

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FRINGFORD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Fringford, Bicester

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123102

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Pearson

Lead inspector: Ian Nelson

Dates of inspection: 20 – 21 September 2004

Inspection number: 266853

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	108
School address:	The Green Fringford Bicester Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX27 8DY
Telephone number:	01869 277397
Fax number:	01869 277397
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Martin Greenwood
Date of previous inspection:	22 February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils entitled to free school meals	3.2 per cent (below average)
Pupils whose mother tongue is not English	none
Pupils on the register of special educational needs	14.8 per cent (below average)

Awards include: School achievement award 2002.

This is a small Church of England primary school. Pupils attend from the village of Fringford and surrounding villages. All of the pupils are of white British background. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. There is little movement of pupils into or out of the school during a school year, but only 64 per cent of the Year 6 pupils who left in 2003 went all through the school. There is a balance between boys and girls overall, but some year groups are not evenly balanced. All the pupils are taught in mixed age classes because of the size of the school. The school lost two experienced teachers to other posts in the term before the inspection. The headteacher has a significant class teaching commitment. Attainment on entry is above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2220	Ian Nelson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
11041	Marvyn Moore	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
30544	Gill Battarbee	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs English Music Physical education
18765	Pauleen Shannon	<i>Team inspector</i>	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The overall effectiveness of this school is good.** The headteacher and governors provide very good leadership, creating an ethos where all pupils feel welcome, well cared for and included in the life of the school. Good teaching ensures that pupils' achievement is good, so that standards are rising and currently well above average at Year 6. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work are very good. Parents have positive views of the school. The school provides very good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Overall leadership and management are good, though staff changes have led to the loss of two experienced subject co-ordinators and a need to review responsibilities.
- Standards at Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils achieve well in their learning.
- Teaching is very good at the Foundation Stage (Reception) and good overall in other classes, but the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- Reception children enjoy excellent facilities.
- Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to their work because the school provides very effectively for their social and moral development.
- Staff care for the pupils very well so that they feel safe and secure in school.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

Overall improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The school has tackled all the key issues from the last inspection. Teaching and learning are much improved. Pupils now behave better and have more positive attitudes to their work. The care of pupils is now very good. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) has improved, along with the overall curriculum. The good quality of the leadership and management has been maintained. Pupils' standards of achievement have risen.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - very high; 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.** The table shows that, in the 2003 national tests for Year 6, pupils' standards of attainment were above average in English, below average in science and well below average in mathematics compared with all schools. This reflects the unsatisfactory teaching at the time of the last inspection which meant that these pupils did not get a good enough start to their school careers. It also reflects the more confident teaching in English at that time. These issues were recognised and tackled by the school. The similar school comparison shows that pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6 were very good in English (in the top five per cent of schools), good in science and satisfactory in mathematics. The value-added measure shows that they achieved well overall between the tests they took at Year 2 and those at Year 6. The unvalidated results of the 2004 tests show improvements in all three subjects, with a particularly sharp rise in standards in

mathematics. The school achieved its target in English at Level 4 or above in 2003 but missed it in mathematics. In the 2004 tests it achieved its target in both subjects. Standards seen during the inspection were well above average in all three subjects. In the tests at Year 2 in 2003, standards were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing compared with all schools. Standards have risen very well in all three subjects since the last inspection. Children enter the Reception class with above average standards. However, as some have only experienced one or two terms in Reception in the past, they have not progressed as fast as they might have done before entering Year 1. Nonetheless, most children exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals (the targets they are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage). Standards of work seen in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education (RE), art and design, design and technology (DT), geography and history are above average. Not enough was seen in music and physical education (PE) to be able to make judgements on standards overall. The achievement of pupils with SEN is good.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** Their behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good** throughout the school, and very good in the Foundation Stage. Systems for checking how well pupils are doing are good overall. The curriculum is good and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and RE. The school provides a very good range of extra activities to enliven pupils' learning. Provision for the care, welfare, health and safety, advice and guidance of pupils is very good. Links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide very good support, as well as holding the school to account for its performance. The school meets all statutory requirements. The headteacher leads the school very well, with a very clear vision for its future. She has put in place good management systems that have resulted in a period of sustained improvement. Recent staff changes mean that she has a class teaching commitment and the school has lost two experienced subject co-ordinators.

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

Parents' views of the school are good. A small number expressed some concern about bullying, the information they receive on their child's progress and the way the school seeks their views, but the inspectors found no evidence to warrant their concerns. Pupils have very positive views of the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Review and revise subject co-ordination roles in the light of staff changes and the head teacher's increased teaching load, and ensure that all co-ordinators are able to check rigorously and systematically the standards and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

- Ensure that the marking policy is implemented consistently so that pupils know what is good about their work and precisely how to make it better.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is **good**. Pupils who completed Year 6 in 2004 made good progress between their Year 2 tests in English, mathematics and science and those they took in Year 6. Standards in the national tests at Year 2 are now much improved. Pupils with SEN achieve well in lessons.

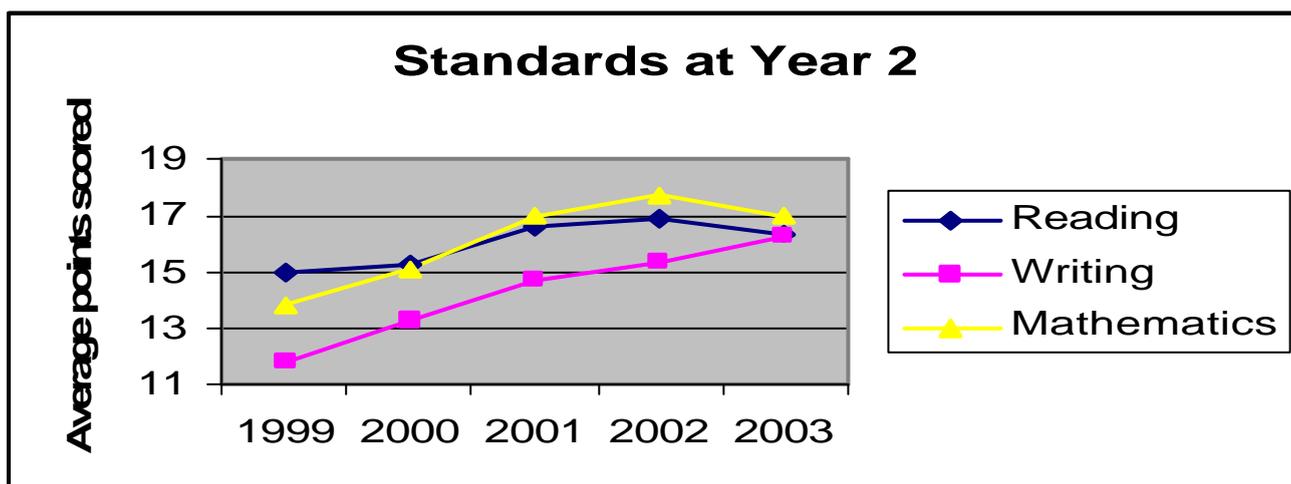
#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by Year 6.
- Standards have risen well since the last inspection.
- Standards in ICT are better than at the time of the last inspection.

