

INSPECTION REPORT

JOHN RANKIN INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Newbury

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109826

Headteacher: Ms L J Valenti

Lead inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th May 2005

Inspection number: 267118

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 203

School address: Garford Crescent
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Telephone number: 01635 42376
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body John Rankin Infant and Nursery School
Name of chair of governors: Malcolm Douglas

Date of previous inspection: April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

John Rankin Infant and Nursery School is a school for boys and girls aged three to seven years. There are 203 pupils on roll and the school is about the same size as most other schools. There are three more boys than girls in the school. At the time of the inspection, there were 59 children in two Reception classes. Of the 50 children in the Nursery, half attend five morning sessions and half attend five afternoon sessions each week. White British is the main ethnic group and the other most numerous groups are the other White background group, mixed White Asian and mixed any other background. One pupil uses English as an additional language (EAL) who is at an early stage of English language acquisition. There are 39 pupils on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register and four pupils have SEN statements. These proportions are broadly average. The most common aspect of need is social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Although currently, most children are achieving average standards when they enter the school, pupils in the current Year 1 and Year 2 groups were much lower on entry. The proportion of pupils who have entered both year groups with significant levels of SEN is high. Two pupils are currently in public care. These factors have changed the characteristics of both Year 1 and Year 2 groups. The school received an Investors in People Award in 2003 and in 2004 received the Artsmark (Silver Award), Healthy Schools Silver Award and an Early Years Kitemark. Between 1999 and 2004 the school enjoyed Beacon School status. In 2003/04 several senior teachers and experienced co-ordinators left the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19227	Paul Missin	Lead inspector	Science, history, geography. Children in the Foundation Stage.
9446	Helen Griffiths	Lay inspector	
11769	Jim Bishop	Team inspector	Mathematics, religious education, design and technology, physical education. Pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education.
24111	Pam Evans	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, art and design, music. Special educational needs. English as an additional language.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

John Rankin Infant and Nursery School is a good, effective school. This is a caring school where well-being of pupils is a high priority. The school ensures that most pupils make good progress by the time that they leave. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in all aspects of English that are above those expected for their age. The leadership of the Headteacher is good. She has a clear vision for the school's further development and ensures that all members of the school's community are fully involved in its work. She is well supported by a well informed and effective governing body. Teaching and learning across the school are good and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Children make a very good start to their time at school.
- The Headteacher leads the school well. She has a clear vision for the school's development and promotes the fully inclusive ethos of the school well.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school. The effective teaching of literacy enables pupils to reach above average standards by the time they leave.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and the strong relationships evident in the school community encourage pupils' learning and enable them to make good progress.
- The governors support and challenge the school well.
- The effective partnership with parents and the local community which the school develops gives it a high profile in the local area.
- The health and safety of all pupils are high priorities.
- The roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators and other senior staff are not sufficiently developed.
- Assessment procedures are used well to track the development of individual pupils but data are not used sufficiently to provide a clear view of the progress made by groups, classes or year groups.

Overall, the school has made sound progress since the last inspection. Good progress has been made in addressing the specific developmental issues that were identified. These include, improving the management of a few pupils' inappropriate behaviour and the better use of the talents of the support staff. However, since the time of the last inspection, there has been a general drop in the standards that pupils in Year 2 are attaining and in certain areas, such as leadership and management, assessment and provision in the Foundation Stage, current standards are not as high as they were. This is partly explained by the changing context of the school with attainment on entry in some year groups below those previously. Also, the school is currently consolidating its provision following the recent loss of several senior staff.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	B	C	B	C
writing	A	C	B	C
mathematics	B	C	A	B

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

Trends in the standards pupils in Year 2 have reached show that, although there is some fluctuation between the years, standards have been average and above. In 2004, compared with similar schools, standards were above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. The

current Year 2 group are reaching standards in reading and writing that are above average and average standards in mathematics and science and all other inspected subjects. Children in the Foundation Stage reach standards that are well above average in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and physical development and above average standards in all other areas of learning. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress according to their capabilities. **Achievement is good.** All pupils achieve well and make good progress from the different levels of attainment when they entered the school. For example, children in the current Foundation Stage make very good progress from average when they entered the school to well above average by the end of the Reception year. Pupils in Year 2 make progress from below average to average. **Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in and around the school are good. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good and teaching and learning and assessment procedures are also good. Teaching and learning are most effective in the Foundation Stage. Here, teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of these young children. Across the school, teachers plan well and devise activities which interest and involve pupils well. Assessment is good, but the use of class and year group data is less robust. The curriculum is well planned and resourced and provision is enhanced well through visits and visitors. The attractive outdoor areas are very well utilised. Care and welfare procedures are managed well and the effective partnership developed with parents and the local community supports the school's work well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The Headteacher leads the school well. She has managed the recent changes sensitively and effectively promotes the school's ethos by ensuring that all pupils are equally valued and supported. The Foundation Stage is led and managed very well. Management is satisfactory overall and other key staff make a sound contribution to the school's work. The work of the subject co-ordinators and other senior staff is not fully effective. The governing body is well informed and supports and challenges the school well. Governors ensure that all their statutory duties are fulfilled.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Both parents and pupils have positive views of the school. Most parents think that their children make good progress and that they like coming to school. Most pupils agree that they find out new things during lessons.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

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

- Further develop the roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators and senior teachers.
- Improve the analysis and use of assessment data to provide a clearer picture of the progress that different groups and classes are making.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Across the school, pupils reach standards that are above those expected for their age. Most achieve well taking into account the standards being reached when they first entered the school. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. Pupils with SEN and those with EAL also attain good standards for their capabilities and make good progress in their learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of the Foundation Stage, children achieve very well and reach standards that are well above average in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and physical development.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in their reading, writing and speaking and listening that are above those expected for their age.
- In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning.
- The needs of pupils of all aptitudes and abilities, including those with SEN and higher attaining pupils, are met well.

