

INSPECTION REPORT

EDWARD FEILD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kidlington

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123075

Headteacher: Mr John Hawkins

Lead inspector: Mrs Stephanie Lacey

Dates of inspection: 20th - 22nd April 2005

Inspection number: 269560

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 256
School address: Bicester Road
Kidlington
Oxfordshire
Postcode: OX5 2LG
Telephone number: (01865) 372 268
Fax number: (01865) 371 515
Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr Ian Jackson
governors:
Date of previous 31st January 2000
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Edward Feild is an average sized school for pupils between the ages of four and 11. It is one of four primary schools in Kidlington, which is a large village to the north of Oxford. Numbers have dropped since the last inspection. This is because there are fewer primary age children in Kidlington than there were. The school has ten classes. There is a nursery school on Edward Feild site, which was last inspected in 2001. Pupils come from a wide range of social, economic and academic backgrounds. Fourteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average, but this does not reflect the economic disadvantages experienced by some families. The large majority of pupils are white British, with 16 per cent from other ethnic backgrounds. Twelve per cent of pupils do not have English as their first language and 13 pupils are at the early stages of learning English. When pupils start school in the Reception class, their skills, knowledge and understanding are very wide-ranging. The overall profile of children's ability on entry to school varies from year to year and this year is well below the levels expected. Sixteen per cent of pupils in the school have been identified as having special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. Four of these pupils have statements of special educational need. This, at 1.6 per cent of the pupils, is broadly average. They have a range of physical, learning and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school last year, other than at the usual points of entry or transfer, was broadly average. The school has won a number of awards for its work. These include a government Schools' Achievement Award in 2001, a British Council International Schools' Award in 2002, an Activemark Gold and Football Association Charter in 2003 and a Healthy Schools' Award and British Telecom Schools' Citizenship Award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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14756	Mr John Lovell	Lay inspector	
24022	Mrs Julia Lawson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Music Special educational needs
24019	Mr Ken Parry	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. Inspirational leadership by the headteacher, with very good support from senior staff and governors, has underpinned the development of a very well organised school where all pupils are valued. Pupils achieve very well because the teaching is very strong. Standards are above the levels expected in Year 6. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All groups of pupils achieve very well as a consequence of very good teaching.
- Pupils are very positive about school and enjoy learning.
- The headteacher is an excellent leader and is supported by a totally committed staff team.
- Very good systems and procedures for planning work and organising pupils ensure a whole school approach to teaching and learning.
- Procedures for checking how well pupils are progressing and for helping them to improve are excellent.
- Work planned by the teachers in different subjects interests and motivates the pupils very well.
- Governors make a very good contribution to the work of the school.
- Some pupils find it hard to express themselves when they start school.
- Parents are pleased with the school, but some do not support their children's learning as well as they could.

The school has made very good progress since its last inspection in 2000. Overall standards have risen in line with the national trend, even though pupils now start school with less developed skills, knowledge and understanding than they had in the past. There has been significant improvement in writing standards through the school over the last few years. The school has successfully tackled the issues from the last inspection. These were related to provision for pupils with special educational needs, assessment and inconsistencies between work in different classes. These areas are now all strengths, with assessment and consistency between classes now excellent.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve very well. There is no difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils, with pupils with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language, higher attaining pupils, those from minority ethnic groups and boys and girls

doing equally well. As the table shows, standards fluctuate from year to year. This is because of the different numbers of high and low attaining pupils in each year group. Most children in the Reception Year are well set to meet the goals expected by the end of Reception in most areas of learning, although some children's speaking and listening skills are a little below the levels expected. This year, standards are broadly in line with levels expected in reading, writing and science at the end of Year 2, and a little below these levels in mathematics. At the end of Year 6, standards are above the levels expected in English and mathematics, and broadly in line with levels expected in science. In recent years, children have started school with less well developed speaking and listening skills than in the past and this affects their learning in other subjects as they move through the school. Staff are working hard to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills in all year groups.

Pupils' personal development is very good, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Pupils are very positive about school and very keen to learn. Behaviour is good overall. Most pupils behave very well, but a small minority find it hard to conform to the school's high expectations of very good behaviour. Levels of attendance are well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality education. Teaching is very good overall. It is particularly strong in the Reception class, Years 1 and 2 and in some older pupils' classes. This ensures that all pupils learn very effectively. Particular strengths in the teaching include planning and assessment. Work planned in different subjects is innovative and exciting and captures pupils' interest and imagination. Pupils are cared for very well and feel safe and secure at school. Some parents are very involved in their children's education, but the school has not yet succeeded in its aim to involve all the parents in supporting their children at home.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides an excellent lead for the school community and is supported very well by senior staff. The school is very well managed and runs very smoothly. Governance is very good and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Only 20 per cent of parents returned the questionnaires seeking their views and a very small number of parents attended the meeting held for them before the inspection. This small group were very positive about all that the school does for their children. A few parents had some concern about the information they are given about their children's progress. The inspection found that the quality of the written reports is very good and that there is every opportunity to speak to teachers about how well children are doing. Pupils are very positive about school and are particularly complimentary about their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue with the drive to raise standards in speaking and listening.
- Continue to seek ways to involve all parents in supporting their children's learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve very well throughout the school. Standards are above the levels expected in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in national tests have been either above or well above average in two of the last three years, with very good improvement in writing standards.
- Pupils achieve very well throughout the school.
- Most pupils have made good progress since they started school.
- Standards in speaking and listening are improving from a low base at entry.
- Standards in mathematics and English are above the levels expected in Year 6.

Commentary

Standards in national tests have been above or well above average in two of the last three years with very good improvement in writing standards.

1. Standards have fluctuated in national tests in recent years. In Year 2, standards have been well above average for two of the last three years. As the table below shows, standards fell to below average last year. There are several reasons for this. The most significant is that this particular group had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, who did not reach the levels expected for their age. The school's tracking shows that almost all these pupils made good progress when they were in Year 2. Over the last few years, improvement in national tests has kept pace with the national improvement trend. This is a notable achievement in the face of an increasing proportion of pupils with special educational needs and more pupils than there were at the early stages of learning English.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.8 (16.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (17.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Improvement has also been in line with the national trend in Year 6 tests, and again this does not reflect the very good achievement of the pupils. Since the last inspection the make up of the year groups has changed, with fewer higher attaining pupils than there were. Standards have been above average in two of the last three years, with pupils generally doing better than those in similar schools. There has been very good improvement in writing standards, with the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 rising from 41 per cent in 2001 to 82 per cent in 2004. Standards in science are a relative weakness and were below average in 2004.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (25.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.0 (26.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.1 (27.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils achieve very well throughout the school.

3. Achievement overall is very good because almost all pupils achieve very well, given their capabilities, and make good progress in relation to their earlier attainment. All groups achieve as well as each other because the work is suitably challenging. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils in the school, for example. Their progress is carefully monitored to ensure that individual targets are met. Pupils with statements of educational need also achieve very well. Support is clearly identified and appropriate time is allocated for focusing on individual targets. All pupils with special educational need benefit from the support provided by the school and this is well matched to their individual circumstances. Those pupils learning English as an additional language and other pupils from minority ethnic groups, also achieve very well because teachers are sensitive to their learning needs. Higher attaining pupils are challenged effectively and they too achieve very well. There are several reasons for this success story. These include:

- A clear focus on raising standards, with a drive this year on speaking and listening.
- Very good teaching.
- Very good strategies to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Excellent assessment procedures that ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve.

Most pupils have made good progress from entry.

4. The school's careful tracking shows that most pupils make good progress through the school. It is also evident from pupils' books that they have made good progress this year, especially in writing. In the Reception class children have made very good progress this year and most are well set to reach the goals expected for their age in most areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year, with some a little behind in the development of their speaking and listening skills.

