

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTH KIDLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kidlington, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123025

Headteacher: Paul Rhodes

Lead inspector: Michael J Cahill

Dates of inspection: 7 - 9 June 2004

Inspection number: 257041

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	311
School address:	Benmead Road Kidlington Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX5 2DA
Telephone number:	01865 372607
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Tony Leake

Date of previous inspection: 27 April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the north of Kidlington, a very large village a little north of Oxford. It serves a well-established area of mainly private housing; children from other, smaller, villages also attend. The school is of larger than average size, with 294 full-time pupils taught in 12 classes. A further 13 pupils attend an Early Years class part-time.

The vast majority of pupils are from white British families; nevertheless the percentage of pupils whose first language is not/believed not to be English is higher than in most schools. The school recognises and values this diversity. Attainment on entry varies from year to year in terms of the proportions of higher attaining children and those with special educational needs; overall it is average. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average; the proportion with a statement of special educational need is about average. As well as a range of learning difficulties, the special educational needs in the school include social, emotional and behavioural, physical and autistic, visual impairment needs. The school gained Investor in People status in 2003 and the FA Charter in 2004.

Two teachers were absent because of illness during the inspection and their classes were taken by very competent temporary teachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19623	Michael Cahill	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Music
9334	Jenny Mynett	Lay inspector	
11901	Pat Lowe	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Religious education English Geography History
32287	Mary Clennett	Team inspector	Foundation stage Information and communication technology Art Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school that provides very good value for money. Leadership and management are very good, overall, with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher providing a very strong lead, especially in teaching and learning, curriculum planning, assessment and target setting. Pupils achieve well in attaining standards that are above the national average; most pupils leave Year 6 well on the road to becoming life-long learners.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good leadership and management have created a very well run school where aspirations for pupils' achievement are high.
- Pupils' attainment in Year 6 is above average, overall, and well above national expectations in information and communication technology (ICT).
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is high and most pupils develop very positive views of themselves as successful young learners; they achieve well.
- The curriculum is stimulating and meets pupils' needs very well; it is enriched by the extensive use of ICT resources and by a wide range of extra activities.
- Pupils benefit from the level of care and support that they receive and from the very strong links with the local community and other schools and colleges.
- There is a strong partnership with parents; some feel that they will be better able to support their children's learning if they receive more mid-year information.

There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection, for example in respect of the procedures whereby co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. The school has improved its provision for children in the Foundation Stage and the overall quality of teaching and learning is higher.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	C	C
mathematics	D	E	C	C
science	B	E	D	D

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

Over the last five years, national test results for pupils in Year 2 have improved in reading and mathematics so that they are above the national average, in writing they are average. Standards in the present Year 2 are average in English, mathematics and science and above expectations in ICT, religious education, art and design, history and physical education. Results in Year 6 have been broadly in line with the national trend over the five-year period but better than it over the past three years. Inspection evidence indicates that this upward trend is continuing with standards securely in line with the national average for mathematics and above in English and science. In 2003, the school surpassed the target agreed with the local education authority for the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving Level 4 in mathematics and narrowly failed to do so in English. In science, although over 90 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4, fewer than expected achieved Level 5. In the subjects inspected at Year 6, standards are above expectations in art and design, history, religious education and physical education and well above in ICT.

Pupils' achievement is good overall, although there are currently variations between age groups to which staffing difficulties beyond the school's control have contributed. Children make a good start in the well-planned and organised Early Years Unit and achieve well across the areas of learning so that they are well prepared to enter Year 1. This good achievement is maintained, overall, as pupils move up the school, developing a good range of learning skills and producing work that is often of very good quality.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are promoted very well. The very good provision for promoting pupils' personal development is reflected in their very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships, and willingness to take responsibility. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school; attendance is good and punctuality is generally good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education for all of its pupils. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, with good teaching and a wide range of interesting activities in a well-designed setting, including an extensive outdoor area, although there is no covered area for shade. There is much good and very good teaching throughout the school, based on very good planning and strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants that makes sure that all pupils are properly included in the lessons. Because pupils know what is expected of them and are consistently encouraged to improve, they develop very good work habits, showing increasing confidence in their ability to learn independently and successfully. The school keeps good track of pupils' progress and sets appropriate targets for them; this supports their achievement well.

The curriculum is planned very well, with very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and a very good range and quality of enrichment activities. ICT resources are used very well to promote learning across the curriculum and this contributes greatly to making sure that the learning needs of all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with particular gifts and talents, are met as fully as possible. All pupils benefit from the high level of support, care and guidance that the school provides and provision for their personal, social and health education is good. The school works closely with parents and these links contribute well to supporting children's learning, although some parents would like the programme of meetings with teachers to be revised; the school has already initiated a review of this. There are very good links with the local community and with other schools and colleges and these enhance pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision and high aspirations for the school and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. There is a very strong commitment in the school to raising pupils' achievements through continually improving the quality of education provided. The governing body is very well led and organised; many governors give generously of their time, providing very good support and challenge. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents expressed a high level of satisfaction about the work of the school. They recognise that the school is well managed and appreciate the fact that the headteacher and staff are highly approachable. Pupils are very happy and feel it is a very safe and secure school. They value the fact that their views are listened to and taken notice of.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Enable parents to make an even greater contribution to their children's learning through revising the programme of meetings for sharing information at key times during the year.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good. Most of the children in the Reception class are on track to attain the national goals in most if not all areas of learning by the time that they enter Year 1, some will exceed them. Some pupils now in Year 2 have had a disrupted year because of staffing difficulties. Their achievement has been satisfactory rather than good. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 has been good in relation to their attainment on entry and current standards in Year 6 are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards in Year 6 are above average; in ICT they are well above average.
- Pupils make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding because of consistently high quality teaching.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.8 (12.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (15.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Over the last five years national test results for pupils in Year 2 have improved in reading and mathematics so that they are above the national average. In writing they have now returned to average after dropping for two consecutive years. Results in Year 6 have been broadly in line with the national trend over the five year period but better than it over the past three years. There are differences from year to year in the relative performance of boys and girls but, on average, there are no significant differences in the achievement of any group of pupils, including the small proportion who are from minority ethnic families.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.9 (27.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (26.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.9 (28.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In 2003, the school surpassed the target agreed with the local education authority for the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving Level 4 in mathematics and narrowly failed to do so in English. In science, although over 90 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4, fewer than

expected achieved Level 5. Targets for this year are challenging in terms of the proportion of pupils expected to attain Level 5 in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to record improved overall results in national tests in 2004 and their overall achievement has been good during their time in the school.

