

INSPECTION REPORT

NEW HINKSEY CE FIRST SCHOOL

Vicarage Road, Oxford

LEA area: Oxford

Unique reference number: 123142

Headteacher: Mrs Jenny Lee

Reporting inspector: Mrs E W D Gill
17766

Dates of inspection: 26 – 29 March 2001

Inspection number: 188999

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Girls and boys
School address:	Vicarage Road Oxford
Postcode:	OX1 4RQ
Telephone number:	01865 242169
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Elisabeth Ledger
Date of previous inspection:	June, 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17766	Eira Gill	Registered inspector	Mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, religious education, special educational needs, equal opportunities and English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13828	Ron Ibbitson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14997	Valerie Emery	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children under five, English, art and design, geography, history, music, physical education.	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is smaller than other First schools with 101 pupils aged between three and nine years on roll. There are eleven more girls than boys. In the Nursery class there are 22 children aged under five years. The school is sited in a quiet urban location and pupils come from a variety of backgrounds including Traveller families. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (26) and the percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register (24) are above the national average. The percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils from an ethnic minority background is above average. There have been changes in the characteristics of the school since the last inspection when the number of pupils on roll (120) was higher. The percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs was higher and well above average. In 2003 the school will become a primary school and will educate pupils up to the age of eleven years. A well-established feature of the school is the valuable support given by the teachers who visit the school regularly to work with the Traveller pupils and with pupils with English as an additional language. The children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The leadership and management of the school are very good and the quality of teaching is good overall. These factors have had a significant impact on improving standards. The school is very effective in its strategies to promote the educational inclusion of all the pupils who come from a variety of backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language and those from Traveller families. In February, 2001, the school was officially recognised by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment as having achieved substantially improved results over the previous four years. The findings of the inspection show a continued improvement in standards, although standards generally in Year 4 are below average due to the very high (more than 50 per cent) number of pupils with special educational needs in the group. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities promote improving standards for the pupils.
- The consistently good quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, helps the pupils to make good progress.
- The good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is having an impact on raising standards.
- The excellent provision made for Traveller pupils. This provision permeates the whole school by ensuring that the traditions of the pupils and their families add richness and culture to the whole curriculum.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language enables them to make good progress in most lessons.
- The good provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes good behaviour and relationships.

What could be improved

- The middle ability and higher attaining pupils do not make as good progress as those with special educational needs in Year 4.
- The quality of handwriting throughout the school, where there is a lack of focus by the teachers.
- The presentation of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 is generally untidy and this was a weakness identified in the last inspection.
- The governing body is not sufficiently involved with monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- The governors' annual report to parents which does not meet statutory requirements.
- Poor attendance and punctuality, which affects some pupils' progress and attainment.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in June, 1996 when it was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. In March, 1998, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) judged that the school no longer required special measures. The findings of this inspection are that the school has continued to make a good, and sometimes very good, improvement and has a similar capacity to improve still further. Practically all of the key issues for action identified by both inspections have been addressed successfully. Standards have improved in all subjects and, although standards are below average in Year 4 in several subjects, this is because of the very high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. There has been a significant improvement in leadership and management although the governing body is still delegating too much responsibility to the headteacher. The new headteacher is energetic and has established very effective systems to ensure a smooth running school and rising standards. Her clear vision has empowered the teachers whose skills have improved considerably. They are a committed, hardworking team and are very supportive of the headteacher's initiatives. Most aspects of the school were judged to be unsatisfactory or poor by the last inspection team and are now judged to be good or, in some cases, very good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	C	E*	E	D
Writing	D	E*	D	C
Mathematics	E	E	D	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The results show that the seven year olds attained well below average standards in reading and below average standards in writing and mathematics in comparison with all schools in 2000. This was a good improvement from the previous year. When compared to schools in a similar context, standards were below average in reading but average in writing and mathematics. It is difficult to make accurate comparisons where only a small number of pupils take the test each year. In 1999 there was a high number of pupils with special educational needs in the group who took the test. The trend over the last three years has been below the national average with girls performing better than boys. Inspection evidence shows that by the age of seven years, standards in all subjects are average. The achievement of pupils is good in English and satisfactory in all other subjects. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and Traveller pupils is good in all subjects. By the age of nine, standards in design and technology, art, music and physical education meet those expected for their age. In all other subjects, standards are below average and this is because more than half of the group (52 per cent) have special educational needs. In most subjects achievement in Year 4 is sound, but in art and design, ICT and physical education achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve relatively better than the middle and higher attaining pupils in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education. The school sets appropriate targets for individual pupils and is focusing on increasing the number of pupils who attain the higher Level 3 in the tests for seven year olds. Attainment on entry to the nursery class is below average and, by the time the present group of children enter Year 1, most are on course to attain the early learning goals for all areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good: pupils throughout the school have good attitudes to learning and most show enthusiasm for their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: all pupils behave well in and around the school and playground. Some pupils call out inappropriately in some lessons but most teachers implement the behaviour policy effectively.
Personal development and relationships	Good: pupils enjoy showing initiative and each class now has representatives on the School Council. There are good relationships between all the members of the school community.
Attendance	Poor: there is a high rate of absence by a minority of pupils and this is affecting their attainment and progress. A few pupils are also consistently late which disrupts the beginning of lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	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.

Ninety-eight per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, 13 per cent was very good and two per cent was unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, teaching is variable. It is good overall with mostly good and very good teaching in Year 3. In Year 4, teaching is mainly satisfactory with one lesson being judged unsatisfactory. The teaching of English, including literacy, is good throughout the school. The teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, is satisfactory overall and in Years 1 and 3 it is good with some very good features. The major strengths throughout the school are the teaching of ICT and English, including literacy. This has an impact on the pupils' learning which is good in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, learning is more variable and closely matches the quality of teaching. It is good in English, design and technology and ICT in Year 4 and in all other subjects, except science, learning is satisfactory. In the Year 4 science lesson observed, learning was unsatisfactory. In Year 3, learning is good in most subjects except music and physical education where it is satisfactory. All teachers need to focus more on the teaching of handwriting and the teachers in Key Stage 2 need to focus more on the presentation of pupils' work. In Year 4, there is a lack of challenge in some lessons for the few middle and higher attaining pupils in mathematics, science, history, geography and religious education. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is good, and for Traveller pupils, teaching is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: curriculum is very broad and balanced. Visits to places of interest, residential visits and good extra-curricular activities broaden the pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good and provision for Traveller pupils is excellent. There is very good liaison between the co-ordinator (headteacher) and the teachers, support assistants and visiting specialist teacher.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: liaison is good between the co-ordinator, the support assistants and the visiting specialist teacher. The headteacher intends to develop in more depth the resources for teaching this aspect.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: provision for moral education is very good which has an impact on the good behaviour of the pupils. Provision for spiritual, social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures for child protection, promoting good behaviour and ensuring the welfare of the pupils. Assessment of the pupils' progress is good.

Links with parents are good. Parents make a good contribution to learning and progress. A strength of the links with parents is the regular nurturing sessions that are organised weekly for parents by the deputy headteacher.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: the headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is well supported by the deputy and all teaching staff who carry several responsibilities effectively. This has a very good impact on improving the school and raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory: most governors are committed to the success of the school and make a positive contribution to its ethos for learning. However, the governing body does not have effective systems in place to inform themselves of the work of the school and this limits their ability to carry out their duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good: the school makes good use of national tests and assessments of pupils' progress to evaluate its performance and modify practice.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources and all extra funding that the school has been given or applied for. However, there is at present a lack of clarity about the long-term improvement of the school and the cost of new developments.

The school is generously staffed. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. The weakness in accommodation is the outside environment, which is inadequate, for example, for teaching physical

education. The governing body is beginning to apply the principles of best value appropriately with the support of the headteacher.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ethos of the school.• The very strong leadership and management.• They feel extremely comfortable about approaching the school with a question.• Their children like school and make progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team strongly supports the positive views of parents. The extra-curricular activities provided by the school are similar to those provided by most small schools and are enriched with visits and visitors.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery class with levels of attainment that are below average in all the areas of learning. They make good progress and they are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage, except in the area of communication, language and literacy. Their achievement is good overall.
2. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2000 show that pupils attained well below average standards in reading in comparison with other schools and below average standards in writing and mathematics. When standards are compared to schools in a similar context, standards are average in writing and mathematics and below average in reading. This was a very good improvement from the previous year. However, it is difficult to make accurate comparisons year on year where only a small number of pupils take the tests. The trend since 1996 has been variable which illustrates the problems very precisely. Also, the number of pupils with special educational needs in the group that took the test in 1999 was significantly high. Girls have outperformed the boys in the national tests over the last three years. The assessments in science made by teachers for pupils aged seven years in 2000 show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was close to the national average and was well above the national average for the higher Level 3.
3. Inspection findings show that, by the age of seven, pupils' attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science is average and in all other subjects, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. The difference between these findings and the national test results is because of the good implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies that has raised the quality of teaching. Additionally, the improved use of assessment procedures has helped to inform planning more effectively. No judgement can be made on standards of attainment in physical education (PE) as no lessons were observed in Key Stage 1. Apart from design and technology, where standards were judged to be in line, these findings are an improvement since the last inspection as standards in all other subjects were judged to be below average. Pupils achieve well in English considering their below average attainment at six years of age. In all other subjects, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs, Traveller pupils and pupils with English as an additional language are achieving well in all subjects due to the good focused teaching given by the support assistants and visiting specialist teachers.
4. By the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening are average and the achievement of pupils is good. Most pupils concentrate and respond to questions appropriately. They are developing their expressive language skills when they share stories and respond to questions. Most pupils read with confidence and with reasonable fluency at the level expected for their age. Standards in spelling are average overall. A good range of writing styles is encouraged but pupils' handwriting is not always clearly shaped and positioned. In mathematics, pupils can count in twos, fives and tens and can measure fairly accurately. They can name common shapes. Pupils enjoy science particularly when they are asked to taste different spreads in sandwiches. They found it difficult to distinguish between the smell of a particular spread and the taste but are beginning to develop their scientific thinking.
5. By the age of nine, standards are below expectations for their age in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and ICT. In religious education standards are not meeting the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In design and technology, art and design, music and physical education pupils are meeting the standards expected for their age in the lessons observed. This is a very similar picture to the judgements made in the last inspection, except in ICT and history when they were judged to be average. A significant number of pupils (52 per cent) in this group of 21 pupils are at stage 2 or higher on the special educational needs register. One of the pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Need. This contributes to lower standards

than might be expected. Within this picture, those pupils with special educational needs achieve relatively better than the average and able pupils because of the good focused support they are given from the assistants and the visiting specialist teacher for Traveller pupils.

