

INSPECTION REPORT

EDITH MOORHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Carterton

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123017

Headteacher: Miss Wendy Atkinson

Lead inspector: Dr T Simpson

Dates of inspection: 20th to 22nd June 2005

Inspection number: 266782

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 to 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 306

School address: Lawton Avenue
Carterton
Oxfordshire
Postcode: OX18 3HP

Telephone number: 01993 842372
Fax number: 01993 847084

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Ms Janet Eustace
governors:

Date of previous November 1998
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Edith Moorhouse is a large primary school serving part of the town of Carterton in Oxfordshire. About a third of the pupils are from service families stationed at nearby RAF Brize Norton. The socio-economic background of the pupils is mixed – but is average overall. A below average number are entitled to free school meals. Attainment on entry is below average overall. The number of pupils who enter and leave the school other than at the normal time is above average. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or for whom English is an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well below average – but the percentage with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is average. The needs of the pupils concerned are varied. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll. The school was granted Investors in People status in 2001 and a Healthy School Award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10428	Dr Tom Simpson	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, music, physical education, history, geography, special educational needs, English as an additional language.
9391	Dr Norma Ball	Lay inspector	
17393	Ms Esther Digby	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, the Foundation Stage.
31838	Mr Martyn Williams	Team inspector	English, design and technology, religious education.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES ONE AND TWO	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	34

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school where the pupils achieve well. Teaching and learning are good overall. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and other senior staff. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils are happy and very well cared for and relationships at all levels are very good.
- Teaching is good overall and there are examples of very good teaching at all stages of education in the school.
- Support staff are very well deployed and have a very positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- The new Foundation Stage arrangements provide the children with a very good start to their schooling.
- Very good partnerships have been formed with parents, the community and other schools.
- Despite a significant amount of monitoring and support from the school's senior management, the quality of teaching is still too inconsistent.
- An enriched curriculum is provided and provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The role of some subject co-ordinators is not well enough developed.

The school's improvement since the last inspection has been good. All the key issues raised in the report have been addressed well. Teaching is better now and planning at all levels now ensures an appropriate progression of skills and knowledge as pupils proceed through the school. Assessment procedures are further developed. Leadership and management are now stronger and the school no longer provides unsatisfactory value for money. Cultural development – which was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection and a minor weakness – is now good. However, the role of some subject leaders remains under-developed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	C	D	C
mathematics	C	E	C	C
science	C	D	A	A

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

Overall achievement is good at all stages of education in the school. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development

and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The school has successfully introduced a number of strategies to raise standards further. These are now average in reading, writing, mathematics and science in Year 2. In Year 6, they are average in English and mathematics – but well above average in science. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average in both Year 2 and Year 6. In art and design, standards are above average throughout the school. Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to attain the goals they are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1 in all the areas of learning apart from communication, language and literacy. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and support staff and make good progress. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. They relate very well to one another and to the adults in the school. Their social development is very good and they are very keen to take responsibility. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes towards their work and the school. Attendance is good and most pupils are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and there are examples of very good teaching at all stages of education in the school. However, despite monitoring and support from the headteacher and other senior staff, some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching still remain. Strengths within the teaching include thorough planning which means that work is generally matched well to pupils' needs. Pupils are usually managed positively and effectively and, as a result, they are engaged, attentive and enjoy their work. Conversely, in a small number of lessons, the pupils are not managed so effectively. This is mainly when tasks do not challenge them well enough. Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed and have a significant impact on the achievement of pupils – especially those with special educational needs. There are detailed assessment and pupil tracking procedures in English and mathematics which help the school to respond well to individual needs. However, some teachers do not use the data collected as well as others and assessment strategies are not as well developed in the other subjects.

A good breadth of curricular opportunities is provided and there is a good range of enrichment activities including out of school visits, visitors and some extra-curricular activities – mainly related to sport. Pupils are very well cared for and their views are very well sought and valued. Partnerships with parents, the community and other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The governing body is supportive and has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher and other senior staff provide good leadership and have a clear vision for the further development of the school. They have a good level of commitment to inclusion and the promotion of equality. The senior management team carries out regular monitoring and self-evaluation and puts the results to good use in informing both the school's immediate needs and its effective strategic planning, and this could usefully be extended to include all subject leaders in order to iron out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Performance management strategies are in place. The school has a good regard for the principles of best value, and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have a very good level of regard for the school. They particularly like the quality of the teaching and consider that staff treat their children fairly. Their children are also very positive. Nearly all consider that they have to work hard and feel that there is an adult they could go to if they were worried at school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to improve consistency in the quality of the teaching.
- Further develop the monitoring role of subject managers.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall standards are average in the Foundation Stage, in Year 2 and in Year 6. Achievement is good throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in their personal development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Standards in science are well above average by the end of Year 6, reflecting particularly good achievement, while in art and design standards are above average throughout the school.

Commentary

1. Results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were well below average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Results of teacher assessments in science were above average in terms of those gaining the expected Level 2, but well below average in terms of those reaching the higher Level 3. In the 2004 tests of pupils at the end of Year 6 (SATs), results were below average in English, average in mathematics and well above average in science. In comparison with similar schools – a measure relating to pupils' prior attainment in Year 2 – the results were average in both English and mathematics and again well above average in science. The school's trend in improvement at Year 6 is above the national trend.
2. Standards do vary from year to year in relation to the aptitude of different groups of pupils. Also, the school has analysed data carefully and put in place a number of strategies for improvement. These include improved assessment strategies and carefully targeted support for specific pupils. A structured phonics programme will be in place for September. Teaching is regularly monitored by the headteacher and is generally focused well on the needs of different attainment groups within classes. Current standards are average in English and mathematics at both Year 2 and Year 6. In science they are average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. These judgements are supported by the school's own preliminary National Curriculum test data and teacher assessments for 2005. Standards in ICT and religious education are average throughout the school. Standards in art and design are above average in both Year 2 and Year 6. By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage most children will not have reached the goals they are expected to reach in communication, language and literacy but will have reached them in all the other areas of learning.
3. Children enter the school with attainment which is below average overall and well below average in aspects of literacy. Their achievement is good at all stages of education in the school. Achievement is adversely affected by an above average level of pupil mobility in and out of the school. On the other hand it is supported well by the school's strategies for improvement and by the provision of an enriched curriculum which motivates the pupils. The major positive impact on achievement, however, relates to teaching which is good overall and particularly strong in the upper part of the school. Most teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, which enables the pupils

to work in an orderly environment. Work is carefully planned for and pupils are regularly encouraged to succeed. Support staff are very well deployed. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve particularly well in their personal development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and non-teaching staff and make good progress. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