3. Attainment on entry to the Early Years Unit is broadly average; many children have attended the local nursery and join the school ready to learn and to benefit from the good provision in the Foundation Stage. By the time that they enter Year 1 most children will have met the early learning goals in most areas of learning and some will have exceeded them in more than one area; overall, achievement is good.
4. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is average in reading, writing, mathematics and science and above national or locally agreed expectations in all the other subjects that were fully inspected, ICT, art and design, history, physical education and religious education. Fewer than expected pupils demonstrate attainment above average for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement in Year 2 is currently satisfactory rather than good due at least in part to staffing difficulties beyond the school's control; parents were rightly concerned at the effect of intermittent staff absences.
5. Pupils now in Year 6 display attainment that is above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Most Year 6 pupils are very confident and competent ICT users and standards in this subject are well above national expectations. Standards in the other subjects inspected fully in Year 6 are above national or locally agreed expectations in art and design, history, physical education and religious education. No overall judgements are made about standards in design and technology, geography or music because it was not possible to obtain sufficient evidence of teaching and learning in these subjects. However, there was evidence of work of above average quality in each of these subjects. It is clear that pupils in Year 6 have made good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding over time; achievement is good.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Their needs are identified early and they are set clear and achievable targets. More able pupils and those with particular gifts and talents also achieve well because they are set more challenging tasks or encouraged to undertake work independently of adult direction. The few pupils whose home language is other than English achieve as well as their peers because of the overall high quality of teaching and learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The very good provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development is reflected in their very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships, and willingness to take responsibility. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour enable them to make good progress because they are highly motivated and eager to learn.
- The very good relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves promote a positive learning environment.

- The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good and contributes very effectively to pupils' personal development.
- Attendance is higher than in many other schools and punctuality is generally good.

Commentary

7. Both pupils and parents generally express positive views about their school. Parents are pleased that their children are happy and enjoy school. They feel that the teachers' encouragement and expectations help their children to develop confidence, work hard and achieve their best. As a result they are making good progress. Pupils are very enthusiastic. They like the way the school is run. '*We do loads of fun things*', and '*we get to use our initiative...*' which promotes independence, '*so we get more responsibility and get to do things on our own*'. They '*like the way teachers help us... but we also get some discipline so we don't get away with things*'. The children in the reception class are developing very positive attitudes to their work and learning. They show confidence and concentrate well on their different activities and lessons, and are learning to share their toys and resources. These children are likely to achieve their early learning goals in personal and social education by the end of the year.
8. Teachers have very good management systems and the behaviour of the majority of pupils continues to be very good both in lessons and around the school. Harmony is a strong feature of the school. Although a few parents raised concerns regarding behaviour and bullying, the school has good systems in place to deal with any incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour. Pupils do not have concerns - '*there may be little fights but there's never been any serious bullying*', and are keen to stress that if they do have a problem they know who to go to and feel confident it will be resolved.
9. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils gain a good understanding of their own and other religions through the sensitive teaching of religious education lessons. In addition the recent approach to 'values education' is being embedded into the school's culture and helps to develop pupils' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness. This is consistently promoted each week, especially during assemblies and in the personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils show great respect for the values and beliefs of others.
10. Moral development is very good. Pupils respect the code of conduct which they have helped to devise, know right from wrong and are fully aware of how their actions affect others. The weekly celebration assembly encourages pupils to recognise and celebrate others' achievements. Pupils gain an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves through their support of charities both at home and overseas. The good behaviour of pupils in and around the school is a result of their developing self-discipline and is reflected in no pupil being excluded from the school.
11. Social development is particularly well developed and results in constructive relationships being forged both between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves. This promotes a good working environment and makes a positive impact on achievement. Pupils accept responsibility readily where it is given and complete any tasks they have been given conscientiously. The school council engenders a good awareness of others and how they can meet the needs of pupils in the school. The older pupils are very caring of the younger ones.

12. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. There is a rich provision offered through music, art and dance and with involvement in various local festivals and competitions. A multi-cultural action group of parents, teachers and governors was formed to review the schools provision and effectively promotes pupils' awareness of cultural diversity through a range of curriculum developments, projects and visitors.

Attendance

13. Pupils are happy to come to school and are eager to learn. Attendance is good and above the national average with very few unauthorised absences. Most of the absences are due to a small number of pupils with irregular attendance, and parents taking their children on holiday in term time. Most parents are conscientious in contacting the school when their children are away, and bring their children to school punctually in the mornings. However, there is a small minority of parents who bring their children to school late on a regular basis, and this interrupts the start of the day for the rest of the class. The school monitors attendance rigorously and has appropriate systems to follow up absences and frequent lateness.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality education for all its pupils.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment procedures are very good overall. The teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is better than is found in most schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lesson planning is very detailed and links very well to earlier learning and includes very clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils; this promotes very good learning.
- Very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is a key factor in making sure that all pupils are fully included in lessons and achieve well.
- Teachers make very good use of ICT resources to enhance pupils' learning and achievement across the curriculum.
- High expectations and very good behaviour management promote very good attitudes to learning and very good group work skills.

Commentary

14. During the inspection, the quality of teaching in the Early Years Unit was consistently good. In Years 1 and 2 teaching was at least good in all lessons and very good in a quarter, in Years 3 to 6, teaching was again always at least good with two-thirds very good. The quality of teaching of English, including the skills of literacy, was very good. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching was always good. The pupils' work in books and on display supports the judgement that the overall quality of teaching is very good. There are many good examples of the planned development and use of the skills of literacy and ICT in other subjects but fewer examples in respect of the skills of numeracy. The teaching of other subjects is always at least good and is often very good. As a result of this consistently high quality of teaching, pupils achieve well and develop very good attitudes to learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	20 (47 %)	23 (53 %)	0	0	0	0

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

15. Teachers plan lessons carefully, making them interesting and including tasks that match the needs of different groups of pupils well. Because teachers regularly check on pupils' progress, the planning enables pupils to build securely on their earlier learning. There is

a strong focus on pupils improving their skills, knowledge and understanding in lessons; this was particularly obvious in very good physical education lessons with pupils in Year 3. Because of good assessment and feedback during lessons, supported by much very good marking, pupils gain a good knowledge of their own learning and what they need to do to improve. Assessment procedures are well established and very effective in tracking progress and targeting appropriate action.

16. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well, largely through making lessons so interesting but also by communicating high expectations and by consistently reinforcing good behaviour. As a result pupils develop very good attitudes towards their learning and very good work habits, including the skills of working independently and collaboratively. Pupils in Year 4, for example, were absorbed when making willow sculptures, eagerly chatting about their project and working productively together; the quality of their learning, and their achievement were good.
17. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Their individual needs are met through the work that is set and the quality of the support provided. They benefit from working alongside their peers in the classroom, with valuable help from teaching assistants, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. The very good support that some pupils receive individually or in small groups enables them to access the curriculum fully. Very good team work between teachers and teaching assistants was a strong feature of much of the teaching observed.
18. Teachers ensure that pupils for whom English is an additional language are integrated well into the life of the class. Work is well matched to their needs and there is appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum. They are encouraged to take an active part in discussion and to apply themselves fully to group work.
19. The school has very good ICT resources and teachers use them very well and naturally in their teaching. Many examples were observed, for example in literacy, numeracy, science, history and music. Pupils, too, are confident about using their skills to help their learning in other subjects. Pupils from Year 5, for example, set up their Power Point presentations and used an Interactive whiteboard to share their research into famous Victorians. Such opportunities, and there are many, make a major contribution to helping pupils develop into confident and successful young learners. They also help all groups of pupils to be fully included in lessons, something that the school values highly and is very successful at.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is very good and enriched very well by additional activities. The accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- The breadth of curricular opportunities for pupils is very good, with very good opportunities for developing and using ICT skills.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is very good.

