

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Middle Barton School**

Middle Barton

Chipping Norton

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123005

Headteacher: Mr D J Haley

Reporting inspector: RWG Thelwell  
20977

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2000

Inspection number: 224612

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane Middle Barton Chipping Norton Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX7 7BX
Telephone number:	01869 340522
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss K Davies
Date of previous inspection:	26 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Robin Thelwell [20977] Registered inspector	Foundation Stage, Science, Information and communications technology, Design and technology, Physical education.	What sort of school is it? Results and achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Michael Whitaker [9644] 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?
Sandra Teacher [10270] Team inspector	Equal Opportunities; Special educational needs, English; Art; Music.	
Gavin Jones [22578] Team inspector	Mathematics; Religious education; Geography; History.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Middle Barton School serves the Bartons and the village of Sandford St Martin. A small number of pupils come from outside the catchment area. Pupils are drawn from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, with homes including a mix of privately owned, and council, or other rented accommodation.

At present, 150 pupils attend full time, including ten children of reception age. There are six classes, with an average size of 25. Children join the school at the start of the term in which they become five. The majority enter school having attended the Middle Barton Pre-school adjoining the school. Assessment on entry shows that whilst nearly all children have attainment expected for their age, a third are judged to exceed this.

The school has identified 26 pupils as having special educational needs. This represents 17 per cent of those on roll, and is broadly average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs allocated to them under the terms of the DfEE Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is, at two per cent of those attending school, well below average. All pupils have English as their first language. The school benefits from an established and active Parent Teacher Association which gives valuable financial support.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very good school that serves its pupils and community extremely well. It has no major weaknesses. Teaching is good across the school. Very good behaviour is the norm, and relationships are excellent. The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team. They have successfully addressed the issues from the last inspection, and have created an orderly climate for learning. When further taking into account attainment on entry, and the good added value in terms of pupils' achievements when they leave, Middle Barton is a very effective school. Efficient use is made of time, money and resources. Although the unit cost per pupil is above average, the school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Provides a warm, caring community where pupils are known well and valued as individuals. The school creates an orderly climate for learning.
- Promotes very good attitudes and behaviour, together with excellent relationships.
- Good teaching is a strength of the school.
- At both key stages, pupils achieve very high standards in science.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- The school has excellent links with parents, and a close involvement with the community.

#### **What could be improved**

- At Key Stage 2, the use of information and communications technology to monitor and display data relating to science investigations is underdeveloped.
- The library is not used to its full potential as a resource for learning due to its location; particularly with regard to the promotion and development of pupils' research skills.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

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<sup>1</sup> The DfEE Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

The school has made very good progress in addressing the issues from the last inspection of January 1998. There has been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching. All pupils are now set challenging tasks, carefully matched to their capabilities. Greater emphasis has been given to problem solving and investigative work. At Key Stage 2, attainment in religious education is now satisfactory. Reception children now have regular opportunities to work outside and use large equipment. The use of information and communications technology has been developed across the curriculum. Teachers' marking now gives pupils a clear indication of what they must do to improve, and the use of day-to-day assessment to help determine what is to be taught next, is good. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects to support teachers' planning for the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Resources have been improved where weaknesses were identified. Good procedures are now in place to monitor the quality of teaching. The role of co-ordinators, together with that of the senior management team, has been developed. The school's aims are now clearly reflected in its day-to-day life.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	D	A	C
Mathematics	B	C	B	C
Science	B	B	A*	A*

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

In the table above, pupils' attainment in science, when compared with either national averages or similar schools, meets the performance levels of the top five per cent of schools nationally. Results of pupils in 1999 end of Key Stage 1 assessments, showed overall attainment to be well above the national average for writing, and above average for reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in science was very high. When compared with those of similar schools<sup>2</sup>, results were well above average for writing, average for reading, but below average for mathematics.

Results of the assessments for the year 2000, for which no national figures were available at the time of the inspection, show standards at Key Stage 1 have been maintained, whilst at Key Stage 2, further gains have been made in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence confirms standards for those pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6, to be above expectations in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in information and communications technology, and religious education is in line with expectations at the end of each key stage. In other subjects, attainment is above average for design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2; standards meet expectations for both key stages in art, geography, history, music and physical education, together with design and technology at Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to prior attainment and targets set within their education plans.

<sup>2</sup> Schools with up to and including 8 per cent free school meals.

Whilst nearly all children achieve the Early Learning Goals<sup>3</sup> by the time they leave the Foundation Stage<sup>4</sup>, at the end of the reception year, a third achieve the expected levels earlier. Many enter Key Stage 1 with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics above those expected for their age.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show very good attitudes to learning. This has a positive effect on the progress they make.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Within lessons, consistently very good behaviour allows maximum time to be spent on teaching and learning.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils, and amongst pupils and staff, are excellent. They contribute very well to pupils' learning.
Attendance	Good. The overall rate of attendance is above average. Unauthorised absence is well below average. Pupils are keen to attend.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed. Overall, it was good or better in 77 per cent of lessons observed, including 32 per cent very good, with a further 5 per cent excellent. The high standard of teaching has a positive effect on pupils' progress and achievement.

Teaching of children in the reception year was judged to be excellent in 14 per cent of lessons observed, very good in 29 per cent, and good in the remainder. At Key Stage 1, teaching was good or better in 77 per cent of lessons observed, including 23 per cent very good. At Key Stage 2, 72 per cent of lessons were judged good or better, including 35 per cent very good, and a further five per cent excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

The quality of teaching of literacy was good or better in 88 per cent of lessons, including 63 per cent very good, of which 13 per cent were excellent. The teaching of numeracy was good or better in 89 per cent of lessons, including 22 per cent very good. The remainder was satisfactory. Teachers successfully meet the needs of pupils with different abilities, ranging from those with special educational needs, to higher attaining pupils.

<sup>3</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals', comprised of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of reception year. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literature; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development.

<sup>4</sup> From September 2000, the term Foundation Stage refers to children's education from the age of three until the end of the reception year.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is broad and balanced, and supported by a very good range of out-of-class activities and educational visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision that is very well managed by the headteacher in his capacity as special educational needs co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Whilst provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good, that for moral and social development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's provision for child protection, together with health and safety aspects of care, is good. Very good provision is made for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school's excellent links with parents have a very good effect on pupils' learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership. The very good support he receives from the staff and governors, results in the school having a very positive and caring ethos that supports and promotes pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities fully. Governors are closely involved in strategic and financial planning, monitoring and evaluation. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's provision for the National Curriculum, and the standards pupils achieve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate performance. Data is analysed to help determine what is to be done next. The quality of teaching is monitored on a regular basis.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes efficient use of its resources to support pupils' learning. At each stage of planning and evaluation, the governing body applies principles of 'best value' to good effect.

The school has sufficient staffing to meet the demands of the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, and the National Curriculum. Accommodation is good. The school benefits from good outdoor provision, including a swimming pool, field and hard play areas. Grounds are used well to support environmental education in addition to physical education. Overall, resources are good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are taught well and make good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed. It works closely with parents and keeps them well informed of pupils' progress.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible, and behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teachers know pupils and their needs well. Staff are approachable to discuss concerns with parents.</li> </ul>	<p>A small number of parents are concerned that, on occasions, tasks given as homework:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are too broad in nature;</li> <li>• are not always sufficiently related to the abilities of pupils;</li> <li>• lack sufficiently clear instructions to either pupils or parents.</li> </ul>

Thirty-nine parents returned the questionnaire, and twenty-nine parents attended the meeting with the Registered Inspector. Inspection evidence confirms the positive views expressed by parents. The team is of the opinion that an appropriate amount of homework is provided for pupils, relative to their age and understanding. Following a recent questionnaire to parents on the subject of homework, the school has prepared an informative brochure which has yet to be distributed to parents, and has already planned a 'homework discussion evening' for parents.

### PART B: COMMENTARY

#### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

##### The school's results and achievements

1. Assessment of children on entry to the school, shows that whilst nearly all have attainment appropriate for their age, a third have levels above expectation. The school makes good provision for its young children. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical and physical development. Progress is satisfactory in knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. Whilst nearly all children achieve the officially recommended Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Foundation Stage at the end of reception year, a third achieve the expected levels earlier. As a consequence, many children enter Key Stage 1 with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, above that expected for their age.

2. Results of 1999 end of Key Stage 1 assessments for reading, showed the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level<sup>5</sup>, to be in line with the national average. The proportion gaining the higher level was above average. In writing, the proportion of pupils achieving either the expected or higher level was well above average. For mathematics, whilst the proportion gaining the expected level was average, that achieving the higher level was above average. Teacher assessment for science, showed the proportion reaching the expected level was very high, consistent with the top five per cent of schools nationally. The proportion gaining the higher level was assessed as being well above average.

<sup>5</sup> The national expectation is that, when assessed at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils should achieve Level 2. The higher level for pupils at Key Stage 1 is Level 3. At Key Stage 2, the expectation is that when assessed, pupils should achieve Level 4, with the higher level being Level 5.

