

INSPECTION REPORT

Kidmore End C E Aided Primary School

Reading

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123202

Headteacher: Miss Judith Rowlands (Acting)

Reporting inspector: Mrs Heather Evans
71324

Dates of inspection: 17-19 January 2000

Inspection number: 187667

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chalkhouse Green Road Kidmore End Reading
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd Graham Foulis Brown
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kidmore End School is a Church of England Aided school, which serves both the local community and a wide surrounding area from where pupils travel to school by bus. The immediate area around the school includes homes from high social class but taking into account the extensive area from which pupils are drawn, overall the background and, for the great majority, the attainment of pupils on entry is above that of most schools nationally. The school is oversubscribed and the appeals procedures are very well known locally.

At present there are 191 pupils on role including five children in the mixed age reception classes who have not yet celebrated their fifth birthday. Children enter the school in the term in which they will be five and more young children will join the school in the summer term. Pupils are taught in seven classes mostly in single age grouping, and there is a good balance of boys and girls. The average class size is 30. There are 10 pupils who are entitled to free school meals which is a low number. All pupils in the school speak English as their first language. The school has identified 26 pupils as having special educational needs. Of these four have statements and two others are in the process of further formal assessment.

The aims of the school as set out in the brochure include teaching the Christian faith and developing in pupils' high self-esteem and self-discipline. The school aims to work with parents and carers to promote confidence and determination to accept new challenges and develop all areas of every child's emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social and physical potential.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school where the standards have been very effectively maintained at a much higher than average level for the past four years. Standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are higher than average and match or exceed those in similar schools. By the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils leave the school, very high standards are achieved in English mathematics and science and these are well above those in similar schools especially in English where standards in creative and factual writing are very high. The Overall standards in information technology are above those found nationally at both key stages. A significant number of pupils attain very high standards and have very good skills, knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology. The new national initiatives in literacy and mathematics are raising already high standards across the curriculum as pupils apply skills learned in these subjects to other related work. The quality of teaching across the school is never less than good and is sometimes very good. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and plan their work effectively. The leadership of the school by the acting headteacher is very good. A dedicated and hardworking team of teachers in their roles as subject co-ordinators support her effectively. The involvement of the committed and increasingly well-informed governing body, through an efficient committee structure, is being increased through training and a growing understanding of the responsibilities entailed. The school is well managed, relationships are very good and standards are high. Overall, with average unit costs per pupil in relation to its income the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are high in English, mathematics, science and information technology at both key stages
- Attitudes to work and relationships are very good and behaviour is good inside and outside the classroom. The level of attendance is very good.
- The quality of teaching is always at least good and is very good in almost a quarter of lessons. The commitment of all the teachers to providing challenging work and striving for high attainment is very good.
- Curriculum provision and the use of assessment to identify areas for improvement are good.
- The overall provision for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school has good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare.
- The management of the school is good and the vision and educational direction of the acting headteacher is very good.

What could be improved

- Storage facilities for essential resources are cluttered and detract from the positive learning environment. They need to be improved in order enhance learning facilities.
- There is an inconsistent and informal approach to short-term planning across both key stages.
- The policy for marking introduced in the spring term is not yet used in all subjects across the curriculum.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

The school is providing very well for the pupils of all ages and abilities. There are no significant weaknesses and the areas already identified in the school development plan for continuing improvement are clear and practical. These include the aim to meet all the targets agreed with the local education authority, which are very high and are intended to increase the numbers of pupils attaining the higher than expected level three at the age of seven at the end of Key Stage 1 and higher levels of attainment at the age of eleven at the end of Key Stage 2.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in March 1996 when it was considered to be good, the school has successfully addressed all the identified Key Issues. The school has been very effective in maintaining its high standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology and maintained or improved its provision in other subjects. The school has strengthened and improved the curriculum provision for art, music and design and technology and has established effective and comprehensive schemes of work for all subjects. Management procedures have been strengthened and the governing body and the subject co-ordinators play a full part in supporting the acting headteacher in the strategic management of the school. The long-term school development plan is well organised and is very well supported by detailed action plans for each of the identified priorities. Monitoring of the curriculum and the benefits of spending on materials and resources, set against maintained and improving standards is carried out systematically by teachers and governors together. All teachers and co-ordinators have clear job descriptions. The staff has benefited from a series of in-service training courses linked to the appraisal process, which has identified areas for development. This has enabled teachers to increase their personal skills and expertise through a balanced development programme. The school day has been lengthened appropriately at Key Stage 2 and the documentation provided for parents has been improved and fully meets statutory requirements. The governors have reviewed the organisation of equipment in the school hall to provide a safe and attractive environment for physical education. Overall the school has made good improvements since the previous inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	A*	A
Mathematics	A*	A*	A	A
Science	A*	A*	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school has very effectively maintained standards at a well above average level for the past four years. As the average level nationally has increased the school's ability to maintain the high level and to make improvements in keeping with the national averages is very creditable and is due in no small part to the skilled teaching provided for pupils in all classes. Standards are high in English, mathematics, science and in information technology as well as all other curriculum subjects. Standards at Key Stage 1 are good and work in the younger classes for children under 5, establishes the pattern for hard work and lays the foundation for the future success of pupils. Whenever the standards have been graded A* in comparative tables, attainments place the school in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. Despite caring for a number of children with special educational needs the school has set challenging but realistic targets for the future. All work is good but the quality of creative writing and the sensitive selection of vocabulary are of a very high standard. The speed of pupils' mental calculations and their knowledge and instant recall of multiplication facts is impressive. The school is attaining at a high level and will have to continue to work hard, as other schools improve, in order to maintain the 100 per cent attainment and more importantly the 'A' grades it has come to expect at the end of Key Stage 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitude to the school and to learning is very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in the classroom and around school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good.
Attendance	The level of attendance is very good and is higher than in most schools nationally.