Commentary

1. Several features relating to the context of the school continue to have an important impact on the standards being achieved. Since the last inspection there has been a wide variation in the standards children are achieving when they enter the school. Data show that when they entered the school, both the current Year 2 and Year 1 pupils were attaining below average standards. This was lower than most previous year groups and represents a drop since the last inspection. Another factor is the mobility of pupils. Although the numbers transferring into the school in the last two years has been relatively small, the transferred pupils have had very significant levels of SEN, including complex emotional and behavioural problems. These factors have changed the general character of the school and limit the capacity of the current Year 2 group to reach very high overall standards. The proportion of less able pupils is much higher in this group than in previous years.
2. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are on course to reach standards in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and physical development that are well above those expected for their age. In these areas, children's achievement is very good. Standards in knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical and creative development are above average and achievement is good. The school has successfully maintained these very high standards since the last inspection. The main reasons for this very good achievement are the high quality teaching and effective learning, the well planned and challenging curriculum which meets the needs of all children very well and the support provided by all the adults in the staff team.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (15.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.8 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2004, when compared with all schools, standards were well above average in mathematics, and above average in reading and writing. When compared with similar schools based on the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, standards were above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. An analysis of trends since 2000 shows some fluctuation between each year and a rate of improvement in mathematics and writing that exceeds that nationally.
4. The findings of this inspection are that standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening and average in mathematics, science, ICT, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE). There was insufficient evidence for judgements to be made in other subjects. Where it has been possible to make comparisons, since the last inspection standards have fallen in all subjects. This is largely because of the changing context of the school. Above average standards are achieved in English because teachers have high expectations, demonstrate good subject knowledge and provide good opportunity for pupils to practise the full range of literacy skills in varied and interesting ways. The higher standards in literacy are a reflection of the several initiatives developed by the school in this area.
5. Pupils with SEN achieve good standards because of the good support they receive. The targets in their individual action plans are very carefully matched to their individual needs. The very few pupils with EAL achieve as well as their peers.
6. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress from the generally below average standards they were achieving when they entered the school, to reach above average standards by the time they leave. Analysis of previous national test results for Year 2 shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the above average Level 3 is often above and well above average. The current inspection findings confirm that the school meets the needs of higher attaining pupils well, particularly in their literacy work. There were no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with SEN and those with EAL achieve well and make good progress towards their own learning targets. Pupils with EAL are enabled to make the same progress as their peers. Pupils with particular gifts and talents are identified in areas such as literacy, mathematics, art and sports and their needs are also met well. These inspection findings confirm parents' and pupils' positive views of the school. Most parents think that their children make good progress and that they like coming to school. Pupils think that they find out new things during lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social, spiritual and cultural development are good. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In their questionnaire, the great majority of pupils said that they liked school and enjoyed their lessons.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 behave well in lessons and around the school. Children in the Foundation Stage behave very well. Across the school, pupils concentrate well and are keen to learn and do their best.
- The relationships between pupils and among pupils and adults are good.
- Pupils respect one another's feelings and beliefs and are keen to take responsibility.

Commentary

7. Children in the Foundation Stage make a very good start to their school life. They settle in very well, form very good relationships with staff and work happily together. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy school and want to do well. In their questionnaire, nearly all the pupils said they had to work hard and found their lessons interesting. Pupils show a good level of interest in their lessons. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson on sound, pupils' enjoyment of the lesson and their positive

attitudes really enhanced their learning. Pupils co-operate well and are trustworthy. This was observed during the inspection in a Year 1 PE lesson on sending and receiving balls. Pupils paid good attention to instructions, concentrated well and were able to give thoughtful evaluations of their own and others' performance. Most pupils respond well to teachers' expectations of them. A very small number of pupils, mainly boys, continue to have problems with concentration.

8. Behaviour is good throughout the school in lessons, assemblies and playtimes. This was also the judgement made at the previous inspection, but then an issue for the school was to improve the management of the few instances of inappropriate behaviour which did occur. This has been achieved well. Parents who attended their pre-inspection meeting felt that teachers dealt well with pupils whose behaviour was likely to cause concern. In the questionnaire, nearly all parents felt that pupils' behaviour was good. The school is taking part in the pilot Behaviour and Attendance project, which involves the direct teaching of behavioural and social skills. These are taught through circle time, of which a good example was observed during the inspection. As a result of the project, behaviour guidelines are now more consistently applied. Pupils respect their teachers, who offer them good examples of courtesy and fairness. Pupils are very well aware of how they should behave and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. The behaviour system is effective and valued by pupils. No bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection and pupils knew what they should do if it should occur. The degree of racial harmony is high.
9. Pupils are enterprising and respond well to opportunities for taking responsibility. The class councils and the school council have been in abeyance this year, but are to be re-introduced next term. Relationships between pupils and adults and among the pupils themselves are good and this security gives pupils confidence to ask questions and put forward their ideas. Pupils are keen to take part in school activities and participation in extracurricular activities is good.
10. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well. Pupils have good opportunities to consider the beliefs of others through RE and assemblies and there are opportunities for reflection in music and art. Visitors representing other faiths visit to talk to pupils and local clergy regularly take assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to think of others through, for example, the shoebox appeal. Vibrant art displays from recent arts weeks display the work of pupils in conjunction with the artist in residence. These weeks are themed to link with the art of other cultures. Pupils are given the opportunity to learn about the diversity of cultures in modern Britain through talks by parents. These opportunities promote pupils' cultural development well. The social and moral development of the pupils is also good. Pupils behave with consideration for others and have a well-developed sense of how their behaviour might affect others. The school encourages a sense of community through class 'Golden Time' and pupils are strongly supportive of one another.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
144	1	1
5	0	0
1	0	0
5	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
66	0	0

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

11. Attendance is in line with national figures and there is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good. The administrative officer monitors attendance weekly for patterns of lateness and absence. The majority of parents are conscientious about informing the school of any absence. There have been two permanent exclusions in the last two years of pupils who have now left the school. Procedures were correctly followed.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. A significant strength is in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage which is very good. Across the school, teaching and learning are good and the effective assessment procedures are used well. The curriculum is well planned and is enriched by interesting visits and visitors to the school. The school’s accommodation is good and particularly effective use is made of the attractive school grounds and outside activity areas. Care and welfare procedures are good and a helpful partnership is developed with parents and the local community.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning and the provision and use of assessment data are good. They are very good in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are very good. Teachers plan very well and ensure that children have a wide range of interesting and challenging experiences.
- Teachers’ lesson planning is comprehensive and clear.
- The positive way that pupils are managed encourages their good attitudes and behaviour and improves their learning.
- Assessment procedures are good. The school makes detailed assessments of the progress each pupil makes but does not have a sufficiently clear view of the attainment trends of whole year groups.
- Generally pupils’ behaviour is managed well but occasionally the inappropriate behaviour of individual pupils limits the learning of the rest of the class.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2 (7%)	16 (53%)	12 (40%)	0	0	0

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

12. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. This was also the judgement of the last inspection, but the proportion of very effective teaching is less in this inspection. The current positive profile has been secured despite having several teachers who are less experienced than previous staff and new to the school and one who is new to the profession. The

inspection findings confirm parents' and pupils' positive views. The quality of teaching is strongest in the Foundation Stage, as it was at the time of the last inspection and good, effective teaching is a feature of each year group.