3. When compared with similar schools, results were well above average for writing, average for reading, but below average in mathematics.
4. End of Key Stage 2 assessments for 1999 for English, showed that whilst the proportion achieving the expected level was average, that gaining the higher level was well above average. For mathematics, the proportion reaching the expected level was well above the national average, with that gaining the higher level being average. In science, all pupils achieved the expected level. The proportion reaching the higher level was very high. Overall standards for science were within the performance levels of the top five per cent of schools nationally.
5. With the exception of writing in 1997, Key Stage 1 yearly results of the assessed subjects, have, since 1996, exceeded national averages. At Key Stage 2, whilst the school's performance over recent years in English, mathematics and science, has been above average, its rate of improvement reflects national trends. In order to raise standards, the school placed greater emphasis on investigative work, particularly in mathematics and science. Across both key stages, a greater emphasis was placed on mental arithmetic, as prescribed by the National Numeracy Strategy.
6. Although, at the time of the inspection, no figures had been published for comparisons, the school's results in the end of key stage assessments for year 2000, show Key Stage 1 standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science have been maintained. Further gains have been made at Key Stage 2 within English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence confirms that for pupils currently in either Year 2 or Year 6, attainment is above expectation for each of these subjects.
7. In English, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. At the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards well above those expected for their age. By Year 2, they show confidence in asking and answering questions, and are keen to read and speak aloud. By the time they leave the school, at the end of Year 6, pupils use a good breadth of vocabulary when discussing items of interest, or explaining their views.
8. In reading, pupils make good progress as they move through the school, and achieve standards that are above average. At Year 2, pupils read texts that are more demanding than usual for their age. By Year 6, pupils read complex texts with expression and accuracy, discuss character and plot, and demonstrate well developed library skills.
9. Across both key stages, pupils' progress in writing is good. Standards are above average at the end of each key stage. Pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences. They acquire good habits in learning spellings, using dictionaries and thesauruses to support their writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write with a fluent and clear style, and work is presented well.
10. Pupils make effective use of their literacy skills in other subjects. In history, they research and produce interesting work on Ancient Egypt, and on Roman Britain. In geography, pupils produce informative work on erosion and quality booklets on their field trip to Conway. In science and design and technology, pupils write clear accounts of investigations, and write instructions and evaluations relating to items made.
11. In mathematics, pupils make good progress across each key stage. Work in number is above average at the end of both key stages. Mental arithmetic is developed well through regular 'mental agility' activities. Numeracy skills are used to good advantage in science investigations when measuring and recording findings. Pupils measure and weigh in design and food technology, refer to timelines in history, and use scales to calculate distance when using maps.
12. In science, pupils make good progress at both key stages. Scientific enquiry is a strong feature of provision. Pupils have a broad knowledge of science, and are able to

observe, experiment, speculate, and operate as 'young scientists'. They understand what makes a test 'fair', and use an increasing range of scientific language with confidence.

13. Pupils in both key stages make sound progress in developing their skills of information and communications technology, and at the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards in line with national expectations. Pupils apply their developing skills well in other subjects. However, the school is aware of the need to develop the use of such technology for monitoring investigations at Key Stage 2.

14. In religious education, pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. At the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, they have a knowledge of Christian beliefs, and of other world faiths.

15. Whilst at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in design and technology is in line with national expectations, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards exceed requirements. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in art, geography, history, music and physical education, meets national expectations.

16. All pupils on the school's register of special educational needs have individual education plans that clearly identify realistic, but challenging targets. Pupils make good progress in relation to prior attainment, and to targets set in education plans. In all classes, higher attaining pupils are provided with suitably challenging work and make good progress.

17. The school surpassed its English and mathematics targets for Year 6 pupils in both 1999 and 2000 National Curriculum assessments. The school is now working with the local authority to set targets to ensure the next group of Year 6 pupils achieves its full potential in literacy and numeracy. The school has a positive attitude to the ongoing raising of standards, and the headteacher, staff and governors work well together to this common end.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

18. Pupils have a very positive attitude to school. This represents an improvement over the good attitudes demonstrated at the time of the previous inspection. Children bounce into school in the mornings, full of eagerness to get on with the day. Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm in lessons, whether it is a reception class reading 'The Gingerbread Man' together in literacy hour, or Year 3 expressing delight as they produce African-style prints from polystyrene tiles in an art lesson. Pupils persevere when tasks are difficult as when pupils in Year 5 were confronted with the challenge of examining and working with 'off-centre cams' in a design and technology lesson. Pupils co-operate well and share ideas. Pride in their work is reflected in high standards of presentation.

19. Behaviour is very good, an improvement on the good behaviour noted in the last inspection report. There have been no exclusions over the preceding twelve months. Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors, keen to share their pleasure in their work. School premises and property are treated with care and respect. In lessons, the great majority of pupils readily comply with the school's behaviour standards. The school is working with experts from the education authority to modify the disruptive behaviour of a very small number of pupils in the lower part of Key Stage 2. Pupils are sensible and considerate when moving about the school. At lunch they eat and chat in a pleasant sociable atmosphere and at play, they are lively but good natured. The school's provision of toys and games for playground use helps to channel energies into constructive play. All pupils, of all ages, both sexes and all abilities play together well. There is a complete absence of bullying, sexual or racial harassment or oppressive behaviour in the school.

20. Pupils' personal development is good. The school is a busy place with a purposeful air about it. At lunch time, groups of pupils will be seen getting out lunch time play equipment, tidying the hall after lunch, depositing waste in the compost bins or collecting litter from the

grounds, all without supervision. Members of the school council talk sensibly and maturely about its work. Older pupils happily entertain pre-school children during the monthly Home-School link sessions. Pupils are encouraged to develop as independent learners; numerous examples were seen of topics being researched at home on personal computers or in public libraries. The annual residential visits made by pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 encourage self reliance. Pupils' respect for the feelings of others is very well developed, as was demonstrated in a Key Stage 2 assembly on 'Sharing', and in a Year 6 citizenship lesson on Human Rights.

21. Relationships are excellent and a real strength of the school. Teachers treat children with consideration and listen to their views with respect, in lessons and throughout the school - in the school council for example. Pupils listen to each other's contributions in class attentively and particularly good work is rewarded with spontaneous applause.

22. Attendance is good. This is an improvement on the satisfactory levels noted at the last inspection. Authorised absences stand at 5.1 per cent, which is broadly in line with that found in primary schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is zero. Registration is carried out promptly and efficiently and registers are properly maintained. Pupil punctuality is good and lessons start on time.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

23. Good teaching is a strength of this school. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons observed. Overall, it was good or better in 77 per cent, including 37 per cent of lessons where it was judged very good, of which 5 per were excellent. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection when 17 per cent of lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory. All teachers and support assistants work very well as a team, sharing good knowledge and expertise. The high quality of teaching has a positive effect on pupils' responses and the progress they make.

24. Teaching of children in the reception class was judged to be excellent in 14 per cent of lessons observed, very good in 29 per cent, and good in the remainder. Planning is based on the officially recommended Early Learning Goals. It covers all areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, and links very well with the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children are provided with a good range of relevant and interesting experiences. Very good knowledge and understanding of the educational needs of this age group are reflected in the preparation and delivery of lessons, and in the careful and detailed monitoring of children's work. Staff co-operate very well in providing children with an appropriate balance between teacher directed activities, and those they choose for themselves. The many opportunities created to develop and extend children's language ability are a marked feature of the good practice observed.

25. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 was judged to be good in 77 per cent of lessons observed, including 23 per cent very good. At Key Stage 2, 72 per cent of lessons were judged good or better, including 35 per cent very good and a further 5 per cent excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

26. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of subjects taught. They use this expertise effectively. Teachers are enthusiastic, and this contributes to positive, well managed classes. On many occasions, pupils' understanding is significantly enhanced by teachers' clear explanations and effective demonstrations. For instance, in an information and communications technology lesson, pupils in Year 3 were given very clear, step-by-step guidance on how to send and receive e-mails. Having been shown the correct way to receive, pivot then pass a netball, pupils in Year 5 responded with great enthusiasm and determination to succeed, when, after their initial attempts, their teacher stated, "I'm not impressed yet, but I will be by the end of the lesson." At the end of the session, one pupil remarked, "That went really well. That's the best I've ever done." In nearly all lessons, teachers communicate objectives clearly, ensuring that pupils fully understand what they are

expected to achieve. At all times, teachers have suitably high expectations, and give good support and reassurance.

27. Across the school, classrooms and adjoining work areas are well organised to promote learning. Teachers were observed using an appropriate range and balance of teaching strategies, including individual, group and whole class teaching to good advantage. The use of questioning techniques by staff is very effective, and has a positive effect on the development of pupils' learning, particularly speaking and listening skills. The same is true of teachers' encouragement of pupils to use correct vocabulary within subjects. Good examples of both practices occur regularly at the end of lessons, when pupils discuss what they have learnt. During circle time<sup>6</sup>, teachers show sensitive care, control and guidance when they encourage pupils to contribute to a range of issues.

28. Teachers across the school make good use of time and available resources to advance pupils' learning. Lessons have clear objectives that build well on previous learning. Nearly all lessons start with a recap of what pupils have learnt earlier, and how this is to be developed within the session. A significant contribution to the effective teaching observed, came from the school's team of support assistants. They work in close partnership with teachers to enhance successfully pupils' learning. Teachers ensure all those working with them have a clear understanding of the objectives, methods and resources to be used. Pupils respond well to the support given. Staff have built very good relationships with pupils, and behaviour is very good. Inspection evidence confirms parents' views that staff know pupils and their needs well, and that teachers plan for them accordingly.

29. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans relate well to the needs of pupils for whom they are written. Staff use these plans well to meet specific needs. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Teachers give clear instructions, and use praise constructively. As a result of good support, pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and to targets set in education plans. In contrast to the findings of the last inspection, the school now provides well for its higher attaining pupils. In each class, such pupils are set suitably challenging tasks, well matched to their ability. A clear and helpful policy is in place to support staff in the identification and monitoring of more able pupils.

30. Teaching of the daily literacy hour was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons observed. Eighty-eight per cent were judged as good or better, including 63 per cent very good, of which 13 per cent were excellent. Sessions are very well planned, with clear objectives. Interesting activities are provided for pupils, and good use is made of the review sessions at the end of lessons. The most successful lessons are characterised by the enthusiasm of teachers, expressive and sensitive reading and leading of stories, and skilled questioning to ensure pupils understand texts. The quality of teaching for the daily mathematics lessons was good in 89 per cent of lessons observed, including 22 per cent very good. The remainder was satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, with an interesting range of activities to reinforce pupils' understanding of the concepts taught. In mental arithmetic sessions, pupils are challenged to think and use their recall of number with rapid responses. Pupils enjoy this and respond well.