Commentary

20. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. It is broad, balanced and based securely on the early learning goals; all six areas of learning are given appropriate attention. The staff work well together to plan the activities and to provide an interesting range of learning opportunities for the children.
21. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements and provides pupils with a broad range of activities and experiences covering all areas of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers' planning is detailed and clearly sets learning tasks which suitably challenge all groups of pupils and as a result pupils make good progress.
22. The school is very effective in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are supported very well by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, class teachers and experienced teaching assistants. Individual education plans (IEPs) are clearly focused and identify different learning tasks to meet pupils' needs. Teaching assistants use the IEP targets very well to plan activities in lessons and as a result pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities and are becoming more involved in the setting and review of their targets.
23. Teachers ensure that pupils for whom English is an additional language are given appropriate support. There are planned opportunities for developing multicultural awareness in literature, art, history, geography, music and religious education, which increase all pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multicultural nature of society.
24. The school is developing its provision for supporting gifted and talented pupils; currently class teachers extend talented pupils' learning by providing more challenging tasks for them to complete in class. Pupils with aptitudes for physical activities or the creative arts are given opportunities to develop their skills in lunchtime clubs and after school activities.
25. The school's strong caring ethos and very good relationships provide a strong foundation for pupils' personal, social and health education development. Good provision is made for sex education and for promoting drugs awareness. The developing school council and participation in teams and clubs provide useful opportunities for developing the skills of citizenship.
26. The school is very committed to promoting creativity and enjoyment for all pupils. The creative arts are used imaginatively to enhance learning and stimulate creativity. Very good links between subjects are regularly made and the very good range of enrichment activities provided by the school has had a positive impact on standards, particularly in information communication technology (ICT). The use of ICT to enhance learning is a strong feature of the curriculum. For example, in a physical education lesson pupils in Year 6 used stop watches to record how many jumps they could complete in a minute and used a video camera to record their performance carrying out a baton change when running a relay race. This very good use of ICT motivated pupils to perform well.
27. Pupils participate in a range of valuable learning experiences in the local community and they take part in many enrichment activities and experiences that support learning in lessons. Pupils visit the local day care centre and entertain the residents and they sing at the Nuffield Hospital every Christmas. The school regularly holds events to raise money

for charity and through community projects; pupils are encouraged to think of others and understand their role and place as citizens in society.

28. The curriculum is very well enriched by regular, well-planned educational visits to local museums, theatres, environmental and residential centres. Visiting speakers and performers make an important contribution to subjects such as art and design, dance, music, English and religious education. Local artists, musicians, authors and the vicar regularly visit the school to talk about various aspects of their work. The school holds an Arts Week every year and pupils thoroughly enjoy participating in a very good range of activities and as a result their dancing, musical and creative skills develop. The school offers a very good range of lunchtime and after-school activities, including netball, football, country dancing, computer club, guitar club and choir.
29. The school has established good procedures to prepare older pupils for transferring to secondary school. Teachers from the local secondary school visit the school and work with pupils to help prepare them for the next phase of their education.

30. There is a good number of well-qualified staff to support pupils' learning and the school makes very good use of specialist staff to enhance the teaching of certain subjects. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 5 enjoy participating in French lessons. Teachers use a good range of high quality resources in their lessons to inspire and stimulate pupils.
31. The school provides well-organised and well-maintained accommodation for pupils. Teachers and pupils take pride in their environment. The interesting school grounds provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for calm and trouble-free play and lunchtimes.
32. Classrooms are colourful and attractive, with high quality displays that promote learning and independence. There are well-considered plans to develop a resources room which will include a library and this will further enhance the provision for developing pupils' library and research skills.

Care, guidance and support

Systems to ensure pupils' health, safety and welfare continue to be very good and pupils are well supported during their time at school. Pupils feel it is a safe and happy school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a safe, caring and supportive environment where pupils can grow into happy confident individuals.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and identification of appropriate adult support.
- The good induction arrangements ensure pupils settle quickly into school.
- Pupils feel they are consulted and have a voice in decision-making processes of the school.
- The lack of shade in the Early Years area is a concern on very hot days.

Commentary

33. The overall provision for pupils' health, welfare and protection is very good and parents are very pleased that their children are well nurtured and supported. Arrangements for child protection and procedures relating to health and safety are well thought through, with the governors taking their responsibility for health and safety issues conscientiously. However, the very hot weather during the inspection highlighted a concern with the Early Years area, as there is very little shade here to protect children when they are playing outdoors. There were frequent reminders to pupils to be mindful of the sun, to not run around too much and to take advantage of the trees and shade where possible.
34. The sensitive induction process into the school is effectively implemented with good links being established with pre-school playgroups. Reception children are quickly integrated into school through the sensitive and caring support of staff and their friendly classmates. The transition to secondary schools is very well managed through regular visits and joint projects with secondary school staff. This ensures pupils' progression to the next stage of education is as smooth as possible.
35. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal and academic development and progress are generally good. Pupils' are involved in target setting in some academic subjects; however, there are no formal tracking systems for monitoring and promoting

pupils' personal development. Whilst teachers know their classes very well this is not always the case with temporary or 'supply' teachers. The school has good systems in place offering support and guidance for those pupils with special educational needs and involves the various outside agencies as necessary. Teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Regular monitoring by the school ensures that they receive appropriate provision and support.

36. The recent appointment of the home/school link worker and the involvement of various outside agencies are enabling the school to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils by offering counselling or providing focused support programmes to raise pupils' confidence and self esteem. The home/school link worker is also helping to support some older pupils as they prepare for the transition to secondary school. The school has established good links with parents and involves them in discussions about their child's progress. Parents spoke very positively about the school and feel it treats pupils fairly.
37. Pupils are very happy and feel it is a very safe and secure school. Despite the recent changes of staff, pupils are confident that there is somebody they can turn to if they have a problem or are unhappy. Opportunities to consult with pupils and to take their views into consideration are very effectively developed particularly through the school council. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the different things that had been implemented arising from their discussions, and feel this has encouraged them to be more responsible and given them a greater voice and involvement in the decision-making processes in the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents have positive views about the school. The partnership with parents and the local community continues to be strong. The links with partner institutions are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has developed a strong supportive parent body and parents generally hold the school in high regard.
- The school has forged very good links with the local community that help enrich pupils' learning.
- The very good links with partner institutions promote curriculum development and learning opportunities for pupils.