13. The strengths in the quality of teaching are similar to those identified at the last inspection. Teachers still plan very well and have a good understanding of the subject they are teaching and also of how pupils learn. Teachers work hard to provide a very good atmosphere for learning in the way that they involve pupils well in the lessons and explain clearly what is expected of them. Pupils are well cared for and well challenged. Pupils are managed well. These strengths improve pupils' commitment to the lessons and their good attitudes and behaviour shown are important reasons why most learn well and make good progress. Pupils are treated firmly but fairly and the challenging behaviour of a few is managed well. However, occasionally this does limit the effective learning of the majority.
14. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers' planning ensures that all the necessary areas of learning are covered and identifies the particular focuses of each activity. Teachers manage children very well. They promote and encourage very good relationships in class and children respond very well by working effectively together and showing high levels of interest in and commitment to their activities. Teachers show a very good understanding of the needs of these young children. There is very effective co-operation between teachers and their assistants. Support assistants are well prepared and make an important contribution to each class's work. Assessment procedures are very good. Comprehensive records are maintained of the progress children are making through each area of learning. These are regularly updated by teachers and their assistants and help to ensure that the needs of individual children are understood and regularly reviewed. Children with SEN are supported well.
15. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science and satisfactory in all other subjects. This is similar to the judgement made at the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEN is good as it was in 1999. Pupils are given work that is appropriate for their needs and levels of attainment and they receive good support from teachers and their assistants. They work well together as a team to plan, support and assess pupils' learning. Teaching assistants have a clear idea of their role and of what pupils are expected to learn in each lesson. They have considerable expertise and contribute much to the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) are provided with carefully structured programmes of support.
16. Several features of good, effective teaching were observed in a science lesson to pupils in Year 2 investigating the conditions under which plants grow best. Good use was made of assessment data when, at the beginning of the lesson, the teacher spent time in reinforcing some aspects of the previous lesson which assessment had indicated that pupils were unsure of. As the new lesson was introduced, the teacher put a lot of emphasis on the investigation procedure to be followed and the pupils talked together about what it meant to be 'super scientists'. The class teacher's very perceptive and probing questions further encouraged pupils' deductive and reasoning skills. Pupils were then able to devise and carry out their own investigations to determine the best conditions for plant growth with a good understanding of fair testing and careful observation and recording of findings.
17. Assessment procedures are good. At the time of the last inspection they were very good. Assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is good. Useful analysis is done of the trends shown in previous tests and detailed records are maintained of the progress which pupils make in these subjects. In English, useful work has been done in collecting samples of pupils' written work which has been assessed according to National Curriculum criteria. In mathematics and science, regular assessments are made of pupils' achievements which are matched to key areas of learning in each subject. Data are accessible and are maintained in comprehensive teachers' files. Data are used well to provide useful learning targets in English and mathematics, but not yet in science. Teachers use assessment data well to modify their approach when required and to plan for pupils' further work. Shortcomings in assessment are that the well established and effective monitoring by subject co-ordinators which was a feature of provision in

1999, has not yet been re-established since the significant change of staff and as co-ordinators develop new roles. Also, while the school has a clear view of the progress which each individual pupil is making, data are not used well enough to track the progress of groups, classes or year groups.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum provided is good and meets statutory requirements. The school also makes good provision for enriching the pupils' learning. Additionally, it has well resourced accommodation and particularly attractive outdoor areas which support pupils' learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage meets their needs very well.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and it ensures good equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils.
- A good range of special events and activities is planned to stimulate the pupils' creative and thinking skills.
- The pupils' learning is enhanced well through the good range of educational visits and visitors.
- The school has established particularly effective provision for oracy, the arts and personal, social and health education.
- The outdoor areas are used really well to enhance learning in subjects such as science and art.

Commentary

18. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is appropriately broad and balanced in its content and has been planned and developed by the staff to encourage innovation and fresh approaches to make it relevant to its pupils. For example, the staff have sought to raise the pupils' achievement by using the arts to enhance their thinking and learning skills. This has been particularly successfully in subjects such as drama, music, art and literacy. Apart from English and mathematics, other curriculum subjects are taught using a two-year rolling programme of topics. These have been planned to link several subjects together, in order to make the learning process for the pupils more stimulating and creative. At the last inspection the overall curriculum was judged to have been very good.
19. Further strengths in the curriculum are the way in which pupils' speaking and listening skills and their personal, social and health education are valued and promoted. Both these features have improved the school's ability to provide consistent approaches by all staff, to enable all pupils to achieve well and to develop their personal skills. Pupils are fully and successfully included in all aspects of school life and no significant differences were observed in the provision for different groups of pupils. The provision for more able pupils has been improved by encouraging more investigative approaches to subjects such as science and DT. The curriculum is also enhanced by the provision of special events such as Arts Week. This successfully integrates curricular subjects and enables pupils to experience, for example, African and Indian patterns and a variety of cultures and lifestyles.
20. The curriculum is well supported by the variety of visitors to the school and its arrangements for relevant and stimulating educational visits provided for the pupils. For example, the visit of an African musician and storyteller enabled pupils to appreciate African stories, animal sounds and to compose their own music using drums and shakers. Year 1's visit to Marwell Zoo significantly supported the pupils' learning not only about science, but also promoted their opportunities for social development. Other visits have included trips to Windsor Castle and a Beatrix Potter exhibition.
21. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. At the last inspection it was judged to have been excellent. Cross-curricular themes are planned but great care is taken to ensure that specific skills, especially basic literacy and numeracy skills, are emphasised well. Very

good links are established between all areas of learning. The effect of this is that children's interest and commitment are quickly secured and effective all-round learning takes place. Particular strengths are in the provision for children's communication and language work and the use of the splendid outdoor area to support their physical development. Resources and accommodation are good overall.

22. The curriculum for pupils with SEN is good. Pupils are fully included into the school's curriculum and are given work that is pitched at appropriate levels for their development. Individual education plans are of good quality and have clear, specific targets, which address pupils' complex needs well. Care is taken to ensure that pupils are in a range of groupings for a variety of subjects in order to be able to contribute in different ways.
23. The school's accommodation offers good facilities for the delivery of the curriculum. Classrooms are of an appropriate size to enable pupils to have sufficient space for a range of methods of learning, and the school has particularly good outdoor areas for teaching. Subjects such as art, PE and science all benefit from the school's most attractive surroundings. At the last inspection the school's library was deemed to lack appropriate access to the pupils. It has now been repositioned and this has satisfactorily resolved a significant proportion of the access issues. Learning resources generally are well suited to the demands of the curriculum. The school has sufficient staff with appropriate expertise to teach the full curriculum. The effective support assistants contribute significantly to the quality of pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 and 2. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The induction arrangements for new pupils are good
- There are effective procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- All adults know pupils very well and provide good levels of care.
- Arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development and achievements are good
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work is good.

Commentary

24. There are good arrangements for pupils when they start at the school, which include preliminary visits to the school by both children and parents. Teachers make home visits when required. Parents and children felt well prepared for their new experience. Strengths have been maintained well since the last inspection.
25. Pupils with SEN receive good levels of care, guidance and support. They are given focused, specialist help where necessary and their needs are reviewed regularly. Pupils with statements of SEN have their needs and support reviewed regularly as part of the annual and termly reviews. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully as they progress through the school.
26. The school has good child protection procedures. The Headteacher is the designated person for child protection and for pupils in public care and has been recently trained. All staff are to be trained later this year. Teaching staff and their assistants are kept well informed and monitor and record their concerns appropriately. The support given by social services through the recent multi-agency approach is good. Pupils in public care are looked after well and co-ordination with external agencies is good.

27. Health and safety procedures are effective. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are good and good numbers of staff have been trained in first aid. Supervision at lunch and play times is good. Risk assessments are regular and the conscientious caretaker works hard to ensure good health and safety practise around the school.
28. There is a strong bond of trust between pupils and all adults who work in the school. Most pupils who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt there was at least one adult to whom they could turn for advice. Adults know the pupils very well and offer them good support. Personal development is monitored very well through class profiles and reports. Parents felt strongly that their children were well supported and cared for. Academic monitoring is used well to inform pupils how they can improve. Pupils' views are sought extensively through circle time, assemblies and PSHCE. Pupils have recently discussed the layout of the playground and improvements to the school environment were made as a direct result. Nearly all pupils in their questionnaire felt confident that their views would be heard and acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school in nearly all areas.
- The school provides parents with good information.
- The school seeks to involve parents in the work of the school well.
- There are good links with other schools, playgroups and colleges.
- The school has good links with the local community.
- The Friends' Association is very supportive.