#### Commentary

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards generally above average for their age. They achieve well and enter Year 1 with most children exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Until the autumn of 2004, children entered Reception termly so that some only experienced one or two terms in the Foundation Stage before joining Year 1. Consequently, not all children enjoyed the full benefit of the very good provision for the whole Reception year.

2. The national test results in 2003 for Year 2 show pupils attaining standards above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. The comparison with similar schools shows standards were above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics. However, over the years achievement appears to have improved from a low point in 2002, when standards were well below average compared with similar schools in all three areas. The graph below shows the sustained rise in standards over recent years, despite the slight dip in reading and mathematics in 2003.



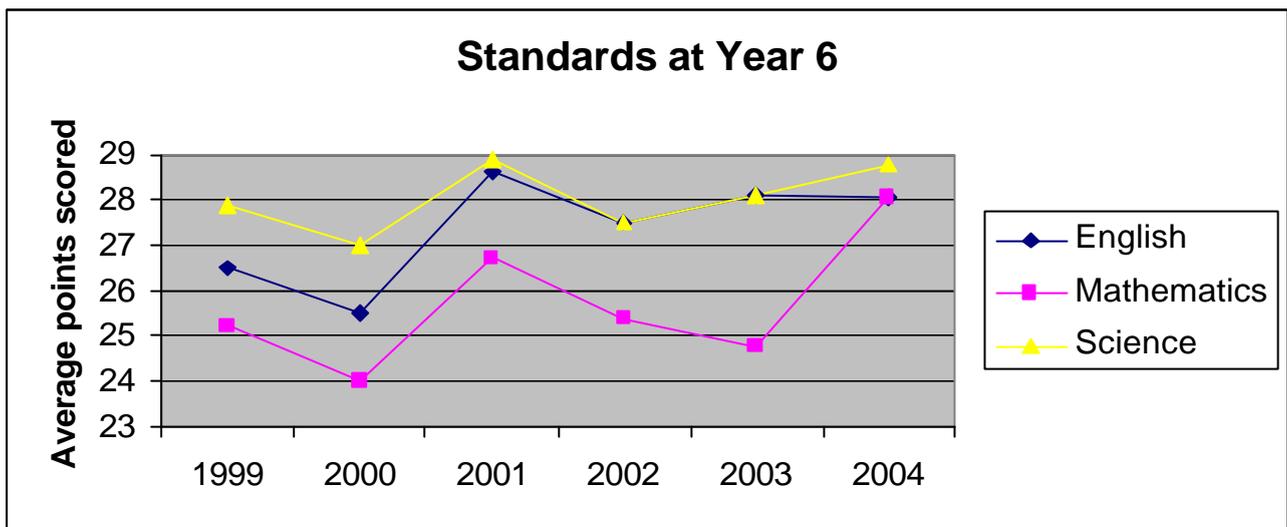
#### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (16.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.3 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.0 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Standards of work in these subjects seen during the inspection were above average and reflect the effective way the headteacher and governors have tackled the weaknesses in teaching identified in the previous inspection.

4. In the national tests for Year 6 in 2003, standards were above average in English, below average in science, and well below average in mathematics compared with all schools. Most of the pupils in this cohort were in school at the time of the last inspection when unsatisfactory teaching was identified at Reception and Years 1 and 2. These results, therefore, reflect the impact of that teaching, coupled with more confident teaching of English than of mathematics at that time. When compared with their results at Year 2, however, these pupils achieved well overall. In English their achievement was excellent. In mathematics it was satisfactory and in science it was good. The unvalidated 2004 test results show a rise in standards in all three subjects as shown in the graph below, with the biggest improvement coming in mathematics, to reverse two years of decline.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (27.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.8 (25.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.1 (27.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. Standards of work seen during the inspection in English, mathematics and science were well above average because of the much improved teaching and learning, effective analysis of annual test results, good range and balance of learning activities, and better motivated pupils.

6. Standards in ICT, RE, art and design, DT, history and geography are all judged to be above average by Year 6. Too little work was seen in music and PE to make judgements on standards.

7. Pupils with SEN receive very good support and achieve well in lessons. Learning support assistants help them, so that they are fully included in all the class activities and often achieve the standards expected of their age.

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

8. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are pleased to participate in the wide variety of activities and clubs provided by the school.
- Pupils' confidence, self-esteem and relationships with others are very good.
- The school is very good at promoting good relationships, including racial harmony, and deals very effectively with all forms of harassment.

## Commentary

9. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Themed assemblies, which are taken at regular intervals by the local vicar, and frequent visits to places of worship, enhance pupils' spirituality. Pupils have opportunities to study, and reflect on, great works of art and music. However, there was less evidence of lesson planning which included a spiritual dimension as a matter of course.

10. Pupils' moral development is promoted very well by the ethos of the school, which ensures pupils know, and understand, the differences between right and wrong. The school has very high expectations for pupils' conduct and they respond accordingly, with very good behaviour. This begins in the Foundation Stage and ensures that children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Praise is used effectively by teachers to raise pupils' confidence and self esteem and, as a result, pupils learn with confidence. Pupils undertake classroom activities with enthusiasm and a sense of purpose. They treat their own belongings, other people's belongings, and school property with respect and care. The inspection team was greatly impressed by the candour of the pupils, who were delighted to talk to them, show them around and express their confidence in the staff and pride in their school. Pupils and parents interviewed during the inspection week were totally sure that there is no trace of racial harassment. Bullying is very rare and every pupil who offered an opinion was certain that the school was a good place in which to learn, work and play.