- Some particularly good achievement was seen in some English and mathematics lessons. For example, a very good Year 6 English lesson explored poetry. All present shared the teacher's enthusiasm for the topic, tasks were challenging and creativity was encouraged. As a result, the pupils produced powerful language and their achievement was excellent. In a very good Year 5 problem solving mathematics lesson, tasks set were open ended and challenging. Methods were stimulating and the pupils were very positively managed. Most achieved very well as a result of the very effective teaching.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.7 (15.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.1 (13.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.4 (14.9)	16.2 (16.3)

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (27.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.7 (25.5)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.9 (28.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attitudes and behaviour shown by pupils are good and this makes them keen to learn. Spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and social development is very good. Attendance is good and most pupils arrive at school punctually.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave well in lessons and this contributes to their good achievement.
- Personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Very good relationships and respect for others contribute to the good learning environment.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and show a pride in their school community.
- Social development is very good.
- Attendance is above average.

Commentary

5. Attendance is slightly above the national median and there is very little unauthorised absence. There is, however, a small number of pupils who have serious health problems that cause interrupted attendance. The attendance profile of the school is also affected by pupils who have to remain on the school roll for some time although they have left the school. The education welfare officer works effectively with the school and matters of attendance and punctuality are well monitored.
6. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Parents appreciate that their children are encouraged to work hard and become responsible young people. In the majority of lessons pupils listen attentively, enjoy their learning and want to do their best. They work happily in small groups and are also able to work on their own with equal confidence and so they develop good learning skills. They enjoy exploring and finding out new things. A good example of this was in a Year 6 science lesson where all pupils were totally absorbed in an experiment observing bubbles and how these reacted and moved in the air. Results were recorded carefully and pupils put forward a range of interesting hypotheses to explain what they had seen. Very good relationships at all levels are a notable feature of the school. In lessons this helps to make pupils feel confident and creates a good constructive learning atmosphere.
7. Behaviour has remained good since the last inspection because pupils respect the behaviour rules they have agreed in their classes. There are a few pupils who sometimes misbehave and this has resulted in two recent fixed period exclusions for aggressive behaviour. Some parents expressed concern about poor behaviour but the inspection found that bullying and oppressive behaviour is not a feature of the school. When poor behaviour does occur incidents are investigated carefully and matters are dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils of all ages feel they have a part to play in making their school a happy and well ordered place such as by making newly arrived pupils feel welcome. School councillors also feel that they have a valuable contribution to make and they carry out their duties with pride.
8. Pupils understand that what they do affects other people and this contributes to the good behaviour and the very good relationships in the school. They understand very clearly the difference between right and wrong and have good opportunities to discuss social and moral issues such as living a healthy life and dealing with anger. Pupils enjoy raising money for charities, recognising that by doing this they can help others. From their class studies and from visits to such locations as local churches and museums they gain an understanding of their own culture and history. Pupils understand that people come from different backgrounds, cultures and faiths and they show respect for others, especially within their own school community. They enjoy finding out about religions and how the lives of other children are different from theirs. Visitors are used well to give first hand accounts of different cultures, such as Indian and African life and traditions. Cultural development of the pupils overall is good and this area has improved well since the last inspection. There are planned opportunities in assemblies and lessons to reflect quietly. Pupils also gain from the experience to consider the lives of famous people, such as Nelson Mandela, and the contribution that they make to improving the world in which we live.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.9
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	308	2	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall and an enriched curriculum is provided. Pupils are very well cared for and have good and trusting relationships with the adults in the school. There are very good links with parents, the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Assessment of pupils' work is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers generally plan tasks to match the needs of all groups of pupils so that they achieve well.
- Teachers manage their pupils well and, as a result, pupils are engaged, attentive and enjoy their work.
- Teaching assistants support teachers very well and contribute to the good achievement - particularly of pupils with special educational needs.
- Good assessment procedures are generally used well, but not consistently throughout the school.
- Whilst there are examples of very good teaching and learning at all stages of the school, the quality is not consistent enough.

Commentary

9. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection, when issues of pace, challenge and classroom management resulted in some unsatisfactory lessons. The

school has responded well to key issues for the development of teaching and learning and there were no unsatisfactory lessons during the current inspection.

10. This improvement owes much to the monitoring of teaching and learning by the head and deputy head and by the co-ordinators of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teaching is consistently very good in the Foundation Stage. There is still some inconsistency in teaching and learning in other parts of the school, with strengths being more generally sustained in Years 3 to 6.
11. The good match of tasks to ability is one of the main reasons for pupils' good achievement. This is because teachers' planning usually takes into account earlier learning and the specific needs of different groups of pupils. This helps to provide all pupils with tasks which keep them occupied and interested so time is used productively. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 especially have high expectations of pupils' response and manage their classes very well. This enables pupils to work independently or collaboratively, developing responsible attitudes and behaviour which contribute to good achievement. On some occasions classes are not managed so effectively and time is wasted in regaining pupils' attention and getting them back to work. This is more evident when learning tasks are more mundane and do not challenge pupils well enough.
12. The strong team of teaching assistants works very well to help ensure that pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as everyone else. The assistants work with teachers to plan, deliver and assess suitable tasks and move pupils' learning on through their skilful support. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, the sensitive questioning of the teaching assistant helped a pupil with special educational needs to explore imaginative and powerful vocabulary. The resulting poem earned spontaneous applause from fellow pupils.
13. The detailed assessment and tracking procedures in English and mathematics and the analysis of outcomes help the school respond better to individual needs. Some teachers do not use the information gathered as well as others, which helps explain why some tasks are not as well matched to ability as they should be. Assessment is still a recognised area for further development, with science and ICT poised to be reviewed in the autumn, followed by other subjects in turn. At present the school has a marking policy but a variety of practices are currently being trialled in order to find a method that best suits the school. One consequence of this, however, is an inconsistency in feedback to pupils, with the risk that some may be unclear about how they are doing and what they need to do next.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16 (41%)	7 (18%)	16 (41%)	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced. It is enriched by visitors and by the very good use of the local and wider community. The curriculum for

children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The school's accommodation and resources support pupils' learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective curriculum planning ensures a wide range of stimulating activities, which are well matched to pupils' learning needs.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is very well planned to enable children to make a secure start to school.
- A wide range of visits within the local and wider community, as well as visitors to the school, enrich pupils' learning experiences.
- Links between subjects could be developed further.