Standards in speaking and listening are improving from a low base at entry.

5. There is a concerted drive this year to raise standards in speaking and listening. These are below the levels expected on entry. In all year groups, most pupils speak confidently, but some have a limited vocabulary, which affects their learning in other subjects.

Standards in mathematics and English are above the levels expected in Year 6

6. Standards in reading, science and information and communication technology (ICT) were broadly in line with the levels expected for their age in the work seen, with standards in mathematics in Year 2 just below the levels expected and in Year 6 above the levels expected overall. Standards in writing were broadly in line with levels expected in Years 1 to 3 and a little above these in Years 4 to 6. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus. Work in other subjects was sampled and so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards.

- The school anticipates that standards will be below average in Year 2 national tests this year; this is based on assessments of unaided work. Work seen in lessons was at least in line with levels expected of pupils of this age in writing. In Year 6, the school anticipates that standards will be average in science in Year 6 national tests and above average in English and mathematics. This matches the standards seen in pupils' work and marks an improvement in science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils are very positive about school and behave well. They are developing as very well-rounded citizens and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Levels of attendance are well above average.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils enjoy school and are very keen to learn.
- Most pupils behave very well, but a small minority find it hard to conform to the school's high expectations of good behaviour.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are very good.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good.

Commentary

- This is a very strong area, with significant improvements in pupils' spiritual and cultural development since the last inspection.

Pupils enjoy school and are very keen to learn.

- Pupils talk very enthusiastically about all that the school has to offer. They are particularly positive about the kind and friendly teachers, the very good facilities, the opportunity to meet friends and the school's work to raise money for charities. In lessons, pupils are generally very attentive and work hard.

Most pupils behave very well, with a small minority finding it hard to conform to the school's high expectations of good behaviour.

- Behaviour is good overall. Most pupils are very sensible in lessons and at playtimes. Pupils' behaviour in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 is consistently very good. In Years 3 to 6, although most pupils behave very well, a very small minority find it hard to behave appropriately all the time. The particular needs of these pupils (20 in number) have been recognised and very good support programmes are in place to help them. These are working well and ensure that the other pupils' learning is not disrupted. However it has sometimes been necessary to exclude pupils from school for short periods.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background

Number of pupils on roll
207
7

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
9	0
0	0

Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	10	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	5	0	0

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

Relationships between all members of the school community are very good.

11. Pupils relate very well to the staff and these very good relationships provide a firm basis for pupils' learning. Pupils also get on very well with each other. They work together very well in class and play happily at playtimes. Very occasionally pupils fall out. There were three racist incidents recorded for last year, for example, involving racist language and name-calling, which were dealt with effectively by staff. Bullying is rare, but the school deals with any occurrences quickly.

Pupils' personal development is very good.

12. Pupils are developing as confident and aware young people. This is because the school provides for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. The areas for development from the last inspection have been tackled and the daily act of worship now meets statutory requirements. Planning for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is now much improved. Particular strengths in this area that have contributed to pupils' very good development are:

- The work of the class and school councils.
- The work of playground buddies and peer mediators.
- Pupils' efforts to raise money for charities (over £3,000 last year).
- Pupils' involvement in international projects, for which the school has won an award.
- Pupils' involvement in school productions.
- Opportunities for pupils to collaborate in lessons.

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good.

13. Attendance levels are well above the national average and unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national average. Pupils' punctuality is very good. This is a more positive picture than that found at the time of the last inspection. Parents are supportive of their children's regular attendance at school and respond well to the school's good monitoring of individual pupils' attendance, which is well supported by the education social worker and the school's encouragement and recognition of good attendance. The significant majority of parents contact the school to provide an explanation on the first morning of a pupil's absence and the school promptly follows up any unexplained absences.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

School data	4.1
National data	5.1

School data	0.2
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 school provides a very good quality education. Teaching is very good. Work in different subjects is planned very well and enriched by a range of interesting visits and visitors.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good overall and this ensures that pupils learn very effectively. The assessment of pupils' work is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent procedures for checking how well pupils are doing help pupils to be very clear about what they need to do to improve.
- Very good planning and preparation ensures that all pupils are challenged effectively.
- Very good relationships between pupils and teachers underpin pupils' success in tackling learning tasks confidently.
- Lessons are interesting and so pupils are enthusiastic about learning.
- Teachers plan and use a variety of teaching methods to help pupils maintain concentration and learn effectively.

Commentary

14. The quality of teaching was good at the time of the last inspection and is now even stronger, with an increase in the proportion of very good lessons seen. In the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2, all the teaching seen was good or better. In Years 3 to 6 there was a little more variation in the quality of teaching, which ranged from satisfactory to excellent in the lessons seen, with teaching particularly strong in some of the older pupils' classes. The impact of this very good teaching on pupils' learning is evident in the way in which pupils tackle their work with confidence and quickly pick up new ideas.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	13 (32%)	21 (51%)	6 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

15. There is an impressive consistency of approach to teaching throughout the school, which is founded on clear policies and procedures. A very good team structure also ensures that staff are supported in implementing agreed initiatives and developments. The following strengths in teaching are key factors in ensuring that pupils learn very effectively.

Excellent procedures for checking how well pupils are doing help pupils to be very clear about what they need to do to improve.

16. Staff have worked extremely hard and very successfully to improve the ways in which they check how well pupils are progressing. This was an area identified for improvement at the last inspection and is now one of the strongest features of the school's work. The procedures in place help pupils understand how well they are doing and exactly what they need to do to improve. The factors in assessment that make the biggest positive impact on pupils' learning are:

- The use of WALT (We are learning to) and WILF (What I am looking for) to help pupils to stay focused in lessons.
- Excellent marking to give pupils clear feedback on their work.
- Consistent practice from class to class.
- Weekly team meetings in which assessment information is used to plan subsequent work.
- The use of peer assessment in older pupils' classes.
- A continuing review and refinement of existing practice.

Very good planning and preparation ensure that all pupils are challenged effectively.

17. Throughout the school very good lesson planning sets a firm foundation for pupils' learning. The features in the planning that make it particularly strong are:

- A team approach, so that pupils of the same age in different classes undertake the same work and teachers share work and use their expertise well. This aspect of planning is excellent.
- Good links made between subjects.
- Work planned to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, although the specific needs of pupils learning English as an additional language are not always identified in planning.

18. The school has improved the way teachers plan for the different needs within their class since the last inspection. Individual education plans are now better used to identify how best to support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who are only slightly behind their peers benefit from clearly identified help within their normal classroom settings. Support for pupils with more significant needs is well planned to allow for their individual targets to be met. They benefit from specialist teaching, well-chosen resources and from withdrawal work. Learning support assistants play a key role in helping pupils with special needs and maintain good records of their work. Higher attaining pupils are challenged effectively by more demanding tasks. Class teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language, who also receive some extra support.

Very good relationships between pupils and teachers underpin pupils' success in tackling learning tasks confidently.

19. There is mutual respect between staff and pupils and very good relationships are evident. Consequently pupils are positive about learning and approach their work in the confidence that teachers will help and support them.

Lessons are interesting and so pupils are enthusiastic about learning.

20. Teachers take care to plan interesting work for pupils. There is a good mixture of activities, such as: practical work, group and paired work, visits and visitors and work in the school grounds. As a result, pupils are caught up in an enjoyment of learning and are positive about their work in different subjects. Homework is used well to help pupils to consolidate and extend their understanding and provides an opportunity for parents to see how well their children are doing.

Teachers use a variety of teaching methods to help pupils maintain concentration.

