

INSPECTION REPORT

STOKE ROW CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stoke Row, Henley-on-Thames

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123136

Headteacher: Mr T. Kumsang

Reporting inspector: Mr D. Collard
OFSTED Inspector Number: 11122

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th March 2001

Inspection number: 190219

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: infant and junior
School category: voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 5 - 11
Gender of pupils: mixed

School address: School Lane
Stoke Row
Henley-on-Thames
Oxon

Postcode: RG9 5QS

Telephone number: 01491 680720

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Appropriate authority: governing body

Name of chair of governors: Helen Harkess-Taylor

Date of previous inspection: July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11122	Mr D. Collard	Registered inspector	English; information and communication technology; art and design; design and technology; music; religious education; equal opportunities; English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9327	Mr S. Vincent	Lay inspector	None	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11848	Mr J. Taylor	Team inspector	mathematics; science; geography; history; physical education; the foundation curriculum; special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6 - 9
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10 - 11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11 - 13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13 - 14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	15 - 16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16 - 17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19 - 22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23 - 33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stoke Row Primary School is a small village school in Oxfordshire. It has 68 pupils on roll, which is smaller than average. There are three classrooms, a library and a playground. The school does not have the use of a hall and assemblies are held in one class area. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds but only 15 pupils come from Stoke Row village. The remainder come from adjacent villages, owing to the improved reputation of the school. At the time of the inspection only one child was in the reception year although another five are presently attending on a part-time basis. The majority of children join the school with literacy and numeracy skills that are above those of most children of their age. However, a proportionately large number of pupils have been admitted to the school in other years and of these about half have a special educational need. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is low but has increased since the last inspection. No pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and there are no pupils identified as being at an early stage of learning English. This is very low by national standards. Twenty per cent of pupils are on the special needs register, which is in line with the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need.

The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Pupils make good progress during their time at the school, although the school's test results do not reflect that fact. This is because of the relatively higher proportion of pupils who have been entering the school with special educational needs since the time of the last report. Learning is good because the quality of teaching is good. The quality of the leadership is very good, supported by a knowledgeable and effective governing body. Resources are used well and the principles of good value are consistently applied when making purchases. The school is very well aware of its strengths and of those areas that need development and is taking effective action to improve. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves very good standards in information and communication technology and has improved standards in science.
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with higher ability, make good progress while they are at the school.
- The leadership of the school is very good and is supported by an effective governing body
- Pupils feel secure because there is very good behaviour in and out of classes and friendly but professional relationships between the staff and pupils.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- There is a good curriculum based on thorough planning of lessons and assessment of the pupils' work is also good.
- Pupils' care and welfare is a high priority.
- There are good links with parents and the local community.

What could be improved

- The deployment of teachers so that they can use their particular strengths more efficiently and the quality of teaching can be raised to the level of the best.
- The standards in gymnastics by using a wider variety of apparatus.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1997 the school has made good improvement. Progress in learning is now good. Standards in National Curriculum tests have declined but they do not reflect the good progress that is being made. The school's intake of pupils has changed since the last inspection. There are now more pupils with special educational needs and despite the good progress that these pupils make, some of them do not reach the average Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2. Work is much more closely matched to the ability of the pupils. The good quality of planning and assessment have enhanced this. Work is presented well. Co-ordinators know what needs to be developed within their subjects. They are confident when explaining what has worked well and what needs to be improved. Consequently, work is planned to ensure that pupils learn new information each year as

well as consolidating what they already know. The headteacher and governing body have a clear view about how to move the school forward and are making the necessary moves to raise standards. In addition, there has also been an improvement in the monitoring and evaluation that the school undertakes and the overall quality of teaching. The school has procedures and systems to allow the school to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	C	C	C
mathematics	A	B	C	C
science	A	C	D	D

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

From the table above it can be seen that pupils attained average levels in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in the National Curriculum tests of 2000 and below average levels in science. This was also the case when the figures were compared with those of similar schools. More pupils have entered the school with special educational needs than was previously the case and there is a wide variety of ability in the present Year 6. This ranges from well above average to below average and is the cause of the apparent declining trend over the last three years. Taken as a group, the pupils in the present Year 6 have average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. However, all pupils including those with special educational needs and those with higher ability make good progress. Standards are well above the national expectation in all aspects of information and communication technology, above expectation in art and in line with expectation in religious education, geography, design and technology and history. Standards in physical education are above expectation in swimming but below expectation in gymnastics because pupils do not have enough opportunities to use a wide variety of different apparatus. Too few lessons were seen in music for it to be possible to judge attainment.

Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are attaining above average standards in reading, speaking and listening and science, and average standards in mathematics, religious education, design and technology, art, geography, history and physical education.

Pupils make good progress in their learning overall. It is good in reading, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art, and physical education. In all other subjects it is sound. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress against the specific learning targets they have been set.

The school has set realistic but challenging targets for pupils in each year. They are on target to achieve these.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners. They often become very absorbed in the work that they are doing and concentration levels are high.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good and sometimes in lessons it is excellent. No instances of poor behaviour were seen during the inspection. A small number of pupils challenge the authority of teachers but they are dealt with sensitively.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are excellent between pupils and with all teachers. The school is developing as an harmonious community.
Attendance	Well above average with good systems for monitoring absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching overall is good. In 95 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection it was at least satisfactory or better. In five per cent it was excellent, in 50 per cent very good, in 22 per cent good and in 18 per cent satisfactory. All the excellent teaching seen was in Key Stage 2 and it was always very good or excellent in lower Key Stage 2. However, a higher proportion of very good teaching overall was seen in Key Stage 1. There is some inconsistency in the teaching during Key Stage 2, which ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory although in 50 per cent of the lessons it was very good. This is because the teachers in upper Key Stage 2 have not been deployed effectively enough to make the best use of their expertise. The provision for teaching children in the foundation stage is well planned and incorporates the nationally recognised goals for learning as well as integrating this into National Curriculum work. Consequently, the children are well prepared for future work. Planning by all teachers is a feature of the strong teaching as well as the teaching of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. As a consequence, pupils throughout the school learn well. The majority of lessons are conducted at a good pace, and pupils are challenged to think by the quality of questioning. In the small number of cases when teaching does not challenge the level of ability then pupils begin to lose interest in their work. All teachers have good knowledge about the subjects they are teaching and are able to explain these to the wide range of abilities. Work is generally matched well to each pupil's need, especially to those with special educational needs, who often have the support of efficient classroom assistants.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school works hard to provide a balanced, broad and relevant curriculum. In this it is generally successful although aspects of gymnastics cannot be taught to the same level because there are no facilities available within the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils have thorough, well-developed plans for their individual need. These are reviewed regularly. Support is targeted well and this is one of the main reasons why they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of the school day through regular assemblies and periods of reflection at the end of some lessons. Social and moral development is fostered well. There is a common work ethic and a respect for each other's feelings and beliefs. Cultural development is catered for well through regular visits and visitors as well as explicit work in art and music. Multi-cultural development is satisfactory. The school actively tries to promote other cultures through library books and within history and religious education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. All staff know the pupils well. There are efficient systems in place to support the welfare of pupils. These range from behaviour policies to a range of rewards and sanctions aimed at promoting good behaviour. Parents are very supportive of the school and there are good links with the local community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a clear educational direction and is respected both by the teachers and by the pupils. The leadership qualities of other members of staff are also very good. Co-ordinators have a clear view about improving their subjects and share a common sense of purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body meets regularly and provides the headteacher with support but also effective challenge because they are well-informed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Effective action has been taken to make improvements, particularly since the last inspection. While the governing body has taken account of the changing profile of the school population it has yet to determine a longer term strategy to deal with this effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The principles of best value are consistently applied. Finances are closely monitored both by the headteacher and by efficient administration assistants and by the governing body. The accommodation is sufficient apart from the ability of the school to provide sufficient apparatus for gymnastics. There are sufficient teaching staff, good classroom assistants and effective administration support.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school • The progress achieved • The good behaviour • The good teaching • The information about progress • The approachability of the school • The high expectations • The way the school works with parents • The school helps their children to be mature responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework • The management and leadership • The range of activities outside of lessons