6. In English, by the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is below that expected for their age. Their vocabulary is limited and most pupils find it difficult to explain their ideas clearly. All pupils can decode simple words but it is only the very few higher attaining pupils who can read fluently and can express a preference for an author. They can use dictionaries and indexes. Writing skills are below average and most of these nine year old pupils are writing at the expected level for seven year olds. Their spelling skills are weak and the presentation of their work is poor. Pupils' achievement in English is sound overall but the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good because of the very focused support they receive. In Year 4, many pupils find it difficult to make quick mental calculations and to read four digit numbers in words. The middle and higher attaining pupils cannot interrogate data at an appropriate level. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory but, for pupils with special educational needs, achievement is good. The scrutiny of their science books showed a wide range of work but there was no evidence of pupils learning about a fair test. Achievement for all pupils in science is sound.
7. Evidence from art work on display in Year 4 shows that pupils' attainment in art and design meets expectations for their age and achievement is good for all pupils when their below average attainment on entry is considered. They are developing the skills of pattern, line and form. In design and technology, pupils are reaching expectations for their age in the design and make strands of the curriculum but their evaluation skills are below those expected. Achievement is sound for all pupils in this subject. Pupils' mapping skills in geography are not sufficiently developed and the pupils are working with very simple co-ordinates in their mapwork. In history, pupils cannot research aspects of the Victorian Age sufficiently. Achievement in history and geography is satisfactory for all pupils although, in history, the pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the good focused support they receive.
8. In ICT, pupils' skills and knowledge are below average but, nevertheless, their achievement is good compared to their previous underachievement. This applies to all pupils including those with special educational needs. Pupils are developing the skills of word processing, data handling and using graphic packages. Some pupils can save and retrieve their work and a few can use ICT to explore imaginary situations. No lessons in music were observed in Year 4 but in Year 3, pupils are reaching standards expected for pupils of their age and their achievement is sound. Pupils in Year 4 are reaching expected standards for their age in physical education and their achievement is appropriate. In religious education, pupils are not meeting the expectations of the agreed syllabus and most pupils have difficulty understanding the underlying meaning of several aspects of religious beliefs. Their achievement from a below average starting point is sound.
9. Pupils with special educational needs, the Traveller pupils and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and attain appropriate standards in relation to their specific targets and goals. Their achievement throughout the school is good overall. Pupils' needs are identified early and appropriate learning targets are set. Their learning is further enhanced by the good quality tuition provided by the skilled assistants and the very good teaching of the visiting teacher for Traveller pupils. Inspection evidence suggests that there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The attitudes of pupils to their learning are good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when attitudes to learning and behaviour were judged to be poor. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard in lessons. Pupils respond well where teaching is enthusiastic and show a keen and sustained interest in their work. For example, a pupil in a Year 3 geography lesson was totally absorbed in her work about India and only left her table occasionally to check her answers on a large map.
11. The improved behaviour since the last report, commented on by parents at the parents' meeting, was well supported by the findings of the inspectors. Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors; they hold doors open and talk frankly to them when questioned. Around the school, including using the stairs, most pupils behave very sensibly. In the playground some pupils play with hoops and skipping ropes while others play on climbing frame or just chat to friends in the quiet area. At lunchtimes pupils queue patiently for their meals and, while having their meals, chat to each other and enjoy the time as a social occasion. During the inspection there were no signs of bullying or other aggressive behaviour. The school deals with such behaviour when it does occur firmly and promptly. In the past year there have been three fixed exclusions and one permanent because of violent behaviour by the pupil towards staff and other pupils.
12. Pupils get on well together and there are no signs of discrimination. They form good relationships with their teachers and with each other and this makes a significant contribution to their learning. Pupils know right from wrong and are aware of the school rules, which are shown in most classrooms.
13. The personal development of pupils is good which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. They readily accept opportunities to use their initiative and they show a sense of responsibility. Each class in Years 3 and 4 has two representatives on the school council, which meets every half term. The representative pupils learn how to conduct themselves in a formal setting and to respect the views of other representatives when discussing council business. One of the initiatives to come from the council was a 'friendship stop' in the playground to which any pupil feeling lonely could come and be looked after by Year 4 pupils. The council has its own small budget and decides how to use it. They also raise money through such events as a 'sponsored sing' and are presently trying to raise £250 to provide playground equipment.
14. Younger pupils are given various responsibilities in class and these are cheerfully accepted. All pupils, for example, take turns at taking registers back to the office after marking and all pupils tidy away at the end of the lesson. Pupils enjoy raising funds for charity and through this gain in maturity by understanding the conditions of others less fortunate than themselves. A popular charity activity, in which all pupils participate, is the filling of empty shoeboxes with small gifts at Christmas time, for sending on to refugee children.
15. Although the majority of pupils attend school regularly there is a high rate of absence by a few pupils. There is a tendency for some pupils to be absent without a good reason and, in some cases, parents take their children out of school for extended holidays. This affects the pupils' learning and there is evidence, for example in mathematics, where the assessment graphs show a clear decline in the progress of pupils whose attendance is poor. As well as having an effect on pupils' learning, these absences also adversely affect the overall attendance rate, which is well below the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. All the parents indicated in the questionnaires that teaching is good or very good and were totally supportive of the teaching at the pre-inspection meeting. The quality of teaching is good in the foundation stage and good overall for pupils aged five to nine years. Ninety-eight per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, 13 per cent was very good and two per cent was unsatisfactory. This represents a very good

improvement from the findings of the last inspection when 31 per cent of lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory. The proportion of very good teaching has also increased from a very low percentage. This makes a positive contribution to the rising standards. There is a significant improvement in teachers' lesson planning that leads to the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and skills. This is the result of the support they now receive from the school's more consistent planning of the curriculum as well as clear schemes of work for teachers to follow.

17. The overall good teaching in the foundation stage in the nursery and the reception year leads to good learning. The teachers and assistants work together well ensuring that they are aware of the progress the children are making. The teachers and children enjoy good relationships and this has an impact on the children settling well into both classes and learning well. Planning is good and based on the curriculum for the early learning goals.
18. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school with a very high proportion of good, and sometimes very good, teaching in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all subjects in Key Stage 1, except for mathematics where teaching and learning is satisfactory in Year 2 and very good in Year 1. In Year 2, teaching is very good in design and technology and religious education. No teaching was observed in history and physical education. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is variable between year groups but is good overall. In Year 3, teaching is very good in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, and this has an impact on the pupils' learning which is very good. Teaching and learning is good in Year 3 in all other subjects except music and physical education where it is satisfactory. In Year 4, teaching and learning is good in English, design and technology and ICT. It is satisfactory overall in mathematics, history, physical education and religious education teaching. In science, teaching is unsatisfactory because of insecure management and control of the pupils, as well as weak planning. No teaching was observed in art and design, geography or music in Year 4. In Key Stage 2, learning matches the quality of teaching in the lessons observed. It is good in English, design and technology and ICT in Year 4 and in all other subjects, except science, learning is satisfactory. In the Year 4 science lesson observed, learning was unsatisfactory.
19. Although teaching is good in English overall in Key Stage 2, the teachers have low expectations of the pupils' presentation of their work across the curriculum. This was a weakness identified in the last inspection. In Year 4, there is not enough challenge in the activities given to the few middle and higher attaining pupils in mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education. The pupils' learning is satisfactory rather than good in these lessons. The pupils with special education needs and Traveller pupils are given good focused teaching by the skilled support assistants and the very good visiting teacher for Traveller pupils. As a result, the learning of these pupils is good.
20. A significant strength of the teaching is the very good organisation of the teaching of ICT throughout the school. The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, has ensured that all classes use the ICT suite to its maximum capacity throughout the day. Teachers and support assistants liaise together very well to ensure that small groups of pupils are withdrawn to use the mathematics program at their own level. This organisation works very smoothly without any disruption to the lesson. Good learning takes place during these sessions. All teachers use the suite to teach other subjects using ICT. For example, good links with science were observed when the Year 2 teacher took all her pupils into the suite to research animals through the encyclopaedia program. Year 3 pupils used a simulation program to move their learning forward in mapping skills and road sense. Very good organisation in these lessons ensured that some of the pupils worked 'off computer' but researched the same aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator has ensured that teachers and assistants have been given effective training in how to teach ICT across the curriculum.

21. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs, Traveller pupils and for those with English as an additional language is good in most lessons and in withdrawal groups. This is an improvement from the findings of the last inspection when it was considered satisfactory. The support assistants have had good training and ensure that their teaching methods challenge the pupils. The visiting teacher for Traveller pupils gives very good support and work is very well matched to the specific needs of the pupils and addresses the targets on their individual educational plans.
22. The teaching of literacy is good in both key stages. All teachers ensure there are good opportunities for improving the pupils' skills in speaking and listening in 'Special Times', when pupils sit in a circle and are able to discuss any problems or events to celebrate. Teachers across the school have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing although the teaching of handwriting is insecure as there is no policy to help teachers know when to teach joined handwriting. Most pupils have a good understanding of how they are progressing in their writing skills and have clear targets written in the front of their books. Teachers give pupils opportunities to practise their literacy skills through descriptive writing in history and writing about feelings in religious education.
23. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory overall in both key stages, although in Year 1 and Year 3 teaching is very good. Most teachers use the good resources for teaching mental mathematics in the opening sessions effectively and the oral and mental work is well established. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher used particularly imaginative methods to teach her young pupils the o'clock times. They all had little card clocks with moving fingers and pretended they were on a train. The pupils were very excited and worked enthusiastically to good effect. In Year 2, none of the very good resources available in the classroom was used to teach the pupils mental mathematics in the opening session of the lesson and there was a lack of pace and challenge for the pupils although the lesson was judged to be satisfactory overall. Very good teaching of numeracy in Year 3 had a very positive impact on learning with pupils able to keep pace with the teacher's quickfire questions and thoroughly enjoying the lesson. Learning is very good in this class with all pupils keen to answer questions. Good organisation of a lesson in data handling skills in Year 4 led to the pupils with special educational needs making good progress in learning how to make a tally chart. However, the few middle and higher attainers were not challenged sufficiently by the activity they were given and their learning was only satisfactory, rather than good. Teachers ensure that the pupils practise their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, in design and technology when they measured paper and other materials to make their product. In geography, pupils were able to tabulate the information about rainfall in different cities in India and also to print out graphs from different websites on the Internet.
24. Throughout the school, most teachers have good skills of management and control and this is maintained in nearly all lessons. The behaviour policy is used consistently by most teachers and has led to an improvement in behaviour from the last inspection. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of their ability to apply themselves to work. Pupils are well used to routines and are ready for a prompt start. Occasionally, where the teacher does not sufficiently reinforce expectation of behaviour, pupils are inattentive and call out inappropriately. Usually, this is during the opening session of lessons. Most teachers use praise effectively and the reward system which works well.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

25. The curriculum provided for children in the foundation stage is good and is based appropriately on the specified areas of learning for children of this age. Teachers plan the curriculum carefully in accordance with the early learning goals and provide exciting practical activities. The school also ensures a wide range of good quality learning opportunities for all pupils in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 and has an appropriate curriculum in place. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented well and these are giving good support to raising standards in English and mathematics. The timetable is arranged so that literacy and numeracy are the first

priority, with each class being taught English and mathematics every morning. Extra time is given to literacy through booster classes and additional literacy support is given to small groups of pupils by the trained assistants.