21. Teachers take care to use a good range of approaches in lessons in order to keep pupils focused. In the introduction to lessons, for example, teachers make very good use of paired discussion, whole class questioning and individual white boards to keep pupils fully involved. There is little opportunity for pupils to 'switch off' and so they concentrate very well.
22. Within this very strong picture there are no significant areas for development. In the small number of satisfactory lessons seen, areas for improvement included:
 - Encouraging pupils to work more quietly in the activity part of the lesson.
 - Organising materials and equipment so that they are readily available for pupils.
 - Making more use of teaching assistants.

The curriculum

The school provides a very broad and well-balanced curriculum, enriched by visits, visitors, clubs, practical activities and innovative approaches. It is very well staffed, well resourced and makes very good use of its accommodation and grounds.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The curriculum is very well developed, relevant to the needs of pupils and accessible to all.
- Excellent use of innovative approaches enlivens and enriches the learning in different subjects.
- Very good use of, visits, visitors, clubs and practical activities brings learning alive.
- The school is staffed very well.
- The school works very hard to improve and make the best of its spacious but dated accommodation.

Commentary

The curriculum is very well developed, relevant to the needs of pupils and accessible to all.

23. Since the last inspection very good use has been made of national guidance and local authority advice to plan and develop a very broad and well-balanced curriculum in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 6. This is based on national guidance for the Foundation Stage and the requirements of the National Curriculum. Considerable time and effort has been spent on this. Statutory requirements are met. The school continues to refine its curriculum in the light of changes in intake and national expectations.
24. Teachers make very good use of the school's long term planning documents and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy as the basis for planning. Collaborative planning and a two-year planning cycle ensure pupils in both the mixed and single year group classes develop knowledge and understanding progressively. Ability grouping in lessons and setting in mathematics meet the needs of all pupils very well. 'Catch-up' programmes and extension activities in English and mathematics help to meet pupils' specific needs very effectively.
25. Links between subjects are identified and care taken to ensure that the identity and skills of specific subjects are not lost. For example, the school is currently working to extend the use being made of ICT to support learning in other subjects. This well planned and considered approach is a strength of the curriculum. There is a very

strong regular programme of personal, social and health education that includes work on sex and drugs and supports pupils' personal development very well.

26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are now carefully monitored to ensure appropriate targets are in place. Targets for all pupils are carefully planned, monitored and reviewed to ensure pupils make progress. Good use is made of specialist teachers and outside agencies and the hours of support required by each pupil are clearly identified. This support enables pupils to have access to the full curriculum offered by the school. The training needs of all support assistants are starting to be addressed and this is improving their effectiveness within the classroom setting. The school has identified this as an area for further improvement. Resources are used flexibly throughout the school to support individual needs.

There is excellent use of innovative approaches to enliven and enrich the learning in different subjects.

27. The school is constantly seeking new ways to enliven and enrich the learning opportunities it provides. It strives to balance excellence with enjoyment while following national guidance. Recent initiatives have included work on waste recycling, an ongoing focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and development of outdoor learning in response to pupil requests. A particularly strong example is the dragon project, which has stimulated learning across the curriculum. Pupils are working closely with a sculptor to create a dragon and his lair within the grounds. This develops skills and understanding across a wide range of subjects and is creating a valuable resource for the future. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in annual performances and these enrich the development of pupils' creative and aesthetic skills.

There is very good use of, visits, visitors, clubs and practical activities to bring learning alive.

28. A very strong, regular programme of visits, visitors and out of lesson clubs help to extend, enrich and develop pupils' skills and understanding. Very good use of the school grounds and local area, together with very well chosen practical activities, provide stimulating starting points across all subjects. This ensures learning is interesting, relevant and develops pupils' breadth of understanding. The local sports centre provides pupils with regular swimming sessions and very good links with the adjacent secondary school provide older pupils with opportunities to access specialist facilities. This also helps to make the transfer to secondary school a smooth one.

The school is staffed very well.

29. The school is staffed very well with well-qualified, experienced and committed teachers. There are a good number of teaching assistants who work closely with teachers to provide individual and group support. As a consequence of workplace reform, the school has rightly identified the need to develop their professional skills further.

The school works very hard to improve and make the best of its spacious but dated accommodation.

30. Although the large building is old and expensive to maintain, much effort has been made to update it. These include a superb early years' wing, the creation of additional teaching space in some rooms, an ICT suite and general improvements. Very good use is made of available space. Specialist areas support pupils' learning very

effectively. Exciting grounds developments and good landscaping have created attractive areas for different activities, including imaginative and constructive play, art, physical education (PE), drama and science.

31. Resources are good, with sufficient in place to meet the needs of the curriculum. The school is currently augmenting these with, for example, data logging devices for ICT and science, interactive whiteboards and high quality artefacts for drama, geography, religious education (RE), history and art and design.

Care, guidance and support

The very good support, advice and guidance found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and this is an area of considerable strength. Arrangements for health and safety are very good and those for child protection fully meet requirements. The provision of first aid is very good. The school has very good procedures for actively involving pupils in the community and the development of their school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements are very good and form the basis of the very good relationships that pupils enjoy with staff.
- Very good monitoring of pupils' personal development and learning ensures that they receive very good support, advice and guidance.
- Pupils are actively involved very well in contributing their views on how to improve the school and its facilities for the benefit of the whole school community.
- Arrangements for ensuring that pupils work in a safe environment are very good.
- Child protection arrangements fully meet requirements.

Commentary

Induction arrangements are very good and form the basis of the very good relationships that pupils enjoy with staff.

32. The very good relationships between staff and pupils begin when the pupils first start school and underpin the very good guidance that both the pupils and the parents say the staff provide. Staff know the pupils and their families very well. Staff work very hard to ensure that the best interests of pupils are met and respond very well to pupils' developing personal and social needs. Staff provide very good role models. Pupils turn confidently to their teachers or other adults working in the school. The trusting relationships that the pupils enjoy with staff give them confidence to share their news or concerns and help them cope with the problems that they encounter.

Very good monitoring of pupils' personal development and learning ensures that they receive very good support, advice and guidance.

33. Pupils are supported very well because staff monitor their personal development very effectively and have a very good awareness of those factors that might affect pupils' progress at school. Assessment is excellent and all pupils' academic progress is monitored very closely. Very good individual support and encouragement is provided, particularly for the youngest children and those up to the age of seven.

Pupils are involved very well in contributing their views on how to improve the school and its facilities for the benefit of the whole school community.

34. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute to the development of the school through personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the elected school council that meets regularly and provides reports to the whole school, in the classroom and in assemblies. Pupils readily identify how their ideas have contributed to improving the community of the school, for example through developing rules and the outside environment, with particular pride being taken in the pond and the dragon. Pupils feel strongly that their opinions are valued and take pride in what they have achieved for the benefit of themselves, their peers and future pupils.

Arrangements for ensuring that pupils work in a safe environment are very good.

35. Safe practice is promoted very well on a day-to-day basis and in lessons. Equipment is checked regularly, evacuation procedures practised and regular safety audits are completed. The school has a very good portfolio of risk assessments, which is regularly reviewed and updated. Assessments cover visits and activities as well as areas such as lone workers and the movement of cash for banking. First aid provision is very good because of the large number of staff who have undertaken first aid training, their understanding of individual pupils' needs and the availability of trained first aiders outside the normal school day.

Child protection arrangements fully meet requirements.

36. Child protection arrangements and training fully meet requirements and the headteacher, who co-ordinates this area of activity, views this work as a priority. Besides the headteacher, one other member of staff is usually fully trained, although at the time of the inspection, because of staff turnover, this was not the case. However, arrangements had already been made for a member of staff to complete the training during the current term. All staff are provided with clear guidance on child protection procedures and are vigilant in carrying out their responsibilities. The arrangements fully comply with the agreed local area protection committee procedures.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership between school and home is sound and parents are pleased with what the school does for their children. Links with the community are very good and those with other schools are good. These links enrich the curriculum and learning opportunities as well as underpinning very good transfer arrangements for pupils at the age of 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are pleased with what the school does for their children, the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make.
- Parents are very well informed about their children's progress.
- The school makes good provision for the development of links with parents, but has not yet succeeded in involving all parents in supporting their children's learning at home.
- The 'Friends of Edward Feild' provide valuable support for the work of the school.
- The school has good links with other schools and very good links with the feeder nursery school and receiving secondary school.
- The school has very good links with the local community.