11. Pupils' social development is encouraged by regular visits to places of interest, including the Henley Rowing Museum, the Warwick Toy Museum and the local Botanical Gardens. Arrangements are also made for visitors to come into school, such as theatre groups and visiting speakers. Pupils have very good relationships with adults and are keen to take responsibility and show personal initiative, for example, by acting as monitors, operating equipment in assemblies, and acting as friends and mentors to younger pupils at play time and lunch time. They are given a good level of responsibility, and are encouraged to raise money for numerous local charities and to support local events. The school has recently introduced a school council; pupils are pleased to be elected as members and eager to contribute their ideas for improvements to be made.

12. Pupils' cultural awareness is very good because the school is very effective in promoting pupils' own cultural traditions and those of others. The school has arranged for various visitors to come to the school, including a sculptor from Uganda and an African Caribbean singer, and has organised theme days such as a Viking Day, Caribbean Day, Greek Day and Tudor Day. Pupils study the work of illustrative artists such as Nick Sharratt and authors such as Jacqueline Wilson, and the school successfully combines with other local schools to sing in a choir.

## Attendance

13. Attendance at 94.4 per cent is good. The school's action to promote attendance is very good. The school regularly monitors attendance on a first day of absence basis and the education welfare officer makes regular visits to the school.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

14. There have been no exclusions for a number of years.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The overall quality of education is good. Teaching, learning and assessment are good.** The curriculum is good and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and RE. The school provides a very good range of extra activities to enliven pupils' learning. Provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils is very good. Links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

### Teaching and learning

**Teaching is consistently good** throughout the school and very good in the Foundation Stage. Teaching and support staff work well together to ensure all pupils are well supported.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching support staff make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Teachers use resources well to capture and hold pupils' interest.
- All pupils, whatever their ability, are fully involved in lessons.
- Teachers make good use of links between subjects.
- The marking policy is not applied consistently enough.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7	12	2	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

15. Teaching is much improved since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and the proportion of good and very good teaching was higher than at the time of the last inspection. This is the result of good leadership and management identifying the problems with teaching at that time and taking effective and decisive action to remedy them. Pupils and their parents have positive views of the quality of teaching. Some parents expressed concerns over homework, with some suggesting there was too much and others that there was too little. The inspectors judge homework to be satisfactory overall but with some good examples. For instance, Year 6 pupils were expected to bring to school representations of internal body organs that they had made at home, to create composite models in a lesson. They responded very well to the challenge, and the homework very much enhanced their learning.

16. Children get a very good start in the Foundation Stage. The facilities are much improved and the children have an excellent outside area that is well used to promote physical, creative and social development in particular. Teaching is firmly based on the requirements for the Foundation Stage. The very effective partnership between teaching and support staff ensures that all children get the support they need, with a balance between teacher directed and self-chosen activities. Consequently, children settle quickly to school routines, enjoy the activities available and make very good progress in their learning.

17. The consistently good teaching in Years 1 to 6 ensures pupils make good progress and achieve well in their learning. The very good teamwork among teaching and support staff is a strong

feature throughout the school. Support staff are very well briefed and confident, and they work very effectively with small groups of pupils so that they succeed with their tasks. The flexibility of this team work means that teaching and support staff can take turns to support higher or lower attaining groups, including pupils with SEN, with equal confidence. This ensures good achievement of all abilities within the mixed age classes. Staff tell pupils in lessons how they can improve their work, and they use effective questioning to extend their learning. However, the marking in pupils' books does not always tell them as clearly what is good about their work and how to make it better; this is something the school is working to improve.

18. Staff help pupils to reinforce learning from one subject by using it in others. This was shown in science, for example, when pupils used mathematical skills to measure and create graphs of their results. Pupils also used ICT to produce graphs and tables of the results of scientific investigations. Learning is effective because the pupils have direct instruction from teaching and support staff in a particular skill and then reinforce that learning by using it in other subjects.

19. Teaching and learning place a strong emphasis on practical activity and the effective use of resources. This ensures that pupils are very well motivated, behave very well and work hard. Staff make increasingly effective use of the interactive whiteboards that have recently been installed and pupils make good use of the computers in the ICT suite. Pupils used them to find information on types of animal in a science lesson, for example.

20. Staff use a combination of end of year tests and ongoing teacher assessments to check how well pupils are doing. They keep detailed records of what individuals have achieved in each subject, and use these records in creating groups within lessons. This ensures that pupils, including those with SEN, receive work that challenges them and enables them to learn well.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good** overall. It fully meets statutory requirements, and a very good range of activities enriches pupils' learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides very good leadership of the curriculum and, as a result, the school gives its pupils a wide range of stimulating and exciting activities.
- The provision for the Foundation Stage is very good; outdoor provision for Years 1 to 6 is not as good as that for the Foundation Stage.
- The strong links made between subjects help to make learning more relevant.
- The provision for pupils with SEN is very good.

### **Commentary**

21. Children in the Foundation Stage now benefit from a very effective curriculum, supported by an excellent outdoor learning environment. The school has worked hard to raise the quality of provision for these children and this represents very good improvement since the last inspection. Good planning by staff enables children to achieve well and reach good standards.

22. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 shows a significant improvement since the last inspection. Learning is planned in a two-year cycle to ensure balance and progression for the mixed age classes. The headteacher identified the need to develop a more creative and exciting curriculum. Together with the staff, she organises theme weeks, focus days and visits, as well as topics that cover several subjects and contributions by visitors to the school. The topics are all designed to appeal to both boys and girls. All these opportunities are carefully planned to provide high quality, meaningful learning. Pupils said they enjoyed learning this way.

23. Good use is made of the mobile library service and all the classrooms have a well-stocked fiction library and a good selection of non-fiction books. Although the school's central non-fiction library area is small, it has sufficient stock in good condition and there are adjacent areas for pupils to sit and study. However, there is limited evidence that the older pupils, in particular, use the library systematically to develop their research skills through independent study.

24. A very good range of out-of-school activities helps pupils to develop into confident, well-rounded young citizens, and supplements the well-structured PSHE programme that is built into the curriculum. Pupils take part in clubs, for example, for drama and performance, French, hockey and football, and have opportunities to learn to play different instruments including the recorder, clarinet and saxophone. An enthusiastic group of Year 6 pupils was proud to explain the importance of their small village school taking part in local events, such as the school's musical day, the girls' football tournament, hockey matches and the school's swimming gala. The French club had visited a local renowned French restaurant to practise, not only their vocabulary, but also their palate, and the oldest pupils were looking forward to taking part in the bi-annual residential visit.