Pupils of all ages are confident and diligent learners. They are pleased when their work is good and are eager to share this with other pupils. They readily use skills learned in one lesson to support work in other subjects. Pupils listen intently in lessons and pay attention to the teacher and the contributions of others. They enjoy working independently and with one another showing maturity and sensitivity. In assembly they reflect on the difficulties experienced by people who were punished for being different. Pupils are eager to try things out and suggest a variety of ways to solve problems testing their ideas both orally and in practical work. They have good verbal skills and a wide vocabulary especially in the classes for older pupils towards the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils enjoy coming to school and there is almost always full attendance every day. Attendance is above the national average and there have been no exclusions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was never less than good. In the 13 lessons observed 23 per cent were very good and 77 per cent were good. Very good teaching was seen in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. The strength of the teaching is in every teachers deep subject knowledge and their keen awareness of the prior attainment and abilities of the pupils. Planning in the long- and medium-term is thorough and detailed. Careful analysis enables work to be matched to individual and group needs and to be appropriately challenging at all times. Teachers provide well for pupils of all abilities including those capable of high attainment and those with special educational needs by grouping according to ability. All teachers have high expectations matched by the pupils' own desire to do their best and attain high standards. Teachers modify work sensibly but they record short-term plans in individual ways that do not all follow a consistent format. Along with all other work literacy and numeracy are taught well and pupils are encouraged to use the skills learned in other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers encourage pupils to use a variety of strategies to support independent learning and to test ideas as individuals and collaboratively with friends. The very effective working atmosphere developed throughout the school enables teachers and pupils to complete large amounts of work to high standards in a productive and enjoyable manner.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the curriculum is relevant and well balanced and the policies and schemes of work fully meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. There is a carefully structured policy and strategies are effective for the early identification of possible learning or behavioural difficulties.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for spiritual, social and moral development is very good. Provision for cultural development including multi-cultural awareness is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school caters very well for the welfare and personal development of its pupils.

The provision for English, mathematics, science is very good with many opportunities to accommodate individual needs in striving for academic excellence. Opportunities for developing information technology are good but the introduction of additional work through the National Grid for Learning has been delayed by local installation difficulties. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good overall but is somewhat limited by the use of the school's facilities by the after school club using the hall. The provision of the club is most welcomed by working parents who are able to collect their children later secure that within the school they are well cared for and are productively and enjoyably engaged.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the acting headteacher is very good. She has a very clear vision for educational excellence and has provided very effective direction for the planning and delivery of the school's aims during a difficult period during the illness of the former headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Since the last inspection the governors have accepted all their responsibilities and have undertaken structured training to enable them to fulfil all of their duties. They act as the school's critical friend and are becoming increasingly skilled in their developing role.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Led by the senior managers of the school there is detailed analyses of work in every class and at both key stages, particularly national test results. The findings of the analysis are used to modify the curriculum and adapt planned work to raise standards further.
The strategic use of resources	Resources including accommodation and personnel are at least satisfactory in quantity and are good in quality. They are used very effectively in all classes and subjects.

The strength of leadership of the acting headteacher has enabled the school to overcome recent difficulties. The support of the strong teaching staff and the encouragement of the acting deputy headteacher has enabled work in all classrooms to stay fixed on high expectations and high standards have been maintained. The governors have tackled the budget deficit, created by staff absence, in a positive and practical way and, taking the advice of the bursar, have managed to order the affairs well so as to create a small surplus. The school has developed very effective financial procedures and with the support of the diocese and the local education authority has learned to seek out all possible grants and financial support in a drive to ensure that the principles of best value are always applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents like the high standards promoted by the school and the progress their children make. They like the fact that good behaviour is promoted. They like the emphasis on hard work by pupils. They like the good quality teaching. They value the effective leadership. They like the approachability of all the staff. They like the fact that their children like school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some would like an increased amount of formal homework. Additional extra curricular activities would be welcome although parents support those that are available. Some would welcome a change in the time of parental consultation sessions.