26. Teachers plan carefully to ensure sufficient time is also given to other subjects each week. For example, history and geography are often taught in blocks of time in half-termly periods. Additionally, teachers have skilfully noted that there are times when two subjects can be taught together. For example, the computer room is used very effectively to teach both art and design and computer work. The teachers' time is used productively to teach pairs of pupils on the computers and to support pupils in their artwork. Increasingly, other opportunities such as using appropriately linked historical or geographical big books to study in the literacy hour are planned. As a result, the school has a curriculum that is well planned with sufficient time for each subject. The planning for religious education is appropriate and follows the locally agreed syllabus.
27. The previous inspection identified the curriculum as a weak area in need of substantial improvement. This work has been carried out well and very good improvement has taken place. Teachers meet regularly to review the curriculum and to plan what should be taught during the next year. The new schemes of work are reviewed to highlight what is successful, what is not and what further resources need to be purchased. Teachers also identify well where literacy, numeracy and, more recently, information and communication technology, can be taught in other subjects. As a result, the school now has a very broad and balanced curriculum that is helping to raise standards.
28. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is very good. The curriculum provided for Traveller pupils is excellent. The visiting teacher for the Traveller pupils has extensive and long-established links with the pupils' families and ensures that the curriculum is relevant to their needs and backgrounds. For example, the materials she uses, such as reading books, contain stories about the Travelling community. Learning support assistants generally work closely with pupils who need extra help, although not in every lesson. For pupils who have statements of special educational need, annual reviews provide a good review of the past year with a chance to alter the provision if necessary. There is a commitment to equality of opportunity and good inclusion throughout the school for these pupils.
29. A strength of the curriculum is the very good attention paid by the school to include and take account of the varied backgrounds and traditions of its pupils, which adds richness and culture to the curriculum. For example, when studying various homes, trailers are included as examples of the homes of the 'Traveller' pupils. In Year 1, the role-play area was organised by the teacher as a trailer home with the traditional plates decorating the walls. Many examples of using parents from other ethnic cultures, such as when studying the Chinese New Year or India, add depth and interest to the curriculum. Good provision is made for a school of this size for after school activities. These include art and design, music, dance and frequent trips to relevant places of interest, linked to the pupils' studies. Additionally, a residential trip for older pupils is offered annually.
30. The school makes good use of the community to extend pupils' learning through visits to local places of interest. Year 4 pupils, for example, visited Victorian buildings in Oxford as part of their history studies and every year pupils go to a Festival of Voices for the children of Oxfordshire. All pupils visited a 'One World Band' event at a neighbouring school. Year 3 pupils went to a private Hindu shrine and also to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for a workshop on ancient Greeks. Among other places of interest visited were a local restaurant, where Year 1 pupils made pizzas, a butterfly park that was visited by the Nursery children and the Cotswold Wildlife Park by Years 1 and 2.

31. A strength of the community links is the use of designated rooms within the school by different groups from the community. For example, each week there are three weekly music sessions organised for the 'under threes' in the local area and their parents. On Wednesdays, after school, the local Toy Library uses the hall, and parents and their children select a specific toy they can borrow for a week. Parents in the area are invited to a 'drop-in' session at the Nursery one afternoon a week and a nursery nurse runs a play activity weekly for very young children accompanied by their parents. An after-school care club uses the school every evening directly after school for working parents. There is a continuous 'buzz' and a friendly atmosphere in the school.
32. The school maintains good liaison with local playgroups, which enables useful contacts to be established with children about to enter the nursery. Events such as a combined disco and rounders matches are arranged with a neighbouring school and these events have an impact on social relationships being established before pupils move on to the middle school. Good relationships with the local colleges result in the school welcoming students who are given a good experience and included fully in all activities. For example, they were invited to join the staff and inspectors to discuss the inspection procedures before the inspection began.
33. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. It is very carefully planned and incorporated into long term planning. Much of it is delivered through 'Special Time', when pupils sit in a circle and devote time to a wide range of personal issues. Health education including drugs and sex education, are covered appropriately through science and informal discussion. The school meets the requirements for collective worship.
34. All aspects of pupils' personal development are supported well and have improved since the last inspection, where they were judged to be unsatisfactory. In particular, there has been good improvement in spiritual provision and this is now good. There is a daily act of collective worship where suitable time is provided for reflection and prayer. Through the school's emphasis on 'values education', where a different value is promoted each week, good emphasis is placed on reflecting and exploring lives and relationships. These are promoted during acts of whole school collective worship and extended in classroom worship and 'Special Time'. Opportunities for discussion of what might be painful issues are provided regularly through Special Time. For example, the very young children talk about what frightens them and older pupils discuss issues such as a death in the family that are sensitively explored. Teachers provide good support to enable pupils to reflect on the wonder of the world around them. For example, when studying poetry, older pupils reflected on the beauty that exists in the world. They thoughtfully discussed the meanings of the phrases, 'the softness of the air', 'the rhythm of the sea' and 'the dewdrops on the flowers'.
35. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school's behaviour policy is firmly based on an effective reward system and is applied consistently by everyone in the school. The school's 'values' of the week, together with classroom rules and targets, form a very strong basis for high moral values. Pupils are encouraged to be courteous and to have a very clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. The teachers and assistants set a very good example and provide very good role models for pupils. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, the school has successfully created a strong moral code. Pupils new to the school adapt to this and they quickly learn to behave just as well as the others.
36. Good provision is made for social development. Teachers frequently include opportunities for pupils to work together. All pupils are given many responsibilities to help with classroom routines as well as assembly and lunchtime jobs. Throughout the school, there is a high expectation that everyone works and plays together. For example, on the playground a 'Friendship Stop' has been established where pupils stand if they are feeling lonely and the older pupils have the responsibility to ensure that this does not last long. Pupils have opportunities to collect for various charities throughout the year, for example, Comic Relief and the 'Shoe box ' appeal at Christmas. After the Harvest Celebrations, gifts of fruit and vegetables are distributed by pupils to members of the community.

37. The school makes good provision for the cultural development of pupils. In subjects such as religious education, art and design, music and literacy, pupils gain awareness of the arts in people's lives. Good examples are the benefits they obtain from visits to the Natural History Museum, art exhibitions and a Hindu shrine. The strong promotion of the pupils' own cultures by the school is a particular strength of the school. Very good links are established with the Travellers' community, for example, which are used very effectively to widen and enrich the curriculum. Traveller visitors explain their own traditions of weddings and baptism while Chinese parents help pupils to write Chinese script to decorate greetings' cards. Every year, the school makes good provision for an 'Artist in Residence', providing a range of artistic experiences and involvement in an art exhibition in the community. All these rich and varied experiences support good provision for cultural development

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school's provision for the care and welfare of its pupils, particularly those having special educational needs, is good and is an improvement since the last inspection when serious concerns were raised about pupils' health and safety. The good personal support and guidance given to pupils is based on the good relationships that teachers have with their pupils.
39. The school has good child protection procedures. The headteacher is the named person for dealing with child protection matters and all staff are aware of the need for vigilance. There are good relationships with the appropriate external agencies and these are contacted for assistance, should the need arise. Good records are kept, in secure conditions, of child protection matters.
40. The school's recent health and safety policy is awaiting approval by the governing body. Health and safety procedures are good with the exception of risk assessments, which are not carried out. Records of health and safety tests, such as fire and emergency drills, are well maintained. The school secretary is a qualified first-aider and pupils who are involved in minor injuries are well looked after.
41. Good guidance is given to help pupils to behave well and to do their best. The school has a clear behaviour policy and this emphasises self-discipline and is based on rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. Rewards include the earning of stickers, which are given for various kinds of good behaviour, such as being kind, moving around the school nicely or singing well. Each week the school has a particular value for the week and lessons and assemblies focus on the value chosen. The purpose of the chosen value during the week of the inspection was 'friendliness', to encourage pupils' social awareness and to discourage all forms of bullying and other oppressive behaviour. The school uses a nurturing programme to encourage self-discipline and courses based on the nurturing programme are run regularly for parents to enable them to participate fully in their children's learning.
42. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is good. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, which is an improvement from the previous inspection, where it was identified as a key issue. The procedures have made a contribution to the improvements in teaching and raising standards in the whole school. The procedures for raising attainment are effective, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is systematically assessed both formally and informally on a day-to-day basis. Additionally, assessments are made and recorded in all other subjects at the end of each term. However, assessments in science, history, geography and religious education have yet to make an impact on the appropriate challenge given to middle and higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly in Year 4.

43. The arrangements for the assessment and identification of pupils with special educational needs, the Traveller pupils and pupils with English as an additional language are good. The targets identified in individual education plans are appropriate and measurable and attention to the pupils' needs is very thorough. Where it is necessary, outside help is used appropriately for more searching tests or advice. Individual educational plans are reviewed every term and the support assistants provide valuable insights into pupils' progress for these reviews. Pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and Traveller pupils have every opportunity to be included in all school activities and the school takes a justifiable pride in this inclusion. Good records are kept by support assistants of the work they do and this is shared with colleagues so that pupils receive good overall care.
44. Information from assessments is used well to inform teaching and learning and this is helping to raise standards. For example, pupils are identified at the start of Year 2 as being likely to achieve a low level 2 and are included in a 'booster' class to help them attain better standards. Pupils in Year 3 have additional literacy support as assessment identifies where extra support is needed. The school tracks individual progress closely and predicts target levels for each pupil. The national tests are analysed and group and individual weaknesses are identified, helping to ensure the best support is given.
45. The school places high priority on the personal development of its pupils and procedures are good. All staff, both teachers and support staff, have a very good knowledge of pupils. The very good personal support and guidance provided by the headteacher, ensure that all pupils are monitored closely and provided with support and guidance needed.
46. Despite the school's current low attendance rate the monitoring of attendance is good. The school is concerned to see that the satisfactory rates of previous years are resumed and is concentrating on both the promotion and monitoring of attendance. Assemblies at half term are used to present certificates for full attendances and every Friday class teachers award good attendance certificates to pupils with full attendances over the week. The need for regular attendance is also often stressed in newsletters.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents have very positive views of the school. Responses to the inspection questionnaires and at the meeting held before the inspection showed a high level of satisfaction with nearly all aspects of its work. Parents are very pleased with the progress that their children make and with standards of behaviour. Nearly all think that the school helps pupils to become more mature and responsible and expects them to work hard. They are also very happy with the quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school. The only area of concern to parents is extra-curricular activities. The majority of those who completed the questionnaires feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. These views are not supported by the inspection, which judges that provision is good overall.
48. There are good links with parents. The school works hard to establish good links with parents, is concerned to involve parents in their children's learning and has maintained the supportive partnership with parents mentioned in the last inspection report. One hundred per cent of parents indicated in the pre-inspection survey that they could approach the school comfortably about a problem. Although few parents come into the school to help regularly there is a good number of local retired people, including grandparents, who come to hear pupils read consistently. The local toy library is organised in the school hall once a week after school where all parents in the area and their children are welcome. The nursery class teacher establishes good links with parents before the children begin school. Parents and children are welcomed into the nursery every week for the drop-in afternoon where they can get to know all the routines, the staff and other children. A strength of the links with parents is the regular sessions that are organised weekly by the deputy headteacher for parents, in order to improve their skills of managing and nurturing their children.