25. Pupils with SEN are fully included in all activities, and their needs are always considered when lessons are planned. Pupils' individual education plans outline their targets, and the dedicated learning support assistants provide very good support for the pupils, whose progress is discussed and recorded on a daily basis. This good communication ensures that pupils' progress is smooth and avoids unnecessary repetition or gaps developing in their learning.

26. Overall, the school's accommodation is satisfactory and resources for learning are good. The classrooms are attractive and well organised and, although the school hall is small, lessons are well planned to match the available space. Pupils use the area well and good use is made of the outdoor spaces and adjacent village hall. Care is taken to review and update the resources on a regular basis and spending is directly linked to raising achievement. The newly acquired interactive white boards have been put to good use straight away, enhancing pupils' learning and providing enjoyment and motivation for them. There is a good number of teaching and support staff to cater for the needs of the pupils and the curriculum.

27. The grounds are well maintained and well used to support pupils' learning. However, the school is aware that the recent development of a very high quality outdoor area for the youngest children has created some inequity in the quality of provision with the lack of outdoor equipment for the older pupils.

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

The provision for pupils' care, guidance, health and safety is **very good**. Pupils are supported very well and receive very good advice and guidance.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Child protection procedures at the school are very good.
- There are very good procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults at the school.

### **Commentary**

28. The headteacher is the designated child protection officer and has received appropriate training, which has been shared with all other members of staff. The child protection policy is relevant and comprehensive and conforms to the requirements of the area child protection committee.

29. The headteacher, together with the bursar and nominated governor, carries out regular health and safety inspections of the buildings and grounds to ensure that the premises remain risk free. The school has an appropriate number of staff fully trained in first aid, and any accidents are meticulously recorded. The fire alarm is tested at regular intervals and regular fire drills take place, with records being kept.

30. All the pupils are very well known to all the staff. There are regular meetings between teachers, teaching assistants and the headteacher to discuss pupils' attitudes, attendance, personal achievement and problems. Pupils' personal development is monitored well, both formally and informally, and pupils are confident that staff will take their concerns seriously and respond supportively to them.

31. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils interviewed during the inspection confirmed that they considered the advice, guidance and help they received to be of high quality, and they feel that they are cared for and cherished.

32. The school has good arrangements to involve pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. A school council has recently been formed and pupils confirm that staff are eager to obtain their views on school development and improvements to be made. In PHSE, pupils are given ample opportunity to voice their opinions, and they feel they are treated as responsible young people by staff.

33. Pupils with SEN are well integrated into the life of the school. They receive high quality care and their progress is well monitored. Pupils' individual education plans are of a good standard. Parents are invited to regular reviews of their children's progress, and contribute to target setting. As a result of the school's active approach, pupils with SEN make good progress and thrive.

34. Induction arrangements for pupils are very good. Most Reception pupils have previously attended the playgroup, which is attached to the school, and as a result, are already known to staff when they arrive. Parents of prospective pupils are given a welcome pack containing information and early reading material. Reception parents are allowed to stay with their children if necessary, although few feel the need to do so. As a result of the well thought out induction arrangements, and the way that they are sensitively introduced, pupils make a very good start to their school life.

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

Links with parents and the community are **very good**. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is very good provision to parents of information about the school and pupils' standards and progress.
- The school has very good procedures for obtaining parents' views and ensuring their satisfaction, and for dealing with concerns or complaints.

### **Commentary**

35. Parents have very good views of the school and feel that it is very well led and managed. The overwhelming majority of those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that:

- their children are making good progress;
- their children like school;
- teaching is good;
- staff treat children fairly;
- children behave well.

A minority expressed concerns about the information they receive on their child's progress, bullying in the school and that the school does not seek their views or opinions. The inspection team agrees with all the positive remarks made but found no evidence to support the concerns expressed by some parents.

36. Pupils' reports are issued annually and are of good quality. They describe fully what pupils have studied on a subject by subject basis, and give targets for improvement. The school holds two parent evenings a year, one shortly after pupils have started a new school year and one in the spring term. In addition, curriculum letters are sent out to parents every term telling them what their children will learn, and parents receive individual information for each child on target setting and achievement. Parents can see staff at any time if they have any concerns, and the school promptly contacts parents if there are problems with pupils' behaviour or work. The school holds regular well-attended sharing assemblies in the village hall to which all parents and friends are invited. Merit assemblies are also held where children receive certificates and merit badges.

37. The school surveys parents annually to obtain their views and the headteacher makes herself freely available to parents at all times if they wish to give her their opinions or seek advice. A large number of parents and grandparents help in school by accompanying pupils on school trips and visits, hearing readers and helping with cooking. The school holds an annual gardening day for parents and provides lunch for them.

38. Parents receive regular newsletters, which contain a variety of information on the school's activities and plans. The prospectus is a very well produced document giving a good deal of information to parents about the school's aims, objectives and curriculum. The governors' annual report contains a great deal of information about the school and fully complies with legislation.

39. The Friends of Fringford School, an organisation to which all parents belong, arranges many social events. These include race evenings, wine tasting, social dinners and children's events, such as the pancake party and Halloween disco. It raises between £4,000 and £5,000 a year, which is donated to school funds. The school greatly appreciates their efforts.

40. Links with the community are very good. The school has very strong links with the local church and the vicar regularly comes in to school to conduct assemblies. The school uses the village hall on a regular basis and provides concerts for the local community. Pupils raise money for local charities and make up Christmas parcels for children in disadvantaged countries. Regular visitors from the community, including the police, the fire brigade, the school nurse and the vicar, come into school to talk to pupils about their work. Members of the community give talks to the pupils about their life experiences.

41. The school is a member of the Bicester Learning in Partnership Group which comprises seventeen primary schools and two secondary schools. The group holds regular meetings to discuss matters of mutual interest. Subject co-ordinators meet on a regular basis to organise partnership training. The school has links with Banbury College and provides training places for its teaching assistants. Pupils from the two local secondary schools are given work experience places.