The high percentage of returned questionnaires and the views of the 29 parents who attended the meeting for parents indicate a high level of satisfaction with how the school is organised and managed. The inspection team agrees with the parents that the school provides well for their children's overall development and well-being. The team considers that the relatively new homework policy introduced in the autumn term, and the home and school agreements which all parents have signed form a good basis for pupils' work at home and overall this is satisfactory. The addition of more extra-curricular activities on top of the staff's existing work load, which sometimes includes Saturday activities, would be difficult to manage, especially as the after school club uses the hall which is not then available to teachers. The school is willing to discuss with parents a change in the style and time of some evening consultation sessions.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards are high in English, mathematics and science at both key stages

1. At Key Stage 1 standards in English as shown in the national tests in 1999 are well above the national averages especially in reading and writing. The numbers of pupils attaining higher levels is well above that expected nationally in reading and is close to the nationally expected level in writing and above that in similar schools. Standards in speaking and listening are very good. Inspection evidence supports these results in all aspects of English where standards are high. The strategies developed to raise standards in writing at higher levels is in the early stages of development and follow the pattern set in the literacy hour but the signs are that they are proving to be a useful way forward. There is no significant difference in the attainments of boys and girls.
2. At Key Stage 2, work is built on the strong foundation laid down in the infant department for pupils at Key Stage 1 and, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards in English are very high. All pupils attained the expected level 4 and standards were well above those nationally for pupils attaining at the higher level 5. Standards have remained high for the past four years and the difference between the school's and overall standards nationally has been maintained. Inspection evidence indicates that work at the end of the key stage is at least as good as that in the recent past. Targeted work aimed at increasing the numbers of pupils attaining the higher level 5 are encouraging pupils to develop independence in learning and to push themselves towards high standards. Boys and girls overall do equally well.
3. In mathematics at Key Stage 1, the numbers of pupils attaining the expected level in the tests in 1999 was well above the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining above the expected level 2, was above that attained by pupils nationally. Standards in mathematics were close to those attained in similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that work undertaken in class is enabling pupils to work at levels above those found in most schools nationally. Pupils know and can manipulate numbers up to and beyond 100. They can calculate mentally the change one needs from 50p or £1 when buying jewels from the 'Pirates Treasure Chest' using multiplication, addition and subtraction quickly and accurately and recording their work clearly and neatly. They understand which process to select from their repertoire and know that repeated addition will help them to check simple multiplication.
4. Test results in 1999 at Key Stage 2 showed that standards in mathematics were very high compared to the national average for pupils attaining level 4 and were well above the national average for those pupils reaching the higher level 5. Some pupils attained level 6, which is a very high standard and is not expected to be reached until the secondary phase of education. When compared with similar schools the pupils are attaining well above the average standards at level 4 and above other similar schools at level 5. Targets agreed for the present year make allowance for the fact that there are pupils with statements of special educational needs in the group. The school has already analysed the results and has found ways that teachers believe will enable more pupils to attain the higher levels in the future. Inspection evidence indicates that a significant number of pupils are already working at a high level early in the school year. This suggests that the methods the school has developed are proving to be effective. Pupils understand the use of square numbers and square roots. They can manipulate fractions mentally and in work in their books, understand and use negative numbers and improper fractions. Pupils work quickly, relating new work to that completed in other areas of their learning. Their complete mastery of multiplication tables is immensely valuable to them as they tackle work designed specifically for them as a small group or as individuals. They are confident that they know their number facts and do not need to 'work out' answers or check them using calculators.
5. The standards in English and mathematics were already high before the implementation of the literacy hour in 1998 and the numeracy strategy in 1999. However, these have both been incorporated very successfully into the work of the school. The standards of spellings and reading have been seen to improve and the enjoyment and the demonstration of skills and knowledge in mental mathematics sessions where a very brisk pace is achieved is impressive.