Commentary

14. The school has a well-planned curriculum which meets all statutory requirements. Staff in parallel classes plan well together to provide a good range of learning experiences that meet the differing needs of pupils, including those in the mixed age class, and which promote their personal development. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Planning is detailed and makes good use of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Subject leaders identify priorities for developing their subjects and plan clearly the actions required to bring about improvement. As a result, there have been a number of positive curriculum innovations recently. However, these are not yet fully embedded in the work of all teachers. There are effective ability grouping arrangements (sets) for teaching mathematics in Years 3 to 6 which promote high expectations. Intervention and support strategies are used well to target support for under-achievers and their progress is monitored well. A high priority is given to providing a range of meaningful and interesting activities that stimulate pupils' curiosity and make them enthusiastic learners. As a result pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Good use is made of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in some subjects of the curriculum, but this is not yet fully developed through a systematic and coherent approach.
15. Recent innovations in planning the curriculum for the Foundation Stage have been very well implemented. The organisation of the Foundation Stage unit and deployment of teachers and nursery nurses enable all children to access a wide range of practical learning experiences - both inside and outside - at a level appropriate to their needs. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is better than at the time of the last inspection. It is inclusive and takes good account of their needs.
16. The curriculum is enhanced by the good range of visits that the school provides, using the local community and trips further afield. The school has developed strong links with a number of schools in Europe through the Comenius Project. These are used effectively to enhance subject based teaching and learning and to widen pupils' horizons by increasing their understanding of other cultures. This has had a positive impact on the quality and range of curriculum opportunities for pupils. Older pupils are encouraged to participate in a good range of sporting activities through after-school clubs. The school has improved links with the local college and other schools in the area and this is now a strength of the school. As well as providing support and expertise in subjects, these partnerships help to prepare pupils well for entry into their next school. For example, Year 6 pupils undertake specific work in English, mathematics and science as part of their transition to secondary schools.

17. Accommodation and resources are good overall. The school is housed in good-sized buildings. A very positive feature of the school accommodation is the Foundation Stage unit in which the nursery and reception classes have recently been integrated into one area with a number of small 'home bays'. This provides a spacious and attractive learning environment, which is further enhanced by the stimulating outdoor area and the good range of equipment and resources. Staff resources are used well and support staff are well trained, enabling them to make a good contribution to the learning and ethos of the school.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures that all pupils are very well cared for in a safe and happy environment. They are given good advice and guidance and feel they are well supported by the staff who care for them. Pupils are very well involved in the work and development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The welfare and safety of pupils is a very high priority in the school.
- Child protection and first aid matters are very well organised.
- Induction arrangements for new pupils are very well planned.
- Pupils feel able to confide in staff and share their concerns.
- The social and academic development of pupils is well monitored.
- Pupils' views are very well sought and greatly valued by the school.

Commentary

18. The environment in the school and outside is very welcoming and pupils feel cared for, secure and able to confide in staff when they have problems. All staff regard the safety and wellbeing of the pupils in their care as of great importance and are strongly led in this by the headteacher. Outside agencies are sensibly and well used to extend the care provided by the school through direct contact such as the support offered by the education welfare officer. The policies relating to health and safety and child protection are implemented very well and regular inspections of the school premises and equipment are carried out. Pupils who are unwell are well cared for and many staff have qualifications in first aid.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for. Their views are respected and they are encouraged to play a full part in lessons and in the overall life of the school.
20. Children and their parents are introduced to school life by well structured and sensitive induction arrangements which include visits to the school in the term before they begin their education. The school serves a local armed services base and pupils often leave and join the school part way through a school year. The arrangements made to welcome and support new children who join the school part way through the year are very sensitive and thorough so that they and their parents settle quickly and happily into their new school. The headteacher and teaching staff take time to meet parents and explain all aspects of the school to reassure them and make sure they are fully involved with their child's education at an early stage. Parents also value the sensitive manner in which pupils are both welcomed into the school and also helped to make the move to the next stage of their education at the end of Year 6.

21. The headteacher and staff know the pupils in their care very well. Personal development is sensibly monitored by teachers and information is used carefully to promote their development and progress as they move through the school. Staff treat pupils with kindness and respect and enjoy talking to them and helping them. A good range of information is collected about pupils' academic progress. A new system of monitoring of academic progress and target setting has recently been introduced to guide and promote the achievement of pupils and will be evaluated at the end of the academic year. Targets are set for pupils and regularly reviewed but the process is not yet fully embedded in the school. Overall monitoring of pupils' academic development is good.
22. The school council provides a regular forum for pupils to express their views and share ideas about developments in the school. They are elected to this responsibility by classmates and represent their fellow pupils very well, canvassing ideas and reporting back on what the council has decided. The minutes of council meetings are well displayed in the school. Respecting pupils' contributions to school life is a very positive feature of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good partnerships with parents, the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very well informed about the school and their children's achievement.
- Many parents are involved in the school on a regular basis.
- Very good links have been developed with other schools locally and abroad.
- Links with the community are used very effectively to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils.

Commentary

23. Parents have a very positive picture of the school and greatly value many aspects of its work. Parents respect that teaching is good so their children are encouraged to work hard, make progress and mature. They feel comfortable in approaching the school if they have problems or concerns and feel that they and their children are treated fairly. Any complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively and all teaching staff are readily available to talk to them, especially at the start of the school day. Parents' views are sought well on a regular basis, through individual discussions and school wide questionnaire surveys. The views of parents are analysed carefully and taken into account in school planning and development.
24. Parents are very well informed about the school through the prospectus, regular newsletters, parents consultative evenings and open sessions. Reports at the end of the summer term are well set out, informative and give parents a very secure picture of how their child has worked and achieved during the year as well as highlighting some areas in which they can improve their work especially in English, maths and science. The targets set of pupils are variable and not always precise but overall the quality of reports is good and complies with statutory requirements.
25. A very helpful initiative has been a mathematics information course set up for parents over a ten week period with Abingdon and Witney College. This training, together with

advice and guidance on helping their children to read, is very valuable to parents wanting to support their children's learning at home and a strong feature of the very good partnership. Parents provide very good support in many areas of the school on a regular basis as well helping with school visits and extra-curricular activities. The school association is both a social and fundraising group and through its efforts there have been valuable additions to playground facilities and to the school book stock. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress.