42. The school has good arrangements for the transfer of pupils. It ensures that parents receive all relevant information to enable them to make an informed choice for their children's secondary education. This is particularly important, as Fringford School feeds up to eight secondary schools. Staff visit some of the secondary schools and the school administers the optional 11+ examination to pupils who wish to take it. As a result, all pupils are well prepared for their secondary school life.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The school meets all statutory requirements. The headteacher leads the school very well, with a very clear vision for its future. She has put in place good management systems that have resulted in a period of sustained improvement. Recent staff changes mean that she now has a class teaching commitment, and the school has lost two experienced subject co-ordinators.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The good leadership noted at the time of the last inspection has been maintained.
- The school has a very strong ethos of care that values each individual.
- The school has a very small financial surplus to carry forward.

### Commentary

43. Governance is very good. The school has an active, committed and informed governing body that has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors have committees to ensure that they work efficiently and effectively. They ensure that statutory requirements are fulfilled. Performance management is fully in place. Governors understand the information the school receives on the results of the annual national tests at Year 2 and Year 6. They use this information to set priorities for the future of the school and are fully involved in school development planning. They understand and apply the principles of best value and know that good spending decisions result in improved achievement of pupils. They kept a larger than usual financial surplus last year to enable the headteacher to be released from a class teaching commitment. Given the improvements in results at Year 6 in 2004, this seems to have paid dividends. However, the present state of the budget means that the headteacher now has a class teaching commitment and there is a very small carry forward predicted for this financial year. Given the level of funding the school receives, the improvements made in recent years and the rising standards, it is judged to give very good value for money.

### Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	283,432.00	Balance from previous year	24,113.00
Total expenditure	307,408.00	Balance carried forward to the next	137.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,846.00		

44. Leadership is good overall. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and shares this with all staff and governors. She enjoys very positive support from parents. Those at the meeting with inspectors agreed wholeheartedly that she provides very good leadership. She has a very clear understanding of how well the school is performing and where the priorities for improvement lie. Consequently, her self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development is good. This has led to her tackling the unsatisfactory teaching noted at the time of the last inspection and to the improving standards since that time. The very strong ethos of care for individuals, and high expectations, have led to much improved attitudes and behaviour from pupils so that they are very well motivated and work hard. Subject co-ordinators lead their subjects well. However, at the time of the inspection the school had lost two experienced co-ordinators and needed to review leadership responsibilities, particularly in the light of the headteacher's increased class teaching commitment. Despite the recent turnover of staff, the school has created a closely-knit team with a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils.

45. Management is good. The headteacher accurately identifies priorities for improvement through the school development plan. All staff are involved in development planning and each subject co-ordinator produces a subject plan to feed into the whole school plan. Some of the subject development plans, however, are not precise enough and include items that are properly part of the co-ordinator's ongoing job description rather than development issues. Consequently, the whole school development plan contains more than it should and could be more concisely expressed. The headteacher has recognised the importance of the management role of subject co-ordinators and has arranged for them to receive training in their roles. Given the small size of the school, however, and the headteacher's present class teaching commitment, there is little opportunity for the co-ordinators to be released from their classes to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. The headteacher's teaching commitment also limits how much time she can realistically spend in other classes.

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

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

46. Provision in the Foundation stage is **very good**. Children are taught very well and so achieve well. They have a rich and interesting variety of activities to aid their learning. Admission arrangements are very effective and help children settle well. There are very good relationships with the parents and with the local playgroup. The Reception class benefits from the many parents who help in class and from the regular support with their children's reading activities at home. There are very good arrangements for Reception children when they enter Year 1. The weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection have been fully addressed. The school has developed a curriculum for the mixed age class that caters very well for the Reception and Year 1 pupils. The assessment arrangements are good. Children with SEN are identified early and well catered for. Staff make regular assessments of children's learning, which are shared with parents. A real strength is the teamwork between teaching and support staff, which is very good. There are effective arrangements in place for planning and delivering the curriculum between the two teachers who share the class. The teaching observed was consistently very good. Accommodation and resources are very good and used well. Staff provide an interesting range of indoor and outdoor activities, and make very good use of the excellent all weather surface and outside covered area. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.

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

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

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

- Achievement is very good because teaching and learning is focused on promoting children's confidence and independence. The learning support assistant is a real asset.
- Induction arrangements are very good, helping children to settle.
- Year 1 pupils are good role models, showing Reception children how to work together.

#### **Commentary**

47. Teaching is very good and, as a result, children make very good progress in their social and behavioural skills. By the end of their time in Reception most children will exceed their Early Learning Goals.

48. The new admission arrangements are very effective and help both the children who attend full-time, and those who attend part-time, to settle quickly. Very supportive relationships are established so children feel confident and happy. Children enter with a range of ability and experience. Organised visits for children with their parents help the new entrants feel safe. The very good links with the playgroup also give the children real confidence. Reception staff establish children's new routines in a happy and enjoyable way. They make very good use of the Year 1 children to show younger children how to behave and work together. The staff are very caring and use every opportunity to praise children. They provide many opportunities for children to learn to co-operate through playing games. Children who have particular special educational needs receive good support and every effort is made to ensure they are fully included in all activities. From the beginning, children are expected to take some responsibility for the equipment they use. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. Children respond very well to the reward system and to frequent praise. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Reception children clearly enjoy coming to school.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through an interesting curriculum.
- Many opportunities are provided for children to express their ideas through meaningful talk.

### Commentary

49. Teaching is very good. Children make very good progress and achieve well, despite many only having part-time provision. By the end of Reception most will exceed their Early Learning Goals.

50. Children enter Reception with a wide range of ability in communication skills, although most enter with good communication skills. They are encouraged to listen, and the activities are organised so that they have very good opportunities to talk about what they are learning. They particularly enjoy repeating well-known rhymes and stories. Staff use every opportunity to extend children's language skills. The imaginative play areas are used very well to encourage talk that is meaningful and relevant. Staff encourage less confident children to talk in sentences, and the more fluent communicators to extend their vocabulary.

51. Staff teach children very good reading habits. Children are taught that books are special and they learn how to take care of them. They have a cosy reading corner and a *Pooh Bear* soft toy with the invitation 'come and read a story to me'. This makes sharing books very inviting. Stories are told in an interesting and appealing way by staff. For example, in a very well taught lesson children were spellbound as they shared the story, *The Mixed up Chameleon*. Reception children are beginning to recognize a few words and sounds. Very good use is made of letter and word games. Staff show children that books are valued, and encourage an enjoyment of them through reading a range of good quality big books. Daily opportunities are provided for children to use pencils, pens and paper. Children's work shows that, by the end of Reception, they are learning to form their letters and write their name correctly. They write a few sentences, but a few need more help to develop a fluent, confident style.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through practical activities.