6. The percentage of pupils attaining high standards in science as indicated by teacher assessment at Key Stage 1 are very high at the expected level 2 but teachers' expectations are not set at an ambitious level at level 3. Inspection evidence suggests that teachers are concentrating on work to level 2 and may be underestimating how hard they and their pupils are working and erring on the side of caution in their assessment of the numbers of pupils attaining higher levels. Pupils know about living things and life processes and they develop their skills in the school gardens where they conduct experiments about the environment. They question new facts and apply established knowledge to new learning in experiments and recording work.
7. Standards in science at Key Stage 2 as shown in test results in recent years are very high in comparison with the national average at the expected level 4 and are well above average for pupils attaining level 5. The results were well above the average attained in other schools. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have good recall of work undertaken in the past and are able to explain about solids, gasses and liquids and describe how gasses and liquids can change shape to fit any containers. They understand the concept of insulation and how materials bend when subjected to heat. Inspection evidence indicates that they are now working at a level that is at least satisfactory and a significant number are already attaining at a higher level. For the majority of pupils their knowledge of what they know and what they have learned is impressive.
8. Standards in information technology are above those found in most schools nationally. This is in part due to work in information technology being used to support other subjects across the curriculum and also because many pupils have Personal Computers at home and are able to practise work done in school at other times. Pupils are able to access menus and load and retrieve their personal work from stored files. Pupils can access data entered by other classes to manipulate spreadsheets and import pictures. The use of remote controlled robots around the classroom and on the screen enables pupils to develop and display their understanding of control technology. There is a good selection of programs to support pupil's modelling skills and individuals delight in displaying their abilities. All pupils make progress towards agreed targets in a purposeful way. The targets set for groups and individuals are always appropriately challenging.
9. Pupils with special educational needs and average and above average pupils never make less than good progress. In those lessons where the teaching is especially good or where earlier work has prepared pupils particularly well, such as where support staff have introduced new vocabulary in advance, then, when new work is offered, very good progress is made. Except occasionally for particularly gifted individuals there is no difference between the attainment and progress of boys and girls.
10. Children under five in the reception classes work productively in the six areas of learning recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. Teachers take care to develop all of the areas of learning well and all children have attained the desirable learning outcomes by the time they reach five. The children come to school with good linguistic and numeracy skills and have developed good personal and social skills as they play and work with their classmates. They share in a rich learning experience for creative development including art and music. Children develop well physically and enjoy making models with construction toys and demonstrating a range of skills on the computers.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour

11. Pupils arrive early each day keen to share their work with one another and anyone willing to look and listen. Attendance in all classes during the inspection was almost perfect with one child having to be sent home when unwell although she wanted to stay in class and learn. One young pupil in Year 1, when describing a recorder wondered if the mouthpiece was like a duck's bill and wanted to both draw the instrument and create sounds from it. This was difficult as it was a treble recorder and rather big for him to control but he persevered.

12. Pupils behave very well in lessons and well when playing outside; when although noisy, they are kind one to another and behave in a friendly and responsible manner. Older pupils play happily with and take care of younger ones. The atmosphere for work and play is harmonious without oppression or any intimidatory behaviour. Boys and girls work purposefully together and although the girls do most of the sharing of games in the play areas boys are very responsible checking for fair play around the climbing frames and in the quiet garden. Boys and girls willingly share the responsibilities of setting out chairs in the hall and helping to manage equipment at lunchtime. Collaboration for the common good is high and a responsible attitude is fostered from the earliest years in school.
13. In this Church school there is a sharing and celebration of common religious and moral beliefs. Pupils are made aware of other faiths and know that some people suffer oppression for being of a different race or colour. This is held up to be totally wrong and pupils express the belief that everyone has a right to think their own thoughts. An example of this was in a time of collective worship, when the story of Martin Luther King was told and pupils acted out a play that they had written themselves, and prepared for presentation to the school, where prejudice was displayed and discussed. Overall relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. This strong feeling of care for one another within the school is instrumental in developing the very effective atmosphere for learning which helps to promote and sustain the high standards of which pupils and staff have cause to be proud. The way that pupils take care of the attractive grounds and care for the resources and their own property is exemplary.

The quality of teaching

14. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was never less than good. 1 lesson out of six was judged to be very good at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2, three out of 7 lessons seen were judged to be very good. At both key stages the teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' prior attainment and know how and where to drive on with new challenges; when to allow time for pupils to benefit from a period of reflection in order to consolidate their thoughts and to develop their personal ideas.
15. Every teacher is skilled in a range of suitable teaching techniques and methods to meet the learning styles of different pupils. They mix their styles well to impart knowledge, increase skills and deepen pupils' understanding. For example at Key Stage 1, a teacher used her knowledge of books in the library to support the visiting percussionist with photographs showing him, playing the drums on horseback, at the Queen's birthday parade. Skills in teaching basics such as spelling rules, parts of speech and grammatical structures as well as multiplication tables make such routines as mental mathematics exciting and enjoyable in every classroom. Teaching and learning is carried out at a brisk pace and every minute is used effectively.
16. All work is carefully planned and profitably linked to the long and medium-term plans, which reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum as set out in comprehensive and detailed schemes of work prepared by the teachers from a range of personal and commercial sources. The details of each section of the schemes is linked to work accomplished in previous years and modified in the light of careful evaluation. The pattern of formally recording short-term planning varies from class to class but in all cases objectives are clear and match the agreed programmes of study. Work is always linked to the weekly planning and to the needs of groups or individuals.
17. Pupils are expected to strive for high standards and in every class they have no time to do other than behave well. They do this readily as their work is interesting and they have much to complete in every lesson. All resources, including the time of classroom assistants and voluntary helpers, is used carefully to good effect. The additional planned support given to pupils with behavioural or learning difficulties enables the vast majority of these to make progress at the same rate as the rest of the class. Pupils are encouraged to use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and information technology to increase their knowledge and their rate of learning with the minimum of fuss. Pupils of all ages rarely need reminders or prompts to use any of the available supportive resources but teachers slip these in as and when required. Pupils are enabled to develop at their own rate and follow independent lines of enquiry within the bounds of the work of the class.