49. Parents of pupils with special educational needs, with English as an additional language and Traveller pupils are kept very well informed about the amount of support given at school, especially at the annual reviews of pupils who have statements of special educational needs. There are opportunities to discuss special educational needs at two parents' evenings per year and the chance to follow up the annual report if parents wish. They are also invited to seek individual times for discussion. There are very good links between the parents of Traveller pupils and the specialist teacher who visits their homes fairly regularly to keep up contacts. The parents of Traveller pupils always attend the evenings arranged for parents.
50. The quality of information to parents is satisfactory. The school prospectus is well presented and meets statutory requirements. The prospectus is a useful information pack, for example, it provides parents with good advice about homework and how the pupils' individual targets in English and mathematics are given a priority. The school provides weekly newsletters to parents, which are friendly and give lots of information about the life of the school as well as showing lunch menus for the following week. On the other hand, the governors' annual report to parents does not meet statutory requirements as several items are omitted.
51. The quality of information on pupils' progress is good. The annual reports on pupils' progress meet statutory requirements but the information on progress is limited due to the small spaces available on the reporting form. The pupils' attendance percentage figures are shown and there is also a space for general progress. The reports include targets for English, mathematics and science. The school intends to include a section on the development of the pupils' personal, social and health education in this year's reports. Parents are also sent details of their children's targets each half-term and are asked to help the pupils to work towards achieving their targets. This contribution by the parents has an impact on the progress the pupils make. The school is very consistent with the use of reading diaries and the parents use these as an effective way of keeping in touch with the class teacher.
52. The school values its partnership with parents. It has taken steps to improve home/school links and involve parents more extensively in their children's learning. It has introduced home/school contracts and established a policy that every pupil will receive regular homework. These arrangements provide parents with the opportunity to be involved in their children's education. The school's efforts are having a positive effect. Parents can bring their children into classrooms where they can stay for a few minutes while the children settle down; parents can use this opportunity to raise small matters with the class teacher which has a very positive effect on the pupils' happiness in school. Parents wishing to have longer discussions about their children are invited to make appointments. Parents are invited to the school twice a year to talk to teachers about their children's progress, and their children's files are available to read at any time. Parents make a good contribution to the learning and progress of their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher, who was appointed just over 2 year ago, provides very good leadership. She is well supported by the deputy and all the staff who manage several responsibilities. This is a very considerable improvement from the last inspection. The parents indicated by their response on the questionnaires that they believe that the leadership of the school is very strong. The headteacher is energetic and is a good role model for the staff and pupils. She has a very clear vision for the school's development and this is expressed verbally and in documentation as well as being shared by members of staff and the governors. The headteacher is raising standards through a range of very positive strategies. For example, she has implemented a very effective behaviour policy and ensures that all staff carry out the systems of rewards and sanctions consistently. This has been a key factor in the significant improvement in the pupils' behaviour in classrooms and in the playground since the last inspection and since her appointment. There are very good links between the procedures for managing the pupils' behaviour, the weekly 'nurturing' sessions organised for parents and the very clear value systems introduced by the headteacher since her appointment. These links were given high praise by parents who described how their

children's knowledge of their own attitudes and behaviour spilled over into their homes in a very positive way. These systems have already had an effect on standards of attainment that have improved since the last inspection.

54. The headteacher's purposeful development of the school is clearly indicated by the good and, in several aspects, very good improvements that the school has made since it was last inspected. The school has addressed rigorously the many weaknesses identified by the previous inspection and has also responded well to new national initiatives. For example, good quality subject policies provide a common structure for planning, monitoring and co-ordinating the curriculum and pupils make better progress as a result. Schemes of work are either implemented or being developed thoughtfully with a consistent format and the co-ordinators have established an effective pattern of leading and supporting colleagues. Assessment is now firmly established in all subjects and is used well to monitor the school's performance and to set appropriate targets. The headteacher has systematically assessed pupils' test data to analyse strengths and weaknesses and used the information to inform future planning of the pupils' learning. The school has implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies effectively and this is having an effect on improving standards. Subject managers construct ongoing action plans from notes and observations they make over time in order to raise standards. However, as yet, these action plans are not linked to the school development plan.
55. The key issues for action from the inspection in 1996 and the inspection conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectors in 1998 have, overall, been addressed successfully and the aims of the school are fully reflected in its work. The team spirit and shared commitment evident in the school give it a good capacity to continue to improve. The very good management ensures that all pupils are included well in all activities and are given every opportunity to succeed regardless of their gender, ability, background or ethnic origin.
56. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and Traveller pupils is very good. Funding is administered appropriately to provide staffing and resources for these pupils. The headteacher, who is the co-ordinator, is very committed and well informed. She has built up substantial records that are maintained well and comply fully with statutory requirements. She regularly meets with the learning support assistants to discuss issues related to special educational needs. The designated governor for special needs meets with the headteacher to discuss various aspects of the provision. Although the headteacher finds this helpful, she intends to ensure that the meetings are more regular in order to ensure that the governing body is better informed. The headteacher has very close links with the teachers who visit the school weekly to support the Traveller pupils and pupils with English as an additional language. In their annual report to parents, the governors do not supply the information about special educational needs that is required by law except the name of the co-ordinator. This omission means that the governors are not meeting statutory requirements.
57. There is rigorous monitoring of teaching and the curriculum by the headteacher. Her regular informal and formal visits to each class are followed up by discussions and a written evaluation when areas for development of their teaching skills are discussed. The headteacher also receives systematic evaluations of lessons from the teachers that give her valuable information about the quality of planning and delivery of the subjects. As a result of this monitoring, the quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. The headteacher has identified areas for development in the quality of teaching in Year 4 and, as a result, has initiated a professional support system to ensure that improvement takes place. She is well aware that this has not yet had the expected impact and will need further action. All teaching staff are given middle management responsibilities as co-ordinators and are given regular time slots to review planning and support their colleagues in the classrooms. The co-ordinators show a considerable commitment and knowledge of what is to be done to move the school forward and keep ongoing action plans, which is yet another improvement from the last inspection. The policy and procedures for performance management are well implemented and the governing body has set targets for the headteacher.

58. Governors support the school satisfactorily and, through their good relationships with the head and staff, make a significant contribution to its positive ethos for learning. They have actively pursued improvements to the accommodation and links with the community. For example, one group has achieved 'Charity Status', and is no longer linked to the governing body but has set up several weekly and annual initiatives to link the school with the community. One of the governing body sub-committees, the 'Green Group', is concerned with environmental issues and has supported the headteacher's initiative to save energy costs in the school, for example. The whole governing body has met to discuss the joint initiative with the nearby Church to share accommodation within the adjacent Church buildings. This joint initiative will have a considerable impact on the school enabling the nursery class to move into more spacious accommodation. The governors are keenly aware of the problems the school may experience with a projected falling roll and have produced a good quality newsletter to market the school, which was delivered to many organisations and houses in the larger area around the school.
59. Governors are very committed to the success of the school but, despite the best efforts of the headteacher, have not yet developed sufficient procedures and systems to effectively monitor and evaluate its work. A start has been made by the headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body to involve all the governors more. For example, two or three of the governors visit the school and observe lessons regularly. The headteacher ensures that the governing body makes good use of the results of the national tests and assessments to evaluate the school's performance and, through this evaluation, the governors are more aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Also, through the curriculum sub-committee, the headteacher keeps the governors informed of the progress the pupils are making with their writing skills, for example. However, there are no terms of reference for the committees, no Finance Policy and only one set of minutes was in evidence for the Finance Sub-Committee meetings for the last year. The outcome of these omissions is that the quality of the reporting back to the main governing body by the chairs of the committees lacks substance and has an impact on the governors' understanding of exactly what is happening in all aspects of the school. There are several items missing from the governors' annual report to parents and this document is not meeting statutory requirements. All other statutory requirements are met.
60. The governing body relies too much on the headteacher for information. There is no Clerk to the Governing Body and the headteacher and the supportive Chair of the Governing Body organise all the administrative tasks that would normally be undertaken by the Clerk. This is a considerable burden to the headteacher and is taking time away from her duties as a leader and manager of the school. The headteacher prepares the annual budget prudently and gives alternative budgets for the Finance Committee to debate. There is evidence from working notes written on the budget documents presented to the governing body that the committee monitors spending appropriately. There has been no audit of finances by the local authority since the last inspection four and a half years ago when this was highlighted as a weakness. Although the school development plan is short-term, the criteria for the success of priorities within the plan are clearly related to improving standards but are not always clearly measurable. The headteacher is aware of the need for a long-term plan to identify the improvements the school needs to make and to link these with the monies available to the school. She intends to link this with the action plan following the inspection.
61. The headteacher and governors are appropriately aware of the importance of following the principles of best value when managing and allocating school funds. Supported by the headteacher, the governing body compares the school's performance in tests with national averages and similar schools and there is increased communication and consultation with parents. The headteacher assesses value for money carefully and analyses the pupils' progress following the initiative of the ICT mathematics program and the specific reading tuition given by the learning support assistants. The evidence about the pupils' good progress following both these programmes shows good value for money. Very effective use is made of new technology in the school. The school uses the grants budgets well. The grants come from various sources. The good use of this funding has been effective in saving energy costs by, for example, installing double-glazed windows in some of the classrooms. The grant from the authority to install a mathematics program on all the computers in the ICT suite has been used very effectively.

Efficient timetabling ensures that the program is used intensively throughout the week and is having an impact on raising standards in numeracy for all pupils. Most of the grants funding is used to fund improvements that will have an impact on raising standards.

62. The school has a generous number of teaching and support staff and there is a strong commitment to good liaison. This is particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs and the Traveller pupils when teachers and assistants contribute to joint planning and evaluation notes of lessons. Learning support assistants work well in partnership with the teachers and play a valuable role in supporting pupils' learning. Student teachers are welcomed from the local colleges and it is clear that the school is an effective provider of initial teacher training. For example, the two students observing during the week of the inspection were given every opportunity to be involved fully in the life of the school and to gain good experience. The accommodation has improved significantly since the appointment of the new headteacher and most classrooms and the hall have been redecorated in attractive colours by the staff and other helpers. The outdoor accommodation is not adequate to meet the needs of the pupils. There is no grassed area and the school uses the local park for physical education activities. The surface of the playground is wearing away and is uneven in places. However, there is an excellent wooden climbing frame and safety mat that is used constantly by the pupils and a quiet garden area where pupils can sit quietly and chat to each other. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, well organised and accessible although the library is not easily accessible to pupils in the Key Stage 1 as their classrooms are in a separate building.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To further raise standards of work the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- (1) Ensure that middle and higher attaining pupils in Year 4 make as good progress as those with special educational needs in mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education by:
 - ensuring that tasks are well matched to their needs.(Paragraphs 19, 23, 57, 84, 85, 87, 90, 92, 106, 107, 110, 111, 126, 127)
- (2) Improve the quality of handwriting throughout the school by:
 - reviewing the policy and establishing an agreed scheme of work;
 - establishing in which year group joined handwriting must be taught.(Paragraphs 4, 22, 75, 77, 79)
- (3) Improve the presentation of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 by:
 - a. establishing a policy of higher expectations by the teachers of how the pupils set out their work.(Paragraphs 19, 77)
- (4) Improve the role of the governors in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school by:
 - establishing a range of systems to inform them of the school's strengths and weaknesses;
 - developing a finance policy;
 - establishing clear procedures to link spending with raising standards.(Paragraphs 59, 60)
- (5) Ensure that the governing body meets statutory requirements when writing the annual report to parents.
(Paragraphs 50, 56)
- (6) Take further measures to improve attendance and punctuality and, in particular, set measurable goals and deadlines for improvement so that pupils' progress and attainment are not undermined by these factors.
(Paragraphs 15, 46, 86)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	59	26	2	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	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10	91
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.9
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
	2000	12	10	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	17	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (50)	82 (55)	82 (59)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	9	10	10
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (50)	91 (69)	91 (59)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	96
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	4	1

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8
Average class size	19.75

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5 : 1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	266,693
Total expenditure	267,091
Expenditure per pupil	1,994
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,664
Balance carried forward to next year	7,266

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	119
Number of questionnaires returned	23

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	87	13	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	35	0	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	35	9	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. **	43	30	9	0	4
The teaching is good.	70	30	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	30	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	100	0	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	18	0	4	4
The school works closely with parents.	70	26	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	83	17	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	22	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	30	9	13	13