26. The school is very much part of town life. Pupils join in many activities and the links between the school and the community are very good. People from the local community make good use of the school facilities including a regular arrangement for an after school club. Local elderly residents also contribute to the school and have recently collaborated with pupils on the production of the very attractive 'Carterton Heritage Textile' which focuses on the history of the town. Local residents are also invited to join the school community to enjoy such school events as fairs. Pupils get to know their local community from an early age with visits to shops and the church helping them to understand that they are part of it. Visitors such as the local firemen and RAF dog handlers from the nearby air base also make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
27. The school works very well with other schools in the Carterton Partnership, sharing information and support for the good of each individual partner. The very good links with local schools ensure that arrangements for the transfer of Year 6 pupils to secondary education are efficient and sensitive so that pupils are well supported at this time. The Comenius Project is greatly valued by their school and through links with schools in France, Germany Spain and Italy important initiatives are co-ordinated, and pupils gain from the links with children in other European countries. For example, during the inspection pupils were exploring playground games which are common in their own country as well as those enjoyed by children in their Comenius partnership schools. Sports links with the community college and the training link with Abingdon and Witney College further support and extend the work of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. Governance is satisfactory. The headteacher and other senior staff provide good leadership. They have a clear vision for the future development of the school and provide good role models for the pupils and other staff. Management is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership of the headteacher and other senior staff is impacting well on the school's forward development.
- Strategic planning reflects the school's needs well.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses – but their role in the strategic monitoring of the curriculum is not fully developed.
- The role of some subject co-ordinators in relation to monitoring teaching and analysing data is under-developed.

Commentary

28. Governance at the school is satisfactory. The governing body is supportive and has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It is prepared to challenge the school management if it considers this to be necessary. Individual governors bring a wide range of skills to the role including among their number, for example, people with backgrounds in the church, local government, the civil service, the armed forces and education. Each is linked to a subject or aspect of the school and several visit the school from time to time to, for example, observe classes, take assemblies or discuss issues with staff. The work of the governing body as a whole is supported by a number of committees. However, these are not always well attended. There is also scope for the governing body to develop a more focused role in its strategic monitoring of the curriculum.
29. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has a clear view of the school's strengths and the areas where it still needs to develop further. She is well supported by the deputy head, who – with other members of the senior management team – provides a good role model through the quality of his own teaching. The deputy has responsibility for managing specific areas of the school's provision, including assessment and ICT, as well as being a key player in the school's overall forward development. The senior management team – which includes the key stage co-ordinators as well as the head and deputy – acts as an effective means of communication in the school. It meets regularly to discuss strategic planning as well as emergent issues. All members of the senior management team have a significant part to play in the school's good level of commitment to inclusion, the promotion of equality and concern for the needs of individuals. The school improvement plan is a practical working document and a good reflection of the school's current needs. It is not possible to make an absolute judgement about the leadership and management of the school's provision for special educational needs as the co-ordinator was not in school at the time of the inspection. However, analysis of documentation and discussion with the headteacher and support staff indicates that this is good and that all statutory requirements in respect to the pupils concerned are being met.
30. The school evaluates its performance well and there are a number of procedures in place for monitoring teaching and performance data. The headteacher observes all teachers teaching once a term, focusing on a particular subject, and provides both oral and written feedback to those concerned. Any common issues are addressed through staff meetings. The other members of the senior management team have a particular role in data analysis. Subject co-ordinators are generally enthusiastic and have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their areas of responsibility. However, their role in monitoring teaching is under-developed. Although this does not have a significant impact on standards, it does mean that opportunities for professional development are being missed. Also, not all co-ordinators are fully conversant with the implications of data available to support strategic planning for their subjects, and so opportunities are not being taken to ensure that teaching is consistently good within all subjects. Staff development procedures are satisfactory and routine administration is effective. Performance management is in place and the school appropriately plans to develop this further for support staff. Suitable procedures are in place for inducting new teachers – including those who are newly qualified.
31. Procedures for financial planning are satisfactory and involve the governing body. Available funds are spent in relation to the school's needs. The school's deficit budget was largely as a result of hard to forecast service family mobility. The governing body has put in place a detailed three-year plan to reduce this. It is intended that the budget

will be in credit by the beginning of the financial year 2007/08. The school has good regard for the principles of best value and uses its available resources well. Management of the recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff is good. Most parents consider that the school is led and managed well.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	881467
Total expenditure	902783
Expenditure per pupil	2884

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-21488
Balance carried forward to the next	-42804

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

32. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. It is better than at the time of the last inspection because teaching and learning are now as good in the reception year as in the nursery. Some children enter school at the age of three and attend part-time each day. In September of the year in which they are five, nearly all of these children move into full-time education in the reception year, where they are joined by other children, most of whom have had some pre-school experience. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. They start school with attainment that is below expectations overall. Although they are still below in some aspects of communication, language and literacy when they move into Year 1, they are broadly in line with expectations in other areas. Induction procedures are good with effective links with other pre-school settings and good liaison with parents. As a result of this and the very good teaching and provision, children make a confident start to school and clearly feel secure and valued. The nursery and reception classes have recently been re-organised into one Foundation Stage unit with several 'home bays', each led by a teacher or nursery nurse, catering for the different age groups and abilities. As a result children have access to a wider range of learning experiences, both inside and outside with focused small group teaching planned very effectively to individual learning needs. The new arrangements have not been in place for a full year and so, although assessment procedures are detailed and rigorous, it is too early to assess the specific impact of the new arrangements on children's achievement. Leadership is good. The joint part-time co-ordinators work very well together, and with the other staff, to create a very effective team. The planning is meticulous with a well thought out balance of independent and adult directed activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships between adults and children create an atmosphere where children learn to be positive about themselves and their work.
- Children are given good opportunities to take responsibility and make choices.
- Children show good levels of concentration when working independently and also when co-operating with others.