18. Work is assessed on a daily basis as it is marked, often alongside pupils when suggestions for improvement are made. The new marking system, introduced at the end of the autumn term, indicates ways in which this good work might be extended to all subjects. During assessment weeks pieces of work marked to agreed levels for the standardised tests are completed to ensure that standards are being maintained and that progress towards national expected levels and the schools and pupils' own agreed targets is on course. Modifications to the curriculum and to day-to-day or longer term subject matter or planning, result from the review of assessed work. Teachers adjust the work planned for their own class in response to the standards being attained in the classes above or below. Teachers use all resources sensibly, including support staff and parental volunteers. They sometimes have difficulties accessing resources because of the limited storage space.
19. Homework is set at the end of some lessons each week and a time is indicated as to when it is to be completed. This work is reviewed at the start of follow-up sessions in the following week. The amount and nature of work varies between reading and spellings for the younger pupils to research work and planning and written work for older pupils. Reading diaries are a useful link between the home and school and show very well where parents and teachers working together monitor and extend the ability and range of pupils reading and their choices of books. Homework almost always reflects the work undertaken or prepares for the next phase of planned work. The system set out in the homework policy provides a useful framework for parents, pupils and teachers to work well together. The concern expressed by some at the parents meeting has either resolved itself as the parent and school agreements have become more established or the pattern has settled down again following the Christmas break. All parents consulted during the inspection and evidence gathered from pupils as well as work seen in homework books during the inspection indicates that the pattern and range of homework is at least satisfactory. There has been a consistent pattern since the autumn term before the date of the inspection was announced.

The Curriculum is good and the use of assessment in order to inform future planning is also good

20. The curriculum is broad and well-balanced. The apparent shortage of allocated time each school week for information technology and science at Key Stage 1 is more than accommodated in the cross-curricular work that is very well planned and very effectively managed. All subjects have an adequate time allocated over each half term including the adjustments made for the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and meet statutory requirements. There are good links with the local church and the curriculum for religious education fully meets the requirements of the local agreed syllabus which has increased pupils understanding of other than western beliefs and traditions. There is good provision for teaching about sex-education and drugs' awareness. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' personal, intellectual and physical development. Standards in English and mathematics were already high before the implementation of the National Literacy Hour and the Numeracy strategy. The new strategies have been used very well to reinforce pupils' skills in spelling, extend their abilities in writing and increase the speed of work in mental mathematics.
21. The school has clear policies for all curriculum areas and has developed or adopted comprehensive schemes of work, making full use of national project and Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documents. There are clear links between topics and the coverage of subjects. The staff have developed effective medium-term plans which show a secure knowledge of the curriculum requirements appropriate for the age and abilities of the groups being taught. Weekly plans include reference to learning objectives, matching work to pupils' needs and abilities and assessment as well as learning activities. Individual lesson plans are brief and draw on the long- and medium-term planning but lack a consistent format, with most teachers using a process that suits them and their pupils. Whilst the system works for the teachers at present, it could be damaging for continuity of work should a teacher be absent for any length of time. Particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics the planning stage provides for the evaluation of lessons so that adjustments can be made in the light of pupils' response and progress. Teachers plan alongside colleagues and across key stages. This procedure for planning supports the way the curriculum increases the depth of pupils' knowledge and understanding from year to year.