The inspection agrees with all of the positive comments. The inspection does not support the less positive views held by a small number of parents. The school makes good use of homework. It is set regularly and used well to extend the work done in class. The school benefits from the very effective leadership of the headteacher. The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plays a full part in its management. The range of activities outside of lessons is good. They are made up of a satisfactory range of extra-curricular clubs and activities and the curriculum is considerably enriched by the visits which pupils make to places of interest. In addition, many visitors come into the school, for example the 'Animal Ark', which visited during the week of the inspection.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are at average levels. Pupils enter the school with above average standards in literacy and numeracy. However, a proportionately large number of pupils enter the school during each year. Approximately half of these pupils have special educational needs and this depresses the figures overall. Consequently, in the core subjects, a larger than average number of pupils achieve the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and similarly reach the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6. Equally, a number of pupils, especially in Year 6, do not manage to achieve the average Level 4 despite the good progress that they make.
2. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attained average levels in reading when compared with all schools and with similar types of schools. They attained below average levels in writing when compared with the national average and with similar schools. Pupils in the present Year 2 are doing better. They are attaining average levels in both reading and writing, with a significant number achieving above average levels. Year 6 pupils achieved average levels in English in the 2000 National Curriculum tests. There is a similar picture in the present Year 6 although there is a significant number of pupils whose attainment is above as well as a number whose achievement is below average.
3. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measure and data handling). In 2000, National Curriculum test results were slightly higher than this for the younger children but similar for the older ones when compared with all schools. Pupils in Year 2 were below average level and Year 6 results in line with the results of similar schools. The small size and composition of the age groups in the school means that there is a significant variation in results from year to year, which makes it difficult to compare the improvement.
4. In 2000, science attainment according to the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 was well above the national average and very high when compared with similar schools. Standards in the present Year 2 continue to be above average. In 2000, National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 showed pupils' results to be below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools. Pupils in the present Year 6 generally have a higher level of ability and they are attaining above average levels for their age.
5. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above the national expectation in Information and communication technology (ICT), above average in art and in line with national expectation in religious education, geography, design and technology, history and physical education (PE). Pupils have undertaken a wide variety of work that links many of these subjects together. For instance in science, work is combined with literacy lessons and with geography and history. The themes and topics used are well developed to ensure that each subject is covered in detail and pupils can increase their level of skill and understanding. This good work is further enhanced and enriched during Key Stage 2. The teachers build upon what is already known and ensure that there is constant challenge. Consequently, standards continue to be well above the national expectation in ICT because of the very good teaching, and in line with national expectation in all other subjects. Only in gymnastics are there insufficient opportunities to develop sequences and movement, through the lack of larger and more sophisticated apparatus.

6. All pupils of whatever ability make good progress in their learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection. This progress is linked to the improvement in teachers' planning and to the way that lessons concentrate on teaching a combination of new knowledge, reinforcing what is already known and using these skills to develop each pupil's understanding. Progress is particularly good in ICT because computers are used as an intrinsic part of each lesson. Pupils are very confident with using the software and use the technology to improve their research and enquiry in subjects such as science and geography.
7. Children with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. They are well supported by the clarity and appropriateness for improvement in their individual educational plans and statements. Specific lesson planning for these children is securely based upon these. They are set suitable tasks to enable them to progress and achieve the same learning goals as other children. While the standards of these children are generally below average, a number do attain average levels in some areas, for example, in work on shape and angles in mathematics, carrying out a fair test and knowledge of magnets and electrical currents in science.
8. The school sets high targets for attainment, in agreement with the local education authority. These are likely to be achieved because they are based upon good statistical data that have been collected over a period of time.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to their work and their willingness to learn are particular strengths of the school. Pupils are keen to please their teachers; they become absorbed in their lessons and are exemplary in their enthusiasm. They work hard to come up to the expectations and the targets they are set, they settle to work quickly and without fuss and sustain this effort consistently.
10. Behaviour in lessons is very good and in many cases it is excellent. In the playground pupils are equally well behaved. They talk well, are confident and speak respectfully to adults. There are very few instances of unacceptable behaviour and there have been no exclusions during the last school year. Relationships at all levels are excellent and the atmosphere in the school is relaxed, friendly and welcoming. The school functions as a very harmonious community. Parents express their approval of the standards of behaviour achieved and say their children enjoy school.
11. Pupils' personal development is good. Children join the school with social skills which are above what might be expected for their age. They continue to make good progress throughout the rest of their time in school. They share resources, help to organise their classrooms, take their turn and work co-operatively in pairs and groups. As they move towards the top of the school they are mature and confident and require minimal supervision. They behave responsibly and enjoy helping in the day-to-day running of the school such as by answering the telephone and greeting visitors. By the time they complete their final year in the school, they are well prepared to move on to secondary education.
12. Attendance is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. Teaching overall is good. In 95 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection it was at least satisfactory or better. In five per cent it was excellent, in 50 per cent very good, in 22 per cent good and in 18 per cent satisfactory. All the excellent teaching seen was in Key Stage 2 and it