Commentary

Parents are pleased with what the school does for their children, the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make.

37. The high levels of parental satisfaction found at the time of the last inspection continue and the levels of concern about homework and the closeness of the working relationship between the school and parents have been very significantly reduced. Parents are particularly pleased about the quality of teaching and the high expectations of staff, the progress that pupils make, the support for pupils' personal development and the quality of leadership and management. There does, however, remain a similar proportion of parents who have some reservations about the information that they receive about pupils' progress. Inspectors support the positive views of parents and found the overall quality of information provided to parents about pupils' progress to be very good.

Parents are very well informed about children's progress.

38. Information provided to parents about their children's progress is very good. Progress reports are clearly written and provide individual targets, which help parents to understand how to support their children to move to the next stage of their learning. Staff are readily accessible to parents and consultation evenings are attended by over 90 per cent of all parents. The school provides curriculum information to parents each term but, in many cases, this is too vague (for example, 'habitats' and 'co-ordinates') to inform parents sufficiently as to how they can support their child's learning. Weekly newsletters, coloured bright yellow, provide very good information about the life and work of the school.

The school makes good provision for the development of links with parents, but has not yet succeeded in involving all parents in supporting their children at home.

39. The school has a number of good strategies to encourage parents to become involved in supporting their children's learning, completing their homework and supporting the school in addressing identified behavioural issues. Most parents are supportive in these respects and pupils benefit from their encouragement and help. However, a minority of parents are insufficiently involved and the school continues to work hard to improve their expectations and support.

40. Parents are surveyed each year to gauge their levels of satisfaction and identify any areas of concern. Any individual concerns of parents are usually resolved informally and this was the case throughout the last year. However, in the event that a parent should wish to make a formal complaint, there is an appropriate complaints procedure and parents are also made aware of the county complaints procedure for any matters relating to the National Curriculum.

The 'Friends of Edward Feild' provide valuable support for the work of the school.

41. The 'Friends of Edward Feild' organise events that involve pupils and the wider community. They raise funds to support the work of the school and provide valuable additional resources and facilities such as playground equipment, stage lighting and a sound system. In addition, a small number of parents provide practical support within classrooms. The support of these parents and the 'Friends' is greatly appreciated by pupils and staff.

The school has good links with other schools and very good links with the feeder nursery and receiving secondary school community.

42. Good links with local schools benefit pupils' learning through shared local initiatives and staff development through joint in-service training for teachers (INSET). The

sharing of resources and facilities increase opportunities available to pupils. There are very close links with Edward Feild Nursery and consequently children's transfer from Nursery to formal education is seamless. Transfer arrangements for pupils at the age of 11 are also very good. Pupils are confident about moving to secondary school because they have good opportunities to visit and become familiar with it through their use of facilities such as the swimming pool. Arrangements for transfer are underpinned very well by very good records and by close liaison regarding particular pupils.

The school has good links with the local community.

43. Very good links with the community help pupils to develop an understanding of the needs of others through their work to support local national and international charities. Local residents act as oral witnesses and bring their personal experiences to enrich work in different subjects. The local area is used well as a resource.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. The deputy and other key staff support him very well. Governance is also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent leadership, drive and vision of the headteacher have helped to build and motivate a strong and committed team.
- The deputy headteacher and other key staff make a very good contribution to the leadership and management of the school.
- Very good systems and structures ensure that the school runs smoothly and efficiently.
- Very good procedures for monitoring the work of the school are used effectively to improve the quality of education.
- The bursar plays a key role in the very effective financial controls and very efficient management of the budget.
- Governors are very well informed and have a strong influence on the school's work and its future development.

Commentary

The excellent leadership, drive and vision of the headteacher have helped to build and motivate a strong and committed team.

44. The headteacher is an inspirational and charismatic leader. His leadership is based on an exceptionally clear vision of what he wants for the school and very high aspirations for pupils' academic and personal development. He leads by example and communicates his ideas very clearly and passionately. This has enabled him to build and motivate a strong and dedicated team in which morale is high and all staff share his commitment to meeting the needs of individuals. He works closely with colleagues, recognises their achievements and provides advice and support when these are required. At the same time he deals rigorously with areas of concern. Each of these factors has contributed to the very good improvement since the last inspection. He is held in high regard by parents, pupils and staff.

The deputy headteacher and other key staff make a very good contribution to the leadership and management of the school.

45. The deputy provides very strong support for the headteacher and is instrumental in improving the quality of teaching and learning by sharing her expertise as a highly skilled teacher. This has helped the school to maintain its impetus in moving forward despite a number of changes of staff. Together with other senior staff she makes a powerful contribution to the leadership and management of the school. Within a very strong overall picture, with standards in English and mathematics rising, the time is now right to further develop the roles of other subject leaders. This is being done very effectively by spreading the core subject leadership roles more widely, using the Primary Strategy funding to release subject leaders, delegating responsibility for developing the Foundation Stage and by beginning to release all subject leaders to observe and develop their subjects.
46. Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, a weakness at the time of the last inspection is now good. The special needs policy is up to date and the Code of Practice is appropriately implemented. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) monitors the work of her colleagues well to ensure better consistency throughout the school. Recent analysis of pupils' progress is helping the school to evaluate its provision for pupils with special needs. A recent LEA audit has helped the school to focus on areas for improvement. The school is making good headway in addressing these areas. The co-ordination of special needs is good and the school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The governor for special needs is enthusiastic and eager to develop the role further.

Very good systems and structures ensure that the school runs smoothly and efficiently.

47. All members of the school community are involved in policy-making and there are regular checks to ensure that guidelines are implemented consistently. The headteacher actively promotes the professional development of all staff to help them meet the challenging but clearly defined demands of their particular roles. Performance management is well established and used very effectively to promote whole school development as well as teachers' particular training needs. The school makes a very good contribution to teacher training and new staff are very well supported by the 'induction tutor', who acts as a mentor.

Very good procedures for monitoring the work of the school are used effectively to improve the quality of education.

48. The headteacher and senior staff are very effective in monitoring the work of the school to improve the quality of education. Lessons are observed regularly, pupils' work is carefully scrutinised and teachers' planning is checked. In addition, the school makes excellent use of national, local and school data to evaluate how well pupils are doing. Checks are made to ensure they are making enough progress and the achievements of different groups, including those from different ethnic backgrounds and classes within the school, are compared. This very thorough process enables the school to deal systematically with each priority as it is identified and fed into the school development plan. It has resulted in a school where there are considerable strengths in most areas of its work and where all groups of pupils achieve very well.

The bursar plays a key role in the very effective financial controls and very efficient management of the budget.

49. The bursar works closely with the headteacher and governors enabling them to monitor and evaluate spending decisions. As a result, the school has moved from a sizeable deficit budget five years ago to a position where the books now balance each

year although, as the table below shows, there is still very little margin for error. The school has made significant savings in its overall costs while continuing to improve the quality of education and raise pupils' standards. This has been supported by the proactive approach of the headteacher, bursar and governors in seeking additional grants and other money to fund the ongoing programme of improvement. The school applies the principles of best value for money very well and regularly consults and involves all those concerned in decision-making about spending. Overall, the school provides very good value for money. The bursar also makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school through her work as premise manager, ICT technician, admissions officer and clerk to the governors.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	693,692	Balance from previous year	-6,898
Total expenditure	686,310	Balance carried forward to the next year	484
Expenditure per pupil	2,652		

Governors are very well informed and have a strong influence on the work of the school and its future development.