31. Day-to-day planning is very effective. Teachers make good use of ongoing assessment to help plan what is to be taught next. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection when its use was considered 'often weak'. A range of policies and schemes of work help teachers plan the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. A further improvement since the last inspection is that teachers' marking of work is consistently good. In addition to providing positive comments to note their appreciation of pupils' efforts, teachers give them clear guidance as to what pupils must do to improve. Although a number of parents had concerns

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<sup>6</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle, and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues that concern all of them.

regarding the provision of homework, inspectors find that teachers make appropriate use of homework throughout the school.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

32. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that includes all aspects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Appropriate emphasis is given to English, mathematics, science, information and communications technology, and religious education. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when it was noted that insufficient time was allocated to mathematics. Further shortcomings related to insufficient investigative work in mathematics and science, have been addressed. Whilst the school has responded well to the requirement that information technology be put to greater use across the curriculum, the school's use of equipment to monitor and display data relating to science investigations, is underdeveloped.

33. There is a good programme of studies for children in the Foundation Stage. It covers all required areas of learning, and links very well with the early stages of the National Curriculum. The findings of the last inspection that children had insufficient opportunities to use large outdoor play equipment have been addressed. The school now has policies and schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum. Curriculum planning is very good. It ensures that new learning is based on previous knowledge and skills. A good feature of planning is that pupils with different abilities are provided with appropriate and challenging activities. This is an improvement since the last report.

34. Provision for sex education, drugs awareness, and citizenship is found in the school's plans for personal, social and health education. These plans are very comprehensive and used to good effect. Parents are well informed and have opportunities to view some of the materials used. Personal development is addressed through individual target setting, together with opportunities for personal research or investigations, often based on pupils' own interests. Whilst carried out across the curriculum, this is a particular feature of geography and history.

35. A strength in the organisation of the curriculum is the way in which the school forges links between subjects. This is especially so in literacy where pupils are given a wide range of good opportunities to write, not just within literacy lessons themselves, but for a wide range of purposes in subjects such as religious education, geography and history.

36. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school successfully identifies and provides for higher attaining pupils. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. This provision, supported by effective classroom assistants, enables pupils to make good progress in relation to prior attainment, and to targets set in individual education plans. The school has a clear special educational needs policy that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Documentation for these pupils is clear and very well managed. Individual education plans provide detailed targets appropriate to the needs of each pupil, and are reviewed regularly. Annual reviews of pupils with statements of special educational need are appropriately carried out. Parents are fully involved throughout the special needs process, from the time when concerns are first expressed, through to annual reviews.

37. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extracurricular activities which include provision for sporting, musical, cultural, investigative and dramatic interest. The curriculum is further enhanced by a good range of visitors, together with visits made to museums, art centres, places of historical interest, and a hospital. In addition, pupils benefit from attending residential centres. Such activities help bring learning alive. Whilst a small number of parents are unhappy with arrangements for homework, inspection findings are, that this aspect of the school's curriculum provision is satisfactory. The school has a clear homework policy. The

level of homework increases as pupils move through the school, and is in keeping with their age and levels of understanding.

38. The local community contributes very well to the education of pupils at Middle Barton. Pupils gain a great deal from their visits to the Jubilee Club, where they entertain the elderly. The Parish Council supports the printing of the school prospectus, and the school has recently benefited from the use of two fields nearby to support its work in environmental education. Displays of work have been shown in a nearby library, and two local churches are in regular contact with the school.

39. The provision made by the school for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. This shows an improvement since the last inspection.

40. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school fulfils the requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship. Through these, pupils have good opportunities to consider the content, and reflect on their own lives and those of others. They are introduced to a range of festivals, including Harvest, and the Jewish festival of Sukkot. Through good use of resources and clear explanations, pupils examine and gain understanding of the beliefs behind them. Further good support for pupils' spiritual development comes from work in religious education. Here, pupils have good opportunities to understand the nature of worship of Christians and of other faith groups. A visit to Coventry Cathedral provides pupils with an opportunity to marvel at a beautiful place of worship. All pupils visit the local church and gain valuable experience of a place of worship. The remainder of the curriculum provides further good support through its ability to point to where pupils might experience awe and wonder of God's created world. Work in science, through studies of growth, plant and animal life supports this aspect of the work. The previous inspection noted the school missed some of these opportunities. The school has effectively responded to the criticism by identifying spiritual development in planning.

41. The provision the school makes for the moral development of its pupils is very good. Staff, parents, governors and pupils all have very high and consistent expectations for behaviour in class and around the school. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and are actively involved in devising class rules and guidelines. In connection with their work on India and their understanding of the life of child labourers, pupils arrived at a clear picture of the rights children should have. Work on display in Year 3 focuses on the 'United Nations Bill of Rights for Children', and pupils in the class show a sound understanding of its implications. There is genuine respect shown by teachers for the contributions pupils make in class. This was borne out in a religious education lesson where a difficult discussion on 'Where is God?' saw the teacher valuing all contributions and setting a very good example for her pupils to follow. Lists of class codes appear in many classes. Where they do appear, it is usually as a result of discussions within class, in which pupils show a clear understanding of the requirement for order and rules in society.

42. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school, the local community and the wider world. The school has a simple hierarchical system, which gives older pupils more privileges and responsibilities than younger ones. All pupils happily take on tasks around classrooms. Older pupils help in the dining room, support younger pupils with reading, together with helping with pre-school children when they visit each week. The well prepared work on citizenship throughout the school gives very good support to social development and links well to the work the school does in the community. The school has wider social contact with India where it actively sponsors an Indian child and has regular information about life in the country, which increases pupils' knowledge of the social pressures on children in the wider world. A theatre visit to a production by performers with Downs Syndrome, raised pupils' awareness of the range of abilities often not attributed to people with special educational needs. Merit assemblies, which parents often attend, celebrate the work of pupils and classes. 'Gold Books' are used to place on record the good work and attitudes of individuals. Pupils understand the importance of being able to celebrate the success of others.

43. Pupils' cultural development is good. Work in literacy hour provides all pupils with good opportunities to sample stories by recognised authors. Year 6 study extracts from 'Macbeth', thus meeting the works of William Shakespeare at an early age. History provides pupils with good opportunities to learn about life in this country during the Tudor and Victorian periods. Information about the culture of the period focuses on such elements as clothes, entertainment, housing and schooling. Studies of the local environment provide pupils with an understanding of land use and of the physical features of their area. Visits made to the Millennium Dome, museums, and art galleries, support pupils' understanding of their cultural heritage. Through studying different religions within the religious education programme, pupils gain an understanding of the cultural diversity exemplified within religions. This was supported well by a visiting Asian dance workshop for Year 2 pupils. Work in music and art are less supportive of multicultural understanding than other curriculum areas, with fewer opportunities given for pupils to sing, listen to and appreciate music from other cultures. However, the school's collection of musical instruments contains a good selection from the wider world.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

44. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The headteacher is responsible for child protection matters. Regular training, which includes support staff, takes place. All staff know what action to take in cases of concern. Parent volunteers are police checked. Health and safety matters are overseen by a sub-group of the governing body. The premises are regularly inspected and all necessary risk assessments are made. There are contracts for regular safety inspections of electrical and fire equipment and physical education and play apparatus. Arrangements for first aid and other medical matters are entirely satisfactory.

45. Good arrangements are in place for promoting high levels of attendance. Registers are examined daily and when a child is unexpectedly absent, the school office will phone home to establish the reason. The services of an education social worker are available if necessary. Parents are reminded of the undesirability of taking holidays in term time, though this is not an issue which causes any real problem for the school.

46. The school has a very good approach to discipline. Parents have commented upon the high standards of behaviour in school: "It is better at school than at home," one parent said at the pre-inspection meeting. There is an effective system of sanctions and rewards, which pupils understand. Indeed, pupils themselves debate class rules at the beginning of each academic year. However, expectation and example are as important as codes of conduct in achieving the high standards observed. When young children join the reception class, they are quickly introduced to the school's behavioural requirements. Children are constantly reminded of those requirements as they progress through school. They are encouraged to think and work co-operatively, and the 'Team Point' system is used to underpin that philosophy. Particularly good work or thoughtful acts are celebrated in the school's 'Gold Books' and shared with the whole school at special assemblies.

47. Necessary procedures are in place for dealing with poor behaviour. Records are kept and parents are involved. When necessary, the school will obtain expert advice: for example from the education authority's Emotional and Behavioural Difficulty outreach workers. There are good arrangements for monitoring and eliminating instances of racial harassment. Such instances are very rare - the school can recall only one - but procedures are in place should such matters arise.

48. The school has very good arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment information on entry and at Key Stages 1 and 2 is clearly monitored and analysed with the assistance of the local education authority's data analysis team. This represents a considerable improvement on what was noted at the previous inspection. All class teachers keep clear records of pupils' academic progress, including reading records, and records of judgements on personal development. The use of this assessment

information is effective in guiding curriculum planning overall, and is well used to determine provision for individual pupils, particularly for those who attain at higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported through their individual education plans. Parents are involved by the special needs co-ordinator at key points in pupils' experience. These arrangements work well.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

49. Parents are very supportive of the school which they hold in high esteem. They see it, as does the inspection team, as a caring school, which goes out of its way to involve parents. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, there were no negative responses regarding the school's relationship with parents. The level of parental support and satisfaction with the school has increased since the previous inspection.

50. The school has excellent links with parents. It provides high quality information about school events and children's progress. Parents find their children's annual reports helpful and informative. Reports address the child's academic and personal development, and provide pointers for future improvement. Parents are consulted in the school's target-setting process, as are pupils themselves. Meetings to discuss the child's progress against those targets are held each term. In addition, staff are always prepared to discuss day-to-day concerns with parents when they collect their children at the end of the day. Parents comment favourably about the staff's approachability. Regular newsletters, written in accessible, parent friendly language, keep families informed of school events and provide advance information regarding topics to be studied. The school holds regular meetings on curriculum matters, such as the effect of literacy and numeracy, expressive arts education and the use of information and communications technology. If necessary, the school will hold meetings more than once, at times to suit the varying needs of working parents and parents with pre-school children. Parents of children with special educational needs are fully involved in target setting, monitoring and reviewing their children's progress.

51. Induction meetings are held for new parents. Shortly after children have started school, meetings are held to explain the results of initial assessments (known as baseline) to parents. Once a month, the school hosts a Home-School link session for parents and very young children (eighteen months to four years old). These sessions form a valuable link between school and family, as well as providing an excellent personal development opportunity for the older school pupils who help entertain their very young guests.