was always very good or excellent in lower Key Stage 2. However, a higher proportion of very good teaching overall was seen in Key Stage 1. There is some inconsistency in the teaching during Key Stage 2, which ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory although in 50 per cent of the lessons it was very good. This is because the teachers in upper Key Stage 2 have not been deployed effectively enough to make the best use of their expertise.

14. Teachers have good subject knowledge. It is particularly good in literacy, ICT and science. Pupils often pose very searching questions and in most cases the teachers are able to give the correct answers. An example of this was in one Year 3/4 science lesson where the teacher was asking whether a frog was prey or predator. This led to a rewarding discussion leading on to the meaning of a food chain. The quality of this questioning was well above that expected of pupils of this age. In ICT the teachers are regularly able to help pupils should they not understand what to do on the computer. When this questioning is not so challenging pupils start to lose interest. Whilst there are very few cases of misbehaviour the lesson loses its urgency and pupils become bored.
15. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught well. Teachers have had thorough training in the National Literacy Strategy and the school was one of those piloting its introduction. Teachers have secure knowledge about the format of lessons and are confident to change the planning should it be necessary to ensure that all pupils make better progress. The National Numeracy Strategy has also been introduced well. Again, teachers do not follow its recommendations doggedly but make sure that they teach appropriate work to the level of each individual. This is why all levels of ability are stretched and challenged. This means that pupils with higher ability are given very appropriate work while assistants support pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are about to undergo training that will help their planning in the use of computers in all subjects. While this will be valuable they already have a very good understanding of how this can be achieved. For instance, in the Year 5/6 class pupils readily use word-processing during literacy sessions and can find out information about work they are studying in history and geography.
16. Planning is a very strong feature in the many successful lessons. This has improved greatly since the last inspection. The long-term and medium-term plans are used to develop weekly plans ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to gain knowledge and reinforce what they already know. Long-term planning ensures that the mixed age classes have different experiences each year. Teachers plan on an individual basis and more could be achieved by refining what skills are being learned each year. In design and technology, for instance, there is no detail about how the skills in the use of tools will be built upon through each yeargroup. Despite this, the teachers spend time evaluating the success of their lessons and then reviewing what needs to be altered in light of this. In this way, pupils are consistently challenged.
17. In general, teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Expectations are very good in Key Stage 1 where the younger pupils have good opportunities to develop their personal skills as well as starting work within the National Curriculum. Here there is a very well balanced curriculum. The younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are consistently challenged by the work they are set and the teacher ensures that pupils understand what is expected of them. The older pupils in the juniors are not always challenged by the work that they are set. In one numeracy session the teacher spent too long talking about what needed to be done and this gave the pupils little time to complete it. The tasks for Year 5 were too limited and a significant number of pupils became restless. At other times the level of expectation is very high. At the end of one morning session with Year 5/6 the pupils had to explain what they thought had been achieved and in particular were asked whether they thought they had done their best or what could have been improved. This gave pupils the opportunity to take charge of their own learning by questioning their commitment to the work.