50. Governors know the school very well and share the headteacher's vision that is driving the school forward and raising standards. They are regular and welcome visitors, reporting on activities and learning in the school and are not solely dependent on the headteacher and staff for information. They are fully involved in regular reviews of progress, redefining strategic priorities and helping to shape the school development plan. In these ways they have a strong influence on the work of the school and its future development. When determining spending priorities they ensure that judgements are made about the benefits and potential impact on pupils. All statutory requirements are met.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

This report refers only to the work in the Reception class. The nursery school, on the Edward Feild site, was inspected separately in 2001. Provision for reception children is very good. There are excellent systems in place for identifying and monitoring children's progress. These procedures make a significant contribution to improving standards. The teacher and learning assistants make an effective team and together they make sure that the needs of all children are consistently met. The co-ordinator successfully leads the work of the Nursery and playgroup to ensure continuity between the different settings. There are clear plans for improving the work of the Foundation Stage further. Leadership is very good. This area was not reported on at the time of the last inspection and so no comparisons can be made.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children behave very well and show a good understanding of class routines.
- Children are enthusiastic learners and display very good attitudes to their work.
- Children do not always have opportunity to plan or review their independent work.

Commentary

Standards of attainment	Most children reach standards expected for their age.
Achievement	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Classroom organisation encourages independence. Very good induction procedures. Very good links with the Nursery.

Children behave very well and show a good understanding of class routines.

51. Children clearly know how to behave and participate in the range of classroom activities with confidence. They have contributed to the class rules and these are consistently applied and reinforced by the class teacher. As a result, all children conform to these high expectations of good behaviour; they sit quietly, and are willing to share with others.

Children are enthusiastic learners and display very good attitudes to their work.

52. In all lessons children are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They listen carefully and readily contribute during class discussions. All children are keen to talk about their work and happily involve adults in their independent tasks. Their interest is a result of well-planned activities that excite them and give them a desire to learn.

Children do not always have opportunity to plan or review their independent work.

53. There are good opportunities for children to engage in a range of activities, which they choose themselves. All children select tasks with confidence because the environment is well organised and accessible. Whilst they display good levels of independence children do not always have opportunities to plan and review the activities they undertake at this time.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work is very well planned to meet the needs and interests of all children.
- Excellent assessment procedures help all children to make very good progress.
- There are very good opportunities for children to develop their skills in speaking and listening.

Commentary

Standards of attainment	Most children meet levels expected for their age, with some a
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	little behind in the development of their speaking and listening skills.
Achievement	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Excellent assessment procedures, very good planning, effective use of learning support assistants.

Work is very well planned to meet the needs and interests of all children.

54. The teacher's plans clearly identify the different needs of children within the class and children benefit from small group focus work to meet these needs. Learning support assistants help children with special needs and those whose first language is not English effectively. They are well briefed, have high expectations for the children in their care and contribute well to evaluating their learning. Children are presented with a range of learning opportunities. They write for a range of reasons and are familiar with a variety of books. Their work shows that they are interested in what they do and try their best.

Excellent assessment procedures help all children to make very good progress.

55. There are excellent systems in place to help all children achieve very well. Assessment is clearly linked to lesson objectives. Each child's stage of development is clearly recognised and supported. There are well-planned opportunities to involve children in assessing their work and this is starting to make them aware of how well they are doing. Learning support assistants contribute very well to the ongoing assessments of children and this is used effectively to plan for their further learning.

There are very good opportunities for children to develop their skills in speaking and listening.

56. Staff use every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary and to encourage them to talk. There are very good opportunities for children to use their environment to explore and investigate. This is having a significant effect on improving vocabulary. For example, children watch caterpillars change into butterflies, and hunt for the 'Gingerbread man' throughout school. Very good use is made of 'talk partners' and children confidently share their ideas with one another. During whole class discussions children listen well to one another. They understand the conventions of taking turns to speak. Even the most reluctant speakers are encouraged to speak through well-phrased questions and explanations. In spite of the hard work of staff some children are a little behind in the development of their speaking and listening skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good emphasis on developing numeracy skills.
- Very good teaching ensures that all children make very good progress.

Commentary

Standards of attainment	Most children meet standards expected for their age.
Achievement	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.

Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Excellent assessment procedures, well planned group work, good use of ICT.

There is good emphasis on developing numeracy skills.

57. There are good opportunities for children to reinforce and extend their numeracy skills. In focused numeracy sessions children practise counting and reading numbers and making simple calculations. All children enjoy these practical sessions and are developing positive attitudes to their work in mathematics.

Very good teaching ensures that all children make very good progress.

58. Teaching is lively and enthusiastic and captures children's imagination. For example, they order numbers on the washing line and learn about position during outdoor play. Children undertake a range of well-planned activities and there is a good balance between practical and recorded tasks. Children benefit from the support of adults, from different tasks and from working in small groups. This helps all children to make very good progress in this area. Learning objectives for each lesson are clearly identified and are used effectively to assess children's understanding. Good use is made of the computer to support mathematical learning. Children follow matching programs and devise simple graphs to support their work on size.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of very good first hand experiences help children to learn very effectively.

Commentary

Standards of attainment	Most children meet the levels expected for their age.
Achievement	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Well-chosen resources, very good use made of school grounds.

A range of very good first hand experiences help children to learn very effectively.

59. Children talk enthusiastically about their work because topics are well chosen to meet their needs and interests. For example, they release butterflies into the wild, hunt for mini-beasts in the school grounds and plant sunflower seeds. Through these experiences children learn about habitats and observe features of what they see. Children develop their skills in investigating and exploring from practical experiences such as digging in the outdoor area. Children meet the expected levels in their work with computers. The school provides a rich curriculum, which helps all children to make very good progress in this area.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **excellent**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- A very well planned and resourced outdoor area allows for excellent opportunities for children to develop their physical skills.

Commentary

Standards of attainment	Most children meet the levels expected for their age.
Achievement	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Excellent range of activities, very good resources, generous number of support staff and other adults, very good links with the nursery school ensure curriculum continuity.

A very well planned and resourced outdoor area allows for excellent opportunities for children to develop their physical skills.

60. The outdoor area provides an excellent resource for helping children to develop their physical skills. Equipment is very well organised and this allows children to develop a range of skills. As a result, all children display tremendous confidence and imagination when travelling, climbing and moving across apparatus. For example children learn to crawl under a net, and walk along a see-saw experiencing redistribution of weight. A generous number of support staff and additional adults ensure that all children fully participate and enjoy their time in this area. Children clearly display very good standards of behaviour showing a good understanding of what is expected. They share equipment, take turns and co-operate. This contributes well to their personal development. Children develop their manipulative skills well and confidently use a range of small tools.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There are very good opportunities for learning in all aspects of this area.
- Some children require additional support to make their play more purposeful.

Commentary

Standards of attainment	Most children meet the levels expected for their age.
Achievement	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.
Other factors affecting progress	Good opportunities for children to consolidate and practise skills.

There are very good opportunities for learning in all aspects of this area.

61. There is very good provision for children to explore materials. In one session, for example, they joined containers and moulded play dough. Children benefit from focused teaching and from opportunities to experiment by themselves. Through these

experiences children learn about the different properties of materials such as those that join easily and those that do not. At times children are over directed and do not always have the opportunity to select materials for themselves.

Some children require additional support to make their play more purposeful.