** This statement does not add up to 100 per cent. This is because a few parents in the nursery class responded to this statement by saying they did not think it was appropriate for their children to have homework.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. Children in the foundation stage, both in the nursery and the Reception/Year 1 class, enjoy a wide and practical curriculum, which is planned appropriately to cover all the specified areas of learning for children of this age. After a satisfactory range of induction procedures, children enter the nursery when they are aged three and a half. They transfer to the Reception/Year 1 class in the term after their fifth birthday.
64. The teaching has improved since the last inspection and overall it is now good. This has an impact on learning which is now also good. Particular strengths in the teaching include good support for the development of personal and social skills and a strong emphasis on developing good listening skills and clearer speech. Good relationships are established between the teachers and the assistants, which creates a happy and secure atmosphere where children enjoy being at school. It is because of these strengths that children settle happily into school and achieve well overall.
65. Evidence from the baseline assessments and by observation during the inspection, indicate that although there is a wide range of ability, attainment on entry to the nursery is below average. It is because of the strengths of the good teaching that children learn well and by the time they enter Year 1, they have achieved all the early learning goals except communication language and literacy. The reason for this is the well below average attainment in speaking on entry. A few children are at an early stage in their acquisition of English.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Although there is significant below average attainment in personal and social skills on entry to the nursery, children learn well and are on course to meet the early learning goals in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful and good teaching in both classes. Teaching is particularly strong in the nursery class in this area of learning. Children are frequently encouraged to work and play together in small groups and in pairs. For example, in the nursery they play in the vet's surgery as vets and nurses, bandaging animals. In the reception class, they help each other to write sentences by identifying words for each other in word banks. In the whole class sessions, there is a high emphasis on children's participation, but they learn to listen respectfully to one another and to value each other's opinions. 'Special Time' is a good example of this and it is then that children listen carefully to each other when quietly thinking and talking about such issues as " I feel scared when....." All adults provide good role models for children, always treating them with warmth, care, quiet respect and courtesy. The teaching in this area of learning is good, helping children to develop confidence well.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Children are likely to attain just below the early learning goals for this area of learning. Very good learning takes place in the development of speaking and listening in both classes and achievement is good. In reading and writing, learning is variable. In the nursery, the focus is on the development of good speaking and listening skills and the children's development in the early skills of learning to read and write is satisfactory. In the Reception/Year 1 class, work concerning the development of reading and writing becomes more challenging and their learning is consequently good. All adults take every opportunity to develop the skills of speaking and listening and a good level of interaction and discussion takes place. Adults in the nursery for example, talk to children about the pet gerbils kept in the classroom, or discuss how they are making their animals better in the vet's surgery. In the Reception/Year 1 class, children work as a whole class to verbalise a class story that the teacher writes on the board. This promotes a good

deal of discussion about how the story will proceed. At these times, adults use clear speech to help the children to develop and repeat the children's contributions to promote clear speech. Teachers have adapted the literacy framework well for these children. They enjoy listening to stories and 'big books' in particular, which are shared by the whole class. 'Hairy Maclary' is the current favourite in the nursery, which is used appropriately by the teacher to identify rhyming words. Children learn to write their own names and recognise words from favourite books in the nursery. In the Reception/Year 1 class, they gain knowledge of a wider range of words that they recognise and higher attaining children start to read simple books. Through a variety of well thought out activities and games, children gain a satisfactory knowledge of letters and sounds of the alphabet. Good opportunities are prepared to help children understand the purpose of writing. A range of writing materials is on the reception desk in the vet's surgery for children to play at writing appointments, letters and bills. Other examples are when children are asked to write greetings cards and menus. The teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the Reception/Year 1 class.

Mathematical development

68. This area of learning is taught well and children are likely to reach the required goals by the time they enter Year 1. This represents good progress and good achievement. Teachers in the Nursery and in the Reception/Year 1 class encourage children to think as mathematicians and to see mathematics around them. They learn to recognise house numbers for example, and weigh and compare presents. There is frequent reinforcement of numbers in other activities, such as reading number books together. Children are, for example, asked to count the number of pets in the pictures. Whole class sessions are of good quality. An appropriate adaptation of the numeracy strategy has a regular time slot every day. Children show enthusiasm and interest in their work, because of a well thought out approach to providing interesting games and activities. Number rhymes and songs are frequently sung and number stories are created about pictures in the oversize books.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. The teaching in this area of learning is good and activities are appropriately based on first hand experiences, which enable the children to observe and explore the world around them. Children have first hand experience in observing pets, understanding and caring for their needs. They build and construct using a wide range of objects and select the appropriate resources. They find out about the past, using photos of their families to help them. They make picture maps of routes around the room. Children have regular opportunities to experiment with musical percussion instruments and learn to explain, in simple language, the difference between their sounds. Such an example of this was in the nursery, where children were learning to identify tapping, scraping and shaking instruments. This area of learning is provided for very well, giving a wide variety of experiences. It is because of this, together with the good teaching, that children make good progress and achieve well, on course to reach the early goals in this area.

Physical development

70. Regular access to outdoor play activities in the nursery and the reception classes, together with good teaching, are major factors to the good development in this area. Planning indicates a wide range of other activities, for example, finger and foot print painting, moving on different parts of the body and co-operative games and dances. Children also have good access to parachute games. All children experience using a range of tools and construction and modelling materials. The quality of teaching is good in this area because of the thorough planning that ensures good access to resources. Children's achievement is good. They make good progress and are on course to meet the goals for this area of learning.

Creative development

71. At the end of the foundation stage, children are at the expected level in this area of learning. Children paint, draw and make collage pictures such as the wood collage 'Wooden Town' on display. They very regularly sing a wide range of songs and make music using body sounds or untuned percussion instruments. Role-play areas are set up in both classrooms and are a favourite and well-used provision. The current vet's surgery in the nursery and the Travellers' 'Trailer' in the Reception/Year 1 class, are good examples. The teaching is good and this, together with good provision, enables the children to make good progress, to achieve well and meet the required goals for this area.

ENGLISH

72. Inspection judgements are that standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with the national average. In the 2000 national tests for seven year olds, results were well below the national average in reading and below average in writing. When the results are compared with schools that have pupils coming from similar backgrounds, they are below average in reading and broadly average in writing. These results are an improvement from the previous year when results in both reading and writing were very low. Standards are improving and teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Standards in English were judged to be below average at that time at both Key Stage 1 and Year 4. Explanations for the rise in standards, the difference between inspection evidence and the results of statutory tests are that the literacy hour has been implemented well throughout the school. Additionally, the school now has good assessment procedures and an effective system for tracking pupils through the national curriculum and this information is used to inform planning for specific groups. For example, some pupils are now identified at the start of Year 2 as being likely to attain a low Level 2, which is the expected level for seven year olds, in the national tests. Extra 'booster' classes have been organised to help them to attain a higher level. A very good level of support for pupils with special educational needs has been established. The achievement of all pupils is good in Key Stage 1.
73. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of Year 4 are below those expected for pupils of this age. This is because of the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs (more than 50 per cent) in the present Year 4. At the time of the last inspection, standards were also judged to be below average. However, achievement is sound from a below average starting point on entry. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, the Traveller pupils and those with English as an additional language is relatively better because of the good, and sometimes very good, support they receive from the assistants and the visiting specialist teachers.
74. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils up to seven years old is good. Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection and the serious weaknesses identified in Key Stage 1 are no longer evident. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate and respond to the teachers' good questioning skills and have developed appropriate speaking and listening skills. Several examples were observed of good learning in this strand of English. For example, at the end of a literacy lesson, pupils were asked to retell the story of the 'Hen and Fox', which they had shared at the start of the lesson. They did so with confidence, speaking clearly and giving appropriate detail. The class listened well and the recall of the story indicated appropriate understanding of what they had heard. Drama is used well in Key Stage 1 to promote enthusiasm and speaking and listening skills in mathematics and design and technology. Imaginative teaching in a design and technology lesson ensured that pupils evaluated their puppets and were beginning to develop the ability to explain through role-play why their puppets were good puppets. In both these lessons, the pupils' learning was very good because they were highly motivated to listen and were longing to have a turn to speak.

75. Pupils' writing skills are average. Good teaching methods ensure that pupils develop appropriate writing skills. A good range of writing styles is developed and the pupils write for a variety of purposes. They write in the style of traditional tales; for example, they write recipes, poetry and reports on events. Standards in spelling are average overall. The teaching of handwriting is insecure. Teachers are not sure when to teach joined handwriting and this slows down the development of pupils' writing and their skills are not developed as quickly and as consistently as they should be. Writing is not always clearly shaped and positioned and there is no evidence of joined writing. Learning is not as good as it should be in handwriting. Pupils' reading skills are average. Most pupils read with confidence, reasonable fluency and expression. The teaching of reading is good and pupils use a range of strategies appropriately to decode new words; their learning is good. For example, they use picture clues, sounding out and making sense from the rest of the sentence. Good records are kept of their reading development and this has an impact on good learning. Most pupils enjoy being able to read, but many have not developed discerning tastes and cannot yet talk sufficiently about their preferred books or name authors they particularly like. This is possibly because the pupils are still developing their expressive and descriptive language skills.
76. The teaching of English in Key Stage 2 is good and pupils respond well in English lessons. By the age of nine, pupils' attainment is below expectations for their age. However, teaching and learning has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The main reason for the below average standards is the large number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 4. Standards in Year 3, for example, are in line with those expected for their age. When told to do so, pupils listen carefully and show an understanding of the main points of a discussion by their response. Teachers give good attention to the development of speaking and listening skills but a significant number of pupils have a limited vocabulary and find it difficult to explain ideas clearly enough, other than simple responses to direct questions.
77. Although the development of writing is taught systematically at Key Stage 2, writing standards are below average. There are very few middle and higher attaining pupils and a significant number of pupils are writing at the standard expected for seven-year-olds. The teachers give pupils a wide range of activities so that the pupils learn to write for a variety of purposes. For example, research notes for a topic; poems and instructions, such as how to play a game. Presentation of work and handwriting are showing improvement but standards are still too low because expectations of the teachers are not high enough. In Years 3 and 4, there is little regular joining of letters and pupils are not encouraged to set out their work correctly. For example, some pupils consistently position their writing a significant way in from the margin and this makes it very confusing when they learn to indent to indicate a paragraph. Standards in reading are below those expected by the end of Year 4. Almost all pupils have learned well the basic skills of reading and use these appropriately to decode words and have been taught to do this effectively. However, it is only the higher attaining pupils who are discerning readers and express preferences for styles of books and authors. Most pupils have sound research skills; they can use dictionaries, indexes in books and CDROMs competently.
78. The school has made good progress in the consistent development of the National Literacy Strategy across the school. Effective monitoring takes place and good support given to improve teaching. Literacy is used well to support other subjects. In history, for example, Year 2 pupils wrote about their impressions of Remembrance Day. In Year 3, pupils organised a quiz to raise questions and test each other's knowledge of 'Chembakoli'. In Year 4, in a history lesson, pupils were asked to write answers to questions about their impressions of life in Victorian times. In all lessons, teachers plan well to provide many opportunities for pupils to listen and speak. The question and answer sessions in the last part of the literacy hour are good examples of this. There are good links with information and communication technology when pupils can write and review their work using word processing programs. Additionally, there are frequent opportunities in 'Special Time' to listen, talk and reflect on a range of issues. For example, pupils in Year 3 were thinking about 'differences between people'. Skilled questioning by the teacher promoted deep thinking and reflection by pupils about how we are all different. This enabled pupils to put forward their thoughts clearly and they listened with respect to the thoughts of others.