52. Parental involvement in school makes a very significant impact on the effectiveness of its work. The school is open enough to seek parents' views on a number of issues concerning its day-to-day work and to listen to responses. For example, parents' views were sought on homework. The resulting replies were analysed and, as a consequence, a helpful booklet on homework, which has yet to be sent to parents, has been produced. Parental expertise is welcomed to supplement the school's provision. Parents assist in classrooms, with information technology and in helping to run the school's impressive range of extracurricular activities. The Parent Teacher Association acts as both a Home-School link and as a very effective fundraiser, particularly for the support of the school swimming pool and minibus.

53. Parental support at home is an important factor in promoting children's learning. Pupils have homework books which parents are asked to examine and sign regularly. Home-School reading records are used effectively throughout the school. Parents were consulted over the terms of the Home-School agreement and a high percentage felt able to sign up to it.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

54. The school has built well on the 'sound' leadership and management identified at the time of the last inspection. It has successfully addressed all areas where improvement was considered necessary.

55. The headteacher, now in his third year in post, provides excellent leadership. He sets a clear direction for the work of the school, based on his vision for the school's development, and on a thorough understanding of the needs of its pupils. He receives very good support from the senior management team, and a committed, hard working staff, who, along with an involved and supportive governing body, share a commitment to providing quality education. This results in the school having a clear set of aims, values and policies that are reflected in its day-to-day life. In line with their stated aims, staff and governors have established a very positive and caring ethos that supports and promotes pupils' learning.

56. Together with the governing body, the headteacher manages the school very well. Day-to-day management and organisation are very good. Roles and responsibilities are now clearly defined, and staff have specific management responsibilities that support the school well.

57. Management of the curriculum is effectively delegated to teaching staff, who take responsibility for co-ordinating a number of subjects or aspects of school life. The school has responded well to the recommendations of the last inspection to clarify and develop the role of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators, with substantial improvement. In addition to being fully involved in planning, resourcing, and evaluating standards that pupils achieve, co-ordinators support the headteacher in regularly monitoring the quality of teaching across the curriculum.

58. There is regular and productive communication between the headteacher and the chair of governors. The governing body is supportive and committed to raising standards. Committees, covering a range of management areas, meet regularly. In addition to discussing subject policies and documents, governors each have oversight of a subject or aspect. Through visiting, observing and working alongside pupils, governors have, collectively, a good understanding of the school's provision for the National Curriculum and the standards pupils achieve.

59. The preparation of the school development plan is well managed, with governors and staff successfully involved. The resulting document is of excellent quality, being very clear and very well structured. It establishes relevant priorities, responsibilities and resource requirements. It clearly states the criteria that will be used to evaluate success. The provision of in-service training associated with the plan's targets, together with those resulting from agreed personal development, is well managed by the headteacher in his capacity as staff development co-ordinator.

60. The governing body meets its statutory obligations fully, including those relating to a daily act of collective worship. The school complies with requirements relating to the Code of Practice for the identification of pupils having special educational needs, and ensures equality of access to the curriculum. The school has a helpful special educational needs policy that conforms with the requirements of the Code of Practice, and informs the management of special educational needs provision. As special educational needs co-ordinator, the headteacher manages special needs very well. He liaises effectively with teachers and support staff, and assists in the writing of pupils' individual education plans.

61. The school is staffed with sufficient, appropriately qualified and experienced teachers to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, religious education, areas of learning for children within the Foundation Stage, and special educational needs. Professional development of staff is linked well to the school development plan and includes training requirements for National Curriculum initiatives, together with areas identified through the school's programme of professional review and development. The school has a satisfactory number of learning support assistants who are well deployed and highly effective, making a

strong impact on standards of attainment. Administrative staff are efficient and contribute to the smooth running of the school.

62. Accommodation is spacious with classrooms of good size to support the delivery of the curriculum. Despite being well organised and sufficiently stocked, the positioning of the school's library inhibits its full use as a learning resource. Reception children's outdoor provision has been improved by the recent addition of a large canopy, and resources for information and communications technology have been much improved since the last inspection. Overall, the school has a good range of resources. The school has good provision for physical education, including hard and grassed play areas, together with a covered, heated swimming pool. The school has successfully developed the use of its grounds for environmental education. This area of study has recently been enhanced with two nearby fields being put at the school's disposal.

63. The standard of financial planning and management, together with that of financial control is good. The last audit of the school's financial management systems, undertaken on behalf of the local authority, found them to be good. It raised very few minor recommendations for improvement. Governors are closely involved in budgetary matters, and all expenditure is carefully targeted and used appropriately. In keeping with the school's good application of the principles of 'best value', all spending decisions are evaluated for cost effectiveness in terms of their impact on the quality of education provided.

64. The school's unit cost per pupil is above average. However, when taking into account: attainment on entry and the good added value in terms of pupils' standards when they leave; the quality of the school as a community and the education it provides; the effective deployment of staff and use of resources, Middle Barton gives good value for money. This marks an improvement on the 'sound' judgement of the last report.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In the context of its many strengths, in order to improve the school further, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- **Develop** further at Key Stage 2, the use of information and communications technology equipment and software to sense, monitor and display physical data, particularly with regard to science investigations.

(Paragraphs: 13, 32, 106, 129.)

- **Investigate** ways in which the library can better fulfil its role as a resource for learning; particularly with regard to the promotion and development of pupils' research skills.

(Paragraphs: 62, 79, 153.)

## **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

### ***Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection***

Number of lessons observed

57
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

27
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### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	32	40	23	0	0	0

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

### **Information about the school's pupils**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	150
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	26
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### **Attendance**

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	11	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	13	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	21	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (86)	96 (91)	92 (91)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	22	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (82)	100 (82)	100 (91)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	16	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	14
	Girls	14	12	16
	Total	23	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (71)	83 (53)	100 (81)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	12	12
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	19	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (66)	83 (67)	83 (88)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	138
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	0	0

*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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	288581
Total expenditure	280034
Expenditure per pupil	1905
Balance brought forward from previous year	27640
Balance carried forward to next year	36187

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

150

Number of questionnaires returned

39

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	33	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	31	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	41	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	41	13	3	0
The teaching is good.	77	21	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	28	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	77	23	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	21	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	28	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	74	21	0	3	0

*Due to rounding percentages may not add up to 100.*

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Several parents wrote letters in support of the school. Together with those who attended the parents' meeting with the Registered Inspector, they commented on the good quality of care and support provided. The findings of the questionnaire reflect the feelings of the parents' meeting in giving strong support for the school. Parents appreciate they are made to feel welcome and value the quality of information given them. They agree the school promotes good standards, values and attitudes. Parents are pleased behaviour is good, that their children enjoy coming to school, and that they make good progress. A small number had concerns regarding the activities set for 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**

66. Currently, ten children are in the reception year of the Foundation Stage. They share a class with pupils in Year 1. Children enter school at the start of the term in which they become five. Nearly all attend the nearby Pre-school group before joining the school. Assessment on entry, shows that whilst nearly all children have attainment in line with that expected for their age, a third achieve levels above the norm. The school makes good provision for its young children. Whilst nearly all children achieve the officially recommended learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, a third of them achieve the expected levels earlier, and enter Key Stage 1 having attainment in reading, writing and mathematics above that expected for their age.

67. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is good. Staff are sensitive to the needs of children in their early years of schooling. They have created a happy, purposeful atmosphere where children settle quickly into the routines of school. Children work together in a friendly and supportive manner, and show respect for each other, adults and visitors. They take part in a variety of self chosen and adult led activities, and handle resources sensibly. Children are well behaved, and sustain concentration well when working. They make sensible choices from the range of activities available, play well with others, share and take turns. Children respond well to adults. They follow instructions, listen carefully to what they are told, and begin activities eagerly. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, and show obvious pleasure in friends' successes as well as their own. They change and dress themselves with increasing speed and ability, and line up and move around the school in a sensible manner. Food technology activities provide children with opportunities for observation, language development and preparation skills, together with an awareness of the importance of washing hands before handling food.

68. Children make good progress in communications, language and literacy. They have many opportunities to speak and listen to adults and to each other, in groups or as a whole class. For example, they listened attentively, and when required, joined in enthusiastically with the story of The Gingerbread Man. At other times, children demonstrate confidence when taking part in discussions and answering questions. Through carefully chosen stories, children begin to recognise an increasing number of words in familiar contexts. They recognise the letters of the alphabet, and associate sounds with them. Several higher attainers confidently read texts from the school's reading scheme, others use picture clues and developing phonic ability to help them enjoy story books. Children develop good book skills. They handle books well. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and the terms 'author' and 'illustrator', correctly explaining what each does. Children carry out 'pretend writing' as part of their activities within their 'Middle Barton Health Centre', where they make lists, record appointments and write down telephone messages. By the end of reception, the majority write simple sentences correctly. They learn the correct way to shape letters and copy examples of writing with increasing control.

69. Mathematical development is good. Children recognise and count numbers to ten, most to 20 and beyond. They sing and play a range of number rhymes and finger games to reinforce understanding. Through a variety of carefully directed activities, children develop their understanding and capability regarding addition and subtraction. They sort objects in a variety of ways: for instance by colour, shape and size; by threading objects and repeating patterns. Children use correct mathematical language for simple shapes, and compare measurements such as more than and less than. They arrange objects in size order, and construct pictograms relating to information they have collected about the class. They then use the completed pictogram for a range of number activities including counting and comparing. Children become familiar with handling and identifying coins, and know the 'o'clock times of the day' that are of significance to them. They develop an awareness of

capacity and volume through daily play tasks with sand and water. In so doing, they use quantitative words such as empty and full.

70. Children make sound, and, on occasions, good progress in developing knowledge and understanding of the world. They talk with interest about their environment, and describe their journey to school. Children observe and discuss weather, and understand why we wear different types of clothes for each season. Their understanding of chronology is helped by observing and discussing a range of family photographs to show different generations, and through drawing simple timelines to illustrate how they have changed since they were babies. Children know parts of the body, and understand that we change as we get older. They explore the texture of different materials, classify objects as living or non-living, natural or man-made. Children investigate the properties of paper and decide which is best for wrapping a parcel. They handle computers with growing confidence and use the keyboard and mouse to control, colour and move items on screen. They use programmable toys to good advantage.