62. Staff work hard to introduce an imaginative theme linked to other areas of learning. For example, during the inspection, children dressed up as butterflies, took people on 'mini beast' adventures and took orders in the garden centre café. Children are confident in this aspect of their learning and respond very well when adults join in with their play. Some children require additional support to develop their imagination and role-play further.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen in national tests since the last inspection.
- The current drive to raise standards in speaking and listening is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment.
- Pupils achieve well in reading.
- Pupils achieve very well in writing because they are very well taught and given excellent guidance about how to improve their work.
- Very good teaching overall underpins pupils very good learning.
- Very good leadership has fostered improvements in this subject.

Commentary

	Years 1 and 2	Years 3 to 6
Standards of attainment	Broadly in line with expected levels.	Broadly in line with expected levels overall and above these in writing and Year 6.
Achievement	Very good.	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.	Very good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Not all parents share books with their children at home.	
Improvement since the last inspection	Very good.	

Standards have risen in national tests since the last inspection.

63. Standards have risen in line with the national trend since the last inspection, even although pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are not as good when they start school as they were. There has been very good improvement in writing standards in Year 6 tests, with a significant rise in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4.

The current drive to raise standards in speaking and listening is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment.

64. This year all staff are concentrating on raising standards in speaking and listening. This is because in recent years pupils have started school with increasingly limited speaking and listening skills, which makes it more difficult for them to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in other areas. Throughout the school pupils

have 'talk partners' and the use of these is clearly helping pupils to use more extended and complex language. Question and answer sessions are also used well in whole class sessions and again pupils are encouraged to speak at length. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve very well and are making very good progress. This is because they are given a small amount of extra support and in lessons teachers are sensitive to their special learning needs. The development of speaking and listening skills is planned across all subjects and pupils also have opportunities to speak to larger audiences in assemblies. Drama activities are planned into work in a range of subjects. Staff are developing strategies to evaluate pupils' progress in this area.

Pupils achieve well in reading.

65. Pupils achieve well in reading. The school's assessments indicate that standards are a little below levels expected in Year 2, and a little above the levels expected in Year 6. There are good strategies in place to ensure that pupils are developing skills to help them to tackle new words and more complicated texts, as well as encouraging them to enjoy books and stories. There is clear teaching about letter sounds in younger pupils' classes and throughout the school pupils work in groups to read books with their teachers. Consequently pupils tackle reading confidently and use a range of strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words. Pupils also take books home and are expected to read to a parent or carer regularly. Some pupils do this as part of their homework, but others do not. Currently, in a few classes, there is infrequent monitoring of the books that pupils take home and less emphasis on a dialogue between home and school about reading than there is in many schools. Most pupils have clear preferences for different books and authors and there is evidence of some exciting work about authors, such as that related to Roald Dahl in Years 1 and 2. However class book areas are not as well organised or attractive as they could be, with few displays to catch pupils' interest or draw their attention to particular books or authors. Staff report that this is not normally the case and that usually there are displays about the book that pupils are using as a basis for work in the literacy hour. The library is a great asset, and is well organised with a good stock of good quality books.

Pupils achieve very well in writing because they are because they are very well taught and given excellent guidance about how to improve their work.

66. The school has worked hard and very successfully to raise standards in writing: a recent focus for school improvement. Throughout the school pupils tackle writing tasks confidently and use language well to convey meaning. In lessons seen, standards were in line with or slightly above the levels expected, although the school's own assessments of pupils' unaided writing indicate that standards are in line with or a little below the levels expected. The key factors that have contributed to the improvement in writing are:

- Allocating time for pupils to write at length.
- Making writing tasks interesting and relevant.
- High teacher expectations.
- Using good quality published writing as a starting point.
- Making links with other subjects.
- Making it clear to pupils what they are expected to concentrate on in each session.
- Improving marking to make it more helpful.
- Using strategies to involve boys as well as girls.

Teachers show pupils that their work is valued by displaying their writing and putting together class books. A few pupils have had their work published.

Very good teaching overall underpins pupils' very good learning.

67. Teaching is very good overall and ranged from satisfactory to very good in the lessons seen. Particular strengths in the teaching of English are:

- The current emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Planning to challenge all groups of pupils effectively, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils.
- The consistent use of 'WALT' and 'WILF' to help pupils to know what they are expected to achieve.
- Excellent marking so that pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve.

The consequence of this very good teaching is that pupils concentrate very well, work hard and pick up new ideas quickly.

Very good leadership has fostered improvements in this subject.

68. This area is currently led and managed by two teachers, who have only been co-ordinating the subject for a few months. They are working very closely with the deputy headteacher who was the previous co-ordinator and have maintained very strong leadership, with a very clear focus on raising standards and supporting staff.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

69. There is a current drive to raise standards in speaking and listening by providing opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in all subjects. Pupils use and improve their reading and writing skills in the humanities and ICT.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and are above the levels expected in Year 6.
- All groups of pupils achieve very well.
- There is a very strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Pupils are given very clear guidance about how to improve their work.
- Leadership and management of mathematics are very good.

Commentary

	Years 1 and 2	Years 3 to 6
Standards of attainment	Just below the expected level.	Above the expected level.
Achievement	Very good.	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good.	Very good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Good opportunities for pupils to use mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects.	
Improvement since the last inspection	Good.	

Standards are rising and are above the levels expected in Year 6.

70. Standards in last year's national tests were below average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Test results have varied from year to year with a significant dip in Year 2 last year. This is largely because the proportion of pupils of different abilities varies in particular year groups. The overall trend shows that standards are rising year on year because of the very good teaching. The school's predictions indicate that results this year are again likely to be below average in Year 2, and above average in Year 6. This reflects the inspection evidence which shows that pupils are working just below the level expected for their age in Year 2, and above in Year 6.

All groups of pupils achieve very well.

71. Most pupils enter the school with weak mathematical skills and make rapid gains as they move through the school. This represents very good achievement. They are taught in sets formed across two age groups. This arrangement is successful in extending more able pupils while making it easier to support those who are less able. As a consequence, pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and more able pupils achieve equally well. The school works hard to ensure that there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls by ensuring that activities and tasks motivate both genders.

There is a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills.

72. Teachers make very good use of the National Numeracy Strategy and a strong emphasis is given to improving pupils' numeracy skills across the school. Younger pupils are working below the levels expected for their age but very good teaching helps them to make very good progress in their knowledge of number. More able pupils in Year 2 investigated multiples of three and four and they quickly identified patterns in their results. As the pupils move through the school they improve their understanding of place value and number operations. They make very good gains in their recall skills, of multiplication tables for example, and their ability to solve mathematical problems because of regular practice. By Years 5 and 6, where the majority of teaching is particularly effective, most pupils deal confidently with fractions, decimals and percentages and successfully apply their knowledge to solving problems.

Teaching and learning are very good.

73. Overall, teaching is very good, ranging from satisfactory to excellent. It is strongest in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6. All lessons begin with a brisk oral session to sharpen pupils' mental skills and to practise a variety of calculation strategies. Teachers employ a variety of strategies to involve pupils actively in this stage of the lesson, for example by using individual whiteboards and the very effective use of talking partners. This shows a clear awareness of the need to address identified weaknesses in speaking and listening by encouraging pupils to discuss their work and to consolidate their learning. Teachers have very high levels of subject expertise and use this to plan interesting and stimulating tasks that successfully motivate pupils. As a result, almost all the pupils are enthusiastic learners who enjoy their mathematics lessons. Particular strengths in the most effective lessons include excellent relationships with lots of smiles from adults and pupils, skilful questioning and careful organisation to maximise the amount of teacher input and support for each group. Teaching and learning are less successful when the teacher is not sufficiently assertive in challenging the immature behaviour of a small minority of pupils. A visiting teacher contributes effectively to the overall provision by working with gifted and talented pupils.

Pupils are given very clear guidance about how to improve their work.