Commentary

33. Children achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development as a result of very good teaching. They enter school with below average attainment and leave the unit with average attainment and good personal skills in some areas. Children in the nursery take responsibility by taking their name card as they arrive and placing it to show their attendance. They settle quickly to the activities set out for the start of the day. Behaviour is good. Children sit quietly when the register is being taken and show confidence in asking and answering questions in group time. The well-planned

curriculum provides children with many opportunities to make choices and to investigate the stimulating learning activities on offer. As a result, children become independent learners from a young age and are able to sustain interest and concentration when working on an activity. This is developed as a continuum throughout the reception year, because of the organisation of the Foundation Stage as a single unit. Role-play in the home corner, and outside, encourages children's social skills. They play well together and share resources. The very high levels of care and support provided by all adults in the unit result in children quickly gaining confidence and eager to try new activities and to persevere with challenging tasks. This prepares them well for the later stages of education.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of literacy skills is good.
- Children are given good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

34. Teaching is good with well-planned activities that promote children's language development. All the adults working in the Foundation Stage unit encourage children to talk about their experiences and to ask and answer questions. In the 'home bay' areas children talk about what they have done and listen attentively to adults explaining the activities. Children of nursery age listen to stories and recognise well-known tales. They are beginning to try to write and the more able can form letters and write their own name. These children can also read simple phrases and talk about the story they are reading. However most children of this age are not yet reading or writing. They handle books appropriately and can tell a story from the pictures. Children have access to a wide range of books, including some that they have made themselves. They make marks as an early attempt at writing and many enjoy using the writing area for their own independent writing.
35. By the end of the reception year, most children read simple text using familiar words and phrases. They know most letter sounds and make phonetic attempts to write words correctly. More able children write simple sentences. Some imaginative work was seen where children were writing their own version of what 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' ate, using their own choice of animal. This set of very good lessons was delivered to different groups of children during the week. The teacher's very accurate knowledge of what the children could do enabled her to challenge each child to achieve their best work through very focussed questioning and appropriate support when required. Children's vocabulary and personal skills were extended as she asked them what the caterpillar would feel like after eating so much and, then, how they would feel after over-eating. Explicit guidance was given to demonstrate writing techniques and, as a result, the group of nursery children who were seen concentrated hard and achieved very well.
36. Many children start school with low levels of literacy skills, particularly writing. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage where teachers concentrate on ensuring that children have a very secure base of knowledge and understanding in all aspects of this area of learning. As a result, by the end of the reception year, more

able children reach the goals they are expected to reach, and most others are close to attaining them, although standards in writing are still below the expectations for their age.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the good teaching and stimulating activities.
- Mathematical understanding is promoted well through many informal opportunities.

Commentary

37. Most of the children start school with a level of mathematical understanding that is below national expectations. They make good progress and are likely to attain most of the goals they are expected to reach for mathematical development by the end of the reception year. However, not enough children are yet confident in their understanding of simple addition and subtraction operations.
38. Teaching and learning are good and a very good lesson was seen. The very well planned lessons, usually introduced to the class and then followed up with focussed, small group activities, engage children's interest and are pitched very accurately to children's knowledge and understanding. As a result they make good progress. Activities are usually linked to the topic theme. For example, teachers used their current topic of minibests, which included literacy work on the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', to plan a stimulating activity for more able children in which they drew round 8 circles to form a caterpillar and then had to give each segment 2 legs. Both groups of children were able to count the number of legs accurately and to work out how many segments were left if a number were removed. Children developed this further by giving the caterpillar a number of items to eat and could add or subtract accurately from this number. This activity reinforced the children's literacy work and extended their vocabulary, and provided a good opportunity for their creative skills, as well as developing their knowledge of number and shape. Children were enthused by the activity and concentrated very well for a long period, supported by the teacher's challenging questioning and encouraging praise.
39. Children are given many other opportunities to develop mathematical understanding through well-planned independent activities because of the staff's good knowledge of the children's capabilities and the positive interaction between adults and children. These develop children's knowledge of shape, number and size. In the 'home bay' sessions, children are encouraged to identify the day and the date, and to work out how many children are present each morning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of practical and investigative activities is provided.

- There is good use of the local environment.
- Scientific understanding is particularly well developed.

Commentary

40. Children achieve very well as a result of the very well planned opportunities for independent learning and the very good challenge and support provided by teachers in the adult directed activities. As a result children are encouraged to investigate the world around them with confidence and are given information to build on their learning. By the end of the reception year, children are likely to attain the goals they are expected to reach for this area of learning because of the very good teaching, despite starting school with below average attainment.
41. The school provides a very good range of opportunities to find out about the world, using the locality as well as the indoor and outdoor learning environment of the Foundation Stage unit. Children go for walks at different times of the year to identify features of the changing seasons. They learn about living things through seeing the animals of a local farmer, learning about life cycles and investigating 'mini-beasts'. They talk enthusiastically about their visit to a local museum to see rocks, fossils and dinosaurs. Stimulating displays reinforce children's learning and help them remember some of the special events. The very good opportunities for independent investigation enable the children to develop early scientific skills. For example, they visited the school's wild garden, armed with magnifying glasses and picture references to common mini-beasts. Their excitement, as logs were overturned to reveal different insects and, especially, the discovery of a family of baby newts was a delight to watch. Effective questioning by the teacher and adult helper ensured that the children learnt from their experiences and also became aware of the importance of life and care for defenceless creatures.
42. Children are encouraged to become aware of the wider world through looking at different places where they have been on holiday or where other members of their family live. In particular, children are learning about children who go to school in France and some enjoyed using a few French words when responding during the registration session. Children develop understanding of time through sequencing events. A photographic timetable is clearly displayed which enable children to follow the routines of the day. Children use computers competently accessing programs and using the mouse to control the cursor. Older children use 'Clipart' to draw and colour, making a teddy. They are developing good awareness of the range of techniques available through using the computer and some good work was seen in which children had written their names using a variety of fonts, sizes and colours. A display of junk models shows that children can use a good range of joining and sticking techniques. Role-play is used effectively to extend children's learning and enhance their understanding. A jungle area with an 'investigation centre' encourages children to see themselves as independent explorers and investigators. The very good outdoor area is used well and provides opportunities for seeing plants grow and older, more able children can identify the different parts of a flower.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children handle tools, materials and equipment effectively.
- There are well-planned opportunities for outdoor play.