71. Progress in physical development is good. Children make sound progress in their fine manipulative skills. They handle tools, scissors, paintbrushes, construction kits and malleable materials safely, with increasing control. Children run, skip and hop with increasing control. In a dance and drama lesson, they moved and responded well to music as they strode like giants, marched like soldiers, and moved around the hall as other characters in a story narrated by the teacher. In outdoor structured play, children make thoughtful use of a range of equipment to ride, balance and explore. In so doing, they demonstrate growing confidence, together with a willingness to share and take turns. This is an improvement on the last inspection, which found children had insufficient opportunities to use large equipment or work outside regularly.

72. Children make satisfactory progress in creative development. They use a good range of media to draw, paint, print and make models. They create small imaginary environments, and act out scenes in them, exploring ideas and feelings. Children have good opportunities for structured role play. They were observed developing language, number and social skills when enacting the roles of doctor, nurse, receptionist and patient in their 'health centre'. Children enjoy singing songs from memory. They sing enthusiastically, tunefully, and with a sense of rhythm.

73. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage was good or better in all lessons observed, including 29 per cent very good, and a further 14 per cent excellent. All activities are very carefully planned and focus clearly on learning outcomes. Adults use conversation and questions very effectively to draw out children's ideas and develop their confidence. All adults understand the content and desired outcomes of the activities they supervise. This clarity of purpose makes a significant contribution to children's progress and to standards achieved. Expectations of children's performance are suitably high, and a positive classroom ethos creates an environment in which children are encouraged to make progress. The needs of all children are met very well; this includes higher attainers and those with special educational needs. At all times, the teacher and support assistant provide children with very good role models.

74. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is well managed. Very good procedures are in place to support children's induction into school. Children from the nearby Pre-school setting visit regularly to join activities with the reception class. The school organises valuable monthly 'Home-School Link' mornings for children in the locality aged between eighteen months and four years. These morning sessions are very successful, with children engaged in a range of well resourced activities in the school hall, whilst parents exchange information and examine books, stories and other items that can be borrowed for home use. A helpful policy and a recently introduced local authority scheme of work, guides teachers' planning for the six areas of learning. A thorough assessment of children's skills and understanding is carried out during their first half term in school, and this information is used to inform

subsequent planning and teaching. Children's systematic development in learning is aided by detailed record keeping, careful observations and ongoing assessment.

## ENGLISH

75. Results of 1999 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum assessments showed the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in reading was average. The proportion reaching the higher level was above average. In writing, the proportion gaining either the expected or higher levels was well above average. When compared with similar schools, results were average for reading, and well above average for writing. Whilst overall results for 1999 Key Stage 2 assessments were well above national averages, when compared with similar schools, results were average.

76. Results for the year 2000 assessments show standards to have been maintained at Key Stage 1, with further gains made at Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence confirms attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 is above average. This marks an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards at both key stages were average.

77. By the end of both key stages standards of speaking and listening are high. Pupils speak about their interests and experiences confidently. They take turns to speak and they make sure they express themselves so that others can understand. They repeat their statements in a different way to express their intentions clearly. Pupils develop confidence in speaking to an audience during the plenary session of the literacy hour, when reading to an adult, and during discussions about what they have been learning. Pupils pay good attention to instructions from their class teacher and show a great deal of respect for others, as observed in Year 1 and Year 2 when enthusiastic pupils were reminded that it would be their turn next time to share their ideas with the class.

78. Pupils in Year 5 listen attentively and with great interest to their peers when they use their voices to promote an advertisement for chocolate. They evaluated the use of their voices to consider whether their performances had gained and held the audiences' attention. One group used a computer sound program to record their ideas with 'soundbites'. Pupils listened intently when their class teacher read a story. They are exposed to a good range of literature from different cultures. Discussions about moral issues, or types of life styles, such as food from different cultures, or learning that the word 'potato' is of Spanish origin, helps develop pupils' cultural awareness. Teachers' reinforcement of the need to listen carefully at all times helps to establish good habits of listening and contributes positively to pupils achieving good standards. Year 6 pupils adapted their speech and ideas to consider the feelings of the characters within Tennyson's poem 'The Lady of Shallot'. They expressed interesting ideas on how the story might have ended, giving reasons for their choices. They learn to express ideas and feelings clearly and effectively.

79. Attainment in reading is above expectations at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 many pupils read competently and fluently above the expected level. They show good understanding and read with expression. Pupils use phonics and the context of the story as clues to interpret unfamiliar words. They show sound comprehension of meaning and predict likely outcomes for the story. Most pupils recall with accuracy what they have read so far and readily find pages referred to when talking about what they read. Pupils show confidence when reading to an adult and are keen to demonstrate their skills. The school has established a positive ethos for reading and parents are encouraged to participate. Home-School reading records are regularly checked and kept up to date. The comments of parents indicate that they play an important part in the development of pupils' reading achievements. In Key Stage 1 most reading follows a reading scheme, but in Key Stage 2 pupils read from a wide variety of books and show a preference for particular authors or themes: for example in Year 6 reading books include information books and stories on horses, and classics such as 'Treasure Island'. By the time they leave the school pupils read fluently, accurately and with good expression. Regular reading periods enhance reading development and pupils' ability to

locate and retrieve information. However, although the library is accessible to Year 5 and Year 6, it is not used to its full potential by the rest of the school.

80. Attainment in writing is above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress in their ability to write independently. In Key Stage 1 pupils write sentences and short stories using capital letters and full stops correctly. They write accounts of how they would use 'Three Wishes', one pupil wrote, 'To see my grandpa in heaven'. Pupils write for a variety of purposes such as letter writing to Father Christmas and thank you letters for presents received. Throughout the school, pupils have regular handwriting exercises. These have a positive impact on standards achieved. Presentation of written work in both key stages is very good and is a strength of the school. In Key Stage 2 pupils structure sentences correctly and express their ideas clearly. They write creatively when analysing features of well known stories, such as The Iron Man, or Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. Pupils write in a variety of styles and for a range of purposes including poetry, instructions, observations and summaries. Pupils in Year 5 write biographies of someone known to them, and an obituary for the scientist Sir Isaac Newton. They study Macbeth and write a report on his health for the 'Scottish Times'. They use appropriate vocabulary to convey meaning clearly and analyse how words have changed their meaning over time. Pupils study aspects of grammar, and apply what they learn to improve their writing. In their writing they differentiate between fact and fiction, opinion and evidence. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support given to them by classroom assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils have good keyboard skills and often word process their work.

81. The quality of teaching was good or better in 88 per cent of lessons observed. Of these, 63 per cent were very good, and 13 per cent excellent. Where teaching is good, teachers use their subject knowledge well and use firsthand experience to stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm to enhance learning. This was clearly demonstrated in one lesson when the teacher used games and role play to stimulate and promote learning. Her enthusiasm was transmitted to pupils who in turn were keen to record their own reactions. Work is well planned across year groups and carefully matched to pupils' needs so that they understand what they are doing. Pupils find tasks demanding, but they have achievable goals. Teachers explain the learning objectives at the beginning of each lesson so pupils know what they are going to learn by the end of the lesson.

82. Pupils are managed well. Teachers apply behaviour strategies consistently and quietly and they achieve high standards of behaviour, creating an atmosphere where pupils concentrate and learn effectively. Very good questioning techniques are employed to assess pupils' levels of understanding, to reinforce previous learning and to extend ideas. In shared reading lessons all teachers recap on what has happened so far before moving on to the next section. Teachers use the good supply of resources for literacy effectively. For example, 'Big Books' enable whole class reading that helps the less able to increase their reading skills by participating with others. In all classes, teachers make provision for pupils to use information and communications technology to enhance learning, as was seen in Year 2, when pupils used software to 'cut and paste' in order to sequence a series of sentences correctly.

83. All pupils do homework regularly in the form of set reading tasks and work related to classroom exercises. This is effective in extending pupils' knowledge beyond the classroom and involving parents at home. Where teaching is less than good the expectations of teachers are not always sufficiently challenging; objectives are not as clearly focused and some pupils are not stretched to achieve the standards of which they are capable.

84. Since the last inspection improvements have been made in several areas. The quality of teaching has improved. Teaching is now good rather than sound overall, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Although there are isolated examples where pupils are not sufficiently challenged, there has been overall improvement in the standard of work demanded of pupils, particularly the more able. The procedures for assessment to inform planning are now good and individual targets are set.

85. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy, and this is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Literacy skills are used across the curriculum. For example, vocabulary is developed well in science and extended writing is used well, as in Year 6, when pupils convey ideas of what it was like to live during World War II. Pupils are given an exercise in their history lesson to punctuate, so that they reinforce their literacy skills as well as getting a clear understanding of the passage. Those in Year 3 select appropriate descriptive words to describe weather and landscape conditions.

86. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for developing the subject and a firm commitment to raising standards. All staff, including support staff, have received training in the implementation of the literacy strategy. Clear and helpful documentation is in place to support teachers' planning for the required curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. Results of 1999 end of Key Stage 1 assessments, showed that whilst the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level matched the national average, the proportion gaining the higher level was above average. When compared with similar schools, results were below average. Key Stage 1 assessments for the year 2000 show similar results.

88. End of Key Stage 2 assessments for 1999, showed the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level to be well above the national average. The proportion reaching the higher level was average. When compared with similar schools, results were average. Results of year 2000 assessments for eleven year olds, showed a higher proportion gaining the expected level, whilst the proportion gaining the higher level was almost double that of the previous year. This is a marked improvement. For the last two years, the school has surpassed the targets set for end of Key Stage 2 assessments. This reflects the overall trend in recent years for rising standards in mathematics at both key stages. Inspection evidence confirms standards for pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 to be above average. The planned curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and provides good provision for pupils' moral and social development.

89. Improvements in the achievements of the most able pupils are a testament to the work the school has carried out in addressing the issue from the last inspection that, 'higher attaining pupils are not working in levels appropriate to their ability'. Very good daily plans show teachers are considering all levels of ability within their classes, and providing suitable work to extend learning for all groups. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets set for them in their individual education plans.