22. The curriculum for children under five is well planned and carefully organised. It covers all the required areas of learning for children in the reception classes. It provides a strong foundation for future progress. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared by a rich and challenging curriculum for secondary school. Homework is used to support progress, with reading and spellings in Key Stage 1 and work in these and other curriculum areas in Key Stage 2. This includes learning spellings and multiplication tables. In Year 6 the pupils undertake individual project work that includes personal research, individual study skills and an oral presentation to others. At these presentations most parents are proud and astonished by their own children's confidence and competence.
23. The school has a range of extra-curricular activities in which good proportions of pupils in both key stages participate. These include netball and football as well as the choir and environmental projects in the school gardens at weekends. Pupils also take part in local General Knowledge quizzes; cricket, cycling proficiency in Year 6, and some pupils maintain an involvement with the Henley Young Musicians Orchestra. A range of visits out of school also supports the curriculum. For example, the infant pupils visit the Science Museum in London and the Hexagon Theatre in Reading. Junior pupils' experiences include a day of Medieval and Tudor art, a visit to the Planetarium and a fieldwork visit to Glasbury-on-Wye as well as to the 'SS Great Britain' in Bristol. Pupils on a residential visit benefit from activities such as canoeing and climbing. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility for a wide range of duties across the school including lunchtime help for younger pupils and supervising and supporting the most timid in the quiet garden. Other pupils undertake tasks helping with chairs and registers. Recently the school participated in a millennium project including performing with pupils from other schools in a concert held at the local secondary school. The school supports a number of charities and attends special services at the parish church. Even at the time of the inspection the school organised its part of the 'Blue Peter Appeal' to raise equipment to help seriously ill babies.
24. The governors have a curriculum committee that visits classes and lessons, approves all schemes of work and policy documents and monitors and supports developments in the curriculum. Individual governors are addressing their responsibilities as literacy, numeracy and special needs governors. This work is developing well and the shared knowledge and expertise is enabling governors to have a more informed understanding of how pupils are growing and learning in all areas of the curriculum. The teachers value this interest and support and are willing to discuss curricular initiatives with well-informed and interested governors. Pupils enjoy focussed visits and are pleased to show their best work to people they know and regard as friends.
25. All pupils' work is assessed carefully at all stages and the findings are used sensibly to modify curricular provision and adapt planned work to match individual needs. Work of pupils in the under fives group is checked against the requirements of the desirable outcomes before their being introduced to the National Curriculum. At both Key Stages work is assessed and evaluated against national expectations at the end of each programme of study and the end of each half term. Assessment weeks, held each term enable pupils and teachers to check progress, ensure that a high quality of work is being maintained in all classes and set new targets. The assessment procedures include pupils' individual assessment books where work is reviewed against expected national levels and the targets set by the school. Individual targets for more advanced work and higher than average attainment are set. Detailed analysis of all test results is shared with parents and discussed with governors. This rigorous analysis of moderated work and test results enables challenging but realistically manageable work to be planned for the future as new targets are set for groups and individuals. Each groups' targets are set anew at every assessment point.

The overall provision for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good

26. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. All the adults in the school are good role models for the pupils who work and play together in a calm and supportive atmosphere. Even the youngest pupils know the difference between right and wrong and consider the impact of their actions on others. Pupils reflect on the beauty of nature as seen around them and in poems, pictures and stories. They listen intently to music in assembly and listen spellbound as the theme and something about the composer are explained to them. Pupils sing a range of hymns and songs tunefully with enthusiasm. They write and contribute their own prayers and thoughts about ideas and themes they are studying. Pupils' care and concern for the environment is evidenced in the quiet garden and in the wild garden dedicated to the memory of a good friend of the school. Multi-cultural provision has been greatly enhanced since the time of the last inspection through an increased awareness of art and music from other than western traditions and an increased knowledge of other than the Christian faith promoted in lessons in religious education. Pupils know about mathematics and science developed in China, Egypt and South America. Overall the provision for cultural development is good.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good

27. All pupils have full access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Individual education plans and individual literacy plans identify appropriate targets. Teachers match work carefully to the needs of individuals, to ensure that pupils of differing attainment have access to all the key elements of learning. Additional help is given to pupils as and when appropriate and good use is made of learning support assistants to implement intervention strategies. All work is carefully planned through individual education plans and supported effectively by teachers and learning support assistants.

28. The register of pupils with special educational needs is kept under constant review and pupils at the early stages regularly move off after only a short period of additional help. Parents of pupils with needs requiring more help than the school can provide from its own resources, and having statements of special needs and planned additional support, are invited to the regular review meetings. These are held at the correct times and parents, teachers and other professionals share in setting new targets. All pupils, including those capable of higher attainment are constantly presented with significant elements of challenge through skilful questioning and tasks that require effort and thought.

The school makes good provision for child protection and developing pupils welfare

29. The school cares for its pupils very well. Teachers know pupils and their parents and make efforts to meet the needs of each and every one. Teachers are alert to all pupils' special needs whether they are physical, social emotional or intellectual and the aim of the responsible adults is to provide for and educate the whole child. The school has a range of suitable practices, which identify how well pupils are making progress particularly but not only in the subjects of English, mathematics and science.