18. Pupils are managed well in the juniors but very well in the infants. Only minor restlessness and lack of attention were noted during the whole inspection. When this happened it was linked to the quality of teaching and the lack of sufficiently stimulating work. In general, pupils concentrate very well and the pace of lessons is very high. Often when undertaking individual work pupils are silent throughout the classroom. This has not been imposed by the teacher but is because the pupils are so focused upon what they are doing. In this way they acquire very good levels of factual knowledge and understanding based on consolidating the skills that they are learning.
19. Teachers use supportive classroom assistants very well. Their time is planned in discussion with classteachers and they have a good understanding about what is expected of them. They are asked to contribute ideas about how to develop the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and this is incorporated into the work. They keep comprehensive records about what they see and these are used to identify improvements.
20. Pupils value the homework they are set. This ranges from reading and spellings to written work and research. They know what is expected and when it should be returned. In most cases this is used in subsequent lessons so that pupils are aware of its usefulness in improving their learning.
21. Teachers use methods which give good support for children with special educational needs. Lesson plans take account of their differing needs and provide them with every opportunity of achieving the lesson learning goals. Their learning is well supported by classroom assistants who are well trained and briefed. Children are fully integrated into lessons and teachers show good skills in involving them in question and discussion sessions. An example of this was during a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson. The learning assistant supported a pupil in consolidating and extending learning of fractional parts with tasks planned by the teacher. This demonstrated a good 'step-by-step' approach and by making reference to the pupils previous success in this area enabled him to make good progress.

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

22. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The school is providing an appropriate range of learning opportunities for all children. The whole-school planning, based on a three-year cycle, ensures that children's new learning is securely based upon what they already know and understand and that they do not repeat work previously covered.
23. The revised curriculum has been particularly effective in improving skills of enquiry, in, for example science and in making ICT an important resource in their learning. All the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education are met. There is good provision for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, which enables all children to achieve to the best of their ability and supports the good progress of those with special educational needs.
24. Appropriate learning activities are provided for children under five. They relate to the recommended areas of learning and are effective in helping them achieve the early learning goals. Lesson planning, which is based upon practical tasks, is in line with the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. For example, speaking and listening activities are based upon the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar'.

25. The provision for children with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator manages this aspect very efficiently. Annual reviews for children with statements of special educational needs are in line with the national Code of Practice. Individual educational plans are in place. These are detailed and carefully identify the needs of individual children, which enables classroom teacher to plan suitable work for them to make good progress.
26. The equality of access to all curriculum and other opportunities the school provides is very good. Lessons provide different levels of tasks matched to children's ages and abilities. These, the good teaching and well directed learning support give all children the chance of achieving the learning objectives in lessons. Children have equal access to extra-curricular clubs, are given opportunities to take responsibility and provided with facilities to suit their particular developmental needs. For example, a playground area has been set aside for children who prefer quiet games and hand rails have been fitted to assist children with physical disabilities.
27. A good range of extra-curricular activities is organised. There is a biennial residential visit for older children to Kilvrough in South Wales, involvement in singing festivals and opportunities to learn to play the recorder. Sporting clubs include netball, basketball, football, cricket, tennis and athletics. A mini Olympics in the summer term for junior children has introduced an element of competitiveness into the school sporting calendar.
28. There is good provision for personal, social and health education. Health education includes lesson for older children on sex education and the misuse of drugs such as tobacco and alcohol. The importance of a balanced diet and need for exercise are taught as part of the science curriculum on healthy life styles. Children are regularly reminded of safe practices when moving equipment, experimenting and creating.
29. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The high quality of this is reflected in the excellent relationships between all those connected with the school. Particularly good is the high level of spirituality within lessons based on a shared ethos of trust, caring and enquiry.
30. Spiritual development is promoted through collective worship that helps children to develop self-knowledge and belief - for instance, through recollection of events which support Christian beliefs of God's love. Children have many chances to reflect on important things in their lives such as the birth of a sister or brother, their achievements are celebrated and other children and teachers value their ideas. Through the support of charities such as 'Crisis at Christmas' they learn to appreciate the plight of less fortunate people and gain some insight into fundamental questions of life.
31. Social and moral development is firmly based on the importance of everyone at the school. Children learn to work well together, take responsibility and understand the good and bad affects their actions have on others. They have many chances to air their views and contribute to mutually important issues such as codes of behaviour. They clearly distinguish between right and wrong and accept that rules are an essential part of living, working and playing together in harmony. The caption in the entrance, that the way to be happy is to make others happy, reflects many of the acts of kindness and support that are a regular feature of life at the school. This is extended beyond school for instance when children help at the annual dinner for elderly village residents.
32. The school has many links with the village that provide good support to children's cultural development. It contributes the monthly magazine, is involved in village activities such as the Millennium celebrations, and has very close links with the church. Visit to such places as Oxford, Maypole dancing, musical festivals, teaching about Victorian and twentieth century