Commentary

29. In response to the questionnaire, parents and carers expressed considerable satisfaction with nearly all aspects of the school. A few parents did not feel well informed about their children's progress, but these concerns were not borne out by the inspection. Information provided for parents is good. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well written and presented and comply with requirements. A helpful booklet is given to new parents and they are invited into the Foundation Stage in small groups to talk about social skills and literacy before their children begin school. The school provides parents with weekly information about what their children are to learn. End of year reports are good and teachers are always available for informal consultation at the end of the day. Regular newsletters are lively and helpful. The school regularly consults parents through questionnaires.
30. Attendance by parents at the good range of consultation and curriculum meetings is very good. Parents are involved early in any racial incidents or in any behavioural issues. Induction procedures are good and include a welcome party for new parents and their children. Links with parents of children with SEN are good and parents expressed considerable satisfaction with the way that this provision is managed. The Friends' Association runs an imaginative range of social and fund-raising activities and raises good sums of money to buy equipment to support children's learning. Very good numbers of parents help in school on a regular basis and many more on trips and visits. These important strengths have been maintained well since the last inspection. The school intends that a 'School Change Team' to further involve parents in the school's development will be established later in the term.
31. There are good links with local playgroups and with the junior school, including visits by older pupils who are to be Year 2's buddies in their new school. The school is part of a consortium which shares ideas and expertise. There are strong links with the University of Reading and Newbury College. The school has good links with the local community. For example, the vicar takes some assemblies and parents from ethnic minority groups have visited school to talk about their family

faith and how they celebrate special festivals such as Diwali and Ramadan. A local vet has sponsored an art competition and talked to pupils about pet care and there are good links with local supermarkets and retirement homes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The Headteacher's leadership and the governance of the school are good. The management of the school and the contribution of other key staff are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Headteacher has a clear vision for the school and she ensures that the school's inclusive ethos is well promoted.
- The work of the Foundation Stage is co-ordinated and managed very effectively.
- The Headteacher provides the governing body with very good information about the school's work.
- Governors are enthusiastic and provide good support and challenge for the school's leadership.
- The recent changes affecting the life of the school have been managed well, but they have resulted in a time of consolidation rather than significant movement forward.
- The roles of the subject co-ordinators and the other senior teachers in the school are not sufficiently developed to provide effective support for the Headteacher.

Commentary

32. The Headteacher's leadership of the school is good. At the last inspection it was judged to have been very good. The Headteacher still has a clear vision for the school's further development and it is based realistically on the changed circumstances of the school. The changes that have affected the school recently have been managed well. She has taken a very proactive approach to the increase in pupils with significant behavioural needs and has managed the loss of several senior teachers and the subsequent staff changes sensitively and effectively. Several of the key strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained. The Headteacher works hard to ensure that high standards are maintained in all aspects of the school's work and that the school's ethos, which encourages the full development of each pupil, is promoted very well. Wherever possible, all involved in the school's work are informed and involved in decision making and the level of information provided for the governing body is very good indeed. The school improvement plan is clear and detailed and charts the development of the school well.
33. The management of the school is satisfactory. Several significant changes have affected the school which have impacted on the effectiveness of its management. The loss of senior teachers and the appointment of several new teachers have resulted in a change in the emphasis of the school's management. The Headteacher has wisely focused the school's work on inducting the new teachers fully into school routines and time has been spent in revisiting its aims and ethos and reviewing policies and guidelines. This has been successful in improving continuity of approach and expectation. The admission to the school of several pupils with significant behavioural needs has led to a continued whole school focus on the support and management of these pupils. The loss of beacon status has caused a further change in the school's circumstances.
34. Several of the subject co-ordinators and some of the senior leaders are very new to their roles and some of the effective management practices which had been in place have not yet been re-established after the recent staffing changes. Performance Management procedures have not been fully implemented although informal reviews of the performance of teachers and support staff are carried out. Other procedures such as the formal monitoring of teaching and learning and the systematic monitoring of pupils' work have also not been re-established with the same rigour as had operated previously. The senior management team's work is largely informal and the roles and the responsibilities of its new members are insufficiently clear to be central to the school's effectiveness.

35. Governance of the school is good. Governors have a clear view of the school's work through members' visits to the school and through the very detailed reports provided by the Headteacher. These have ensured that governors are kept aware of all the changes taking place. Time has been spent in informing governors about the school's approach to behaviour management and the impact that recent changes were likely to have on the overall standards pupils achieve. A scrutiny of recent governing body meetings shows that a good number and range of issues have been discussed and that governors are both supportive and also challenging in their approach.
36. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The school has worked hard to ensure that the significant strengths in this area identified at the last inspection have been maintained, despite a complete change of staff. The relatively new co-ordinator is knowledgeable and effective. She is very enthusiastic and encourages good practice and consistency of approach and gives this work a high profile across the school. She is also an effective senior manager. Planning, assessment and policies are clear and comprehensive and applied consistently. The co-ordinator successfully manages teachers and their assistants to create a very effective overall staff team.
37. The Headteacher manages the provision for pupils with SEN and EAL well. She knows the pupils very well and co-ordinates the provision and support effectively. She works closely with the teachers and their assistants. Teachers' planning and overall provision are monitored well to ensure pupils' needs are met. This makes a significant contribution to the pupils' good achievement. There is a strong commitment to inclusion and to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, and this is fully supported by the effective governing body.
38. The management of the school's finances is good. The school has managed the transition from Beacon school funding well. The priorities in the school improvement plan are appropriately costed. The school's finance officer manages the budget efficiently and the process of monitoring spending is secure. The higher than recommended carry forward figure contains elements of beacon school funding brought forward into the current year. The school seeks value for money in purchases that it makes and in the provision of services.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	471 552	Balance from previous year	55070
Total expenditure	469 273	Balance carried forward to the next	57349
Expenditure per pupil	2267		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