30. Care for the physical and emotional development of children is a high priority of all the adults involved in the school. The school is very aware of procedures to ensure that pupils' safety and well-being are safeguarded and the designated 'named' teacher is well trained in procedures relating to child protection. Teachers and welfare staff are trained in first aid procedures. Pupils' work and development is monitored in a systematic way and when perceived to be necessary, changes are made to the curriculum or to the routines of the school to improve performance.

31. Parents state in their responses to the questionnaire that overall they agree with most of what the school does. There are minor areas for improvement suggested by small groups or individuals which the school will consider, but the vast majority of parents are well satisfied with the standards promoted by the school.

32. The school brochure and information sent home regularly is informative and well received. The reports are very full and meet statutory requirements.
33. Links between home and school are good and the Kidmore End School Association (KESA) forms an effective support and liaison system between the school and pupils' homes. All parents are members of KESA and help to raise funds as they support a wide range of social events such as murder mystery evening, discos or end of term fairs.
34. The newly established home/school agreements signed by all parents in the autumn term are beginning to promote even stronger links between what pupils learn in school and continue to do at home with parental support. As yet there are some details to resolve with the pattern of setting and completing homework. However, as an additional link, alongside the homework policy, parents welcome the agreements and pupils are supported very effectively.

The management of the school and the vision and educational direction of the acting headteacher is very good

35. The strength of leadership of the acting headteacher has enabled the school to overcome recent difficulties. Her clear vision for ensuring the already high standards and challenging work has set a tremendous example to the entire school for prospering in the face of adversity. The support of the dedicated team of teachers and support staff and the encouragement of the acting deputy headteacher has enabled work in all classrooms to remain focussed on the work in hand as well as on longer-term challenging goals, and high standards have been maintained.
36. The governing body has reviewed all the issues raised at the time of the previous inspection with a very high degree of success. There is now a well-organised and effective committee structure. The chairman of the governors has delegated all pertinent responsibilities to the appropriate committees. Under his guidance committee members have undertaken relevant and useful training in order to help them carry out their duties in an efficient and beneficial way for the well being of the school and the pupils. The adopted committee systems and the knowledge of the vast majority of the experienced governors enable all statutory responsibilities to be met. Some new governors are in the process of undertaking training to enable them to play a full part in the ongoing work of the governing body.
37. The curriculum committee works closely with subject co-ordinators to review their work and monitors the effectiveness of the teachers and the schemes of work in preparing pupils for end of key stage tests. The results of statutory and voluntary tests are scrutinised carefully and strategies are in place to evaluate the effect of spending decisions on standards attained. Governors support teachers in their efforts to seek improvement and when reviewing work using the data prepared for schools by the government officials each autumn, they have highlighted places for improvement even in the light of a very pleasing pattern of results. Governors have been appointed to support initiatives in Literacy and numeracy. There is also a governor who is involved in work to support pupils with special educational needs. All of these designated governors have undertaken additional specialist training and provide effective liaison between parents, governors and the school.
38. The governors have tackled the budget deficit created by prolonged staff absence in 1998/99 in a positive and practical way without adversely affecting standards of work. The impact on the workload of senior teachers has been dramatic but the closeness and dedication of the teaching team has been impressive. The quality and commitment of the classroom assistants and learning support staff matches that of the teaching staff. The school has appointed and taken the advice of a very competent bursar and have managed to order the affairs well so as to create a small surplus which is within recommended limits. From the surplus the school plans to increase staffing for the summer term in 2000 to support the new intake. The school has developed very effective financial procedures and with the support of the diocese and the local education authority has learned to seek out all possible grants and financial support in a drive to ensure that the principles of best value are always applied.

39. The allowances for supporting pupils with special educational needs are managed carefully and the additional staff provided by this funding are employed very sensibly. The school allocates additional money from its delegated budget to increase the support for pupils with special educational needs and the standards achieved by this spending are monitored carefully and enable many pupils to attain expected levels alongside their classmates. This is a major factor in the school attaining well above average results for many years. Grants for staff training including training for the National Grid for Learning are used efficiently and the staff appraisal system is used to identify specific training needs.
40. Parents, teachers and governors are keen to keep the fabric and decoration of the building to a high standard. There are frequent weekend or holiday working parties when classrooms or shared spaces are redecorated at minimal cost thanks to the good support of a national company that provided paint at no cost from colours returned by customers. The school is kept bright and clean through this help and through the committed hard work of the site manager. Storage space is at a premium. Although staff and children alike care for all resources they are often crammed together and are difficult to access without great thought and planning. This creates a cluttered environment in places, which belies all the other very good work of the school in aiming to create an interesting and attractive learning environment.
41. The governing body is viewed by the school as a critical friend. The high percentage of parents on the governing body ensures that the needs of pupils are the schools first priority. The skilled professionalism of many governors is seen as a tremendous bonus as they have their own specialisms when looking for best value when making purchases or when monitoring the work of the school. Their involvement in setting the budget and deciding the priorities for new work alongside the teachers and the management team is effective. Evidence for this is seen in the draft documents set against the final development plan. The governing body is confident that the more detailed action plans, prepared by the acting headteacher and shared with them will deliver their intentions. However, they are frequently in the school supporting and encouraging developments and regularly take stock of progress to date. Taking into consideration the average cost for each child, the very good behaviour, relationships and attitudes that prevail, the well ordered and efficient management process as well as the overwhelmingly good teaching and the well above average standards attained, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school is short of space for managing resources and is cluttered in some places