79. The English co-ordinator provides good leadership. Raising standards, particularly in writing, has been a clear focus to the work undertaken. Good monitoring has been carried out and all teachers have received good professional development to further their skills. All pupils are given appropriate targets for their improvement in English, based on detailed assessment procedures that are good. At present, although the school has a handwriting policy, there is no clear scheme of work to aid the early development of joined writing. There is a very good contribution through this subject to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. A particular example is in their openness and good contribution in 'Special Time' to issues of possible controversy and embarrassment. The subject meets statutory requirements.

MATHEMATICS

80. The National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in the year 2000 showed that pupils attained below average standards in mathematics in comparison with all schools nationally but were average when compared with similar schools. The results show a significant improvement from the previous year when results were well below average. However, the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was well below the national average. Year on year comparisons are difficult owing to the relatively small number of pupils taking the tests each year. Over the last three years the school's performance in mathematics has been below the national average. Inspection findings show that by the age of seven most pupils are attaining the standards expected for pupils of this age. The difference between the inspection findings and the national test results is because of the successful implementation of the numeracy strategy. Additionally, assessment of the pupils' progress informs the planning for this subject and the quality of the teaching has improved as a result of the headteacher's rigorous monitoring. This is an improvement from the last inspection when standards were judged below average. The achievement of the pupils in mathematics at seven years old is appropriate but pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the good support they are given.
81. The standards for the current Year 4 are likely to be below those expected for their age by the time they leave the school at nine years of age and this is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. Although the few average and higher attaining pupils are likely to attain expected levels, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (more than half) has a significant impact on overall standards. The achievement of pupils in Year 4 is sound. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good due to the good focused teaching they receive.
82. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy successfully and this has helped to overcome the lack of a clear scheme of work that was a weakness identified by the previous inspection. Planning across the school follows a consistent pattern and long term planning is good. Scrutiny of pupils' work from both key stages indicates that they follow a curriculum that is balanced well across most aspects of mathematics. For example, pupils across the school follow a wide range of work on measures and are developing skills of estimation. This broad curriculum results in an improvement in standards since the last inspection in investigative work, finding patterns and in communicating findings. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge and skills appropriately in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 use data handling skills when researching the weather in different cities in India in their geography lessons. Pupils also printed out graphs of rainfall, for example, from the Internet.

83. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall although there are good, and sometimes, very good features in some lessons. This is an improvement from the last inspection when the quality of teaching was judged to be 'variable'. Oral and mental work is well established and in most lessons the introductory session has a brisk pace, involves all the pupils and engages them in activities that sharpen thinking. Good teaching methods in Key Stage 1 ensured that pupils were encouraged to visualise numbers and 'hold' a number in their heads. In Year 1, the very good use of resources and the number line ensured that all pupils concentrated well and made every effort to answer the teacher's questions. The teacher used role-play methods in this lesson to teach the concept of time and the pupils pretended they were on a train travelling around the country. The pupils loved this activity and worked very hard, holding their small card clocks to work out the time they would arrive at Birmingham, for example. In Year 2, the initial activity was rather short and did not involve any resources apart from the pupils using their bodies to count up and down in multiples of two, five and ten. In this lesson, the teacher used good methods to teach the pupils how to draw straight lines by holding the ruler in a particular way to ensure there are no 'wobbly' bits. The pupils made sound progress in this lesson, which was planned as preparation for learning to measure straight lines later in the week.
84. A very good pace in the opening session of a Year 3 lesson resulted in all pupils making good progress in their mental mathematics and, for example, they could very quickly calculate that the teacher was counting on in sevens or nines and were able to give the final number accurately. In the main part of this lesson, very good methods ensured that pupils learned well that division is the inverse of multiplication. In Year 4, the good choice of a 'Hangman' type activity ensured that all pupils paid attention and enjoyed the challenge. However, the direct teaching session on Carroll diagrams was spoiled by inappropriate calling out and pupils made little progress during this session. When pupils worked on their own, they made better progress and the very few average and higher attaining pupils in this class showing that they understood how useful a Carroll diagram is in showing the links between the properties of shapes, for example. Nevertheless, this group of pupils was not challenged enough by the activities and there was not enough focus by the teacher on moving their learning forward. Good support was given to the pupils with special educational needs who worked effectively in small groups with the assistants.
85. In a well-organised lesson on data handling in Year 4, the pupils were able to draw information from a large sheet of data and draw block graphs. The lower attaining pupils were able to construct a tally chart with only a little assistance but the very few average and higher attaining pupils were unable to interrogate the data in any depth. The tasks this latter group were given did not challenge them sufficiently and they wasted time colouring in the block graphs when they could have been thinking more analytically about the data base. Achievement by this group could have been better with more thorough planning to meet their needs.
86. There is very good provision for links with ICT and mathematics. Throughout the week small groups of pupils in Years 2 and 4 are withdrawn during the activities part of the lessons to work in the ICT suite with an assistant on a specific mathematics program. The school was successful in acquiring the program as a grant funded initiative. Pupils have two or three opportunities a week to work on this program. It enables the pupils to work at their own speed and to develop independence at solving problems in all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. The program also prints out an assessment of the pupils' progress when requested. These assessments clearly show that pupils are making good progress when working on the computers. It was evident from the assessment sheets that the few pupils who have a poor attendance record do not make as much progress. There are also links with geography and science when pupils draw graphs to show climate changes in India and to tabulate the results of an experiment on the relationship between the width of wings on an aeroplane and the length of time it stays in the air.

87. The co-ordinator is recently appointed but well qualified. He is enthusiastic and has been given time to work alongside colleagues to observe their practice that has resulted in his developing a greater understanding of how his colleagues deliver the numeracy hour. The action plan for mathematics shows the priorities for improvement in some detail for the year ahead and one or two priorities are quantifiable to enable the school to measure the success criteria. Assessment of the pupils' progress is good and focuses on the key objectives detailed in the numeracy strategy. However, this assessment has yet to have an impact on the middle and higher attaining pupils' progress in Year 4. Individual targets are given to the pupils and some teachers refer to these during lessons. This was particularly evident in Year 3 and has a positive effect on pupils being aware of what they need to learn. The resources used in school for delivering the numeracy strategy are good and were much in evidence during the inspection week. There is clear evidence of consistent homework being given in mathematics. The subject meets National Curriculum requirements.

SCIENCE

88. The assessments made by teachers for pupils aged seven years old in 2000 show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was close to the national average and was well above the national average for the higher Level 3. Inspection findings show that standards in science are average by the age of seven and pupils' achievement is appropriate. However, achievement for pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and Traveller pupils is good because of the focused support they are given. This is an improvement from the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average. By the age of nine, standards of attainment are below those expected for pupils of this age and this is in line with the findings of the last inspection. This is mainly because of the high proportion (more than a half) of pupils who are on the special needs register in Year 4. Achievement in science for all pupils in Year 4, including those with special educational needs, is sound. The attainment of the present group of pupils in Year 3 is in line with expectations for their age.
89. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is good. This shows a significant improvement from the last inspection when teaching in this key stage was judged to be unsatisfactory. Year 1 pupils can investigate the sounds musical instruments make when shaken or beaten. Good teaching methods ensure that the pupils evaluate what they have discovered and know that the sounds will be loud or quiet and that the instruments have 'different things in them' that make the sound. They can identify that the plastic container filled with rice was quieter than the card tubs and that the metal instruments were the loudest. Good planning in Year 2 means that the pupils have covered a range of topics such as electricity. They have learned effectively of the dangers of electricity and have drawn wet hands near sockets to illustrate their knowledge. Pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of how to link a circuit to make a bulb light up. Good links with literacy are in evidence in their work on humans. They have learned the poem, "When I was six", by A. A. Milne. An attractive, annotated display in their classroom of paper skeletons showed that the pupils have learned about parts of the body and the significant bones. Good links are also made with ICT when pupils had drawn faces with different expressions using an art package. In a good lesson in Year 2, the teacher told the pupils they were going to be scientists and, because of her good organisation, the pupils were able to investigate the different tastes of crisps and sandwich fillings. Pupils also felt inside a bag to try and decide what the object was and also listened to sounds on a tape to identify what animal or machine they originated from.
90. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is variable. For the Year 4 pupils in the lesson observed, it is unsatisfactory mainly because of the teacher's insecure management and control but also due to weak planning which did not challenge the very few average and higher attaining pupils. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. The planning did not meet the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and they could not read the worksheets. Very little progress was made by all pupils in this lesson on how the earth moves in space. A scrutiny of work for Year 4 pupils showed they have carried out worthwhile investigations into air resistance and have discovered that when the wings on an aeroplane are large, the aeroplane

stays up longer. Clear tables show the results of this experiment as well as an investigation into which materials make the best insulators. A well-drawn table showed that the best material is bubble wrap and the description showed that the pupils understood why. Good descriptions of how soil will not dissolve in water together with effective diagrams illustrate that pupils have covered and understood an appropriate range of science topics. However, there is no evidence of the pupils learning about what constitutes a fair test.

91. Good methods and organisational skills in Year 3 ensured that pupils completed their work effectively on the similarities and differences in the properties of materials. Learning was good. In the opening session, pupils showed that they have a good understanding of what a 'property' is. They quickly responded with words such as transparent, waterproof, opaque, translucent, bendy and the teacher encouraged the pupils to use the correct expressions. Their activities were well organised by the teacher and the pupils spent five minutes on each table picking two items and writing down as quickly as they could the similarities and differences. A good pace in this lesson ensured efficient and effective learning. Very good links with literacy in the opening session of this lesson ensured a growing scientific vocabulary. Pupils' work is marked regularly in Key Stage 2 but some comments are over complimentary and give praise when it is not always warranted. Very little diagnostic marking is in evidence.
92. The co-ordinator is very well qualified and is a good manager of the subject. The scheme of work is used consistently well and the teachers use the new national scheme as back up materials. Assessment of science is well thought out with an initial assessment of the pupils' knowledge being organised at the beginning of a new topic and a more formal assessment when the work is coming to a close. There was good evidence of this in the work scrutiny. However, as yet this system is not effective in Year 4 for raising standards for the middle and higher attaining pupils. The co-ordinator is well aware of her key responsibility, which is to raise standards and has planned ahead to next term when she will be working alongside the Year 4 teachers giving them support in delivering the subject. The co-ordinator works hard to achieve a high profile for science and, for example, the day following the inspection was planned as a science investigation day. The subject meets statutory requirements.

ART AND DESIGN

93. Due to the organisation of the timetable during the inspection week, it was only possible to observe one lesson at Key Stage 1. It is evident from the substantial amount of work around the school that art and design has a high priority and is a valued activity. Standards are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven years old and their achievement is appropriate. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good focused support they receive. Standards in Year 4 are in line with those expected for pupils of their age and their achievement, including those pupils with special educational needs, is judged to be good as many pupils in this year group have below average creative skills when they begin school. This is a significant improvement from the findings of the previous inspection when it was judged that provision for art and design did not meet statutory requirements.
94. Pupils in Key Stage 1 investigate various ways of using a range of materials and processes to help develop their own ideas and skills. In Year 1 for example, they draw and paint each other in various sizes. The miniatures they painted showed a good level of detail and proportion for their age and proved a popular activity. Pupils use materials to weave and create individual collage pictures. They were successful when looking at the texture and pattern of a wide range of materials, experimenting with different effects to consider what could be used and where. Art and design skills are developed effectively as pupils move through the school. The collage work in Year 2 indicated a wider range of materials and more effective consideration of the use of materials in their large collage pictures of animals, such as gazelles and zebras. Pupils explored how to mix colour, making it lighter and darker. This is evident in the painted portraits in Year 2, when skin colours, eye and hair colours are given careful consideration.