### Commentary

52. Teaching is very good and, as a result, children make very good progress and achieve well. There is a sustained focus on developing children's mathematical skills. By the end of their time in Reception, most children exceed their Early Learning Goals.

53. Children enter with a range of ability and experience. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce and extend children's mathematical skills. For example, throughout the day children join in many counting activities. Staff have high expectations and help children to learn through purposeful play. Time is given for children to explain their mathematical ideas and use mathematical language. They are encouraged to use correct terms, such as *longer and shorter*, whilst measuring objects.

Number awareness is promoted very well through counting games and familiar number rhymes. Children really enjoy the attractive resources and soft toys. They have daily opportunities to use sand and water, and are starting to record their work and write numbers. There is a very good balance between structured learning, informal exploration and recording of work.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good balance between structured activities and learning through play and informal experiences.

### **Commentary**

54. Teaching is very good and, as a result, children make very good progress and achieve well. There is a sustained focus on widening children's understanding of their environment. By the end of their time in Reception most children exceed their Early Learning Goals.

55. Planning shows that there is a very good range of activities to enable children to develop their senses and widen their understanding of the world. Very good use is made of social times for children to learn about healthy foods. Curriculum plans show that staff provide a range of interesting experiences and visits. Topics such as *'We are special'*, *'Growing'*, and *'Forces'* help children to build up their picture of the world. The wide range of visitors to school, and visits out, all add interest and excitement. In a very well taught session, children made real gains in their understanding of living things because of the excellent use of resources to capture their interest. The teacher set up an investigation area outside and children took real delight in using magnifying glasses to look at insects. Many informal experiences are provided to give the children an understanding of the world of work. For example, two girls really persevered as mechanics when trying to attach a trailer to a three-wheeled vehicle. They were reluctant to change activity until they were successful. Staff extend children's knowledge of different cultures well through teaching about festivals such as Chinese New Year, Harvest and Diwali. Computer skills are well taught. Staff build up children's pleasure and confidence in using computers by providing daily opportunities for them to use them.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

*No judgements about teaching and learning, standards and achievement were made in this area of learning, due to lack of evidence.*

### **Commentary**

56. Planning shows that the children have regular sessions in the hall to help them develop their physical skills and to learn to respond to music. The outside area has large climbing equipment where children can develop their physical skills and their confidence, safely. Children have daily access to three-wheeled vehicles and a range of small games equipment. They are helped to develop their manipulative skills and are provided with regular opportunities to handle dough, scissors and small construction equipment.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

*No judgements about teaching and learning, standards and achievement were made in this area of learning, due to lack of evidence.*

## Commentary

57. There are daily opportunities for the children to develop their creativity and skills. There is access to a good range of materials, with many planned opportunities to paint, draw and make models. Attractive displays around the room show that the children have had a good range of creative and stimulating experiences. They have many opportunities to learn nursery rhymes, sing songs, listen to music tapes and act out simple stories. There is a very extensive range of attractive costumes to help children extend their imagination. They show real pleasure and confidence when they use the home and imaginative areas.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well above average standards in English because they want to learn, they are well taught and their progress is carefully monitored.
- The curriculum is rich and stimulating, and encourages pupils to enjoy their learning and achieve well.
- High quality help is given to pupils with SEN, and this enables them to make very good progress.
- The focus on consolidating writing skills through other subjects has been effective in improving standards.
- There are inconsistencies in applying the marking scheme.
- The subject co-ordinator has insufficient time to develop her monitoring role across the whole school.

## Commentary

58. Since the last inspection, there has been very good improvement in the school's provision in English, and standards have risen significantly overall. Pupils achieve well. Some pupils entering Year 1 have only experienced a short time in Reception. However, the quality of support they receive ensures that, by the end of Year 2, they attain standards that are above average and, by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average.

59. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above the standards expected nationally and they achieve well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are encouraged to speak clearly and to listen carefully to each other. This increases their concentration and knowledge of sentence structure and they learn to converse with others. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are encouraged to talk about their work, use the correct vocabulary and engage in conversation, both formally and informally. For example, a small group of pupils and adults were engaged in a fascinating, informal conversation about hedgehogs' teeth.

60. Pupils achieve well in developing their reading skills, and standards are above average. In Years 1 and 2, the structured reading schemes, reading support in school, and regular reading at home ensure that the pupils progress well. As their skills develop, the pupils are encouraged to read increasingly more demanding texts. One Year 2 pupil said how she was enjoying her new book because, *'it's challenging me'*. In Year 6, the pupils spoke confidently about their likes and dislikes in reading and they were all able to use reference books to find information. However, the boys are less enthusiastic about reading than the girls. Although the school has already identified this difference, and has recently purchased new reading materials with a wider appeal, this has not yet had time to have an impact on the boys' enthusiasm for reading.

61. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of writing since the previous inspection and the pupils achieve well. In the 2003 national tests, standards in writing rose to be well above average in Year 2. This improving picture was maintained in the unvalidated results from the 2004 tests. During the inspection, the standard of work seen in the Year 6 pupils' books and during lessons also indicates that standards are well above the national average. This improvement is the result of a wide range of strategies. These include curriculum development to make writing activities more relevant, exciting and interesting for both boys and girls, whole staff training and specific policies for spelling and handwriting.

62. To ensure the improvements in standards are sustainable, the changes have been incorporated into the long-term planning. As a result, the teachers design interesting tasks that ensure the pupils practise their writing skills across many subjects. Word processing is well used in English, with pupils having a good range of opportunities to practise their skills. The majority of pupils use grammar and punctuation correctly. They produce well-crafted, thoughtful pieces of writing, such as the Emotion Poems on display in the school hall, in which pupils attributed colour, taste and smell to emotions. For example, they wrote, *'anger is deep red - it tastes of hot ashes'*, and, *'love is light blue and tastes of juicy strawberries'*.

63. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and has a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Teachers have detailed knowledge of their pupils' progress and abilities. Relationships in the classroom are very good and teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They organise their lessons well and prepare detailed target sheets for each pupil. However, although teachers have high expectations and plan work for different ability groups, they do not always link the pupils' targets effectively enough to the work in the lessons. This limits the potential progress for some pupils. Although the school has reviewed its marking policy, this is not yet consistently applied to written work so as to tell pupils why a particular piece is good and what they can do to improve it.