39. At the time of the inspection there were 59 children in two Reception classes and 50 children in the Nursery, half of whom half attended during the morning session and half in the afternoon. The process of inducting children to the Nursery and the Reception classes is good. Visits to children's homes are made when appropriate and parents are provided with good information about the school's expectations and how they can help their children.
40. By the end of the Foundation Stage children achieve very well and are on course to reach standards overall which are well above those expected for their age. Achievement is very good and standards are well above average in children's personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and physical development. In all other areas of learning achievement is good and standards are above average. Most children in the current Reception year entered the school reaching broadly average standards and most have achieved very well and have made very good progress in their learning. These judgements on progress are similar to those made at the previous inspection. Children with SEN are supported well and make good progress towards meeting their own learning targets.
41. One important reason why children make very good progress is in the quality of the teaching and learning. Teaching is very good overall. This is similar to the overall judgement made at the last inspection except that in 1999 much of the teaching observed was excellent. Teaching is very good for children's personal, social and emotional development, communication and literacy and physical development and good in all other areas of learning. Strengths are in the way in which teachers consistently emphasise the importance of basic literacy, numeracy and social skills. This ensures that children feel safe and secure and are ready to explore all the new learning opportunities that are provided. Children's personal development is promoted very well and they quickly settle into school routines and are enthusiastic learners. Early reading and writing skills are taught progressively and very good opportunity is provided for children to begin to apply what they know in a wide range of different contexts. A further strength is the quality of support and instruction provided by the support assistants. There is an impressive degree of teamwork and mutual support within the whole staff team. Teaching assistants relate to children very effectively and have a very important and valued role in all the activities that are provided.
42. The very effective curriculum, which meets the needs of these young children very well, is another important reason why they make very good progress. The curriculum cleverly integrates basic skills within children's wider learning. Very good links are established between all areas of learning and there is a clear coherence to all that is provided. Teachers' planning is very good. Plans show clearly how activities are related to required areas of learning. All adults reinforce school expectation consistently and encourage effective speaking and listening skills at every opportunity. This improves the quality of children's learning significantly. Assessment procedures are very good. Comprehensive records are maintained by class teachers and their assistants which show the progress children are making in all aspects of their learning. Despite a change in the staff team, these several significant strengths have been maintained well since the last inspection, although current judgements on standards and provision are not quite as high as they were in 1999.
43. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator manages the staff team very well. She is enthusiastic and has a clear understanding of the approaches required in this phase of the school and ensures that practice continues to be refined and improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in this area is very good.
- Children entering the Nursery are settled quickly into school routines.
- All staff work very effectively together to value and support children as they learn.
- Children are encouraged well to make choices about activities and to take responsibility for important aspects of their own learning.

Commentary

44. Children achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Children in the Nursery are introduced very sensitively but effectively to school routines and expectations. They are welcomed warmly by the teacher and her assistants at the beginning of the session. During the inspection, although several were in their first week at school, all separated from their parents very happily and were able to find their own name and register their attendance before joining the rest of the class for initial activities. All staff work hard and successfully to build up children's confidence and self-esteem. They are quickly encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of their own learning. Children change for PE activities with a minimum of adult help and look after their clothes well. Others have responsibility as 'special helpers' to carry out some classroom jobs. By the end of the year, Reception children are on course to achieve standards that are well above those expected for their age. The impact of this very good provision is that children become enthusiastic, independent learners and develop very good relationships with adults and each other. These features all impact very positively on the quality of their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and most reach standards that are well above those expected for their age.
- Basic literacy skills are taught very effectively and children are given good opportunity to practise what they know in different contexts.
- All staff constantly encourage children's interest in words.
- Children are encouraged well to talk about things that interest them and to become increasingly good listeners.

Commentary

45. Speaking and listening skills are encouraged at every opportunity. Nursery children listen attentively to their teacher and to each other and these effective listening skills are consolidated in the Reception classes. Children are encouraged to talk about what they know and do so with expression and confidence. Basic reading and writing skills are taught and emphasised very well. Children learn the sound of words well and several are confident about using letter sounds to build up unknown words. Several more able children are reading fluently at a level well within the National Curriculum. Writing skills are developed well through emphasis on letter formation and the opportunity to explore and develop writing in a range of contexts. For example, during the inspection, a literacy lesson in Reception on lists was followed by opportunity for children to write their own list for shopping, telephone, party invitations, animals on the farm, etc. Children were challenged to 'Have a Go', which many did to good effect.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's understanding of number is developed well through opportunity to use a good range of practical equipment.
- Teachers make finding out fun.
- Basic skills are taught well and children are encouraged to use what they know in lots of different ways.

Commentary

46. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and most are on course to reach standards that are above average by the end of the year. Younger children in the Nursery develop their understanding as they count the number of children who are present and absent in the class each day and older children 'buy' items from their green grocer's shop. Across the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning in this area are good. New concepts are introduced clearly and effectively and the children have a good range of interesting activities and apparatus to help them reinforce their learning. Teachers make activities interesting and challenging and successfully make children's learning fun. These approaches are important strengths in provision. They were clearly seen in a very effective lesson observed during the inspection in the Reception year. The teacher introduced the concept of addition of numbers under ten by counting on very effectively using the interactive whiteboard to help children's interest and motivation. After a very effective introduction a very good range of activities were provided to give children the opportunity to consolidate their learning through practical application and some fun games. Activities included a bingo game, a dice game using an illustration of a caterpillar on the playground, the green grocer's role-play area and a coin game. These were all managed well by the class teacher and her assistants and children thoroughly enjoyed their work and made very good gains in their understanding.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given very good opportunity for developing a wide range of physical skills.
- Very effective use is made of the exciting and challenging outdoor activity area.
- Children show good co-ordination skills in indoor PE work and as they manipulate pencils, scissors and the computer mouse in the classroom.

Commentary

47. Provision for children's physical development is very good. All children in the Foundation Stage have regular access to the very good facilities in the spacious and attractive outdoor area. Using these, children have good opportunity to clamber and climb and experience different heights and walking, running and turning on the different levels and the varied surfaces in the outdoor area. There is good opportunity for children to practise movement skills using the bikes and trikes. Older children demonstrate very good co-ordination skills as they work together with construction materials and use paint brushes, pencils and the computer mouse with considerable dexterity. All children also have regular access to the school hall where they can try different activities. During the inspection a good lesson was observed where children were showing good levels of control and co-ordination as they moved purposefully around the hall in the different styles suggested by the teacher and found interesting ways of moving across and over the floor mats.

48. Children have a good **knowledge and understanding of the world** about them and they achieve well. Teaching and learning are good. At the beginning of the day teacher's talk about the weather and children agree on symbols reflecting sunny, windy, cloudy, rainy days to describe the current weather. Their appreciation of time is developed well as they decide on the day and date each morning and talk about yesterday, today and tomorrow in class discussions. Their interest in living things is promoted well as they undertake nature observation walks in their spacious outdoor area and as they observe the growing of plants in their classrooms. They demonstrate good mouse control as they access and organise a computer story of well known Nursery rhymes and they are able to change the colour and size of the drawing tool on the interactive whiteboard. The organisation of different interesting activities and the good levels of challenge provided by all the supervising adults mean that children are curious and interested and are keen to explore and find out for themselves.
49. Children's **creative development** is promoted well and most reach above average standards and achieve well. Children's interest in colour and texture is promoted well by attractive displays of their work around each of the classrooms. Children in the Nursery have worked together to produce a large, colourful collage of a fish to illustrate the story of the Rainbow Fish. Older children have produced very effective and carefully coloured pictures of Elmer the Elephant. A Reception Year lesson observed during the inspection focused well on different creative aspects. A range of different paints were available for some children to experiment with colours and patterns while others were arranging different man made and natural materials to form an indoor garden scene. Children sing well-known songs with enthusiasm and use their imaginations well in the indoor role play areas and in the several interesting bases in the outdoor area.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in reading.
- Standards in writing are good because teachers plan for pupils to have opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes.
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well throughout the school.
- Good leadership in the subject ensures its continuing improvement.
- Although access to the library has been improved, the current siting of the library does not allow it to be used for whole class lessons, restricting opportunities for pupils to undertake individual research.

