Internet or from reference books.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is good.

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

- All pupils achieve well because teachers structure learning carefully



- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out investigations independently to develop their understanding of pattern and relationships of numbers and interpret information in graphs and tables
- Teachers use a variety of interesting activities that capture pupils' attention, so they work hard
- Pupils do not all know how to improve because teachers' marking is too general

### **Commentary**

52. Results in national tests have been rising faster than the national trend for the last few years. In 2004 standards were average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 when compared to all schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. The proportion of pupils gaining higher levels was above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6 which is good improvement since the previous inspection. Achievement is good.
53. Standards seen in both Years 2 and 6 are average, although the numbers of pupils likely to gain higher levels in Year 6 this year are fewer because there are fewer higher attaining pupils and more pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Pupils in the current Year 5 are on track to attain above average standards indicating that standards are rising not falling. The school's flexible use of setting in Years 5 and 6 is enabling all pupils to work at relevant levels for their abilities so all pupils achieve well. Those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs achieve well, because of the good support they receive in lessons. Many are on track to achieve expected levels. No difference was evident in the progress made by boys and girls, though boys are more ready to share their ideas in lessons. Pupils throughout the school have particular strengths in their understanding of number, and shape and space. Pupils' skills in carrying out an investigation are not secure, because they do not have sufficient opportunities to practise these. Pupils collect, present and interpret data in graphs and tables when given support, but are rarely given opportunities to do this independently so their skills are below average in this aspect.

54. While teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they do not always give enough written guidance on how pupils can improve. Although pupils are set targets, teachers do not use these consistently in lessons. As a result, pupils are not always aware of their target, how well they are doing or how to improve.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons start with short activities that promote mental calculation, such as seen in a lesson in Years 5 and 6 where pupils had to work out number sequences mentally. Teachers plan carefully, so that a variety of interesting activities build learning in small steps. Pupils work hard because they enjoy mathematics. Very occasionally planning does not provide enough extension for higher attaining pupils to achieve as much as they could. In most lessons tasks are well matched to extend pupils' learning, and higher attaining pupils are challenged. This aspect was a particular strength in very good and excellent lessons. Teachers make effective use of resources, including the interactive whiteboards to stimulate learning, and pupils are given opportunities to explain their ideas. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary well because teachers use this constantly. Lessons end with teachers using questions to check how well pupils have progressed with their learning. Homework is effectively used to consolidate learning.
56. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership is in transition because of the re-allocation of responsibilities of senior managers. Effective strategies have been put in place since the previous inspection and standards and achievement have improved as a result, especially for higher attaining pupils. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and used effectively to plan improvements. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. The use and development of mathematics in other subjects is good. Pupils have many opportunities to practise their graphical skills in science and geography. In science, pupils in Years 5 and 6 drew graphs to show the different absorbency of towels and answered questions accurately about what their graphs show. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to do this independently. Regular fund raising events give older pupils relevant contexts to count money totals and give change.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is satisfactory.

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

- By the end of Year 2, achievement is good because teachers give pupils challenging activities
- Pupils are excited about learning when they are fully involved in practical investigations
- While pupils have some good opportunities to carry out investigations, in some classes these tend to be too structured by the teacher, so lack challenge for higher attaining pupils
- Assessments of pupils' learning are not used effectively to guide teachers' planning so work is not always matched sufficiently well to pupils' individual learning needs
- Marking does not explain to pupils how well they are doing or how to improve
- Too little is done to check on the quality of teaching and learning, so that weaknesses can be identified and tackled

#### **Commentary**

58. Results in the 2004 national assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were average, although the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in Year 6 was above the national average. Standards seen during the inspection at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average. Achievement is satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 2, achievement is good. Teachers

plan work which meets the needs of all pupils so higher attaining pupils are challenged and those with special educational needs and who speak English in addition to another language are given the support they need to succeed. Activities develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of science and their investigative skills well. By the end of Year 6, achievement is satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in the use of assessment so teachers are not always aware of pupils' existing skills and some do not plan work that helps pupils take the next step in their learning, particularly the higher attainers. Tasks are planned well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding, but not so well to develop their investigative skills.