42. All corners, cupboards and areas for resources are filled to capacity with good quality and relevant resources, many of which have been provided by the parents association. However resources are regularly crammed together and this makes it difficult for pupils and teachers to gain easy access. Almost all resources are organised systematically but with notable exceptions such as the resources to support literacy they present a feeling of clutter which belies the very positive and practical approach to teaching and learning which pervades the school.
43. The school is negotiating with the diocese to gain access to the former kitchen area now that meals are no longer cooked on the premises and to undertake some limited building work to enhance storage facilities, resolve the present difficulties and improve the learning environment.

The formal process for short-term planning is inconsistent

44. Every teacher uses the long and medium-term plans effectively and modifies day-to-day planning as is most helpful to her and her pupils. However there is no common format for recording this evaluation process and preparing short-term planning notes for following lessons. This means that every system stands independently and does not present a simple pattern to a supply teacher or another colleague. A number of systems are in place but the school would benefit from a more formalised agreed and consistent convention for presenting short-term planning.

The newly developed marking policy is not used in all subjects when marking work across the curriculum

45. All teachers mark work carefully, often alongside pupils when they discuss ways forward and how work might be improved. The policy for marking introduced in late in the autumn term is clear and informative and is being used in all classes for work in English and mathematics to good effect.
46. In the near future, as outlined in the action plan linked to the school development plan, the extension of this initiative to all written work should enable teachers and pupils to maintain a written dialogue between themselves and their pupils. This would add to the already effective process of ongoing assessment and help pupils to look back and remember important teaching points at a later date.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. There are no significant weaknesses but in order to maintain the existing high standards and develop the school further the headteacher, staff and governors should consider the following recommendations

- (1) The school should consult with the diocese and the Local Education Authority to investigate all possible ways of improving storage for resources in order to create a less cluttered learning environment and improve access to resources for teachers and pupils.
Paragraph 40
- (2) The staff should adopt a standard and consistent way of presenting all short-term lesson plans to facilitate evaluation of completed work and simplify future planning.
Paragraph 16, 21
- (3) The newly developed marking policy should be extended to all written work in all classes across the curriculum, as planned, in order to simplify and enhance assessment strategies in subjects other than English and mathematics.
Paragraph 18

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	13
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23	77	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	191
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		26

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.27
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	17	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	30	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97(54)	97(79)	97(84)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	30	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97(81)	100(79)	100(85)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87(86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	18	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	34	34	34
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	100(100)	100(95)	100(100)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	15	16
	Girls	16	16	18
	Total	28	31	34
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	84(84)	91(85)	100(100)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Any other minority ethnic group	0
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Other minority ethnic groups	0	0
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This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.3
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70.25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	295403
Total expenditure	293951
Expenditure per pupil	1500
Balance brought forward from previous year	20098
Balance carried forward to next year	21550

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	191
Number of questionnaires returned	100

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	39	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	54	5	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	47	2	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	53	17	4	1
The teaching is good.	45	51	3	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	69	5	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	46	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	56	7	3	9
The school is well led and managed.	48	41	5	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	50	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	38	24	6	7

NB: Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%

The high percentage of returned questionnaires and the views of the 29 parents who attended the meeting for parents indicates a high level of satisfaction with how the school is organised and managed. Parents are pleased about the improvements made since the last inspection. Some are not sure how the homework policy works and would like further clarification. Others would like more formal homework to be set especially for pupils in the older classes. Parents appreciate that the school offers some extra-curricular activities but would like more. A number of parents would prefer parental consultations to be available later in the evening than the times available at present. The inspection team agrees with the parents that the school provides well for their children's overall development and wellbeing. The team considers that the relatively new homework policy and the home and school agreements form a good basis for pupils' work at home. The addition of more extra-curricular activities on top of the staff's existing work load, which sometimes includes Saturday activities, would be difficult to manage, especially as the after school club uses facilities which are not then available to teachers. The school is willing to discuss with parents a change in the style and time of some evening consultation sessions.