history and the use of classic tales in English lessons promote children's knowledge and understanding of their own culture. The school has made a great effort to ensure that children know about other cultures. In a literacy lesson, stories such as 'Whistling Thorn' and 'Amazing Grace' and the use of hand puppets to help describe the different way of life of others, taught children about the diversity of other cultures. Through the study of other faiths, in religious education, children begin to understand the beliefs and customs of people who are a part of our multicultural society.

33. The school aims to develop children's academic, personal, physical and aesthetic potential to the full to help them towards living a full life and becoming responsible adults. The good quality of the curriculum provides the opportunities to meet these aspirations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school has very good procedures for pupils' care and welfare and these are based on the excellent relationships and trust between adults and pupils. Teachers know the children very well as individuals and are able to respond quickly to their needs. The procedures for child protection are well organised, led by the head teacher. The school's health and safety policy and procedures are also carried out very thoroughly. All matters related to management responsibilities, classroom safety, fire drills, first aid, medicines and general welfare are dealt with very consistently. The governors and staff carry out risk assessments and inspections at regular intervals.
35. The systems for the improvement and management of behaviour are very effective. The rules are clear, agreed with the pupils and then posted in the classrooms. The expectations are clearly understood. Teachers, classroom assistants and mid-day supervisors are very good role models. The head teacher is always on duty in the playground and this means that he is able to encourage positive relationships and behaviour and is very quickly aware of any problems arising. The school is a friendly place to be and parents approve of the standards of behaviour achieved.
36. The procedures for assessment are very thorough. Individual records are kept and the school has linked these to a development of more rigorous analysis. This is much improved since the last inspection. Pupils undertake a range of various tests including some in each year. These are being collated to determine where help should be targeted. The special needs co-ordinator is working very hard to compile data about the increasing number of pupils who need support. This is ensuring that all pupils are able to progress well in their learning. Effective and consistent systems that comply with the current Code of Practice identify and assess their particular needs. This ensures that their progress is supported by targets that are securely based upon what they already know and can do. These are regularly reviewed and updated. Children are fully involved in this process, which provides them with fresh challenges and the incentive to improve. In addition, a register is also being compiled of gifted or talented pupils who require extra support.
37. The procedures for recording academic, personal development, attendance and behaviour are very good and most pupils receive appropriate support to help them achieve their best. Just a few, the older high ability pupils, could be given more support to achieve their very best. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified, receive good support and make good progress as a result. Good records are built up so that detail of their progress is available for review meetings with parents and for further target setting.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents have very positive views about what the school does for their children and the quality of education it provides. A very high proportion of the questionnaires were completed and returned to the school and this in itself is indicative of the very good relationships which exists between them. Parents are very happy with the progress made, the behaviour, the quality of teaching, the information they receive, and the approachability of staff. A few are less happy about the amount of homework given and the range of activities outside of lessons. A small number are less happy with the school's leadership and management but the inspection did not support these views.
39. Parents are given a very good range of information about the school and what their children are doing. As their children join the school, parents are given a tour of the premises and are given the prospectus, which explains how the school is organised and describes the curriculum. Most information about day-to-day matters is passed on through individual letters and there is a monthly newsletter, which is also reproduced in the village magazine and on the school's web site. The newsletters also contain information about forthcoming topics and the detailed planning for these topics are posted in all of the classrooms so that parents can view it at any time. Although pupils come from an area wider than just the village of Stoke Row, most are brought to and from school by their parents and so there are informal opportunities for parents to talk to staff at the start or end of the day. More formal meetings with class teachers take place during the autumn and summer terms, and these are very well attended by parents. The pupils' annual reports give a satisfactory review of progress and these are further supplemented by the 'Blue Books' which also give a summary of progress and effort, approximately every half-term. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully informed about progress and involved in discussing their targets.
40. The very positive relationships between the school and home ensure that parents make a very valued contribution to the life of the school and what it achieves. The Home School Association is very active and its organisers arrange regular and well-attended social events. A highlight of the summer term is the end of year barbecue, when parents, children and staff all gather and celebrate before the holidays begin. As well as creating a sense of community, their efforts also make a significant contribution to school funds and these are spent directly on resources for the benefit of the pupils. For example, in the past these funds have been used to buy new furniture, playground equipment and pay for theatre visits. The school also seeks parents' involvement in the classroom and their help with visits. There is a good response to these requests. The school has many links with the local community and is involved in many local activities. These too, reflect well on the school and enhance its reputation.
41. Parents feel very positive about the education their children receive and play a productive part in it themselves. Homework is well supported by most parents and they are keen to attend and discuss progress at the consultation meetings, particularly where their children have special educational needs. Parents are keen to ensure their children come to school regularly and this is reflected in the well above average figures for attendance.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The leadership of the school is very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision about what needs to be done to improve the standards of pupils as well as the provision and quality of education. In this he is supported by a good team of teachers who fully support the objectives and aims of the school. Its success can be seen in the quality of relationships among the school community and the attitude of pupils towards achieving their best. As this is a small staff the