Commentary

43. Children achieve well because of the good range of resources and opportunities for them to access activities independently, whilst receiving effective adult support and guidance when required. As a result, they are on course to attain the expected goals in physical development. Children enter the nursery with limited skills in manipulating small items and tools. Good teaching enables them to make good progress through the Foundation Stage and they are able to use tools, such as brushes and scissors, reasonably effectively by the end of the reception year. However, some still find difficulty in pencil control and this affects their ability to form letters accurately when writing. Children manipulate small construction equipment and toys with reasonable dexterity. There are very good opportunities for children to develop their co-ordination on the outdoor equipment. Children use the large wheeled toys confidently and can follow a given route. They are able to climb and balance competently and show a good awareness of space when moving around the inside and outdoor areas.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative play is planned well to link into other areas of learning.
- Children have good opportunities for drawing, painting and making.

Commentary

44. Children are on course to attain the goals they are expected to reach and many achieve well as a result of good teaching and well-planned activities. Children are developing satisfactory music skills. They can play untuned percussion instruments in time to recorded music and sing simple songs. Children use the role-play areas confidently, re-enacting domestic life in the home corner and playing very well with each other. Children enjoy creating models from playdough and designing junk models, using a variety of different materials and textures. Well-known tales, such as 'Jack in the Beanstalk' are used effectively as starting points for a variety of creative activities involving writing, art-work and role-play. These links between different areas of learning stimulate children's interest and enhance their knowledge and understanding. Older children draw flowers accurately from observation. Children show awareness of colour and pattern, and use this effectively when painting butterflies. They use computer art programs to draw and colour and an attractive range of computer-generated rainbows was displayed in the classroom.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, notably in speaking, thanks to teachers' good questioning.
- They write for different purposes, but not often independently at length.
- The subject is well led and pupils' progress is carefully monitored.

Commentary

45. Standards are broadly average by Year 2. Pupils' achievement is good since they have below average skills when they come to the school. National Curriculum assessments for 2004 showed that pupils in Year 6 reached below national average standards. Current Year 6 standards are now broadly average. Many pupils of different abilities arrive and leave - especially during Years 3 to 6. All groups of pupils do well in relation to their prior learning so their achievement is still good.
46. This stems from good teaching and good opportunities to ask and answer questions or take part in discussions. Pupils are generally attentive in conversation and make relevant contributions because teachers engage their attention well through carefully targeted questions. The vast majority of pupils in Year 2 apply new words and structures they learn well in speech but are less adept in writing them. A sample group of pupils from Year 2 read aloud with few problems, talking about their books with interest. They had little difficulty in finding a book on a particular subject from the satisfactory range in the school library.
47. Pupils in Year 6 use the library less but apply their research skills appropriately through ICT, including the internet. They achieve well in speaking and reading, although writing is again less developed. A wide range of activities includes stories, diary entries, letters and instructions but the outcomes are often short and limited in complexity. Even so, in one Year 6 lesson boys and girls of all abilities showed an above average competence

in the use of powerful words to express strong emotions succinctly but imaginatively in poetry.

48. Teaching is good, and the National Literacy Strategy is used as a guideline to meet the needs of the school. There were examples of very good teaching in both Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 and no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers do not always manage a good enough balance between the different language skills so writing receives less attention than it should. In the better lessons the brisk pace allows plenty of time for different activities, well-pitched to the needs of the class. In less successful lessons more time is spent talking about tasks than getting pupils to do them, and the tasks themselves do not extend learners as much as they should.
49. Good tracking systems help the school identify pupils' needs more clearly and, where appropriate, introduce support programmes. The targets and the accompanying comments and indications in marking vary somewhat from class to class because different methods are being trialled. In the better practice, teachers regularly refer to pupils' personal targets in lessons so they see how well they are moving forward. This is helping to raise standards. Regular assessments and evaluations and the focused support of teaching assistants help ensure that pupils with different needs are fully included and achieve equally successfully.
50. Subject management is good. The two curriculum leaders each monitor lessons throughout the school so that best practice may be more consistently shared. This has helped raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, a good improvement since the last inspection. They have already recognised important areas for development, including the need to provide greater opportunities for extended writing and especially an increase in the use of ICT. Current standards are broadly similar to those at the time of the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. There is a satisfactory emphasis on key vocabulary and the use of discussion and research skills to support work in other subjects. Writing for a variety of purposes includes some opportunities to produce work at length but this is not a prominent feature throughout the school. Shorter pieces are more usual. They include descriptions of sea-side features in geography and accounts of the growth of sunflowers in science, both using correct technical terms. There are some examples of word-processing in class newspapers in Years 3 and 4.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because lessons are well planned and teaching is good overall.
- Pupils' use of numeracy skills is promoted well through a good range of opportunities to solve problems.
- Questioning is used effectively to encourage pupils to explain their reasoning and extend their range of mathematical strategies.
- There is some inconsistency in teaching.