Commentary

38. The school's close liaison with parents keeps them regularly informed and provides them with many opportunities to become involved in their child's education both at home or in school. This is having a very positive effect on pupils' learning and their levels of achievement. Most parents expressed a high level of satisfaction about the work of the school. They think the school is well managed and find the headteacher and staff highly approachable. However, at the pre-inspection meeting a small number of parents expressed concerns about incidents of bullying, and others were unhappy about the pattern of consultation meetings and the degree to which they were kept informed about their child's progress. The team followed up the school's procedures to deal with any bullying issues and felt these were appropriate and that the school took any concerns seriously and dealt with them promptly. The inspection team felt that although the

school generally had good informal systems in place to keep parents involved through its open door policy, it might help parents to help their children if there was a mid-year meeting with teachers.

39. General information for parents is good. Regular newsletters keep parents updated and well informed on different school activities and events. Curriculum information is circulated termly and enables parents to see what their children are learning at school so they can help them at home. Parents' consultation meetings are well attended and information evenings are popular as they keep parents updated on new developments and important events. The school effectively consults with parents about different issues via questionnaires and keeps them updated and acts on the responses. The annual reports to parents are good, clearly stating what pupils know, can do and understand and identifying targets for improvement. However, parents would benefit by being given a better indication of their child's level of achievement according to what is expected of a child of his or her age or against national averages. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about their child's progress and are involved in the review processes.
40. Parents are invited to help in the school and a number provide support by listening to reading, helping out in the classroom or on trips. Parents also undertake various tasks around school such as running traffic awareness or cycling proficiency programmes, or extra-curricular clubs. Parents are very supportive of the school and involved in their child's learning. School productions, sports days and events are very well attended. The friends of North Kidlington School association is run by an enthusiastic group of parents and staff who organise a large number of social and fund-raising activities each year, which raises significant funds for the school. This money has been effectively used to buy additional resources, including books or computer equipment for the school or helps to sponsor class outings.
41. Links with the local community are very good with many local people, including grandparents, involved in school events and attending functions and activities run by the school. Their experiences have been valued when talking about personal and local history. Pupils are involved in local festivals and competitions, such as a dance and the forthcoming arts festival.
42. Links with other schools are very good both on a management and an academic basis. Very effective liaison within the cluster of neighbouring primary schools includes helping to promote sporting programmes and various staff development opportunities. The school council is about to instigate discussions with other primary schools about their role. Links with the local secondary school are very well developed, and the early start in Year 5 is clearly impacting on pupils' achievement. Opportunities include visits in connection with sports, science, English and mathematics as well as Year 7 teachers visiting to introduce transitional topics at the end of Year 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher leads and manages the school very well and is ably supported by senior staff. The governance of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body takes an active role in shaping the vision and direction of the school and supporting and challenging senior managers.
- The very clear vision and high aspirations of the headteacher and senior staff are evident in the strategic planning which reflects the school's aims.
- Very efficient management systems reflect the emphasis on self-evaluation and commitment to improvement.

Commentary

43. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. They share the same aspirations for the school and work together very effectively. Their leadership of the curriculum and teaching is strong, based on a framework of shared values. Senior managers and subject leaders are very good role models for other staff and pupils and give careful consideration to future developments. They inspire, motivate and influence staff and pupils, thereby establishing a very positive climate for learning. There is a very strong commitment to inclusion and to the development of pupils' full potential, independence and self-esteem.
44. The management of the school is also very good. There are very good systems in place for the regular monitoring and evaluation of the progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science, enabling effective action to be taken where necessary. In other subjects, the analysis of assessment information is used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning and to inform teaching. The school recognises the need to establish a more uniform approach, based on this good practice. The management of all subjects is at least good, in some cases very good. Very good allocation of resources by the headteacher enables subject leaders to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' written work, and to incorporate their findings into annual subject action plans. These provide a clear sense of direction for future improvement. The school manages the recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff very well. Very good induction procedures, performance management and continuing professional development of staff, have proved very effective in raising aspirations and effecting improvement.
45. The governance of the school is very good, under the leadership of a dedicated and experienced chairman. Members of the governing body give very generously of their time and varied experience, in support of the school, and take full advantage of available training opportunities. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and take an active part in its development. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to special educational needs, English as an additional language, race equality, disability, gender, and inclusion. They challenge, as well as support, the leadership and management of the school and are prepared to take difficult decisions, if necessary.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	708,018
Total expenditure	738,731
Expenditure per pupil	2,266

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	83,743
Balance carried forward to the next	53,030

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, as it was at the last inspection. Children receive good teaching and are provided with a well-planned curriculum which gives appropriate attention to all areas of learning. Children achieve well and are prepared well for work in Year 1 and beyond.

The majority of children have attended the local nursery, with which there are good links; procedures for induction into the class are good. The teaching is good and support staff are well deployed and contribute well to children's learning. The staff work very well together and monitor children's progress. They know the children well. The room is well resourced and there are attractive displays which stimulate and engage pupils. The outside environment is satisfactory. There is no covered area for the children to play under and this restricts outdoor play opportunities during the winter and summer months.

The school has improved the accommodation and resources for the Early Years since the last inspection. The present Early Years Unit was opened in January 2002 and the new accommodation, good range of resources and effective work of the staff provides a good learning setting for children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the good teaching.
- The ethos in the classroom is good and makes children feel secure and happy.
- Children are well on their way to reaching, and in many cases exceeding, the expected goals by the end of the year.

Commentary

46. The teacher, ably supported by the teaching assistant, has established an environment where expectations are clear and there is a strong emphasis on co-operating and caring for others. Children are encouraged to be polite and respectful. When they are contributing to a class discussion, for example, they are encouraged to put up their hands and not to interrupt others when they are speaking. They enjoy being given responsibility such as taking the register to the office and acting as the 'teacher's helper for the day'. They behave well, know the routines and generally settle without fuss.
47. The children are given a lot of opportunities to work with others and to select activities and resources on their own. They help each other and show each other how to use a new computer program. They co-operate well together; a group of children playing with the sand talked together about what they were doing and negotiated taking turns with the equipment.

48. Children are helped to learn respect for others by listening attentively and being polite. The good relationships with staff, supported by their good use of humour and the caring attitudes, contribute to children's desire to learn; achievement is good and most children are well on track to achieve the early learning goals in this area.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's language skills are developing well because of the good teaching.

Commentary

49. Children are on course to meet the expected goals in this area of learning. They are given a wide range of opportunities to listen to stories, write and to see the printed word. They are beginning to write their own names and making good progress in forming their letters correctly. They enjoy 'reading' stories and recounting them. They are given a lot of good opportunities to speak out loud and to share their thoughts and ideas. Pupils enjoy discussing stories and are keen to express their opinions about different stories. They are gaining in confidence and beginning to show an awareness of who is listening, generally using 'please' and 'thank you'.
50. The teaching is good, with clear objectives for the 'literacy' activities. Teacher and the teaching assistants model reading and writing well. Print is evident in the classroom and children are encouraged to 'read' books and discuss stories, for example pupils accurately retell the story of Jack and the Beanstalk and express their opinions about the main character: 'The giant is a bit scary but he is friendly'. Staff take every opportunity to develop the children's vocabulary through probing and well targeted questioning, and they encourage pupils to use complete sentences. The good relationships give children the confidence to talk, and all adults are genuinely interested in what the children have to say.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff use an imaginative range of strategies to teach mathematical skills.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's mathematical development.