90. Following a good start in the Foundation Stage, pupils in Key Stage 1 make sound progress with their usage and application of mathematical knowledge. In Year 1 they gain a command of mathematical terms and use signs and symbols appropriately. They solve problems, find patterns in numbers and make sensible suggestions for the next number in a series. In Year 2 they use terms such as highest, lowest, above and below with accuracy and point to patterns of odd and even numbers in a hundred square. Pupils study problems associated with their playground and some of the higher attaining pupils can pick out the mathematical operation needed to solve the problem. Having been given the relevant information, pupils in Year 6 solve real life problems associated with money or measurements. Work on the calendar showed pupils looking carefully at numbers in order to pick out interesting patterns.

91. The school has used the National Numeracy Strategy well in order to support steady improvement in number work. Pupils in Year 2 order to 100, with a good number of higher attaining pupils able to order to 1000. They recognise coins and calculate amounts of money they might get in change. In the initial parts of numeracy lessons, where pupils are working on mental ability and agility, responses are quick and accurate. Pupils count in tens both forward and backwards and many show halves and quarters on shapes. Progress through

Key Stage 2 is good, with most pupils making good gains in their knowledge and understanding of number. Pupils order fractions and decimals to thousandths, they understand multiples, square numbers and factors and have carried out good work with negative numbers. They have used simple algebra to calculate longer mathematical statements.

92. Seven year olds have a good understanding of shape, space and measurement. They describe two and three-dimensional shapes using correct terms such as angle, solid and face. A good number of pupils use the recognised formula to calculate the area of a triangle. They have good measuring skills, showing an ability to measure lengths accurately. Pupils measure objects in centimetres and understand units of measure for both weight and capacity. Many explain why a shape is symmetrical and can complete the other half of a symmetrical pattern. By Year 6 pupils measure angles to a tolerance of one degree and have opportunities of drawing items to scale.

93. Work in data handling is good with younger pupils seen sorting objects by shape or colour. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are recording their data in simple ways using pictures and symbols, occasionally presenting them in formats such as simple graphs. By the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils have reached a level of good understanding of how to present their data using information technology. Good examples are seen in Year 6 of data being presented in a variety of ways, making use of a variety of programs.

94. The quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons observed. Eighty-nine per cent were good or better, including 22 per cent very good. This shows a very clear improvement in teaching since the last inspection. This has been brought about by a number of factors: the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has supported teachers well; planning for mathematics is very good; and teachers have been able to attend courses in the subject. These factors, together with the monitoring of teaching by the co-ordinator, have led to standards rising.

95. Nearly all teachers share the objectives for lessons with pupils. This gives a clear idea of the purpose of the lesson and allows pupils to be part of the evaluation of their own learning at the end of the session. Where they are better involved, pupils' attitudes to learning improve. Through well planned activities for a range of ability groups within classes, pupils' interests are aroused and they concentrate well on tasks over good periods of time. In all lessons, the management skills of teachers were good and occasionally very good. As a result very little time was wasted, having a positive impact on progress made in lessons. Through good relationships and well focused tasks, pupils are happier to work at activities with little thought of misbehaving. Teachers move around groups well in class and give good support by engaging pupils in questions, supporting those in need, and gaining good assessment information. Whilst on most occasions, all adults are deployed effectively, in a small number of instances, support staff sit in with the class during the first part of the lesson and have little real involvement in the work. The standard of marking in mathematics is good, with marking for Years 4 to 6 very good. Pupils are given appreciative comments on their work, together with clear indications of what they must do to improve. There is good evidence that homework supports work in class and has a positive effect on the progress pupils make.

96. Numeracy skills are applied well across the curriculum. Timelines are used well in history topics. From these, pupils can gain the idea of chronology. Work in science is often supported by numeracy skills as pupils create graphs and record their findings during investigations. In design and technology, pupils use numeracy skills as they measure, mark and cut materials accurately for their projects. Some classroom displays, however, are a little disappointing in the lack of emphasis devoted to this important area of work.

97. The subject co-ordinator manages the subject well. He has led the staff in reviewing and improving provision and standards in mathematics. Part of the improvements has come from a close examination of results in a variety of tests over time, examining where weaknesses were and of putting in measures to improve. Work with higher attaining pupils is

showing good results in the most recent tests. Investigational work in mathematics has benefited from the school's emphasis to improve this aspect. A clear and helpful policy, together with a thorough scheme of work, supports teachers in planning the step-by-step progression of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school.

## **SCIENCE**

98. Results of teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, showed the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level was very high, consistent with the top five per cent of schools nationally. The proportion gaining the higher level was above average. The same outcomes are obtained when comparing results with similar schools. End of Key Stage 2 assessments showed overall results to be very high, within the performance levels of the top five per cent of schools nationally. They were equally high when compared with similar schools.

99. Results of the most recent end of key stage assessments for 2000 show that the school has maintained its high standards at both key stages. Inspection evidence confirms that for the present group of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, attainment is above average. In both key stages, investigative science is taught very well. Pupils observe, experiment, predict and use the skills of scientific enquiry effectively. They observe well at first hand, record their findings and, in Key Stage 2, offer well informed and reasoned explanations of what they have seen, and for the outcomes of their investigations.

100. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the features of living things, understand that different species of animals are found in different locations and habitats, and know how the changing seasons affect lifestyles. Through conducting investigations, pupils develop a good understanding of their senses, and their importance in everyday life. Pupils know and name parts of the human body, and understand the basic structure of plants. Across the key stage, pupils work confidently with a range of materials, which they classify according to a range of criteria, correctly using vocabulary such as flexible, rigid, opaque, translucent and transparent. Pupils demonstrate their understanding of living and non living things, of natural and man made objects, together with how the shape of certain materials can be changed. They understand the use of electricity, construct circuits, and draw them correctly. Pupils have a good understanding of what makes a test 'fair'. In each activity, as when investigating the best material with which to repair a leaking bucket, pupils devise a number of ways to ensure the enquiry is undertaken in a fair manner.

101. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have built effectively on previous knowledge. They have a clear understanding of the major body systems and organs. Pupils study food chains, and know what constitutes a healthy diet. They investigate the most suitable materials for insulation, and study the work of levers, noting the effect that changing the position of the pivot has in terms of ease of movement and energy required. Pupils understand that certain materials change shape and state when heated, and that whilst in some cases the process is reversible, on other occasions it is not. Well focused activities enable pupils to understand saturated solutions and evaporation, and discover which materials are soluble or insoluble. Pupils carefully research the effect that changing the weight of the pendulum has on the time it takes to swing a given distance. They understand the effects of air resistance on falling objects. Pupils' clear understanding of friction and gravity as forces was demonstrated to good effect when pupils in Year 6 undertook experiments to test their hypotheses as to the part road surfaces and speed have in road accidents. They devised a series of investigations involving model cars and different surfaces, and stopping distances. Several pupils undertook computer generated time/reflex tests to support their understanding of stopping distances. Pupils develop an understanding of electrical circuits through making, then investigating, electromagnets. Pupils conduct activities concerning sound, explaining how we come to hear vibrations.

102. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both key stages. There is clear progression in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they

move through the school. Progress is particularly good in scientific enquiry. The school focuses on this aspect to good effect. By the end of Year 6, pupils' ability to plan, organise and carry out their work, is much above average.

103. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm, sustain concentration for good periods of time, and become thoroughly involved in what they are doing. They collaborate well during investigations and handle equipment with care. Pupils benefit from opportunities to find things out for themselves, and to make decisions based on observations.

104. The school has successfully promoted the status of science through many interesting activities that involve pupils across the school. Such activities include participation in the National Science Week, and working on the Wild Waste Show. Pupils benefited from a visit by representatives of the Natural History Museum who worked with them. A particularly noteworthy feature of the school's development is in the work related to environmental science. Having already successfully set up areas within the school grounds, the school has recently been given the use of two nearby fields for such work.

105. Teaching is judged to be good or better in all lessons observed, including 20 per cent very good. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. Staff plan a sequence of activities with clear learning objectives that challenge all pupils. A particular feature of the good practice observed is the use of open ended questions to elicit responses and prompt further inquiry. Specific vocabulary is introduced and used well. Good support is given to all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and praise good efforts. Teachers' assessment of what pupils know and can do is thorough. Data from assessments is used to help modify curriculum provision. Staff make effective use of day-to-day assessment to help plan what is to be taught next. A portfolio of pupils' work across the science curriculum provides teachers with further support in their assessment of pupils' attainment.

106. The planned curriculum meets statutory requirements and often acts as a stimulus for other areas of the curriculum, including observational drawing and writing. It plays an important part in helping develop pupils' skills of speaking, listening and questioning, together with aspects of numeracy. Whilst good use is made of computer technology to present and illustrate the results of investigations, the school has yet to develop the use of information and communications technology to sense, monitor and display evidence within investigations.

107. The co-ordinator gives good direction for science. A clear and helpful policy, together with a thorough scheme of work provides effective support for staff in their planning. Good resources, which include a garden and conservation areas, make a positive impact on pupils' learning.

## **ART**

108. Across the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory, and, on occasions, good progress. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment meets national expectations. The school has maintained the standards noted at the last inspection.

109. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a good sense of shape, composition and colour, as shown through paintings of sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. They gain an awareness of line in drawing skills, using pencil and charcoal. In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to develop basic skills, experimenting with colour, as when painting landscapes and abstract compositions. Pupils develop close observational skills using pencil and charcoal. Less well developed is the use of clay and fabrics. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use information technology to produce abstract colour compositions of a good standard. A strength of art is pupils'

developing knowledge and understanding of the work of well known artists. For example, pupils produce drawings in the style of Escher, Hockney and Klee. As part of their studies on Dali and the surrealist group, pupils in Year 6 discuss the background to one of his paintings, share their ideas in a collective interpretation of the painting and use the Internet to research for further information.

110. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some lessons being very good and one excellent. Lessons are well planned with appropriate activities provided for pupils. Both classroom management and relationships with pupils are very good. Teaching is best where teachers feel confident with the subject matter, as when they show pupils how to use graphite pencils or charcoal to produce line and tone. Teachers use art in other subjects to help improve learning. For example, when pupils write their own poems or stories, they illustrate them as well. Calligraphy is used to improve handwriting skills. These lessons are well researched by teachers with the consequence that pupils make considerable progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding. Work is accurately assessed, and pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and each other's work. This has improved since the previous report.