64. The school deploys its support staff very well. They provide high quality help for pupils, especially those with SEN. As a result, these pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. They work in small groups, have well planned work that is linked to their individual education plans, and their progress is closely monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), who is also the headteacher.

65. The leadership and management provided by the relatively new subject leader is good. Over the last year she has gained a very good knowledge of the standards in Years 5 and 6, has implemented the strategy to make the teaching of English more interesting, relevant and exciting, and has led the implementation of the new handwriting scheme. She works closely with colleagues and is developing a clear vision based on high standards, but currently has insufficient time to develop her monitoring role across the whole school.

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

66. Pupils' language and literacy skills are developed very effectively through other subjects. This is because topics are planned for each key stage and appropriate links are made between different subjects, with the English skills being central to each topic. For example, Year 6 became intrigued in writing a story for younger pupils based on a letter about a man's attempt to climb Everest. This particular piece of work involved history, geography, science and English, as well as the personal and social skills involved in considering the likes and dislikes of younger pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have improved and are well above the national average by Year 6.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school, with a focus on practical activities, so that pupils achieve well.
- The marking of pupils' work does not make clear enough what is good about their work and how to make it better.

### **Commentary**

67. The school's focus on improving mathematics has been effective, with a sharp rise in standards at Year 2 and Year 6, reversing the decline of recent years at Year 6. Standards seen during the inspection were above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. There was no noticeable difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with SEN achieve well because teachers use adult support very well to help them to succeed.

68. Teaching is enjoyable yet focused; consequently, pupils enjoy their activities and work hard. They develop their ability to work independently, calculate and solve increasingly difficult mathematical problems as they move through the school. Teachers use the start of each lesson well, with questioning pitched at pupils' different abilities. The end of each session is also used well to check what pupils have learnt. There is a clear focus on teaching basic skills through practical activities and good quality resources. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and provide work that is challenging. Planning caters well for the most and least able. In all classes there is a clear focus on pupils using mathematical vocabulary. Satisfactory use is made of homework to reinforce and extend pupils' skills. However, pupils' books show that, while the marking is positive, it does not make clear enough what is good about their work and how to make it better.

69. Improvement since the time of the previous inspection has been good. The school has put in place a number of effective strategies to help raise standards and to make sure that the most able pupils achieve well. Mathematics has had a high priority in staff training, with guidance and support from local authority advisory teachers. Additional time and strategies have been put in place to improve pupils' mental mathematics skills. While there is now more emphasis on problem solving and investigations, the school is aware that this aspect needs more systematic development.

70. The subject is well led, with a clear action plan. The school uses analysis of pupils' work and test papers to identify any weaknesses. However, the co-ordinator does not have enough opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning on a regular and systematic basis.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

71. Good use is made of mathematical skills in other subjects. There are regular opportunities to measure and calculate accurately in science, geography and history. Examples include recording temperatures in science, plotting information in graph form in geography and using time lines and dates in history. The school has increased its range of mathematical computer programs and is developing its use of interactive whiteboards.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good and standards are rising.
- Teaching and learning are good, although the marking of work is not always helpful enough.
- Subject leadership is good.

### Commentary

72. Standards in the national tests for Year 6 in 2003 were below the national average, but above average compared with similar schools on the prior attainment measure. This indicates that these pupils achieved well in Years 3 to 6. The unvalidated 2004 results show standards rose from the 2003 level. The work seen during the inspection, very early in the school year, suggests standards are well above average, with all Year 6 pupils already attaining the level expected by the end of year. Standards at Year 2 are above average. Standards, teaching, learning, leadership and management have all improved since the previous inspection.

73. Pupils' good achievement and the rising standards are the result of consistently good teaching and learning. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of the subject and teach the skills pupils need. They plan practical activities that interest and excite the pupils so that they are very well motivated. All staff expect pupils to work hard and behave well, and pupils respond positively to those expectations. Support staff play a significant role in the good teaching and learning. They work very well alongside teachers, taking small groups and providing very effective support for individuals. An example was when a member of the support staff took a group to the computer room to find information from the Internet. This enabled the teacher to work with the rest of the class within the classroom. This effective use of support staff ensures that pupils with SEN are very well supported and achieve well in their learning. It also ensures that different ages and abilities within a class get adequate support to enable them to succeed.

74. Teachers use resources very effectively. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher presented pupils with animal skulls so that they could look closely at the teeth in particular, and work out whether the creature was a carnivore, herbivore or omnivore. In this lesson, and in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, some pupils worked on computers in the ICT suite to find information or present their findings. In a good lesson in Year 5 and 6, pupils had brought items from home that they had made to represent internal body parts, showing a very good use of homework to extend classroom learning.

75. Children learn effectively because teachers constantly question and challenge them to extend their thinking in lessons. This was well demonstrated in the lesson on skulls, when pupils were challenged to explain their reasons for grouping them. They showed their growing knowledge of different kinds of teeth and their functions, as well as learning to consider the evidence from close observations. The marking in pupils' books, however, does not always tell them what was good about their work and how to improve it.

76. Science lessons link well with other subjects. Good use is made of ICT, for example. Pupils also develop their mathematics skills through measuring and producing graphs of their results. On occasions, all three subjects are linked as pupils produce graphs on computers of work done in science. This makes very efficient use of time and resources.

77. Leadership and management of science are good. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of performance information from national test results and checks the quality of teaching and learning and standards of work. However, as the co-ordinator is also the headteacher,

who has a significant class teaching commitment, there may now be less time for her monitoring role.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Standards have improved.

### **Commentary**

78. Standards at the time of the last inspection were judged to be below average. The evidence currently suggests standards are now above average by Year 6, with pupils confidently using ICT as an integral part of their learning. Year 5 and 6 pupils, for example, used computers to create a motion picture film and music, and to produce newsletters, as well as finding information from the Internet. Part of the reason for this improvement is the ICT suite. This enables pupils to use computers in small groups with teachers or very well briefed support staff. The school has also acquired interactive whiteboards. During the inspection, they were not used as interactively as they could be because they had only been in place a very short time and teachers were still learning to make the most effective use of them. At the time of the inspection, the school had a range of computers ready to be installed to improve facilities even more.