senior management responsibilities are limited. However, there is a clear line of delegation and other, more junior members of staff play their part in supporting this. There is a shared approach to decisions and a commitment and capacity to improve. This is demonstrated through the way that all teachers are involved in planning the curriculum and in ensuring that pupils make progress. Subject co-ordinators also have a clear vision about their own subjects. In discussion they can talk confidently about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and how they intend to make improvements. They have a clear view about why funding is directed towards certain priorities and have an input into the school development plan which lays out improvements over three years.

43. The governing body support the school's aims and objectives. They are very effective in fulfilling their statutory duties. This is based on good information provided by the school and by questioning decisions. They ensure that they are fully informed by asking for further information and regular reports. The financial decisions are particularly well formulated. Monthly statements are provided by an experienced bursar and scrutinised carefully. They always look for the best value when making spending decisions and have managed to keep a healthy balance for emergencies. While this is high, the school is very aware that the numbers in a small school can fluctuate dramatically. They want to ensure that they are able to keep stable staffing levels over a five-year period and do not have to jeopardise the good learning that is taking place in the school.
44. They have helped shape the direction of improvements and have supported the headteacher in his drive to raise achievement. They are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have acted fully upon the key issues from the last report. They have not been so thorough in developing a strategic plan to deal with the changing profile of the intake of the school. They have sometimes acted on impulse to suggestion rather than basing decisions upon a longer-term plan. An example of this is the decision to split the teaching time in the older Year 5/6 class. The headteacher takes this class for three days while two other part-time teachers are employed for one day each week. Unfortunately, this does not utilise the expertise of all personnel to the best effect and consequently there are inconsistencies within the quality of teaching.
45. All teachers are involved in monitoring teaching. This allows them to evaluate the good practice that is going on as well as providing valuable advice. The quality of this monitoring is good and focuses on the correct developments. It has helped improve the quality and teaching of lessons, for the literacy hour in particular. It has been linked well to the appraisal of performance and is further supported by advice from the local education authority. New staff are fully supported and feel that they have had a thorough introduction to new methods. They are quickly assimilated into the life of the school.
46. The school has set targets which are on line to be achieved over the next two years. They are based on the good systems for analysing achievement and take account of the larger numbers of special educational needs pupils who come from further afield than the local village.
47. Special educational needs are carefully monitored by the co-ordinator, who keeps a close watch on the progress of these children. Teachers are kept up to date with changes in needs, immediate problems are quickly and effectively dealt with and ways of meeting specific needs regularly discussed with staff. The annual review of statements and the planning and review of individual education plans are undertaken in accordance with the Code of Practice. The governing body fulfils its statutory obligation to include details of the school policy for special needs in the annual report to parents. The school policy document is a brief statement of provision. It sets out the school's stance on integration and inclusion for these children and includes brief details of arrangements for meeting their needs. There is no reference to the