111. Pupils enjoy art lessons, work hard and take a pride in their work. Pupils make a positive contribution to their own learning. Behaviour is very good and pupils work co-operatively, sharing and exploring ideas.

112. The good display of art work throughout the school is a testimony to the breadth of the curriculum. There are effective links with other subjects: for example clay pot and painted plate designs linked with pupils' study of Ancient Greece; design work linking with mathematics and drawings, representative of a visit to Blenheim Palace linking with the Year 6 history topic. Display celebrates pupils' achievement very well. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although art from non-Western cultures is limited.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. Only one design and technology lesson was observable during the inspection. Evidence drawn from a review of pupils' work and teachers' planning, confirms that at Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress, and, by the end of the key stage, attain standards in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2, and, by the time they leave the school, at the end of Year 6, attainment is above expectation. This marks an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards met national expectations at the end of both key stages. The planned curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs play their full part in all activities, and make satisfactory, and on occasions, good progress in terms of prior attainment.

114. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils discuss ideas and use drawings to help work them out. They have a clear understanding of the sequence of planning, designing, making and evaluating the finished product. When designing their 'moving pictures', pupils used a well prepared sheet on which they wrote down the materials they would use, and step-by-step instructions on how they would proceed. On completion of the task, they noted what they liked best about their product, together with how it might be improved. Pupils successfully design and make calendars and Easter cards. They study the use of wheels on a range of models before designing and making their own wheeled vehicles. They take apart and investigate old shirts, noting the parts used in their making, and how they are joined. Pupils then design and make their own version of 'Joseph's coat of many colours', and a cape for a rabbit. Throughout the key stage, pupils are introduced to a satisfactory range of materials, and are given good opportunities to learn appropriate uses for each.

115. Key Stage 2 pupils build well on what they have learnt earlier. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a thorough understanding of the design and making process, through to

thoughtful evaluation. The integration of design and technology into other subjects is impressive. As part of their work on Ancient Egypt, pupils apply their understanding of forces to design and construct a cask for an Egyptian mummy that is opened by a pneumatic system. Whilst undertaking work on Roman Britain, pupils research mosaics, then plan and make their own Millennium Mosaic. Pupils use their understanding of electrical circuits to good advantage when designing and making a quiz board that lights up when the correct answer is given. As part of 'Police Week', pupils successfully undertook a design task requiring them to make police epaulettes. Pupils investigate a range of domed structures, including the covering of their swimming pool, before embarking on their own noteworthy structures made from materials including metal, wood and card.

116. In both key stages, a good range of food technology activities provides pupils with opportunities to practise food preparation skills, develop subject specific language, and discuss issues of hygiene. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the tasks they have undertaken, and clearly enjoy the activities provided for them.

117. Teaching in the only lesson observed was judged to be very good. Successful teaching was characterised by very clear explanations and good use of questioning that ensured pupils had a clear understanding of their task. Emphasis was placed on correct technical terms, and all pupils were suitably challenged. This resulted in pupils being engrossed in their activities, working sensibly and co-operatively in pairs and groups.

118. The subject is managed well. Teachers benefit from a useful policy and a scheme of work incorporating recent National Curriculum guidance. This documentation supports planning, and ensures the subject is covered in a thorough and sequential manner. Class teachers undertake ongoing assessment of pupils' understanding and performance in respect of specific skills. The school has a satisfactory range of resources that are used effectively throughout.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

119. Geography and history alternate each half term throughout the school and form the main focus of regular, well organised topic work. At the time of the inspection, history was not being taught. Evidence based on lesson observations for geography, together with review of pupils' work, photographic evidence and teachers' planning in both subjects, confirms that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. At the end of each key stage, attainment for both subjects meets national expectations. Overall standards are similar to those noted at the time of the last inspection, with higher attaining pupils now making better gains in knowledge, skills and understanding, as work is more closely matched to their needs.

120. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the countries which comprise the United Kingdom. They show simple mapping skills by drawing a plan of their classroom. They bring postcards back from holidays and mark places visited on a map of the world. In a Year 1 and 2 class, pupils were observed directing a programmable toy around a route, whilst others made a map of the route which Rosie the hen would have taken in a story book. Older pupils in the class set routes around the school, using such terms as 'walk diagonally', for their classmates to follow. Pupils in this key stage take a walk around the village and note many geographical features, which they draw, photograph and write about in class. Later they have the opportunity to walk around the village of Hook Norton, showing their route on a map and making comparisons between the two places. Pupils recognise at least four points of the compass, and use their numeracy skills when noting and charting weather conditions.

121. At the end of the key stage, pupils' understanding of historical investigation is sound. Emphasis is placed on visits and visitors, in order to improve pupils' practical experiences and investigative skills, considered to be underemphasised at the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils become historical 'detectives' as they search the school buildings looking for evidence of change. They handle photographic evidence, the school log book, and question

adults about changes. They gain a clear understanding of chronology as they create their own family timelines with both photographs and writing. In a study about Robin Hood, pupils understand that historical information can vary depending upon the views of the writer. They study famous historical figures such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille, and learn about their contribution to life.

122. By the end of Year 6, pupils' geographical studies of erosion, the course of a river and the seashore, enable pupils to understand the influence of physical conditions on the shape of the land. They use Ordnance Survey maps in which they apply their numeracy skills to understand symbols, distances, co-ordinates and scales. They carry out a local study, concentrating their attention on land use in the surrounding area. Books created during and after their residential visits to such places as Conway, are very well presented and illustrate how much pupils have learned. Through the information provided for their study of an Indian village, pupils are able to challenge many stereotypical beliefs. In the same topic, pupils gain much in terms of social, moral and cultural development. This occurs as they study child labour, Indian customs and family life.

123. Work in history at Key Stage 2 is enhanced by many visits to museums and by visits from two curators from the Roman museum at Cirencester. The work is enlivened with photographs and genuine artefacts for pupils to handle, including clothes to be worn. Pupils write clear descriptions about Boudicca and the arrival of the Celts, and make effective use of their literacy skills. Other topics include work on famous people such as Pasteur and Newton. Once again, pupils' social and cultural development is supported well by the subject as pupils review Roman family life, dress and worship.

124. Work in both subjects extends pupils' use of literacy and numeracy and gives them sound opportunities to use computer skills as they search CD Rom, watch videos, and use word processing programs to write their work. The standard of presentation of all topic work is high.

125. Good use is made of homework to support geography and history, with holiday topics being set on specific subjects. Once again standards here are good, with some pupils making good use of their own computers to enhance the visual quality of their work.

126. The quality of teaching observed in geography was good overall, with one lesson being very good. All lessons are well planned ensuring that work is planned for all abilities in the class. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it well to teach geographical skills and knowledge. Pupils are managed very well, enabling them to make maximum use of lesson time. They respond well, concentrate on their work, share resources sensibly and enjoy the brisk pace of lessons.

127. One minor weakness noted is that pupils are often given all the research material they require during a lesson. As a result, they have insufficient opportunities to find their own material from the library and are not fully developing their research skills. The subject co-ordinator has worked closely with the humanities advisory teacher in producing new schemes of work for both subjects, but has not yet had time to see the schemes in action and monitor the work of her colleagues.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

128. Limited direct teaching of information and communications technology was seen during the inspection. However, observation of pupils at work, review of teachers' planning and records, together with scrutiny of work, confirms that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory, and on occasions, good progress, and, by the end of both key stages, standards meet national expectations. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision for information and communications technology, and has a good ratio of computers to pupils. The school has successfully addressed the requirement of the last inspection to develop the use of information technology across the curriculum.

129. At both key stages, pupils experience keyboard and mouse operated control systems. Across the school, pupils operate tape recorders to listen to pre-recorded stories and music and to record items themselves. Pupils in Key Stage 1 understand the importance of switches, buttons and keys in operating functions of basic household items. Those at Key Stage 2 clearly appreciate the importance of computer technology, and our increasing reliance on it for many aspects of everyday life. Whilst pupils cover all requirements of the National Curriculum, the school has yet to develop the use of equipment and software in Key Stage 2, to sense, monitor and display physical data relating to science investigations.

130. Computers are in operation for much of the day, providing pupils with good opportunities to develop their communication technology skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils' word processing skills enable them to combine graphics and text. Pupils alter size and position of objects on screen, applying skills well to their clear understanding of programs used. By Year 6, pupils draft, edit, alter size and style of letters, save and print work. A good example of the application of these skills is in the production of books by pupils in Year 6. In addition to giving well presented and interesting information about activities from their residential trip, they include photographs imported from digital cameras or scanned from conventional photographs. Text handling skills are used well in other subjects, including history and geography, to present work. Pupils successfully apply their computer skills when using CD based encyclopaedic programs to support learning in other subjects. As part of their studies on 'Water', pupils in Year 6 access the Internet to gain information on water pollution. In Year 5, pupils research approved Internet sites to gain suitable illustrations for the travel brochures they design on India. Others access and use Internet programs to investigate how quickly they respond to computer generated sights and sounds. Pupils use electronic mail for the interchange of information. During the inspection, pupils were observed sending and receiving communications as far afield as Kenya. At both key stages, effective use is made of commercial programs for pupils to design, draw and paint on screen.

131. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to investigate control technology. At Key Stage 1, pupils use a programmable toy to enter directions for it to follow. Such activities reinforce pupils' understanding of direction, angles and distance, as well as developing skills associated with writing sequenced commands for the toy to follow. At Key Stage 2, pupils operate logo style programs to devise and draw repeat instructions. Many of their shapes and designs are successfully incorporated within other art work.

132. In addition to basic numeracy activities, pupils in both key stages make good use of computers for data collection and handling. In Key Stage 1, pupils gather and illustrate a range of information in graph format, before answering questions related to the graphs they produce. In Key Stage 2 pupils make effective use of spreadsheets and graphs to collate and calculate, and illustrate investigations. Work undertaken includes research into the running costs of electrical appliances over time, evaluating the savings made through bulk purchasing, and whether gains are really made when purchasing goods that appear to be the cheapest.