Commentary

51. Teaching and learning are good. An interesting range of activities is used and every opportunity is taken to promote mathematical understanding. As a result pupils are achieving well and most should reach or exceed the expected goals. Many children can count to ten already and recognise some of the numerals, the higher attainers count accurately to 30.
52. Learning is made fun for pupils, for example, by the teacher using a character in a story book to stimulate the children's interest in whales. The teacher and pupils go out into the playground and use a measuring wheel to measure out the length of a giant blue whale. Pupils enthusiastically count out the metres and gasp with awe when they discover that giant blue whales grow up to 30 metres. A number of older children notice that the length of the whale is longer than the outdoor play area. The teacher's good use of effective

questioning encourages pupils to compare the length of the whale with other objects and as a result pupils use language well to make comparisons between the lengths of a range of different objects. One child observes that the whale 'is much longer than their playground but not as long as the big school playground'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of satisfactory activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- The range of interactive displays to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world is limited.

Commentary

53. Children are provided with a satisfactory range of activities in order to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children use computer programs to help their learning in mathematics and literacy. They use computers in the classroom and visit the ICT room once a week. They are gaining confidence and skill in using the mouse, selecting, dragging and dropping. Some older children confidently 'log on' to the computer and open programs.
54. They explore the grounds outside with staff and observe plants growing. Children recognise a lavender plant and notice that the leaves of lemon balm plant are similar to nettles. Pupils know that plants need water to grow and are thrilled when they see that the tiny tomatoes have started to grow. They understand that the flowers they observed on the plant last week have turned into produced tomatoes. Children enjoy visits to places of interest in the local community such as the Cotswold Wildlife Park and the local shopping centre and these experiences enhance their understanding of their local community. During the inspection there were too few opportunities to explore a wider range of interactive displays, including multi-cultural artefacts, to help them find out more about the world around them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the outside area.
- Children receive regular structured physical education lessons which are well planned.

Commentary

55. Children are given good opportunities for physical development. There are two planned physical education lessons per week as well as opportunities for children to elect to play outdoors at other times. Activities are carefully planned to enable children to work towards the expected goals in this area. Every opportunity is also taken to develop children's personal and social skills. For example, the teaching assistant encouraged children to line up sensibly when they were waiting for their turn to kick the ball and pupils enthusiastically clapped and cheered when their friends scored a goal.
56. Children have good opportunities to use small and large apparatus outside, both during break times and when they can during lessons. Children enjoy playing on the climbing

frame and balancing benches. Their balancing skills are good and they travel around, over and under the equipment with increasing control. Children make good use of the wheeled toys, beanbags, hoops and balls. They play creatively and use their imagination when they are playing. They are making good progress in this area and should achieve the expected goals.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for role-play and for other creative activities.

Commentary

57. Children are given many opportunities to use their imagination and role play, for example in a literacy lesson when they wrote to the giant about their holidays. In the role play area pupils enjoy exploring Jack's Cottage and they act out the characters in the story. There are planned sessions for drama and music, although these were not seen during the inspection. The art work displayed in the Early Years Unit is vibrant and colourful; children use paint, collage, and clay and play dough to make creative pieces of work. Four pupils concentrated well for a sustained period of time when they were painting their clay animals. The teaching assistant's good questioning techniques encourage children to select the appropriate sized brush and to take care to paint carefully; as a result children's painting skills improve.
58. Children in the Reception class also attend assemblies for the whole school where they join in with the singing along with their older peers. They participate fully in the range of creative activities taking place throughout the school during Arts Week.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good use of literacy skills across the curriculum and the encouragement of language development through drama are having a positive impact on standards.
- The strong emphasis on the teaching of the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing enables pupils to achieve national expectations or above.

Commentary

59. Standards match national expectations in Year 2 and are above expectations in Year 6. This maintains the position at the last inspection. Standards in reading in Year 2 are above those expected. This represents, however, a drop from the standards attained in the 2003 national tests, which were well above the national average. Standards in writing match those expected, as they did in the 2003 national tests. Differences from year to year are partially explained by variations in the overall ability of each year group and the number of pupils with special educational needs; some pupils have also been adversely affected by lack of teaching continuity. Standards in English are above average in Year 6. This represents an improvement, in comparison with the 2003 national tests, when standards matched national expectations. All groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and gifted and talented

pupils make good progress and achieve well, due to very good teaching and the very good climate for learning.

60. Standards in speaking and listening match those expected of pupils in Year 2, and are above those expected in Year 6. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are confident and articulate when speaking formally and informally. They listen very attentively to the teacher and each other. They respect the contribution of others and wait their turn when others are speaking. Most teachers use good questioning skills to ensure the active involvement of all pupils and to challenge their thinking. Weekly drama lessons successfully develop pupils' language skills.
61. Standards in reading are above those expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. There are planned opportunities for individual and group reading in most areas of the curriculum. The purchase of more non-fiction books to engage the interest of boys has significantly reduced the gender gap, in recent years. Attainment in reading is tracked and analysed to improve standards. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of books and authors. Discussions with staff and pupils indicate that most pupils are well supported in their reading at home.
62. Standards in writing match those expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. The focus on writing in subjects across the curriculum is having a positive influence on standards, particularly of average and higher attaining pupils in Year 6. Very good support is given to pupils who experience difficulties. Progress in pupils' ability to write at length, using extended sentences is clearly visible in their written work, as they move through the school. Spelling and punctuation are of a good standard. Pupils' handwriting is generally neat and legible and most pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Displays are of high quality and demonstrate the value that is placed on pupils' work.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers are very successful in engaging and retaining pupils' interest. Work is challenging for pupils of all abilities. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive very good support from teaching assistants. Most pupils work very well, both independently and collaboratively. Very good assessment and tracking procedures are used very effectively in response to individual needs. Teachers' marking is good, targets are set and pupils have a very good understanding of how to improve.
64. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader has a very good knowledge of the standards and achievement of each child and has been instrumental in implementing new approaches to raise standards further. She has a very clear vision for the future development of the subject, has created a very effective team and provides a very good role model for staff and pupils. The curriculum is greatly enriched by cross-curricular links, visits, visitors, drama and special events. The quality of provision shows good improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. Opportunities for pupils to use their language and literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum are very good. There are particularly good examples in history and religious education, where pupils are encouraged to record their work in a variety of interesting ways. In addition to writing chronological and non-chronological reports, they write diaries, character studies and eye-witness accounts. Weekly drama lessons, and role-play in other subjects, enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills and develop their

confidence and self-esteem. There are good examples of the use of ICT to enhance the development and use of pupils' literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**. Achievement is good. Standards are average in Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards in Year 6 are rising as a result of consistently good teaching, and target setting based on careful tracking of their progress.
- Teachers make very good use of ICT resources to enhance pupils' learning and achievement.
- Lesson planning caters well for pupils of different levels of ability and so all achieve well.
- The planned use in other situations of the mathematics that pupils are learning is under-developed.