Commentary

52. Pupils enter school with below average mathematical understanding. They achieve well throughout the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, they attain standards that are in line with national averages and those of similar schools. Standards at the end of Year 2 were below the national average and well below similar schools last year but have improved this year and are now average. Current standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
53. Teaching and learning are good overall and have improved since the last inspection. However, there are still some inconsistencies in teachers' knowledge, and in the strategies they use, which result in differences between classes in the same year group, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are well planned, using guidance from the national strategy for numeracy, and include a good range of stimulating activities. The organisation of older pupils into ability sets is having a positive impact on the achievement of the more able Year 6 pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Intervention and support strategies for under-achievers are effective because they are well organised, with detailed tracking information on how these particular pupils are progressing.
54. Pupils work hard and their workbooks show that a good quantity of work is completed during the year. In Year 2, most pupils are can use appropriate methods for addition and subtraction problems and work with numbers to 100. They apply their knowledge of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables for multiplication confidently but are only just beginning to use this for work based on division. Year 6 pupils in the upper set work confidently with quite large numbers and decimals, using complex operations. Their work on shape and angles is detailed and accurate. Lower attaining pupils are given good opportunities to use practical strategies to help them in working out numerical problems.
55. Some very good lessons were seen, particularly in the upper part of the school. In these lessons, the teachers' good subject knowledge enabled them to express their expectations clearly and ask challenging questions. As a result, pupils extended the range of strategies that they used and improved their understanding, as they had to explain their reasoning. Throughout the school, pupils are given good opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in solving problems. This interests and motivates pupils and so they enjoy the tasks set, concentrating well and working hard. Their attitudes and response to mathematics is better than at the time of the last inspection. For example, the higher attaining set in Year 6 worked out the numerical value of words, using multiples of the value of each individual letter. They were fascinated to find that the word 'million' had a value much greater than the number it represented. The very good teaching in this lesson then encouraged the pupils to develop their reasoning further by identifying strategies for finding a word that would have a specific numerical value.
56. The good links that the school has with local schools and colleges has increased pupils' opportunities for learning. The local college is currently running a course for parents in school, developing their understanding of the mathematics curriculum so that they can help their children more effectively at home. Year 6 pupils have specific work for school, and at home, to take to their next school and so aid the transition to secondary education.

57. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinators for each key stage work well together in identifying priorities for improvement and the actions required to address these issues. Assessment procedures are rigorous and the school now produces a wealth of pupils' tracking and performance information. However, this is not yet used sufficiently well to address individual needs and inform learning targets for pupils. As a result, teachers' approaches to setting targets, planning work for pupils of different ability and marking are too variable and this has an impact on pupils' achievement in certain classes.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Pupils use mathematics to a satisfactory degree as part of their work in other subjects, such as recording data in science and using mathematical information in ICT. However, opportunities tend to occur incidentally rather than a result of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall achievement in science is very good, particularly in those aspects which are subject to the National Curriculum tests.
- Teaching is good overall and is regularly very good.
- Older pupils do not have enough say over the design of their investigations.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

59. In the 2004 teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2, standards were above average in terms of the percentage of pupils gaining the expected Level 2, but well below average in terms of those gaining the higher Level 3. In the same year's tests of pupils at the end of Year 6 (SATs), the results were well above average. Current standards broadly match these National Curriculum assessment results, being average overall in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. In addition to their knowledge of scientific facts, most pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good appreciation of the key issues involved in scientific investigation. However, their ability to design investigations is less well developed. Pupils enter the school with levels of knowledge and understanding of the world that are below average, and their overall achievement is very good. Current standards are a good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
60. Year 1 pupils are able to sort a variety of fruit and vegetables according to given criteria. Pupils in Year 2 successfully investigate the distance travelled by wheeled vehicles across different surfaces and have some idea of the nature of electrical insulators and conductors. By Year 4, many pupils have a good understanding of forces – including friction and magnetism – but are less clear about electrical circuitry. Year 5 pupils successfully design an investigation into which materials are the most effective sound insulators – but under the clear direction of their teacher. They have a good understanding of how sound travels through different substances. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were successfully carrying out a science bridging topic involving staff from the feeder secondary school as well as their own teachers. However, scrutiny of previous work and discussion with a group of pupils indicates that most have a good to very good understanding of a wide range of scientific issues

including plant inter-dependence, habitats, filtration and photosynthesis. They understand the need for fair testing in investigations and appreciate that they should change only one variable at a time.

61. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards their science lessons and are often enthusiastic about them – particularly the practical aspects. Their behaviour is consistently at least good. Teaching is good overall and some examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection. Strengths within the teaching of science include effective planning and a good range of methods and interesting tasks which keep the pupils motivated and support their gains in knowledge and skills. Pupils are positively and effectively managed and this impacts well on their attitudes, behaviour and relationships at all levels. However, work in some investigative science lessons is not matched closely enough to the needs of pupils with different levels of prior attainment. Also, older pupils do not have enough say over the design of their investigations; for example in response to a scientific question. This prevents them from reaching even higher standards in investigative science.
62. Planning is largely based on national guidelines. However, as a result of an ICT problem, assessment strategies are not fully in place yet. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic – but there is scope for her monitoring role to be developed further. ICT is used to support the delivery of science in a number of ways – including the use of computer-linked sensors to test sound levels.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good quality resources and the ICT suite is used very effectively.
- The subject is well led.
- Direct teaching of ICT skills is good in the upper part of the school.
- Assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are not established.

Commentary

63. Pupils' ICT skills are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school, although a few very able pupils could be given more challenge. Provision has improved since the last inspection as a result of better resources and improved teacher expertise.
64. Overall teaching is satisfactory and some good teaching was seen in the upper part of the school, including a very good lesson in Year 5. Teachers have a secure understanding of the requirements of the curriculum and communicate this well to pupils so that they know what is expected of them. However, different tasks are not planned to enable more able pupils to achieve as well as they might. The school has a good range of software to interest pupils. Teachers make good use of the facilities in the ICT suite and, as a result, pupils are confident in accessing and using the programs. Teachers use questioning very effectively to engage pupils' interest. Much of the work in the computer suite relates to work in other subjects of the curriculum but sometimes the links are tenuous and on other occasions the pupils' lack of subject

knowledge impedes their use and development of ICT skills. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class were constructing a decision tree to identify a fruit, linked to their science topic work. However, their inadequate factual knowledge of the characteristics of different fruit resulted in a number of pupils rushing the task and not achieving a useful outcome. A very good lesson was seen in which Year 5 pupils developed and controlled a traffic light sequence. The interactive whiteboard was used very effectively to demonstrate the task and the teacher reinforced and extended pupils' knowledge very well through her questioning. Her very calm yet enthusiastic approach enthused the class so that no time was wasted and everyone worked very hard. However a couple of very able pupils were given the same task and, although they enjoyed it, they were not sufficiently challenged and achieved the expected outcome very quickly. Some interesting work was seen in which pupils combined text and graphics to show instructions on playing hopscotch, which was sent to schools across Europe, linked to them through the Comenius project.