59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils so they know what they are expected to learn and do. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions about their own investigations and this results in good achievement. In a very good Year 2 lesson, pupils carried out their own investigation into which paper makes the strongest bag. This challenged their learning and helped them to develop their skills of investigation and apply their knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties well. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across Years 3 to 6. Where teaching is good, the pace of the lesson combined with good questioning and subject knowledge enables pupils to concentrate well and make good progress. In some lessons teacher talk dominates and limits the time and opportunity for pupils to ask relevant scientific questions. Pupils enjoy their science work and co-operate very well together in lessons. Good use is made of the school garden to provide enrichment for environmental science work.
60. Since the previous inspection, there is better consistency in planning investigations so improvement is satisfactory in this area. However, while pupils in Years 3 to 6 understand the need for fair testing and how to make predictions, they do not always have enough opportunities to carry out investigations independently and so extend their skills. In some lessons, all pupils complete the same work, guided by identical planning and recording sheets. This provides insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in some classes. While pupils use their mathematical and ICT skills to record findings in graphs and bar charts, they rarely have a chance to interpret their data so their ability to relate their conclusions to their results is below average.
61. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievements are not checked often or rigorously enough, so weaknesses in pupils' investigation skills and lack of challenge for some higher attaining pupils are not being tackled effectively. Assessment procedures are good in Years 1 and 2 because pupils' progress is checked regularly and rigorously and the information used effectively to plan work which is well suited to individual needs. They are unsatisfactory overall because they are not carried out consistently and regularly enough in Years 3 to 6. Consequently, there is insufficient information to plan work for different ability groups. Pupils do not have individual targets or know how to improve their work, because marking provides insufficient feedback to pupils about what they need to learn next. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory overall because standards are higher. This is due to good teaching and learning in some classes.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils work together well in pairs so support each others' learning well
- Assessment information is not always used to plan work to challenge higher attaining pupils
- The ICT technician gives good support to learning in lessons

- There are good links with other subjects so activities are interesting

### Commentary

62. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils cover the full curriculum and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' skills of presenting ideas in different and interesting ways on screen remain a strength. Achievement is satisfactory.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In two good lessons seen, teachers make sure they introduce tasks in enough detail for pupils to know what is expected, leaving good amounts of time for pupils to work independently to practise and extend their skills. In all lessons, pupils were given good opportunity to work together in pairs to talk about their work and so complement each others' skills well. This helps those learning to speak English as an additional language and lower attaining pupils in particular to achieve well. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure overall because all have benefited from recent training. However, there are gaps in knowledge so specific tasks to extend skills of higher attaining pupils are not always identified precisely enough on lesson plans. As a result, these pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. The ICT technician has good expertise so provides good support in all lessons, interacting with pupils to ensure they are secure in their learning.
64. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Assessment systems are in place and provides sufficient information about how well each pupil is doing at the end of each year. Progress is not tracked closely enough during the year however and so teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what some pupils can do and some are assessed at too low a level. As a result, extension tasks to challenge higher attaining pupils are not always planned. The school is developing a clear two year plan to identify how and when ICT can be used effectively to support learning in other subjects. Consequently lessons are always interesting and relevant to pupils' learning. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Achievement in ICT and in other subjects is enhanced well through good use across the curriculum. Pupils learn how to record information in graphs and tables when presenting their results from scientific investigations or showing the different ways pupils travel to school each day in geography. Pupils' reading and writing skills are developed effectively when surfing the Internet to look for information in history and religious education. Links to art are particularly good. As a result, pupils learn how to use a colour palette and tools to create and different effects on screen. This supports their ability to evaluate their own work and extends their knowledge and understanding of line, pattern, colour and form, and the work of different artists, well.

### HUMANITIES

The organisation of the timetable during the week of the inspection provided no opportunities to observe direct teaching in **geography** and it was only possible to observe two lessons in **history**. As a result no judgement has been made about the overall provision in these subjects.

66. There is an appropriate scheme of work in place for **geography**, which provides opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge of their immediate environment and increase their understanding of the wider world as they grow older. The samples of pupils' work seen suggest that teachers are devoting sufficient time to the teaching of geography. In their planning they include opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills and create imaginative links with other subjects. The topics recommended by the National Curriculum are covered satisfactorily and there is an appropriate emphasis on the development of technical skills and vocabulary. There have been few opportunities to check

the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, but teachers' planning and pupils' work have been looked at carefully to evaluate achievement and standards. Therefore the school has a clear picture of what is happening in the subject.

67. There is a very similar picture in **history**. Planning for the subject provides enjoyable and imaginative lessons to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical events, ranging from reflection on their own childhood in Year 1, to a study of the Ancient Egyptians in Year 6. The subject provides good opportunities for extended writing and good development of research skills and the recording of historical evidence. This was clearly reflected in a lesson seen in Years 5 and 6 when pupils clearly enjoyed the topic of the Ancient Egyptians because of the interesting activities that teachers had planned for them. They researched everyday life in Egypt using a range of artefacts and reference material. The subject leadership is keen and enthusiastic and has a good overview of the subject. Checks on the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' work and teachers' planning are good so the school is clear about standards and achievement.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

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

- Pupils make connections between religious stories and their own lives
- Pupils' knowledge of faiths other than Christianity is less than expected
- Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities to express their ideas, and this helps pupils to reflect on beliefs and values
- Assessments are not regular enough to help teachers plan for and guide pupils' learning