Commentary

66. National test results in 2003 were well above average in Year 2 and this represents a big improvement compared with the previous three years. In Year 6, results were average when compared with all schools nationally and when compared with other schools whose pupils had recorded similar results in their Year 2 tests. This also represented improvement compared with the two immediately preceding years. Teaching is consistently good and pupils build well on their earlier learning; achievement is good. There are good assessment systems for keeping track of the progress of individual pupils and setting suitable improvement targets.
67. Some pupils at present in Year 2 have been affected by staffing difficulties beyond the school's control and their achievement and attainment have suffered; the high standards of 2003 have not been maintained. Indications from the work seen from one class are that there has been a good focus on improvement, with work set at three different levels of difficulty. All three groups of pupils have recently made good progress in solving word problems. During the inspection, pupils in the two Year 2 classes made good gains in their skills of adding amounts of money and finding change. Teaching and learning were good because the work was planned well, tasks were set clearly and matched well to the learning needs of groups of pupils. The school's assessment records confirm that achievement is currently satisfactory overall and that standards are average.
68. The learning and achievement of pupils in Year 5 were greatly enhanced by their teacher's very good use of ICT in teaching reflective symmetry in regular polygons. Very good extra challenge was presented to higher attaining pupils who had to investigate symmetry in irregular polygons. Pupils made good gains in their skills at using the software to draw the lines of symmetry on the polygons.
69. An important contribution to pupils' good learning and achievement in the two Year 6 lessons was the interesting setting of a real-life problem as the vehicle for investigating the relationship between the area and perimeter of rectilinear shapes. Designing and costing a garden for the school that incorporated fencing, a water feature, slabs, decking and turf greatly stimulated pupils and they worked very productively at the task. Some used their very good ICT skills when drawing their design with a computer aided design package. Their literacy skills were exercised well when they presented their tenders to the 'governing body'. Standards in this year group are now at the upper end of average, with more than 80 per cent of pupils achieving the national expectation of Level 4 and at least a quarter exceeding this.
70. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Strengths include lesson planning with clear learning objectives, good use of practical apparatus and real life applications where appropriate, and the keeping of useful assessment records. In many lessons, teaching assistants provide very good support that enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to be fully included in the lesson. Tasks are usually set at different levels of demand and this often leads to more able pupils being provided with suitably challenging extension work. Teachers use ICT resources very well to enhance pupils' learning and achievement in mathematics. Pupils throughout the school enjoy mathematics and because teachers focus on understanding and set suitable learning tasks, most pupils become confident in their ability to tackle problems or new work. Work in books is usually presented well and teachers' marking promotes improvement and supports learning well.

71. The headteacher is very effectively leading improvement in achievement and standards. Having identified weaker areas, for example in the teaching of shape, space and measures and in opportunities for applying mathematics, he has promoted more practical and investigational methods and focused his subsequent lessons observations on these aspects. The introduction of target setting, based on regular and accurate assessment, is working through the school and promoting further improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. There was evidence of good use of pupils' mathematical skills, particularly data handling, graph drawing and measurement in other subject areas, including science and design and technology. There is scope for further development of the planned use in other contexts of the mathematics that pupils are learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising in both Year 2 and Year 6; in Year 6 they are above average.
- There is a strong emphasis on investigational work and pupils recording in their own words.
- Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well.

Commentary

73. The results of teachers' assessments in 2003 were well below average in Year 2, especially low in experimental and investigative work. In Year 6, results were below average when compared with all schools nationally and when compared with other schools whose pupils had recorded similar results in their Year 2 tests. However, the recent trend in Year 6 results has been upward and more than 90 per cent of pupils achieved the national expectation of Level 4. Overall comparisons were depressed by the fact that the proportion of pupils gaining Level 5 was well below the national average.
74. The response of the school has been effective. The co-ordinator's monitoring identified the need for careful development of scientific vocabulary, improvements in recording, more use of ICT to support learning and much more emphasis on investigational work. The measures taken are starting to take effect. In a good Year 1 lesson, for example, when pupils were identifying natural and man-made sources of light, the teacher promoted much good discussion and vocabulary development. This, with well focused tasks and a good level of adult support, led to good learning and achievement.
75. Completed work by Year 2 pupils shows a good level of investigational work across a range of topics and good examples of pupils recording their findings in their own words; where worksheets are used they are simple and well-designed. In a very good lesson in one of the Year 2 classes, pupils' learning was very good because the teacher focused sharply on the learning objectives in terms of food groups and a healthy balanced diet; achievement was good. Overall standards in Year 2 are close to what is expected nationally and this represents an improvement since last year.
76. The overall quality of teaching is very good and Year 5 pupils made good gains in their understanding of plaque and teeth cleaning. The lesson was very well planned to build on their earlier learning and included interesting activities in which all could take part, including those with special educational needs. Pupils visiting the British Dental Health website demonstrated very good ICT and research skills; the co-ordinator has very helpfully provided colleagues within an extensive list of useful websites.

77. Pupils in Year 6 showed a good understanding of the principles of fair testing when they planned investigations into the effect of various fizzy drinks on teeth. Standards in Year 6 have improved since last year with a higher proportion of pupils showing above average attainment and most of the rest of the year group operating in line with national expectations; overall, standards are now above average. A very good feature of work in Year 6 is the emphasis on applying what is being learned to real-life situations, for example investigating non-slip surfaces for the Fit and Mean Health Club. Overall, good provision has been maintained since the time of the last inspection and standards are rising.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and pupils achieve very well.
- Resources are very good and the introduction of interactive whiteboards is having a very positive impact on teaching and learning.
- The subject is very well led and managed and this contributes strongly to the improving standards.

Commentary

78. By the end of Year 2 pupils' standards of attainment are above national expectations and by the end of Year 6 pupils' standards of attainment are well above national expectations. This represents very good progress since the last inspection, when standards in Years 2 and 6 were judged to be in line with national expectations. Pupils make very good progress in ICT throughout the school because teachers select appropriate activities to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
79. All classes are timetabled to use the computer room for at least one hour and twenty minutes each week and computers are used very well in the classrooms to support teaching and learning. Teachers' planning for these sessions is very good. Information communication technology is used very well to support learning in other subjects. For example, in one Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils used a maths program to consolidate and extend their understanding of adding two and three-digit numbers together.
80. Pupils are encouraged to share and exchange ideas and to present, explain and evaluate their ICT- based work. In Year 6, pupils use the skills they have learned to present facts about a range of athletics skills they are developing in physical education lessons. They use information retrieved from the Internet to compile a presentation for Year 7 pupils. Pupils think carefully about their presentations and select appropriate programs to use and present their work in interesting and creative ways. They confidently use the interactive whiteboard to present their ideas to the class.
81. ICT makes an important contribution to pupils' social development because it provides opportunities for them to work collaboratively and comment constructively on one another's work. Most teachers exploit this opportunity well to extend pupils' language skills. Pupils enjoy the lessons in the ICT room and have very positive attitudes to learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress throughout the school and their range of skills steadily improves as their

confidence grows. Many pupils use computers at home to look for information that is linked to their school work.

82. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Learning intentions are well defined and shared with pupils and as a result pupils know what they have to do and settle quickly down to work and make very good progress. Teachers' skilled questioning helps develop pupils' understanding and use of technical language. Teachers assess pupils work against National Curriculum levels in order to track their progress.
83. All aspects of ICT have improved since the last inspection. The ICT scheme of work has been updated to reflect national initiatives and new developments in the subject. The range and quality of resources available for teaching have improved. Hardware provision is very good and the range of software programmes available to support learning is very good. The school has plans to purchase laptops and more interactive whiteboards for teachers to use in the classrooms.
84. The leadership and management of ICT are very good and this contributes importantly to pupils' very good attainment. The subject co-ordinator provides strong leadership and through careful analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and analysis of lesson observation records, she has a clear view of the strengths and areas for developments.

Information communication technology across the curriculum

85. Information communication technology is used very well across the curriculum. Where possible, the work covered in ICT lessons is very well linked to what is being taught in other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 study Monet's art work and use a painting programme to learn how to identify lines of symmetry and create reflections in pictures. Teachers use a good range of other forms of ICT equipment to enhance teaching and learning. For example, in Year 6, pupils use a digital video camera to record their performance in physical education.
86. A wonderfully rich learning experience was provided for the pupils in Years 3 and 4 when they participated in a video conference session with the Oxfordshire Records Office. The pupils asked a range of questions about children's lives a hundred years ago and the archivist retrieved the information from the archives and shared it with the pupils. This very good use of ICT enhanced pupils' learning about the past.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Challenging tasks result in pupils achieving above average standards.
- Cross-curricular links and the use of drama have a positive impact on standards.

Commentary

87. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above the expectations of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. All classes study Christianity, Judaism and Islam at varying levels and from different points of view. Analysis of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and lessons observed demonstrate pupils' developing knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. In a lesson observed in Year 3, pupils reflected on their own character, how they could improve it and how this might affect the people around them. Year 5 pupils knew that the Bible is a collection of different types of writing by a number of authors writing at different times and that it contains many different literacy genres. Through the use of a displayed time-line, they increased their knowledge of when these books were written and when translations began to be made. They increased their knowledge of John Wycliffe and his connection with Oxford. They were amazed that each translation took ten months to write by hand and horrified that some supporters of John Wycliffe were burnt with a Bible round their necks. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 proved to be knowledgeable about the key figures of the three religions studied, their practices, beliefs and places of worship. They know that what these religions have in common are more important than any differences.
88. Teaching is very good and leads to very good learning. Strengths of teaching are teachers' sincerity, very good subject knowledge, high expectations, and the opportunities that they provide for pupils to reflect and relate their knowledge to their own beliefs and ideas. Pupils use their literacy skills and ICT skills, as they carry out research and write about what they have learnt. They use their numeracy skills in trying to come to terms with the vast timescales involved. Their cultural development is enhanced through their studies of three major world religions. Pupils apply themselves very well to their work and have a good knowledge of their own learning. Ongoing assessment enables teachers to respond well to pupils' individual needs. The curriculum is enriched by visits to four local churches, visits from representatives of the three religions studied and a Christmas service in the local church.
89. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and provides valuable guidance for pupils. She has a very clear vision for the future development of the subject and is keen to purchase more religious artefacts to support the curriculum. Through her monitoring of teaching and learning, teachers' planning and pupils' work, she has a very good understanding of the progress and achievement of individual pupils. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on historical enquiry skills promotes independent learning.
- Literacy skills are used well to encourage the reporting of historical events.

Commentary

90. Standards are above national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Their well-presented and detailed written work shows clear evidence of progress over time. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 learnt from visiting grandparents about toys of 60 years ago, such as Meccano, farmyards and playing cards

and began to realise that toys don't have to cost a lot in order to be enjoyed. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have researched changes in the local area over the past 100 years. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a broad knowledge of Invaders and Settlers and life in Ancient Egypt. Year 5 and 6 pupils have carried out research on Ancient Greece and the Victorians. They use their literacy skills to write reports, diaries and eye-witness accounts. Mathematical skills are developed through time-lines and links with Archimedes and circles. During the inspection, pupils developed their skills by writing a first-hand account of the feelings and lifestyle of a Victorian hay-stacker who was forced to move to the city. Very good use of resources, including the interactive whiteboard, overhead projector, Internet and a professional presentation brought history to life for pupils and led to their good achievement.

91. Teaching is very good and leads to very good learning. Strengths of teaching are teachers' very good subject knowledge, emphasis on enquiry skills, encouragement of independent research and expectation and challenge. Pupils' interest is engaged and they apply a high level of effort to their work. They use their ICT skills to find the answers to historical questions. Pupils in Year 3 have worked with the archivist at the Oxfordshire Record Office and have carried out video-conferencing. In design and technology, Year 5 pupils were shown Victorian samplers by a visiting historian and were inspired to produce their own. Their cultural development is enhanced through the study of ancient cultures and life throughout the ages.
92. Leadership and management are very good. The subject manager is very enthusiastic and has a very clear vision for future development. She recognises the value of visits and visitors and is keen to extend these. The curriculum is enriched through historical role-play and drama, visiting historians, visits to Bourton-on-the-Water Motor Museum, Warwick, Horley Study Centre and special days, such as Victorian Days. Ongoing assessment is good and is used to address the needs of all pupils. Through monitoring teaching and learning, teachers' planning and pupils' work, the subject leader has a good understanding of how well pupils achieve. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

93. In **geography** it was not possible to form an overall judgement about provision, standards of work, achievement, or teaching, as no lessons were observed. An examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that the curriculum is creative and enriched, and provides very well for the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Cross-curricular links are carefully planned. Pupils use their literacy skills to compare and contrast modern Greece with Ancient Greece, and Kidlington with the Yorkshire Dales. Links are made with mathematics, as pupils study direction, use map co-ordinates and produce world weather graphs, transport graphs for Kenya and charts on water usage. Their study of the water cycle is linked to work in science. Pupils use their computer skills to research environmental issues and to record weather data. Their landscape drawings of Kenya are of a high standard. A dance week, based on dances from around the world contributed to their cultural development, as does their study of Kenya. Pupils' moral development is enhanced as they debate environmental issues, such as pollution and people's responsibility for conservation. Their experience of the transit of Venus, during the inspection, contributed to their spiritual understanding. The curriculum is enriched through visits. Years 1 and 2 study the physical and human features of the local area and visit a farm. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit Bournemouth and contrast it with Kidlington. Year 5 and 6 pupils visit the local reservoir and water treatment plant and extend their knowledge of places further afield through a residential visit to Glasbury Activity Centre. Ongoing assessment is used well to respond to individual needs. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader has a very clear vision for the future development of the subject, particularly with regard to the environment. She monitors teaching and learning and pupils' work and provides knowledgeable and innovative leadership; it is clear that the subject has been developed well since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology and music could not be a main focus of the inspection because of time restrictions. However, some lessons were observed, discussions were held with teachers and some examples of pupils' earlier work and teachers' planning were examined. The following evaluative comments are based on this evidence.