79. The previous report mentioned some unsatisfactory teaching. In this inspection, one ICT lesson was seen and other lessons made extensive use of ICT. In all cases teaching was good, showing a good improvement in teaching and learning. Teachers are confident with their knowledge of the subject and teach pupils the basic skills they need. For example, a lesson with Year 1 and 2 pupils focused on mouse control, using tool bars and dragging and dropping features into place to create portraits before printing the resulting pictures. The very effective use of support staff meant that the teacher could work with groups of pupils in the ICT suite to ensure they all had enough individual attention to succeed. The balance between learning ICT skills and using what they have learned to support other subjects ensures that pupils are motivated by their learning. They behave very well, take turns on computers and help each other sensibly.

80. At the time of the inspection the co-ordinator for ICT had left. However, leadership and management have been good, with much done to improve provision and standards, including regular recording of what individuals have achieved in ICT. The school is well placed to build upon the progress it has made since the last inspection.

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

81. Teachers make good use of ICT to support other subjects. Pupils seek information from the Internet, word-process their work and produce simple newsletters. They use computers to create graphs and charts in science lessons and create pictures using art programs.

## **HUMANITIES**

*In humanities, work was sampled in **history, geography and RE**. Two lessons were seen in history and none in geography or RE. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. Pupils' work, and discussion with pupils, indicates that their attainment is above expectations.*

82. All three subjects make a very good contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural appreciation of the wider world. Particular strengths are the links planned between subjects, the provision of good quality resources and regular opportunities to use computers for research. There are many opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills, and appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy and art skills. However, marking, whilst positive, does not give sufficient pointers to help pupils improve their work. Year 6 pupils are enthusiastic about their work. Parents are pleased with the range of trips and visits to extend pupils' experience, but co-ordinators do not have enough opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

### **Geography**

83. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their geographical understanding and basic map skills through studying the features of the local area. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 explore environmental issues through studying rivers and the rainforest. They learn about the wider world through the travels of class teddy bears and by studying world events from newspapers. They develop their mapping skills through local trips. A residential experience at Kingswood centre provides them with opportunities to further develop their map and orienteering skills. Pupils build up their understanding of the impact of industry, tourism and weather through in-depth projects on India and Europe.

### **History**

84. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 but pupils' work shows that they learn about famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. They learn about events from history such as the Great Fire of London. In Years 3 to 6 pupils build up their historical skills and knowledge through in-depth studies of topics on the Tudors and the Victorians. They develop an understanding of the impact of history on people's lives when studying aspects of life during and after the Second World War. Whilst pupils in these classes cover the same topics, care is taken to cover different skills at different ages. Two lessons were observed. In both, teaching was good. Teachers delivered the subject in an interesting and lively way, pitching questions well to extend both younger and older pupils. Consequently, pupils achieved well because they really enjoyed the challenging work. Both teachers used high quality resources, including interactive white boards, and encouraged pupils to undertake their own research. Pupils clearly enjoy history and talk enthusiastically about their work when asked. Regular enrichment events, such as a recent 'Tudor Day', museum visits and theatre groups, all bring the subject to life.

### **Religious education**

85. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about religious figures such as Jesus, Moses and Mohammed. They learn about special places of worship for different religions. Pupils' work and teachers' planning show that pupils learn about a range of Bible stories and festivals. Planning indicates that pupils in Years 3 to 6 study Christianity, Judaism and Islam in depth. Pupils' work shows that by Year 6 standards of attainment are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils show interest in, and have good factual recall of, their work from the previous year. The school makes good use of teachers' subject knowledge and interest, with one teacher delivering RE lessons to two of the four classes. There are good links with a local church, and there are occasional visitors to school from other faiths. However, there are no visits to places of non-Christian worship.

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

*Only one lesson was seen in physical education. No lessons were seen in art and design, design technology or music. It is, therefore, not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects.*

86. In **art and design** the work seen indicates above average standards by Year 6. Pupils work in a range of materials to produce good quality works of art. However, little three dimensional artwork was seen. Pupils study the work of famous artists and produce work in the style of some of the artists they study. They produce pictures and patterns on computers using software appropriate to their ages. Their progress is recorded against statements of what they have achieved. The size of the school means that the co-ordinator is responsible for other subjects and so has too few opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in art and design in other classes.

87. In **design and technology** the work seen suggests that pupils attain above average standards by Year 6. Pupils have designed and made slippers, Anderson shelters and devices for collecting water based on Egyptian shadufs. They have made their models and artefacts with care, choosing materials suited to the purpose. Their progress in DT is recorded against statements of what they have achieved. The size of the school means that the co-ordinator is responsible for other subjects and so has too few opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in DT in other classes.

88. **Music** is planned on a two-year rolling programme and the co-ordinator's expertise is used well through careful timetabling. This enables her to teach music to other year groups, as well as her own. The music curriculum is enhanced by weekly whole school hymn practices, a recorder club, peripatetic lessons in clarinet and saxophone, and regular performances. In assembly the pupils sang tunefully, maintained the rhythm and used tone and volume effectively. Due to the size of the school the co-ordinator is also responsible for another major area of the curriculum and currently has insufficient time to check the quality of teaching and learning in music in a systematic way.

89. In **physical education** the planning shows that, within the two-year cycle, all strands of the subject are being taught, including dance, swimming and outdoor and adventurous activities. Although the school hall is small, indoor lessons are well planned to maximise the available space and pupils work sensibly together. Good use is also made of the outdoor areas.

90. A good range of school clubs is offered by teachers, parents and outside agencies and these make a positive contribution to the development of the pupils' skills. The pupils are also given a wide range of opportunities to take part in local activities and competitions, including, The Cherwell Hockey Tournament for Years 3 and 4, The Cherwell Year 6 Girls' Football Tournament, The Bicester Schools Swimming Gala and the Cherwell Athletics Tournament. This contributes very positively to the pupils' social development.

91. The subject co-ordinator has developed a good overview of the subject, reviewed and built up the resources and developed a wide range of new opportunities for the pupils. However, due to the size of the school she also has other areas of responsibility and has insufficient time to develop a systematic approach to checking the quality of teaching and learning in the subject.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP**

*This subject was sampled.*

92. Personal, social and health education has a high profile within the school and makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal and social development. A combination of set lessons and elements of other subjects ensure that pupils learn about healthy living and about their responsibilities to the school and wider community. Sex and drugs awareness education are carried out in line with school policies. Pupils develop their sense of personal responsibility through undertaking jobs around the school and carry these out conscientiously. They develop social skills through working and playing together and older pupils enjoy supporting younger ones at breaks and lunch times.

## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).*