65. The subject leader is knowledgeable and well organised. He has worked hard to raise the quality of resources and ensure that they link well to work in other subjects. Teachers are given good opportunities to extend their expertise. However there are insufficient opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning. The co-ordinator is aware of the lack of secure information on how well pupils are progressing and is developing assessment procedures for the subject which are much needed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Much of the teaching of ICT skills is linked to work in other subjects. ICT is used for data handling in mathematics and other subjects, such as science and geography. In Year 6, pupils used a range of techniques to create a front page for a web site on their recent residential visit. Art programs are used to produce work in the style of Mondrian and Monet.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in detail and is reported on in full below. History and geography were sampled.

67. Scrutiny of planning and previous work and discussions with staff indicate that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met in the case of both history and geography. For example, in **geography**, Year 2 pupils compare the features of a seaside town in Wales and a Scottish island with those of their local area. Year 6 pupils explore the journey of a river from its source to the sea. They examine the human use of rivers; for example as means of transport and sources of energy. In **history**, Year 2 pupils study the life of Florence Nightingale and events surrounding the great Fire of London. By Year 6, the pupils are exploring different forms of historical evidence and the information that these might provide about the past. They study different aspects of life in Ancient Greece – including some of its military history.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn about aspects of three major faiths but tend not to relate these to their own experiences or use them to explore what influences their own lives.
- Teachers do not regularly emphasise all strands of the subject equally well.
- Subject management is slow to bring about change.

Commentary

68. Pupils' gains in knowledge about Christianity, Judaism and Islam are within the broad expectations of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus by the time they leave school. Their achievement is satisfactory. By Year 2, pupils retell, for example, Jesus' parable of the lost sheep competently in their own words. Higher attainers explain how the shepherd represents God, and the sheep, people. Pupils do not consider how the idea of a loving and compassionate creator may be found in other faiths. By Year 6, pupils describe accurately parts of a church and a mosque. They generally use the correct names for different features but there is little to show that the vast majority understand what these might signify.
69. Whilst pupils recall certain teachings, predominantly of Christianity, they are less competent in explaining how beliefs influence people's lives. On balance there is little evidence that pupils regularly make links between values and commitments and their own attitudes or behaviour. By Year 6 the highest attainers tentatively question the human desire to believe in something. In books and lessons there are otherwise few indications that pupils ask questions or suggest answers from their own or others' experiences about the puzzling aspects of life.
70. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but variable in quality. The best teaching probes pupils' understanding of what people believe and why they believe it to examine the difference it makes to individuals and societies. This helps pupils ponder the many questions of existence and encourages them to respond sensitively. In general, however, lessons and books suggest that more time is given to the description of aspects of faith and practice than to the deeper questions they raise. The use of worksheets and writing frames, especially for younger pupils, gives good support to the development of literacy skills, but the focus on form more than content detracts from spiritual development. The school uses broad statements of outcome to indicate how well pupils are doing. The optional system of levels suggested in the agreed syllabus is not used. Pupils' achievement in the different strands of the subject is therefore less easy to track, which makes it harder to match learning tasks closely to pupils' different needs.
71. The average standards found at the last inspection have been sustained, so subject management remains satisfactory. Strong links with the local church continue to provide good support to the study of Christianity. Since there are no places of worship of the other faiths studied within easy travelling distance, the school makes satisfactory use of ICT and video resources to compensate. Since the last inspection monitoring has begun so improvement has been satisfactory, but there is limited rigour in sharing best practice more widely. Moreover, the subject is not designated a priority for development until the 2006-7 school year, a long time for pupils to wait.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design was inspected in detail and is reported in full below. Design and technology, music and physical education were all sampled.

72. Discussion with co-ordinators, scrutiny of planning and previous work and the inspection of a small number of lessons indicates that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met in the case of all three sampled subjects. In one **design and technology** topic, for example, Year 2 pupils designed, made and evaluated hand puppets using, in the process, a wide range of techniques – including cutting, sewing and sticking. Year 2 pupils also recently entered a national competition to design an invention that would improve their lives. Four of their number came in the top fifty places out of three thousand entries and won £500 to purchase design and technology equipment for the school. After preparing a clear outline of their purpose and specific function, Year 6 pupils designed and made attractive slippers and, again, evaluated their products – suggesting possible areas for improvement. In one **music** lesson sampled during the inspection, Year 2 pupils explored how sounds can be changed and used this understanding to produce sound patterns related to weather. In a sampled hymn practice, Years 3 to 6 pupils tunefully sang a range of songs including ‘Lord, the Light of Your Love is Shining’ and ‘One More Step Along the World I Go’ enthusiastically. In a **physical education** lesson which was sampled, Year 2 pupils practised their hockey skills on both grass and tarmac.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good and most pupils enjoy their lessons.

Commentary

73. Standards in art and design are above average in Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils’ achievement is good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report.
74. Year 1 pupils successfully roll, cut and stick clay in order to construct collages. Some of these are quite imaginative. They are able to evaluate their work in a simple way. They also use the work of Andy Goldsworthy as an exemplar before sculpting very effective collages from a wide range of natural materials. They produce particularly effective horses and flowers. Year 2 pupils sketch growing plants, photograph these and digitally enhance the images they have produced. Year 3 pupils create striking oil pastel designs in the style of Celtic art and pictures of pools using a variety of media influenced by the paintings of David Hockney. By Year 6, the pupils are creating effective pastel landscapes inspired by a wide range of well-known artists – including Monet, Turner and Lowry.
75. The pupils enjoy art and design lessons and generally behave well in them. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good – but is good overall. Planning is detailed and stimulating resources are provided for the pupils. Activities are wide ranging and also impact well on the pupils’ interest and pace of learning. Pupils are generally well

managed – which impacts well on attitudes and relationships. Occasionally, however, some pupils are not fully engaged on their tasks throughout a lesson.

76. Planning is appropriately based on national guidelines, but assessment is still largely informal. There is some use of ICT to support learning in the subject. Art and design is soundly led and managed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This curriculum area was sampled.

77. The school has a good regard for pupils' personal, social and health education. Staff are very caring towards the pupils and deal with any problems promptly. Assemblies regularly deal with associated issues, and there is a programme of formal lessons throughout the school. In one personal, social and health education lesson sampled during the inspection, Year 1 pupils discussed ways to keep their bodies healthy through, for example, maintaining a balanced diet. In a Year 5 lesson, the pupils explored similarities and differences of people from different cultures and how understanding differences can be an enriching experience. The school recently achieved the Healthy Schools Award and aspects of health education are regularly taught as part of the science curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
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)