94. In **art and design** only two lessons were observed during the inspection and so no overall judgements are made about provision, teaching and learning, attainment or achievement. Nevertheless it is evident from discussions with pupils and staff and examination of the good quality displays of pupils' completed work around the school that the provision for art is at least good. In the lesson observed in Year 6 pupils create interesting William Morris inspired designs on a clay plate. The teacher's good subject knowledge was evident from the way in which he explained the task to pupils. The very good questioning techniques used by the teacher helped pupils to refine their techniques and create work of a high quality. Pupils in Year 5 created interesting abstract sculptures inspired by the work of Georgia O'Keefe. They used willow and tissue paper to shape their sculptures, bending and twisting the willow into imaginative shapes. Pupils chatted excitedly about their design and worked productively and collaboratively together to produce interesting pieces of work. Pupils used the Internet to research information about Georgia O'Keefe and they downloaded pictures and facts about the artist.
95. There is a good range of quality artwork on display around the school which shows how pupils use a wide range of media, such as paint, pastels, collage and clay to create vibrant pieces of art. Art is linked well with other subjects, particularly design and technology, history and science.

96. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and areas for development in the subject and has developed an action plan for further improvement. She regularly monitors pupils' work and teaching and learning. The school has a good range of quality resources to support learning.
97. In **design and technology** the school has responded effectively to the few criticisms made in the last inspection report. Although only one lesson was observed and a small amount of pupils' work examined it is clear that the subject has a secure place in the school's curriculum and that good links are made with other subjects, for example art and design and history. Pupils in Year 5 benefited from a lesson that was part of a very well planned and organized project on Victorian samplers. In the course of which their practical skills, including tacking, running stitch and hemming develop well. Their overall learning is enriched by the contribution of a visitor who readily shares her own high level of skill and knowledge with the pupils. They are visibly surprised when they learn how much time and care went into the making of some of the pieces of work that they are shown. This enhances their understanding of life in other times and what goes into creating work of high quality.
98. Other work on display includes good quality, colourful and interesting masks; pupils record that they observed, drew and made masks based on African ones seen at Pitt Rivers (Museum) and enjoyed covering friends' faces with mod roc.' Both art and design and design and technology are used well to develop pupils' understanding of their own culture and that of others. The co-ordinator has effectively led colleagues to give due weight to all parts of the design process, to focus on the progressive development of pupils' skills and to expect finished work of quality.
99. It was evident that **music** plays an important part in the life of the school, with many opportunities for pupils to learn to play instruments and to perform in school productions and take part in events such as the Festival of Voices in Dorchester Abbey and a concert at the Royal Albert Hall. The hymn practice observed during the inspection was distinguished by the teacher's very good singing skills, her high expectations and consistent focus on improvement. Pupils sang well, both with and without accompaniment, with good articulation, phrasing and attention to dynamics.
100. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and support to colleagues, for example through providing INSET on composing. Both of the good lessons observed during the inspection were on composing, one using a good range of percussion instruments and the other using an ICT based composition program. Pupils in Year 2 achieved well as a result of the teacher's good introduction to the software and used the interactive whiteboard well to share the tunes that they had composed. Pupils in Year 4 showed that they have developed a good musical vocabulary including *forte*, *piano*, *diminuendo*, and worked effectively together in building a four part composition depicting a storm. ICT resources were again used well in recording compositions so that pupils could evaluate their own as well as those of other people. Learning and achievement were enhanced by the teacher's own subject knowledge that enabled her to extend pupils' musical vocabulary and introduce appropriate notation at the right time.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Pupils participate in a very good range of extra-curricular sports.
- Information communication technology is used well to enhance teaching and learning.

Commentary

101. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well as a result of very good teaching. Every year almost all pupils achieve the National Curriculum expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided and many exceed this.
102. Physical education activities make a broad contribution to pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 were given the opportunity to observe their friends kicking a ball and were asked to provide constructive comments to help improve their performance. Pupils offered sensible advice and listened attentively to one another. In this way they learnt new and more effective ways of improving their performance. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and appreciate the range of activities on offer. They respond very positively to instructions and work well individually and in groups.
103. Overall teaching is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this enables them to help all pupils develop skills, knowledge and techniques very effectively. Teachers use digital video recorders and cameras to record pupils' achievements.
104. Literacy, numeracy and the use of ICT are effectively promoted in lessons. In one Year 6 class pupils used a stop watch to record how fast they could run around a course. They recorded their results and compared their performance to their friend's performance. This element of competition motivated and inspired pupils to improve their performance and as a result they all jumped higher and made very good progress.
105. The school teaches all elements of the physical education curriculum, and it provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities including competitive team sports, fun team games and dance clubs. The school has close links with local community sports organisations and pupils have opportunities to participate in coaching sessions led by professional athletes, including netball and football. During the inspection pupils in Year 2 thoroughly enjoyed a coaching session led by a professional footballer. His expert knowledge and good coaching techniques resulted in all pupils refining and improving/developing their kicking and dribbling skills. The school has recently been awarded Football Association charter status in recognition of the range of opportunities that it provides for pupils to develop their football skills. This is a very good achievement.
106. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator regularly monitors teachers' planning and identifies areas for development. She provides training and support for her colleagues and regularly attends training sessions to improve her own knowledge and understanding. Developing planning is good, the co-ordinator is seeking government funding to establish tennis coaching, an active breakfast club, netball club and creative arts club. Currently the school is trialling new assessment arrangements and the co-ordinator plans to develop this area of the curriculum. Improvement since the last inspection has been good as overall standards, the quality of teaching and range of resources have improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

107. Concern for pupils' personal development has a high priority and permeates all aspects of the work of the school. It is closely linked with two other very important aspects of the school's work, developing personal self-responsibility through a rewards system that values caring for others and unselfish acts equally alongside effort and achievement, and the introduction of values as a focus within religious education and collective worship. The school's success in this respect is evident in the pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere that staff and pupils maintain.
108. The school provides sex education with the support of the school nurse and pupils are made aware of drugs related issues. The school council provides a structured opportunity for the development of citizenship skills. These were the focus of the two good lessons that were observed during the inspection, one in Year 1 and the other in Year 6. In both cases, pupils explored scenarios, a shipwreck and a fire disaster, that were the consequence of human behaviour. Skilful questioning and leadership by the teachers led to good discussions and pupils' literacy skills were promoted well. Younger pupils gained useful experience of forming teams for particular tasks resulting from their shipwreck and of negotiation and trying to reach a consensus. Older pupils responded in a perceptive and mature manner to effective use of an introductory video and showed good awareness of the consequences of careless actions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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