#### **Commentary**

68. Standards overall meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils study Christianity, Judaism and Islam in depth and their knowledge of these religions is satisfactory. However, while pupils' understanding of Christianity and Judaism meets these expectations, their understanding of Islam and other religions does not. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 retell well known Bible stories confidently and link the messages to their own experiences well. For example, Year 2 pupils explained that Samson's story made them think about secrets, and how telling secrets is not a good idea. Good links are made with the school's 'values education' programme. For example, when thinking about temptation one boy said, "you listen to the little voice in your head", linking everyday temptations to what Jesus might have been thinking during his temptations in the desert. During discussions with pupils, they knew why Christians give up things for Lent, and with prompting linked Lent with Ramadan. However, their knowledge of Islam was limited and understanding of some other faiths was superficial. This is because pupils do not always have enough regular opportunities in lessons to deepen their understanding of religions other than Christianity and Judaism. For example, their knowledge about some of the features of Judaism is secure and pupils explain what the items on a Seder plate symbolise and mean to Jewish people today. However, pupils' pictures of Divali, while showing satisfactory knowledge of facts, did not include the meanings behind the festival despite a focused assembly about this celebration and links to work in geography.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, teachers prepare and research lessons carefully. They use questioning skilfully to promote pupils' thinking, giving them time to reflect, and this results in perceptive answers. Sometimes teachers talk for too long at the start of lessons and this cuts down the time for pupils to work independently so their learning is lessened. Pupils work well together, ensuring that everyone in their group contributes to discussions. Teachers are beginning to make good use of computers to help pupils' learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 carried out

research into Lent, using the Internet. Pupils are given good opportunities to practise their writing skills. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 retold the Christmas story from the donkey's point of view. Assessment is not fully developed, and so teachers cannot track pupils' progress closely and fine tune their learning.

70. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Suitable schemes of work have been put in place, with some visits to local Christian places of worship. While the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are covered, pupils' learning about two world faiths in addition to Christianity is not covered in enough depth. Priorities for improvement are relevant. The school is seeking to develop further links with local faith communities, but does not yet fully exploit those faiths represented in the school community. Religious education contributes satisfactorily to pupils' personal development. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

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

Inspectors observed one lesson each in music and design and technology so too little teaching was seen in these subjects to make an overall judgement about provision. Inspectors looked at work and talked to pupils about their experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding in these subjects. No lessons were seen in physical education and the subject was not inspected.

71. Standards were above average in the one **design and technology** lesson seen. Teaching and learning were good and all pupils achieved well. Pupils are aware of the need to plan, design and evaluate their work. They have very good attitudes and enjoy the practical aspects of their work. Good links are made with other subjects including science, art and history to make learning relevant and enjoyable. Homework supports learning well.
72. Pupils have good opportunities to perform in **music** and, as a result, have above average skills in this aspect. All pupils have at least one opportunity to put on a musical performance each year and this makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development as well as their musical achievement. Opportunities for pupils who have a particular gift or talent for music are good. Visits to ballet and opera workshops and visits from instrumentalists are examples of good extension activities for these pupils. In addition, the choir is successful and regularly performs to community groups, and pupils learning to play a musical instrument relish the opportunity to perform to the rest of the school in assembly. All pupils in Year 3 are learning to play a musical instrument and through these lessons are learning to read simple musical notation and play short tunes by ear. This is better than expected for pupils of this age. The one lesson seen was exciting and very well planned so achievement was very good. Expectations were high so pupils had to concentrate very hard to achieve what they did.
73. Pupils usually have two **physical education** lessons each week and these cover all aspects of the subject. A good range of extra curricular opportunities enhance the subject well. PE is one of the pupils' favourite subjects. The school was recently awarded an Activemark because of its work in sport. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 swim each week and nearly all can swim the expected 25 metres by the time they leave the school. This is better than expected.

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is very good.

#### **Main strengths**

- Pupils produce very high quality artwork using a wide range of media
- Pupils' enjoy art and achieve very well
- The curriculum is enriched very well

## Commentary

- 74. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Standards have improved and are now well above expectations. Achievement is very good overall.
- 75. Teaching and learning are consistently very good and this leads to very high quality work being produced. Pupils' are confident and enjoy celebrating their achievements. They have very good attitudes and concentrate and collaborate very well in lessons. This enhances their personal development very well. Pupils explore a wide range of techniques and media. The work of famous artists such as Matisse, Shibaza Junzo Zeshin, William Morris and Andy Warhol make a significant contribution to pupils' artistic and cultural development. Pupils have produced high quality 3D sculptures using clay and other natural materials.
- 76. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Very good links are made with other subjects particularly ICT, history, design and technology and science. Specialist teachers and visiting artists enrich the curriculum very well.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

- 77. No judgement was made about overall provision in **personal, social and health education and citizenship** because no lessons were seen. Inspectors talked to pupils, and looked at work on display and teachers' planning. Pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs, tobacco and other substances, and relationships and sex education is taught in science so pupils have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe by the end of Year 6. Pupils learn about the importance of keeping healthy and active in science and physical education lessons. The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to develop responsibilities as young citizens. For example, members recently responded to pupils' insistence to raise money for the victims of the Tsunami, taking responsibility to organise events themselves. The local community regularly use the school for clubs and group activities and this involves pupils well in local community projects and events. The 'values education' programme makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of their role in the school community and older pupils know about the relevance of the values learnt to life outside school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<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).*