95. The quality of teaching and learning in the lesson observed in Key Stage 1 was good and this is an improvement from the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The teacher's good knowledge and understanding was very evident and ensured good learning by the pupils. The lesson was well organised and planned with a clear focus on the development of skills. The large variety of collage materials provided by the teacher enabled pupils to make considered choices about texture and pattern. Good management of the pupils and clear instructions enabled pupils to work well independently, while the teacher focused her attention on specific groups. Very good use was made of time. Pupils' response to art and design is good. They work sociably and quietly, discussing their work and sharing resources sensibly. A good lead was given by the teacher in this lesson in developing the pupils' skills of evaluating their own work. Pupils were asked, for example, what they could add next to improve their work. It was clear from their considered response that pupils are beginning to develop self-evaluation skills.
96. It was not possible to observe any art and design lessons in Key Stage 2, but a scrutiny of planning and displays of pupils' artwork indicate that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is an improvement from the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils between the ages of seven and nine continue to investigate a range of techniques and the development of skills is sound. The skills of pattern, line and form develop well through a range of observational drawings of shoes completed by pupils in Year 4. Accurate representation of proportion, line and tone were made, producing pictures that were at an appropriate standard for their age and represent good achievement.
97. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good leadership in developing the subject. A scheme of work and policy has been written and is in the process of review along with the new national guidance and this provides a sound structure for teaching and learning. This is an improvement from the last inspection when there was no scheme of work. Resources are regularly audited and kept up to date which is an improvement from the last inspection when resources were judged to be inadequate. A formal assessment system is in use and this is having an impact on raising standards. Arrangements are made each year for an 'Artist in Residence' to work in school, who supports the good development of a chosen area in art as well as gaining understanding of the subject from different cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards by the ages of seven are meeting national expectations and pupils continue to meet these standards by the time they leave the school at nine years old. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The achievement of pupils is appropriate throughout the school although, in Key Stage 1, achievement of the pupils with special educational needs is good. There is no difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
99. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is very good. In the lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher used very imaginative methods to help the pupils understand how to evaluate their products which were puppets made out of felt and other materials. Through role-play, the pupils were encouraged very sensitively by the teacher to explain why they thought their puppets had been a success or not. Some pupils found this a difficult concept and related their evaluation of the puppet to its character and said, for example, "My puppet is a bad snake because it eats up animals!" Patiently, the teacher used simple and specific questions to encourage the pupils to look carefully at their puppets. As a result, their learning moved forward and some pupils could demonstrate how they should have been more careful when measuring their puppet so that it fitted their hands better. There was good evidence of detailed plans drawn by the pupils, cut out paper designs and an indication of the different materials they had decided to use to make their puppets.

100. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good. In the lesson observed in Year 4, the pupils evaluated the doll-sized chairs they had designed and made for a specific person, such as Queen Victoria or a teenager. Good planning by the teacher ensured that the pupils had paid good attention to specific details in their design drawings, such as making a chair big enough for a teenager and also to include a mobile phone holder. The teacher's good methods of teaching this subject had an impact on how much thought pupils had given to the materials they would need for making their chairs such as card, string, glue, sellotape, bubblewrap and staples. Their finished products were of a good quality and showed that the pupils had taken care when making their chairs and had felt a true 'ownership' of their chairs. In conversation, the pupils made it clear that they were proud of them. However, their evaluation skills are weak. Although the pupils could discuss the problems they had experienced when making their chairs and explained that their designs needed amending, they could not express their views in written form adequately. This is because the teaching of evaluation of products has not been as thorough as that of design and make.
101. Although the co-ordinator is recently appointed, management of the subject is good. There is a good policy document and the scheme of work is being developed using the new national guidance. The co-ordinator is encouraging the teachers to annotate the planning documents in order to ensure that the resources are sufficient and also to inform her if any of the units of work need adapting to the needs of the school. There is a link governor who is very interested in design and technology and she has supported the co-ordinator well, particularly when writing the policy document. Formal assessment is in place using the national guidance and also the school system of tick sheets. This is having an impact on raising standards. Resources are of good quality and housed in appropriate plastic containers, which are easily accessible. Arrangements have been made for the design and technology adviser to visit the school next term to further the teachers' professional development. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through its good attention to recycling, the self-esteem pupils experience knowing they have made good products, and the way in which they learn to work together sharing the resources.

GEOGRAPHY

102. The standards of attainment for pupils aged seven are meeting national expectations and achievement is appropriate although pupils with special educational needs are achieving well. Standards for pupils at nine years of age do not meet those expected for their age and this is mainly due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs in this class. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in the previous inspection. By the end of Year 4, achievement is appropriate for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, from a below average starting point.
103. In Year 1, pupils develop their mapping skills by, for example, making plans and maps of their route from home to school, or from the supermarket to their house. They look at a map of the countries of the United Kingdom and identify the countries within it. They study different types of homes, comparing the different types they each live in. Good use is made of the Traveller pupils' contribution to geography, as pupils are able to learn about living in trailer homes. Pupils' knowledge extends to wider areas in the world as they grow older. Very good use is made of the unit of work devoted to the fictitious 'Barnaby Bear' in order to extend interest and understanding of a wide range of places across the world. Barnaby travels to Pakistan, Australia, Vietnam and Canada as well as other holiday destinations. Information about all these countries is brought back together with artefacts and the pupils identify the countries on the world map. This range of lessons provides a rich and exciting addition to the geography curriculum. The topic of, 'Where in the world does our food come from?' provides additional interest for pupils to identify locations around the world.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1. No judgements were made on teaching in this stage during the last inspection although many weaknesses were identified. In Year 2, good use is made of secondary resources in the form of the story of 'Katy Morag'. Pupils are skilled at drawing comparisons between an island home and their lives in Oxford. Comparisons are carefully drawn out by the teacher about different types of transport, clothes and the lives of the people. In the lesson seen, pupils showed enjoyment and interest in their work and their response was good. They were keen to ask and answer geographical questions and drew on their previous knowledge and the evidence presented to them.
105. In Year 3, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Geographical skills are developed further and effectively by the good use of the unit of work on the lives of the people in Chembakoli in India. A greater depth of study and the use of contrasting areas was well organised by the teacher and, as a result, the pupils' learning was good. Their learning developed about climate, landscape, work, school and different types of food and, as a result, they were able to raise questions based on this knowledge. For example, a quiz was devised by the pupils based on each of these categories. The work of these eight year olds is meeting expectations for their age indicating sound achievement. The teacher makes good links with information and communication technology in this year group. For example, in one lesson, pupils were learning to read directions from a map and to develop road sense on a computer program and were making good gains in their learning.
106. The work scrutiny indicated that there is a lack of challenge for the few average and higher attaining pupils in Year 4. The range of work organised for these pupils is not generally in sufficient depth to enable them to meet the expectations for their age and, for example, mapping skills are not sufficiently developed. Pupils were working with co-ordinates at a very simple level. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning in Year 4.
107. Management of geography is appropriate. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has not yet had sufficient time to impact on standards. The school is using units of work effectively from the new national guidelines as the main focus of the development of the curriculum and the co-ordinator is monitoring this development closely to ensure that the school purchases the appropriate resources needed to teach each unit of work. Formal assessment procedures are firmly in place but these have yet to impact on achievement for middle and higher attaining pupils in Year 4. The subject is making a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when pupils are learning about a wide range of cultures in other countries.

HISTORY

108. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe the teaching of history in the Year 4 class. Judgements are based on this evidence, discussions with teachers, an analysis of the history displays around the school, the school's planning and records and a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks. The indications are that standards of attainment reach national expectations by the time pupils are seven and this is an improvement from the last inspection when judgements indicated that their attainment was below expectations. Achievement for pupils by the age of seven is sound in history. By the age of nine years, pupils are not reaching the expected standards for their age and this is in line with the findings of the last inspection. Achievement is appropriate for pupils aged nine years. For pupils with special educational needs, achievement is good throughout the school due to the focused support they receive from assistants.
109. From the scrutiny of work available for the pupils aged seven and teachers' planning, the judgement is that teaching and learning are good in Key Stage 1. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection when several specific weaknesses were identified in teaching. Planning is good and it is clear from the pupils' books that their awareness of changes throughout time has been developed appropriately through studying the lives of their families. 'What granny did as a child', is an example of a well-organised unit of work. By studying the history of their own school, pupils have recognised what has changed over time. National events that were televised and nearer to the pupils' experience were studied, such as 'Remembrance

Day' and these experiences gave pupils further insight into the past. For example, pupils visited the memorial in the local church and were privileged to be part of a special memorial service conducted by the vicar especially for them. This service, together with highlights from the televised Cenotaph Service, provided valuable insights into previous historical events.

110. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and this is in line with the judgement of the last inspection. Pupils study events further back in history such as the Vikings and Greeks, whilst a more in depth study of the Victorians was given particular focus and linked to their own locality in Oxford. The pupils in Year 4 know that there were different toys, writing, household objects and transport during the Victorian period but their overall knowledge is at a below average level expected for pupils of their age. In the lesson observed in Year 4, the resources available were prepared well and the instructions were clear. However, the middle and higher attaining pupils were not given the opportunity to research the topic sufficiently due to a lack of appropriate resources. The teacher's questions were not probing enough to ensure that learning was moved forward well. Pupils were able to identify changes in the area since 1876 but their discussion was at a simple level. Pupils with special educational needs were achieving well due to the good support they were given, but the few middle and higher attaining pupils were underachieving due to a lack of challenge.
111. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. History has not been a priority area for development in the school as the implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours has, of necessity, been given greater emphasis. However, a new policy and scheme of work have been written which is an improvement since the last inspection. These documents are currently being reviewed together with the use of the new national guidance. Assessment is good and there is evidence to show regular reviews of pupils' progress. However, these reviews have yet to have an impact on achievement in Year 4. Good links are made with the local community, when men and women of all ages visit the school to share their memories linked to historical studies. History is making a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. The standards pupils attain in ICT by the age of seven are in line with national expectations and this is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average. By the age of nine, pupils' attainment is below that expected nationally but this group of pupils have a high level of special educational needs. The achievement of all pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, is good from their previous underachievement in Key Stage 1. The attainment of pupils presently in Year 3 meets the standards expected for their age.
113. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT is good throughout the school and is backed up by good support from the assistants who play an important role when pupils are withdrawn to the ICT suite. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection when teaching in this subject was judged to be unsatisfactory. The pupils in Key Stage 1 can use the mouse efficiently and drag icons to use the brush to fill in outlines with colour effectively. They are skilled at listening to instructions on the headphones. The very few higher attaining pupils can use the drag feature in the geography program to drop the names of the United Kingdom countries on to the correct place on the outline map. In Year 2, pupils can search the encyclopaedia program using the menu, index and key words facilities. The older pupils in this key stage have had limited experience at writing stories using word processing features and their ability to use the keyboard has not developed sufficiently to create stories or poems quickly. Most type slowly and with one hand only. However, several have learned to make a running list, use capital letters and print their work. Their knowledge of the functions of the keys is satisfactory and they can delete, use the enter and backspace keys. All pupils have used programmable toys to learn how to key in direction instructions.
114. Good planning by all teachers enables a whole class to work in the ICT suite with some pupils working 'off computer' and some on the computer, often in pairs. The suite is in use frequently

every day. The teachers' good organisation ensures an efficient system of small groups of pupils being withdrawn into the ICT suite during mathematics lesson and supported by an assistant. This organisation is very effective and ensures that good progress is being made by all pupils because they are on task all the time. The program they use for mathematics is self-regulating and gives instructions to the pupils when they make an error. There are very good links with other subjects such as history when Viking longboats were drawn and infilled with colour by Year 4 pupils.

115. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are developing skills of word processing, data handling and using graphic packages and have also had some limited experience using electronic mail and searching for information on the Internet. Good direct teaching ensures that most pupils can save and retrieve their work and a few can use ICT to explore imaginary situations. For example, Year 3 pupils enjoyed a geography lesson using a simulation program in the suite when those pupils on the computers found their way to various locations on a map and were learning how to use the correct icon to move to the next page on the map. Good organisation by the teacher led to pupils learning effectively how to read a map, learning directional language and road sense.
116. The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, has good skills and manages the subject very well. Since her appointment she has persevered to improve the provision for ICT and has succeeded with the help of funding from the local authority. There have been very significant improvements since the last inspection in provision, the standards of pupils' attainment, the quality of teaching and the resourcing of the subject. The funding enabled training to be organised for the staff and the co-ordinator monitors the use of the ICT suite and supports the staff in their planning. The school is using the national scheme of work combined with the National Curriculum and this is proving to be a good method for establishing a consistent scheme. As the teachers finish a unit, they annotate the unit documents with their own evaluatory comments that will enable the school to repeat the unit again but more effectively. Assessment is good, with a sound system of ensuring that pupils' skills and knowledge are noted. It is the intention of the co-ordinator to begin 'levelling' the pupils' work next term in order to further raise the skills of the quality of teaching. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection when there was no scheme of work and no assessment. The subject contributes particularly well to the pupils' social development when they work together using the computers to solve problems. The subject meets statutory requirements.

MUSIC

117. By the age of seven standards of attainment meet the national expectation and pupils continue to meet these standards by the time they are nine years old. The previous inspection had insufficient evidence at either key stage to make a judgement. Achievement is appropriate for the pupils although, for pupils with special educational needs, achievement is good as they are included in all the activities and well supported by the assistants. Pupils were heard singing with enjoyment in whole school assemblies on two occasions and their singing is satisfactory overall.
118. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers know a wide range of songs that are chosen well to engage the pupils' interest and keep them on task. The management of behaviour is strong and consistent with the school's policy. Activities are well planned and there is good progression in the activities. For example, in the lesson for seven year olds, the need to use symbols to record music was carefully approached and discussed, enabling pupils to understand that they would not be able to remember their composition unless they had a simple form of recording. Skilled questioning from the teacher helped pupils to understand the need for symbols. Pupils enjoy music lessons and their response is good. They think carefully and make sensible responses to questions, having a good understanding of what they are trying to learn.
119. At Key Stage 2, in the one lesson observed in Year 3, the quality of the teaching was satisfactory. Knowledge of the subject was appropriate and there was satisfactory progression in teaching new skills and musical vocabulary. The skills of three-part group composition were

carefully developed and new and known vocabulary, such as *ostinato* and *forte*, were carefully checked, reinforced or introduced. Pupils' behaviour was occasionally restless and the teacher had no choice but to interrupt the lesson to reinforce the school's behaviour management policy. As a consequence of the break in the pace of the lesson, learning was satisfactory rather than good.

120. The subject is appropriately led by the co-ordinator. The school uses the new national guidelines as a scheme of work and this is a significant improvement from the last inspection when there was no scheme of work and limited co-ordination. The formal assessment system is used effectively to note the progress of the pupils and to raise standards. There is a satisfactory range of resources and, again, this is an improvement since the last inspection when the range was considered to be unsatisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have opportunities to learn the violin from a visiting teacher. On two occasions per week the deputy headteacher and a learning support assistant teach the recorder. The singing in assemblies contributes well towards the subject and the co-ordinator and pupils have composed a rap, 'What do you think about Jesus?' and they perform it well. Each week there is a singing assembly where older pupils play an accompaniment using untuned percussion instruments. Musical events are well established in the school year. The Christmas and Easter events and the attendance of Year 4 at the 'Festival of Voices,' are examples of this. Additionally, weekly musical assemblies enhance opportunities to sing and listen to music. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they make and reflect on music together, share instruments and take part in musical productions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. No lessons in physical education were observed in Key Stage 1 and no judgements can be made on standards or the quality of teaching and learning in this key stage. It was only possible to observe activities in physical education in games at Key Stage 2. This evidence, together with evidence of swimming standards, shows that pupils meet expectations for their age in physical education at nine years of age. Achievement is appropriate for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Standards have remained the same since the previous inspection at Key Stage 2. There is no difference in the standards attained by boys and girls.
122. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. No clear judgement on teaching was given in the last inspection report. An appropriate range of game activities is planned and the sound organisation of pupils and resources enables activities to proceed at a suitable pace. The teaching of skills is variable and not always evident in some lessons. Clear instructions are given, enabling pupils to have a clear idea of what the task is. The pace of lessons is generally satisfactory, but lesson plans are not always adapted sufficiently to take account of circumstances. For example, on a cold day when activities took place outside, the pace and activities were not altered sufficiently to take account of this and the pace was too slow. However, it was evident that the pupils in Year 3 bowl with suitable accuracy and work appropriately with a partner. By the time pupils are aged nine, they have developed suitable co-ordination and control and make quick responses in marking and dodging activities. They make passes using feint and real actions and make use of different directions in their movements. Pupils are enthusiastic about physical activities and mainly have a good sporting attitude. Behaviour is generally appropriate and they keep their natural exuberance to an acceptable level.
123. Management of physical education is good and the co-ordinator has attended recent training in the teaching of dance and Curriculum 2000. She is given a small amount of time each term away from her class responsibilities to monitor the resources and to advise the staff on assessment or implementation of the scheme of work when necessary. The new scheme of work was accepted by the governing body a year ago and is an improvement from the last inspection when the scheme of work then being used was judged to be out-of-date. The hall and playgrounds are of a limited size and there is no grassed area for football and other games that need a grassed surface. However, the school strives hard to compensate for this. Sports days are held in the local park and away football matches are arranged with local schools. Swimming provision is good as

pupils visit the local swimming pool in both Years 3 and 4. This provision makes a significant contribution to the good number of pupils who attain good standards in swimming. Additionally, a residential trip is arranged for the oldest children where they are involved in several different physical activities. A dance club is provided for all pupils weekly after school and this contributes to the subject well.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

124. By the age of seven, standards of attainment are meeting the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and the achievement of pupils is appropriate. For pupils with special educational needs, achievement is good by the age of seven as a result of the good support they receive from the assistants and visiting teachers. This is an improvement from the findings of the last inspection when attainment was judged to be below average. By the age of nine, standards are not meeting the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement of all pupils is satisfactory when their below average attainment on entry is considered. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The group of pupils who are aged nine contains a high number of pupils with special educational needs.
125. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is very good. A wide range of religious education topics was evident in the work scrutiny and it was clear that the pupils had particularly enjoyed learning about the symbolism of Jewish and Hindu weddings. One of the Traveller mothers had visited for an afternoon and described to the pupils the rich traditions of Traveller weddings. In the lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher used very imaginative methods to teach the pupils about the meaning of the stories of Jesus. She told the story of 'The Good Samaritan' clearly and explained how, in those ancient times, the Samaritans and the Jews hated each other. Very good organisation by the teacher ensured that the pupils moved forward significantly in their learning by acting out the story in a modern setting. The pupils were given simple good resources to wear to become the bus driver, a business man, a young mother and a football hooligan travelling into Oxford. The pupils responded very well and showed a mature attitude by becoming the characters. They managed to convey to each other, and the pupils who were watching and enjoying the drama, the surprise they felt that it was the football hooligan who helped the injured man. In this lesson, the very good teaching enabled these young pupils to fully understand the strong messages in this story told by Jesus. The pupils will remember this story particularly well because of their enjoyment in participating in the role-play.
126. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Evidence from the pupils' work in Year 3 shows a wide range of topics have been planned and studied. Christianity has been the prominent religion studied with some good descriptive writing evident describing some of the early books in the Old Testament and their contents. The pupils have been investigating the traditions of other religions, such as Hinduism and learning some of the metaphorical sayings, such as, 'God is like the salt in the water; he is invisible but he is everywhere in the world.' The pupils' visit to a private Hindu shrine had resulted in some good descriptive writing which showed how much they had appreciated the hospitality shown by the owner and his explanations of the holy rituals and artefacts. In the lesson observed in Year 4, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. The lesson began well when the week's value of friendship was re-visited very appropriately by the teacher reading the story of how Peter betrayed Jesus and his subsequent grief and disbelief. Sensitive story-telling and some skilled probing questions about being loyal and faithful to friends or a belief, ensured that the pupils listened well and answered some difficult questions about Peter's behaviour. The pupils responded thoughtfully and showed that they are beginning to develop a good understanding of how religious beliefs can convey their own and others' ideas about values. However, the activity given to all the pupils was inappropriate and showed a lack of understanding of the need to challenge the middle and higher attainers and, at the same time, did not meet the needs of the high number of pupils with special educational needs in this group. The commercially produced worksheet limited the pupils' response mainly to one word answers and some of the special educational needs pupils could not read it. The pupils made little progress in that part of the lesson.

127. The co-ordinator is very well qualified to manage the subject and has attended several courses including one that is certificated. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection when there was no co-ordination of the subject. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus as a scheme of work and this is supported by the school scheme and supplemented with the new national guidelines. This is an improvement from the last inspection when there was no scheme to assist planning. The scheme was written in 1997 and is due for revision in April. Formal assessment is in place and is being reviewed by the co-ordinator who is trying out a specific system of assessment. This assessment system has yet to have an impact on raising standards in Year 4. Resources are adequate and are of good quality. It is intended to build them up further and link them with the school's value of the week that is announced in assembly each Monday morning. The subject contributes very well to the school's evident ethos as well as to personal, social and health education and 'Special Time' when the pupils can talk about events in their lives that may trouble them or bring them happiness. Assemblies contribute very well to religious education when pupils are told stories from the Bible or stories told on a theme of the value of the week. This subject contributes well towards the pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development when they are reminded of the symbolism of the lit candle in assembly. On several occasions, during religious education lessons, the right way to behave is emphasised and in the pupils' study of different religions they learn how people of other cultures respond to their own religions.
128. School events organised by the co-ordinator that have contributed to good provision for religious education are the annual Christingle services which take place in Advent each year, the creation of Easter gardens by the pupils and the Christmas shoebox appeal. Other events that have been organised are a celebration of St Patrick's Day when the Traveller women made cakes and the whole school iced them in Irish colours. One of the women visited each classroom to tell Irish folktales. To celebrate the Year 2000, all the pupils produced work for a big book about the life of Jesus to enter into a competition in the local diocese. The school won second prize which was a beautiful stained glass window made by a local artist who worked with six pupils on a design. This window is going to be unveiled on the last day of term before Easter.