74. Assessment arrangements in mathematics, like all other aspects of the school's work, are subject to continuous review and are being further refined to ensure they are of the highest quality. Teachers always share the purpose of the lesson with pupils at the outset and frequently intervene with reminders to ensure pupils remain focused before returning to it at the end to review progress. Increasingly, and particularly as they get older, the pupils are actively involved in this process by assessing their own progress. Marking of pupils' work is of consistently high quality. Their progress is carefully tracked from Year 1 to Year 6. All of this assessment, together with more formal annual tests, provides teachers with detailed information about their pupils. They make very good use of this information to provide pupils with constructive feedback designed to help them improve and plan their next steps in learning.

Leadership and management of mathematics are very good.

75. The co-ordinator is a highly skilled teacher. She provides quality support and guidance for colleagues, sharing her expertise in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Her very good leadership and management and a carefully considered programme of development are key factors in the school's continuing drive to raise standards. In partnership with the local secondary school, staff are working with other local primary schools to the mutual benefit of all.

Mathematics across the curriculum

76. Teachers make good use of opportunities for pupils to use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and some very good examples were seen in Years 5 and 6 in design and technology, geography and science. The school is aware of the need to plan for these opportunities more systematically and to continue to develop the use of ICT to support pupils' learning. It has already begun to address these issues.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards vary from year to year and have recently improved.
- All pupils achieve well because of good teaching and learning and well planned lessons.
- A strong focus on practical activities, development of investigative and observational skills and use of correct terminology.
- Good leadership and development of the subject by the co-ordinator.
- Good use is made of resources and ICT to support learning.

Commentary

	Years 1 and 2	Years 3 to 6
Standards of attainment	At expected levels.	At expected levels.
Achievement	Good.	Good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Good.	Good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good.	Good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Pupils find difficulty applying previous learning to new situations. Strong emphasis on practical activities to develop pupils' investigative and observational skills. Increasing use of ICT.	

	Good use of school grounds.
Improvement since the last inspection	Good.

Standards vary from year to year and have recently improved.

77. Standards last year were average in Year 2, and for the past two years below average in Year 6. The school's assessment records suggest standards will be average this year. Inspection evidence shows pupils in Years 2 and 6 working at the expected levels for their age. This is a similar picture to that found by the last inspection. However, the school has done well to maintain this position considering the variations in its intake and its necessary focus on literacy and numeracy. All pupils make good progress and those with special educational needs or English as an additional language achieve equally well. There is no difference between the performance of boys and girls. While pupils develop a good level of scientific knowledge in their written work they often find difficulty applying previous learning to new situations. The school has recognised this problem and is implementing strategies to establish what pupils already know and understand at the start of each topic. This is then compared with end of unit assessments to help pupils understand what they have learnt.

All pupils achieve well because of good teaching and learning and well planned lessons.

78. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are planned and prepared carefully taking account of the needs of different abilities and age groups. The departmental approach to planning makes best use of subject expertise and supports non-specialists very well. Careful introductions and explanations prepare pupils for tasks well and good support ensures all abilities achieve equally well. In better lessons, pupils are encouraged to apply learning to more complex situations, as when Year 6 pupils identified the likely effect of changes in a food chain. Questioning is generally used well to focus pupils' thinking but in several lessons over-emphasis on organisation detracted from the point of learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed on activities to support specific groups, usually pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is not the first language. However, they do not always have sufficient subject expertise to help pupils through intervention or questioning.

A strong focus on practical activities, development of investigative and observational skills and use of correct terminology.

79. Practical activities are used well to develop pupils' observational skills, capture their interest and reinforce learning as when Year 3/4 visited the pond and environmental area. Pupils' work shows they are taught to predict outcomes, record measurements with increasing accuracy and reach conclusions about what they have seen or found. Worksheets allow pupils to focus on recording their findings. Teachers carefully introduce new terminology and encourage its use, as when Year 5/6 pupils identified the 'producer' and 'consumer' in food chains.

Good leadership and development of the subject by the co-ordinator.

80. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator has analysed results, scrutinised pupils' work and teachers' planning to form an overview, using this to formulate the subject action plan. Limited opportunities to observe or work alongside colleagues, particularly as she is based with younger pupils, have restricted her ability to have a full overview. Clear identification of areas for development and a strong emphasis on a practical approach have all helped to improve work in the subject.

Good use is made of resources and ICT to support learning.

81. Resources are good and being further improved with the new ICT additions and further development of the school grounds, which are well used. This good learning resource is being further developed through the dragon project. ICT is increasingly used for research, to take readings and make and record observations. The use of data logging equipment, digital cameras and digital microscopes has allowed the school to develop this further. There are plans to make ICT an even more integral part of learning as use of interactive boards develops. Good use is made of regular visits.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improvement in resources and staff confidence and expertise since the last inspection.
- Good teaching enables all pupils to achieve equally well.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and increasing competence in using ICT.
- Good leadership and management of the subject and a clear agenda for improvement.
- There is an increasing use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

	Years 1 and 2	Years 3 to 6
Standards of attainment	Insufficient evidence.	At least expected level.
Achievement	Good.	Good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Good.	Good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good.	Good.
Other factors affecting achievement	Improved resources. Good quality planning. Increasing use being made of ICT in other subjects.	
Improvement since the last inspection	Good: resources and staff expertise have been considerably developed.	

82. During the inspection only two direct teaching sessions were seen in the ICT suite. Work from the current year shows pupils in Year 6 are working at least at the level expected for their age and some go beyond this. It is not possible to reach a conclusion about standards in Year 2 from the evidence available. Planning and examples of work suggest pupils in all year groups are experiencing the expected strands and working at least at the level expected for their age.

The improvement in resources and staff confidence and expertise since the last inspection.

83. Following national training, teachers are competent, confident users of ICT. Since the beginning of term they have been experimenting with the new interactive whiteboards and touch screen computers. They are very positive about using ICT to support teaching, quick to address technical problems and make good use of ICT as a tool for planning. The focused teaching of specific skills ensures pupils make good progress. The recent introduction of data logging devices, interactive boards, laptops and touch screen computers to the classrooms alerts pupils to ICT capability and allows teachers to develop ICT as an integral part of lessons. The ICT technician is a very valuable resource and contributes well to on-going staff training.

Good teaching enables all pupils to achieve equally well.

84. In both lessons brisk introductions and clear demonstrations of the well-prepared tasks ensure pupils achieve maximum benefit in their practical sessions. Good ongoing support from their teachers and the ICT technician helped pupils of all abilities achieve equally well. The school has correctly identified that opportunities for pupils to consolidate their ICT skills in the classroom are more limited. It has carefully researched solutions and is working to address this as funds permit.

Pupils' positive attitudes and increasing competence in using ICT.

85. Pupils are very enthusiastic about using ICT and confidently describe and demonstrate what they can do. In Year 1 pupils show good mouse control and are developing keyboard knowledge, correcting text errors by using backspace. By Years 5 and 6, pupils are learning how to enter data into spreadsheet cells using this to cost a residential visit. They have created multimedia health presentations and incorporated animation, sound effects and Internet clips into their World War II presentations.

Good leadership and management of the subject and a clear agenda for improvement.

86. The new knowledgeable co-ordinator has been supported well by the previous co-ordinator. Both are enthusiastic about the subject and provide good support to colleagues. A well-defined action plan has provided a clear focus and agenda for improvement. The subject curriculum has been well developed from national guidance and adapted, through a two-year cycle, to meet the needs of the mixed age classes. Departmental planning has helped ensure suitable challenge. End of unit assessments and an overview of standards are being developed to support the monitoring process and ensure pupils achieve as well as they might.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

There is an increasing use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

87. ICT lessons are always linked to work in other subjects and good use is made of spare capacity in the suite for classes to undertake research, record findings or complete and present projects. Pupils benefit from working on programmes to help them to consolidate their skills in reading, spelling and mental arithmetic and pupils with special educational needs find these particularly helpful. The recent acquisition of data logging devices, touch screen computers for younger pupils and interactive whiteboards for older pupils will provide opportunities for 'hands on' use of ICT in class lessons. The school has plans to increase resources as funds permit.