Commentary

50. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening that are above those expected for their age and they achieve well. Standards are not quite as high as at the time of the last inspection because there are now a higher number of pupils with SEN. Pupils achieve well in all aspects of English because of the good standard of teaching and ongoing review of teaching strategies, resources and curriculum. Pupils with SEN achieve well because work is planned effectively to help them overcome their difficulties and they receive good support, both in whole class lessons and when taught in small groups.
51. Standards in reading in Year 2 are above average. This is because of a whole school focus on improving pupils' reading skills, and especially the more advanced skills required to reach higher levels of attainment. The additional guided reading times provide very good opportunities for pupils to engage in a high level of discussion about the books they are reading. Pupils enjoy reading and understand its importance in all aspects of their learning. They read a wide variety of books independently and explain well why they enjoy a particular type of book. Pupils enjoy

reading because teachers give them experience of a wide range of literature and make learning interesting and enjoyable.

52. Standards in writing are above average in Year 2. This is because the school has focused on developing writing skills. In Year 2, pupils' writing is well structured. They are taught about grammar and punctuation and have an increasing knowledge of how these should be used. More able pupils show a secure grasp of the spelling of common words and are beginning to use speech marks and exclamation marks in their writing. Less able pupils have a variable understanding of how to form simple sentences accurately. Pupils write for a good variety of purposes in a varied and interesting style which is often enlivened by imaginative and adventurous choices of vocabulary. In a Year 2 lesson where pupils were being asked to develop their own ideas for a character in a story the teacher encouraged her pupils to extend their vocabulary 'beyond scared', and then 'beyond frightened' and was only satisfied when her pupils used the word 'terrified.' A relatively weaker aspect is handwriting and the overall presentation of pupils' work. Here standards are not consistently good and some pupils do not pay enough attention to ensuring that their work is neat and carefully presented.
53. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Year 2. Listening skills are good and enable pupils to absorb new learning quickly. Pupils express their thoughts and opinions confidently and this is seen effectively at the end of lessons, when pupils talk articulately about the learning that has taken place. Teachers include the development of talking and listening skills in many lessons, planning activities which extend these skills, such as role-play, 'hot seating', drama and class discussions.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is good as it was at the time of the last inspection. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well paced and provide a good level of challenge for all pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to read, write and evaluate their work. Teachers choose interesting topics that appeal to the pupils and capture their imagination. Lessons planned around the book 'The Magic Garden' are being used well to develop pupils' understanding of character study and to contribute to other areas of the curriculum. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to make lessons interesting and add a visual dimension to learning.
55. Assessment procedures are good, and the assessment information is used well to track and support individual pupils' progress throughout the term. This information is used to identify able pupils who are capable of more challenging work and pupils who are underachieving in some aspect and may require additional planned support. Teaching assistants are well prepared for lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils are able to identify what they need to do to improve their work but their individual targets for improvement are not consistently displayed in the front of their exercise books.
56. The subject manager provides good leadership and ensures that key priorities for improvement are identified and addressed. She checks the quality of pupils' work and teachers' planning on a regular basis. In addition she ensures that there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their English skills across other areas of the curriculum. Access to the library has been improved since the last inspection. The library has been re-established in the main foyer of the school where it provides an attractive focal point. However, the area is not adequate for a whole class to use the library at any one time and pupils' ability to research independently and to understand a simple library classification system, is inhibited. Good use is made of classroom displays of books to compensate, in some part, for this deficiency.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

57. Good cross-curricular planning ensures that language and literacy skills are used and developed in most subjects. Teachers place good emphasis on equipping pupils with the vocabulary specific to each subject and encouraging them to use it accurately. Pupils also have a good range of opportunities for writing. In history, for example, pupils are able to write in a lively way about the Great Fire of London.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Across the school, pupils reach standards that are appropriate for their age and they achieve well.
- The good teaching and pupils' good attitudes impact positively on the quality of their learning.
- Across the school, there is a strong focus on developing the pupils' basic numeracy skills.
- The school has improved its approaches to raising the attainment of its more able pupils.
- Assessment arrangements for tracking and evaluating the progress of pupils are good.
- Teachers' marking does not contain sufficient indicators of how to improve.

Commentary

58. Standards in Year 2 are average and pupils throughout the school make good progress and achieve well. Since the Year 2000 the school's rate of improvement in mathematics has been greater than schools have achieved nationally. Over the same period the school's standards have fluctuated, but evidence indicates this has been mainly the result of variations in the overall attainment of pupils on entry to the school. Pupils continue to make good progress, but from a relatively lower starting point. The quality of teaching and the rate of progress are just as good as that found in the school's last inspection and since then, the school has further improved the attainment of its most able pupils. In 1999 35 per cent of its pupils achieved above average standards in national tests, whereas in the tests for 2004 53 per cent achieved the same level. Overall, the school meets the needs of all pupils well. Pupils with SEN are well supported by teachers and LSAs and relative to their abilities, achieve as effectively as their peers.

59. In Year 2, pupils have a thorough understanding and appreciation of number work. They work confidently with numbers up to 100 and many can recognise odd and even numbers. They enjoy discussing mathematics and playing games to reinforce their knowledge. By the end of Year 2 a few are starting to understand multiplication. In other areas, such as shape, most pupils can identify common shapes by their properties, and can recognise and draw a line of symmetry. Strengths in pupils' achievement include the way in which they are encouraged to explain why an answer is correct, and their ability to recognise and use simple patterns or relationships.

60. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Across the school, teachers use effective methods and approaches which are well matched to the different abilities of pupils in the class. They are increasingly successful in meeting the needs of the more able pupils. They make effective use of assessment to identify the needs of the pupils and raise their levels of expectations to challenge them realistically. In every lesson observed the quality of planning was good and most lessons were taught at a good pace. This required the pupils to apply consistent effort. Questioning is well used to check pupils' understanding and advance their thinking. LSAs are used well. Mental skills are taught effectively and a strong emphasis is placed upon the use of practical apparatus and resources to enhance the quality of learning. In general, the pupils really enjoy their lessons, especially when they are presented with high levels of challenge. Their attitudes towards learning are good and are evident from the way so many pay good attention and behave well during their lessons. This improves their motivation and commitment to their own learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is sound overall but not all teachers provide sufficient indicators as to how pupils could improve.

61. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school has already identified the need to develop aspects of the subject, such as the need to continue to raise the attainment of its more able pupils. The analysis of performance data is becoming a routine and increasingly effective aspect of the subject co-ordinator's role. Good use is being made of the information received to further raise standards across the school. A strength of the management of the subject

is the efficient way in which the well planned curriculum has been linked with assessment. The co-ordinator has also developed a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff across the school. Good assessment and record-keeping procedures have been established for tracking and evaluating pupils' progress. The subject is resourced well and is making increasingly competent use of ICT equipment and software. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Satisfactory use of pupils' mathematical skills is made in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils in Year 2 use data when measuring the distances travelled by model cars as the vehicles run down slopes and over different surfaces. Art is effectively used to develop pupils' experience and breadth of understanding of shape. In Year 1, pupils create repeating patterns having accurately observed snake skins. In Year 2 pupils have used tie and dye techniques and suspended them from the classroom ceiling as geometric shapes.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress in their learning. The needs of higher attaining pupils are now met well.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of fair testing and undertake a range of interesting investigations.
- Interest in the subject is promoted well through visitors to the school and the use of the school grounds.
- Aspects of the co-ordinator's role are not yet sufficiently developed.
- Expectations for the recording of pupils' written work are not consistently applied.