133. Pupils clearly enjoy information and communications technology activities, and are eager to apply their developing skills. When using such technology, pupils at all stages display awe and wonder when computers and toys follow their commands. They work sensibly, either by themselves or in pairs, treating resources with care. Teaching in the few lessons observed was good. Teachers are secure in subject knowledge and provide pupils with clear and effective explanations and demonstrations. Praise is used well to encourage and motivate pupils. Class organisation and management are good. This results in pupils knowing exactly what to do, where and when. At all times, when pupils require assistance, adults' responses demonstrate confident expertise.

134. In addition to a well presented and thorough portfolio of pupils' work across the required curriculum, regular assessment of pupils' achievements lead to pupils being set termly targets on an individual basis. Examples of pupils' work are kept within each pupil's

Record of Achievement file. This provides an effective form of ongoing assessment. The subject is managed well by a co-ordinator who provides effective support for her colleagues. In addition to a useful policy, a clear scheme of work, incorporating recent National Curriculum guidance, assists in planning the step-by-step progression in pupils' learning.

## **MUSIC**

135. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment meets national expectations in music. The range of opportunities provided for pupils enhances both their personal and spiritual development. Music is used in assemblies and religious education to create a special mood and contributes to pupils' good listening skills.

136. The quality of singing, from both boys and girls, is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils sing enthusiastically in music lessons and in assemblies. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a wide singing range, pitching higher notes with accuracy and producing a well rounded vocal tone. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils successfully hold an independent vocal line when singing in two part harmony. Regular opportunities provided by class teachers for singing during lessons, further develop pupils' musical confidence. For instance, special needs pupils were heard learning the letters of the alphabet through singing a catchy song, and all pupils sing hymns in assembly. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils successfully integrate musical accompaniments into songs. They improve rhythmic and melodic ideas that effectively match given moods. They successfully understand concepts such as pitch, duration and texture, although they do not use these words with confidence when discussing music. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop well controlled playing and listening skills. Pupils in Year 6 reproduce the underlying rhythmic beat contained in the African songs they sing. They recognise that beats are usually organised into metres and know the duration of the beats in a bar. They play correctly a range of tuned and untuned instruments. More able pupils are successfully challenged through being given harder melodic parts on pitched percussion. Other pupils, including those with special educational needs, play simpler parts, using non-pitched instruments.

137. Pupils' attitudes to learning, together with behaviour are very good. Pupils enjoy lessons, contribute very well to practical sessions, and listen attentively to music played to them. They confidently express views and opinions about the music they hear. They use equipment safely and sensibly, and return items to their proper place at the end of lessons. Pupils work well in small groups as they prepare compositions and performances, such as the musical end of term concerts.

138. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make good use of a commercial scheme to involve pupils in a range of activities drawn from National Curriculum programmes of study. The good staff development programme has enabled the quality of teaching to improve since the previous inspection. Good use of available instruments, including chime bars, cymbals, rainsticks and maracas, provides practical learning opportunities that are informative and fun. The range of multicultural instruments is put to full use. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to listen to classical, jazz and modern works, but there is limited work comparing the differences between music from other cultures. Teachers have realistic expectations of pupils, encouraging a discriminating response to heard music, and a thoughtful use of available resources in composition and performance work. Very good relationships between staff and pupils, and a positive ethos in lessons promote good progress. Whilst teachers' ongoing assessment is effective, the limited amount of written work carried out by pupils makes evaluation of notation difficult.

139. There is a range of extracurricular activities and visiting instrumental teachers for string and woodwind. Pupils are involved in the community through the Partnership Music Group. Musically ambitious pupils and special needs pupils have good opportunities to extend their potential by performing in the school's concerts and shows.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. Evidence from lessons observed, together with discussions with teachers, confirms the subject has maintained its position since the last report in that, pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education as they move through the school. At the end of both key stages, pupils' performance is in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs play a full part in all activities and make sound progress. All pupils understand the importance of warming up at the start of lessons, and of cooling down at the end.

141. When working in the hall or on the playground, pupils at Key Stage 1 make good use of space, and show an awareness of those around them as they move with good control of speed and direction. They run, hop and skip with agility and enthusiasm. Pupils respond well to music. When the hall becomes a toyshop in which the toys become alive, pupils move well to the music as it depicts each toy. Several demonstrate good facial gestures as they become really involved in their work. In outdoor lessons, pupils work well with a partner to throw and catch a beanbag with increasing control and accuracy. They work well in larger groups when throwing around the circle. Pupils concentrate on height and speed of throw, together with the correct positioning of hands.

142. Pupils at Key Stage 2 build well on the skills they have learnt earlier. In gymnastics lessons, pupils work well by themselves to devise, then hold, balanced positions, which they then turn into a sequence with a smooth transition from one held balance to the next. Most pupils show clear start and finish positions to their sequence. They work equally well with partners to devise and demonstrate balance sequences. Nearly all pupils showed appropriate control and tension in their moves. In outdoor activities, pupils were observed developing skills associated with netball and rugby. They demonstrated sound technique in netball when working in pairs and small groups to practise receiving, pivoting and passing. In 'New Image Rugby', pupils showed good skills to pass, receive and carry the ball whilst on the move. They quickly learnt and demonstrated the correct method to 'touch tackle'. Pupils successfully applied their skills when participating in small games situations. All had a clear understanding of the rules imposed on their games, and adhered to them well.

143. Throughout the summer term, pupils benefit from swimming in the school's pool. Those in Years 4 and 5 gain experience of swimming in deeper water at a local swimming pool. It is reported that by the time they leave the school, the majority can swim the required 25 metres. Good arrangements are made for pupils' outdoor adventurous activities. They are provided through various field trips, together with several residential visits. Through nationally recognised schemes, pupils have opportunities to gain personal awards for their performances in gymnastics and athletics. Throughout the year, several after school clubs are held for interested pupils.

144. Pupils have positive attitudes to physical education. They enjoy physical activities and co-operate well in groups and pairs. They listen carefully to instructions, concentrate well, respond quickly and work sensibly. Pupils take pride in demonstrating to the rest of the class, and appreciate the efforts of others. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to evaluate the performance of others, stating aspects they feel to be successful, and where improvements can be made.

145. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons observed, including 20 per cent good, and 20 per cent very good. Lessons show a clear development of skills and activities. A common strength was the importance placed on drawing attention to pupils' good or praiseworthy attempts. In all lessons observed, teachers had high expectations, both of performance and behaviour. Appropriate emphasis is placed on safety issues, particularly with regard to the movement and use of apparatus. Support staff make a positive contribution in their support of pupils who require assistance to develop new skills.

146. The subject is well managed. A clear and useful policy, together with a scheme of work, supports teachers' planning for the development of pupils' skills across each element of the required physical education curriculum. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

147. By the end of each key stage, pupils' attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when standards at Key Stage 2 were below expectations. The school has successfully addressed the issue of complying with the agreed syllabus. Work in religious education supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development very well.

148. At Key Stage 1, pupils engage in a number of aspects of learning from and about religion. They study stories of the Creation, and become acquainted with Bible stories such as Noah, David and Goliath and the Easter story. They study festivals in other religions including the Islamic celebrations of 'eids', and the Jewish celebration of the Seder meal. They know about the Shabbat meal and how important the Sabbath is to the Jewish culture. When studying places of worship, they have opportunities to visit local churches and Coventry Cathedral. Pupils review pictures and discuss how a mosque is in some respects similar to a church, but in others very different. Good support is given to religious education by the various acts of collective worship. In the first assembly of the week, pupils gained much knowledge of the festival of Sukkot and helped build a sukkah in assembly.

149. At Key Stage 2, pupils explore a range of Bible stories, including the story of Jonah, the widow's mite, and study Christ's teaching about material possessions. A recent visit to the Millennium Dome gave pupils access to the 'Spirit Zone' providing them with much food for thought. Pupils wrote about their experiences following the visit. Pupils discuss the meaning of worship and relate that to their work on Judaism, Christianity and Islam. A visit to a nearby church helps pupils to understand symbolism in a Christian place of worship, whilst discussion about Islamic art gives good support to cultural development. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced by discussions on the meaning of worship and work concerning Remembrance Sunday.

150. Of lessons observed, three-quarters were judged to be good, with the remainder satisfactory. In one successful lesson at Key Stage 2, pupils thoughtfully discussed the question, "Where is God?" Here, the good teaching was matched well by the quality of pupils' responses. Pupils entered into discussion on a very difficult area of belief with enthusiasm. Their work was improved by the sensitive and empathetic way in which the teacher supported them. Through good planning and well chosen tasks the teacher enabled pupils to experience stillness and calm so that they could make contact with inner thoughts, which they later expressed through discussion and writing. In this instance the good spiritual and personal development arose from the religious education content and was not superseded by it. Pupils' response to the religious elements of collective worship is good. Pupils are eager to contribute to discussions, enter freely into prayer and often make good use of moments given to reflection.

151. Whilst very little work on display in the school related directly to the agreed syllabus, many experiences supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development arose from pupils' work. Displays in Years 1 and 2 touched on the importance of families, but did not make strong enough connections with the family of Jesus or the Christian family.

152. Pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills in religious education. Pupils in Key Stage 1 wrote a 'thank you' prayer for Harvest and completed captions for drawings showing the seven days of the Creation. They wrote lists of books in both Old and New Testaments and compared the Muslim and Jewish faiths in special books, clothing and acts of prayer that they both use. In Key Stage 2 the use of literacy skills is further evidenced

through pupils' work on the Torah scrolls, their writing about the meaning of worship, together with the collection of information from parents about their values and things they hold dear.

153. Recent work by the subject co-ordinator and the governor who supports religious education, has provided the subject with good impetus for development. As yet, there has not been sufficient time to evaluate its success through classroom observations. A series of assessments are now in use in the school and good records of work and standards are kept. Further emphasis is now needed in providing pupils with opportunities to undertake research tasks, not only through information and communications technology, but through use of the library; the position of which sometimes poses problems for this purpose.