HUMANITIES

Geography and History

88. Work in geography and history was sampled with one lesson seen in each subject. In addition, a broad range of pupils' current and previous work was examined and other evidence was drawn from discussions with teachers and pupils, photographs and teachers' planning. Although on this evidence it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision, there is every indication that standards are at least in line with those expected, with some pupils exceeding the levels expected.

89. In both subjects there are detailed planning frameworks. These are key factors in the strong emphasis that is placed on developing the particular study skills of geography and history. In geography, fieldwork and other first hand experiences are used very

effectively to develop pupils' enquiry skills, while in history there is good emphasis on the development of a sense of chronology and the use of different sources of information. At the same time pupils gain a good bank of factual knowledge about the different periods and places they study. A wide range of visits, visitors and other stimulating activities contribute to a very rich curriculum in both subjects. Arrangements for assessment are very thorough and well established.

90. In a history lesson in Year 4, the teacher set the scene effectively for pupils to reflect on the feelings of people being invaded by the Romans. Teaching was satisfactory although other evidence indicates that it is usually better than this. In a very good geography lesson, pupils in Year 5 used Ordnance Survey maps and their good prior knowledge of rivers to plan a study of the River Cherwell. They were highly motivated by the practical nature of the task and variety of well-prepared resources.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very interested in finding out about different religions.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.

COMMENTARY

	Years 1 and 2	Years 3 to 6
Standards of attainment	Meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus.	Meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus.
Achievement	Very good.	Very good.
Quality of teaching and learning	Very good.	Very good.
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good.	Good.
Other factors affecting achievement	None related to religious education.	
Improvement since the last inspection	Good.	

Pupils are very interested in finding out about different religions.

91. In the three lessons seen and in the discussion with older pupils about their work, it was evident that all pupils are very interested in finding out about different religions. This is because:

- Very interesting lessons are planned, with a wide range of activities included to help pupils understand about religions.
- Resources are good and help to bring learning alive.
- Visits and visitors help pupils to appreciate the beliefs held by different faiths.

In discussion with older pupils it was clear that they felt that what people believe makes a difference to the way that they live their lives. In Years 1 and 2 pupils enjoyed the story of Noah's Ark, with their knowledge and understanding successfully reinforced through drama. Standards seen in pupils' work and in lessons meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good.

92. In the lessons seen the teaching ranged from good to very good and was very good overall. It was quite clear that a key factor in the high quality of the teaching was the

teachers' good subject knowledge. This was very evident in one Year 3 lesson about how Jews celebrate Shabbat, for example. Consequently, pupils developed an awareness of the significance of the candle and its symbolism for the creation of light. The very good procedures in place for shared planning mean that teachers are able to share their subject expertise and support each other. The subject is managed well, with the co-ordinator providing good support for colleagues.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Work in these subjects was sampled and it is not possible to make overall judgements about either provision or standards.

Art and design

93. Three lessons were seen in art and design, which were all introductions to new units of work. Older pupils are about to embark on a study of the work of Georgia O'Keefe and pupils in Years 3 and 4 are beginning a block of work about sculpture. The teaching and learning in these lessons ranged from good to very good and was very good overall. Older pupils particularly, worked together well to make thoughtful observations about starting points. The work planned for these lessons was typical of the rich and varied programme that pupils follow. Teachers' planning and photographs of work from past years show that pupils experiment with a range of materials and processes, including ICT. The school has successfully introduced more three-dimensional work since the last inspection and a large metal dragon in the grounds, which the pupils made with a local artist, is testament to the good progress made in this area. Pupils' sketchbooks were evaluated and these show that pupils are successfully developing their skills in sketching. Higher attainers are now being challenged more effectively through very good lesson planning, an art club and visits to the local secondary school. There are sufficient resources to teach the work planned and the subject is led and managed well.

Design and technology

94. One lesson was seen in design and technology in which Year 2 pupils looked at the winding mechanism on different toys. Teaching and learning were good in this lesson. Interesting resources and good encouragement by the teacher to use correct terminology such as 'axle' and 'handle' helped pupils to make good progress, although most pupils found difficulty in articulating their ideas. Pupils' work seen in all year groups suggests that they are working at least at the level expected for their age, with some doing better. Planning for the subject draws well on national guidance and provides pupils with good experience of different materials, methods and techniques, including food technology. The design process is developed progressively. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to examine examples of products and develop ideas before designing and making their own. In the lesson seen, younger pupils were asked to comment briefly on how they might improve their puppets and by Year 5/6, pupils make detailed evaluations of their work. Pupils record, develop and expand their ideas carefully. Year 5/6 pupils kept careful records, used ICT for research, considered the suitability of materials and investigated methods of construction. Resources are good. ICT is used increasingly to plan and model, but not yet for control.

Music

95. Work in music was sampled, with one part lesson seen and two 'singing assemblies'. Good use is made of a specialist music teacher to support teaching throughout the school. She effectively supports the school orchestra and organises performances. Most pupils enjoy singing and older pupils show good control. They learn about pitch and dynamics through well-chosen songs. Pupils experience singing in a range of styles and unaccompanied. There is no subject leader at present and staff currently follow a published scheme to ensure continuity throughout the school. There are plans for improving the provision for music when the new subject leader takes on this responsibility next term. Resources are satisfactory overall.

Physical education

96. Three lessons or part lessons were seen in physical education. Pupils achieve very well in swimming with almost all pupils able to swim at least the required 25 metres by the time they leave the school and the majority exceed this standard. Teams and individuals represent the school in many sports and compete with considerable success in local and national competitions. Very good use is made of the neighbouring school's and council facilities to enhance provision for athletics, games and swimming.
97. Activemark Gold and the Football Association Charter Standard awarded nationally in recognition of the school's commitment to promoting the benefits of school sport. The physical education curriculum is very well planned to include all the expected strands including outdoor and adventurous activities. It is very well supported by a very good range of extra-curricular activities that attract great interest from pupils throughout the school.
98. In the three lessons or parts of lessons observed the teaching was good. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed their lessons and sustained high levels of activity throughout. Most followed instructions closely and practised hard to improve their techniques. As a result, they made good progress in the basic skills of cricket, rounders and dance. Their poor listening hindered the progress of a small minority of older pupils, mainly boys.
99. The co-ordinators set a good example for colleagues. They gain some insight into standards across the school through their involvement in after school clubs but have not been able to carry out any formal monitoring of teaching and learning. Arrangements for assessment are very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

100. The school attaches great importance to pupils' personal development and a strong, regular programme of personal, social and health education has been developed to support this. Achievement of a Healthy Schools Award and selection as a lead school for the local authority confirm the very good quality of the work in this area. Diet, health, sex and the safe use of medicines are often linked with work in science. Good use is made of visitors, including the school nurse. Topics such as feelings, emotions and personal safety are dealt with in discussions and pupils' work shows how they regularly explore, develop and record their ideas and views. End of unit assessments are used well to confirm their understanding. The recent recycling project and direct involvement in improving the school's building and grounds encourage pupils to take responsibility for their environment. Pupils regularly support those less fortunate than themselves through organising fund-raising activities and collections for a wide range

of charities, including the Tsunami Appeal and Red Nose Day. The School Council increases opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas and helps promote, develop and reinforce the school community very well. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 elect class representatives to the School Council, hear outcomes of meetings and directly participate in the decision making process. In the one lesson seen the teacher skilfully guided Year 6 pupils through the process of participating in discussion, listening to others, contributing ideas and reaching a consensus.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	1
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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