Commentary

63. The current Year 2 group is attaining average standards. This is lower than the findings of the last inspection and the results of the 2004 national assessments. A feature shown by analysis of the results of the 2004 assessments and confirmed by the current inspection findings is that there is a small proportion of pupils who do not meet national expectations and a larger proportion which exceeds them. The current inspection findings are lower because the proportion of pupils with specific educational needs is higher in the current group. However, pupils' achievement is good. Pupils of all abilities, including the higher attainers and those with SEN make good progress in their learning.
64. A strength in pupils' achievement is their understanding of fair testing and appreciation of the scientific process. These are developed well as pupils are encouraged to be 'super scientists' and they are able to explain why a fair test is important and how to keep conditions the same wherever possible. Pupils undertake some interesting investigations into, for example, how far toy cars travel when moving across different surfaces and how plants take in water through their roots and transfer it to their stems. Pupils have a sound understanding of scientific processes as they learn that a complete circuit is necessary to make a bulb light and that materials can be changed through squashing, bending twisting and stretching. A weakness in pupils' achievement is that expectations about the amount and quality of their written work are not consistently applied. Some pupils have good opportunity of regularly using a prepared recording framework around which to write about what they have done, but others do not record work in sufficient regularity or detail.
65. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good as it was at the time of the last inspection. Teachers plan well and devise interesting and challenging activities which interest and motivate pupils. They are careful to introduce and re-emphasise any new vocabulary and ensure

that pupils understand what they are expected to learn and to do in each lesson. Pupils were very keen to demonstrate and talk about an investigation done recently to show how a growing plant took up coloured dye and changed the colour of its flowers. The clever way in which teachers encourage and motivate pupils is an important reason why pupils enjoy the subject and learn well. Teachers are innovative in their approach. During the inspection, to further develop pupils' appreciation of the importance of sound, a teacher had arranged for partially deaf and dumb visitors to speak to the class. The pupils asked perceptive questions, such as, 'How do you hear your alarm clock in the morning?' and 'How do you hear a fire alarm?' By the end of the lesson the pupils had consolidated important aspects of their understanding of sound and developed empathy with having partial hearing and speech.

66. The subject is taught as part of an agreed two-year topic cycle. Planning and assessment are good. Pupils' achievements are recorded at the end of each termly unit and assessed according to some key objectives. Good use is made of the attractive school grounds especially for work on Life Processes. Co-ordination is satisfactory. The responsibility to monitor the consistency of approach across the school or to check on the quality of pupils' work is not yet sufficiently developed. Good progress has been made in addressing the developmental issue for the last inspection which noted shortcomings in the challenge provided for higher attaining pupils. They are now challenged well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils use word processing facilities successfully.
- Pupils are confident and enthusiastic in their use of ICT.
- Effective use of interactive whiteboard technology enhances teaching.
- Pupils' access to computers to support their work is restricted.

Commentary

67. Pupils in Year 2 reach average standards and achieve satisfactorily. Although standards were judged above that expected nationally in the previous inspection, the school has experienced a changed intake of pupils and now has many more pupils with significant SEN. Most pupils are confident with basic word-processing facilities. Pupils hand-write poems and stories and copy them onto a computer while others write and print labels for their science work. Pupils develop useful programming skills as they instruct a floor robot to follow a prescribed route. Pupils use computers soundly to support their other work. For example, in art, they use a drawing programme to create symmetrical and non-symmetrical pictures. Pupils are competent at finding information and using educational programs on the Internet and others use a digital camera and a tape recorder. In conversation, some pupils were unsure in their ability to perform basic functions such as saving and retrieving text. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress.
68. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made at the last inspection. Strengths in teaching observed during the inspection were the way in which teachers plan carefully for the lesson and identify the specific focus to be followed. Teachers emphasise cross-curricular links wherever possible and manage pupils well to improve their attitudes and commitment to their learning. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to support and enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum. Good examples were seen in English when pupils in Year 1 added adjectives to a previously prepared text on 'Where the Wild Things Are'. Pupils were observed using computers during the day when lessons were not taking place. They showed enjoyment and interest, worked well with others and had the confidence not to be worried about making mistakes.
69. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of what she wants to achieve in this subject and she has made a good start in improving the quality of provision in the

school. She has established a website that can be accessed by governors, staff and pupils. Teachers and assistants are supported and encouraged well. The school recognises that ICT is an important area for development and has concentrated on putting interactive whiteboards in each classroom, updating the classroom computers and is currently working on networking computers and re-writing schemes of work. A weakness in provision is that although the two computers in each classroom are used well there is an adverse effect on the pace of pupils' learning as they wait to take their turn to practise their ICT learning task during the course of the week. Useful programs have been bought specifically to support pupils with SEN.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. This is satisfactory overall. Pupils use ICT in history, geography, science, art and some aspects of mathematics. They use a digital camera and make good use of the Internet and e-mail.

HUMANITIES

There was insufficient evidence for overall judgements to be made about the quality of provision or teaching and learning in geography and history. A scrutiny of teachers' planning indicated that appropriate topics for both subjects were studied as part of the two-year curriculum cycle.

71. In **geography**, pupils develop an understanding of more distant places as they study Indian village life and know, for example, why pineapples are grown in the Caribbean and rice in China. They develop an appreciation of their own environment through good use of the school grounds and as they draw simple sketch maps of their journey to school. In the single lesson observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Pupils were reinforcing their knowledge of compass directions and beginning to draw a sketch map of the school using interesting aerial photographs. Good links are made with other subjects as, for example, pupils make effective pictures of animals in their topic on India. Satisfactory use of the interactive whiteboards was observed during the inspection.
72. In **history**, older pupils understand the significance of the Poppy Day celebrations and know important facts about the life and times of Guy Fawkes. Their work on the Great Fire of London provided opportunity for good use of literacy skills as they wrote longer descriptions about the origin and the impact of the fire. Useful offsite visits are made to help to bring the subject alive. These have included visits to Windsor castle, a Beatrix Potter exhibition and visits to the seaside.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which impacts positively on the school's ethos.
- Teachers use interesting, practical approaches which secure pupils' understanding.
- Pupils' attitudes are promoted and enhanced well by the subject.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations regarding the quality of pupils' recorded work.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT.

Commentary

73. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are in line with the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus. This judgement is lower than the findings of the last inspection. Pupils now achieve satisfactorily and they gain a sound understanding of the beliefs and values of both Christianity and other major religions. The subject continues to make a good contribution to the ethos of the school, and the pupils still gain a valuable insight into celebrations and appreciation of other

cultures. Pupils with SEN make good progress towards their own learning targets when they are well supported in class.

74. In Year 2, pupils know about the main festivals and beliefs of Christianity and are developing a sound understanding and appreciation of other world faiths such as Hinduism. They make comparisons between the two considering features such as beliefs, symbols and places of worship. Pupils have also learned about Harvest Festivals around the world and most can suggest meanings in some different religious symbols and stories.
75. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Strengths in teaching are the way that teachers plan well and prepare thoroughly for their lessons. They demonstrate good subject knowledge, which is used well to improve the quality of their responses to pupils' enquiries. They also take particular care to provide for the needs of the least able pupils. They achieve this by giving lucid explanations regarding difficult concepts and by relating work to pupils' own experiences. Teachers also develop innovative, practical approaches to their lessons. This was seen during the inspection in a lesson to pupils in Year 1 exploring the story of Noah. The improvised acting out of the story by the whole class interested and involved all the pupils, stimulating and promoting effective learning. A time of quiet reflection at the end of the lesson enabled pupils to consider all that they had experienced. These strengths encourage pupils' positive attitudes to the subject, improve their learning and contribute to the school ethos. Shortcomings in teaching are mainly in the inconsistent approach to ensuring that clear, accurate, well presented written work is completed.
76. The leadership and management of the subject and the provision of learning resources are satisfactory. However, current storage arrangements make access for staff and pupils difficult. Additionally only a limited selection of ICT linked materials is available and currently insufficient use of resources such as the Internet is made. The co-ordinator has established curriculum plans which make good links with other subjects. Overall, satisfactory progress has been made in this subject since the school's last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was insufficient opportunity in this inspection to gather sufficient evidence for overall judgements on provision, standards or teaching and learning to be made in art and design, design and technology and music.

77. In **art and design**, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and a survey of pupils' work and displays around the school indicate that pupils are taught an appropriate range of skills and are given opportunities to use a variety of materials and techniques when creating art work. They are able to choose from a wide range of art materials, such as paints, chalks, pastels, charcoal and textiles for the many different aspects of the art curriculum. In Year 2, pupils are given the experience of dying strips of cloth and weaving them into a frame to recreate Van Gogh's picture of trees. Their work shows great attention to detail and high levels of skill in colour mixing. There are effective links with other subjects such as history, science and ICT and pupils have experience of the art of other cultures, in particular India and Africa. There are good links with art in the community. Pupils have been given the experience of participating in the National Gallery's 'Take on Picture' project, and recently have contributed to the Newbury Timeline mosaic. Good leadership in the subject ensures that it enjoys a high profile in the school. The subject co-ordinator looks at samples of pupils' work and checks teachers' planning to ensure the quality of provision. Pupils' work is displayed to good effect around the school.
78. A scrutiny of teachers' planning in **design and technology** shows that an appropriate range of activities and experiences is being provided. Evidence from current and previous work shows that pupils use suitable tools, techniques and materials in their work. In classrooms and corridors there are attractive displays of pupils' work. One display in a Year 1 classroom shows 'Wild Animal Purses' which include examples of pupils' designs and their completed purses. Additional evidence revealed that Year 2 pupils had created their own instructions for making a wooden picture frame, and had also designed and made a pulley system. Photographic evidence of

previous work provided evidence of Year 2 pupils designing shopping bags and Year 1 pupils' models, resulting from their own designs of playground equipment. In the single Year 2 lesson observed during the inspection, teaching and learning were satisfactory with several good features. The teacher used questioning very cleverly to elicit appropriate responses from her pupils. She managed pupils effectively and organised the lesson so that it ran smoothly and promoted learning opportunities for her pupils.

79. A scrutiny of planning in **music** indicates that the subject is provided according to National Curriculum requirements although no music lessons were observed during the time of the inspection. The singing that was part of an act of collective worship was unaccompanied and was enthusiastic but lacked clear tone. Discussion with the subject co-ordinator suggests that the subject plays an important part in the life of the school. There is a good range of musical instruments and pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder in an extracurricular club. The school productions contain a large musical element.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils enjoy their lessons and most know how to exercise safely and can describe how their bodies feel during exercise.
- A growing strength in teaching is the effective use of evaluating and improving pupils' performance.
- All pupils, including those with SEN, play a full part in all the activities provided.
- The subject has good resources and accommodation.

Commentary

80. Standards are average at the end of Year 2. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to have been above average. Standards are lower now because the overall quality of teaching is lower. Across the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress in their learning. Pupils with SEN take a full part in lessons and make similar progress to their classmates. All pupils are included fully in the subject's range of learning opportunities.

81. By the end of Year 2, pupils explore and develop simple skills, actions and ideas and most can link these in ways that suit the activities. Most copy, repeat and combine simple actions and move satisfactorily with control and co-ordination. Only games and gymnastics lessons were observed during the inspection, but from planning and timetables it is clear that an appropriate curriculum is followed in all aspects of the subject.

82. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A strength in the teaching observed during the inspection is the effective and consistent way in which all staff monitor and evaluate what pupils can do and seek appropriate ways of improving their performance. Pupils are taught how to observe others and to make constructive comments which suggest ways in which the quality of the performance observed can be improved. They are also encouraged to consider the quality of their own individual performance. Pupils clearly enjoy their activities. This is largely due to the methods which teachers use to encourage pupils to work and exercise independently and collaboratively. Lessons are well planned and teachers ensure that skills are taught progressively. Lessons begin with an appropriate warm-up activity, and sufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about the effect of exercise on their bodies. Teachers encourage pupils to take part and try everything. They deal sensitively with pupils who find the subject challenging. This results in all pupils being able to take a full part in the lessons. Teaching assistants play a useful role in lessons, especially when they provide effective support for pupils with SEN. Overall, teachers manage pupils well, but in a minority of lessons too much time is taken in securing pupils' full attention and this slows the pace of learning.

83. The subject has a relatively new co-ordinator, who is enthusiastic and is keen to continue to raise standards in the subject. However, there has been insufficient opportunity for her to monitor standards being achieved. The subject benefits from good accommodation. The school's hall and outdoor areas are spacious and attractive and there is access for pupils with disabilities. The subject has good apparatus and equipment, although the current arrangements for the storage of equipment restrict the space available for activities in the hall. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

84. There was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement to be made about standards or provision in this subject. However, it is evident that the school regards this subject highly, and that it appreciates how effectively it supports the school's overall ethos. An indication of this is evident from the fact that it has recently won a Healthy Schools Silver Award, and is currently intending to achieve a Gold Award. The subject is mainly taught as an individual element of the curriculum, but also features in the school's provision of collective worship and aspects of its RE curriculum.

85. The quality of teaching and learning in the single lesson observed during the inspection was good and the pupils made good progress and achieved well. Pupils in Year 1 were considering 'uncomfortable feelings'. The lesson was taught as circle time with the whole class gathered around the teacher in a carpeted area of the room. The teacher created a calm and secure atmosphere which induced pupils to participate readily and to openly express their personal feelings.

86. The subject has an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has produced a well planned curriculum and scheme of work, which is regularly reviewed and up-dated. She has plans to ensure citizenship skills are more effectively taught, such as during class council sessions. As co-ordinator, she has monitored lessons and modelled teaching for colleagues to observe. She is also keen for the subject to promote a sense of community as a large family throughout the school. The subject is well resourced.

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	4
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	4
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).