name of the special needs co-ordinator, the Oxfordshire Code of Practice, the various stages or identification of all the external support services available to support learning. Overall, it is unsatisfactory but is presently under review. Actual provision and practice are good and better than the details and aspirations of the policy. The school development plan includes reference to special needs in response to parental concern regarding the relatively high proportion of these children in the school. Meetings have been held by the governing body to address this matter.

48. There is a sufficient number of teaching staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and this is enhanced by the good number and quality of support staff. The administration of the school is very efficient and the secretary provides a personable and professional first 'port of call'. The financial administration is equally efficient, through the combined services of the secretary and a bursar employed from the local education authority. The school is kept well maintained through the services of a caretaker and dinners are supervised by effective dinner supervisors.
49. The accommodation is sufficient although there is no dedicated hall that can be used for assemblies or gymnastics. This means that pupils do not have sufficient access to the use of large apparatus and, in discussion, it was noted that pupils moving to their next school find the use of this equipment daunting in the first instance. The library is of a good size and is stocked well with appropriate fiction and non-fiction material. Resources for the school are good, particularly for ICT. There are no significant deficiencies for any subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, governors and staff should:-

- Find ways of improving the deployment of teachers in years 5 and 6 and ensuring that the quality of teaching is raised to the level of the best by:
 - determining the particular strengths of those involved;
 - developing and implementing a long-term plan for deployment that will ensure that pupils make the best progress in all subjects;
 - evaluating its effectiveness and taking appropriate action.

(See particularly paragraphs 13 - 21 and 44 of the main report)

- Ensure that pupils make better progress in gymnastics by:
 - finding ways of providing the pupils with experience in using large apparatus.

(See particularly paragraphs 106 - 109 of the main report)

In addition to the key issues above the governors should also consider the following minor points:-

- Reviewing the policy for special educational needs *(Para. 47)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

22

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

19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	50	22	18	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	68
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	13

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.9
National comparative data	94.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	8	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	12	12	14
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (87)	86 (93)	100 (87)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	6	8	8
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	12	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (93)	100 (87)	100 (87)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	5	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	4	3	4
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	9	7	9
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (70)	64 (80)	82 (80)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	82 (80)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	4	3	4
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	9	8	9
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (90)	73 (80)	82 (90)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	68
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	148289
Total expenditure	151926
Expenditure per pupil	2202
Balance brought forward from previous year	34657
Balance carried forward to next year	31020

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	68
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	30	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	34	4	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	43	11	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	25	19	15	2
The teaching is good.	57	40	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	8	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	30	0	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	0	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	58	6	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	51	28	9	9	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	40	2	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	42	21	13	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

51. The school makes good provision for these children. Their progress is well supported by the clear and careful planning and the high quality of teaching and classroom assistant support. A good foundation is laid for the National Curriculum.
52. At the time of the inspection there were one full-time and five part-time under five children in the infant class. The part-time children attend school for one half day each week. On entry most have achieved a range of the early learning goals through attendance at pre-school playgroups. Oxfordshire baseline assessment shows that overall the achievement of these children is above average when they begin school. The school makes good provision made for the recommended areas of learning. The teacher plans separately for them, using the Foundation Curriculum, and has good systems in place to assess their progress. For much of the time they are supported by the learning support assistant, who has nursery-nursing qualifications. Her support is very effective and is securely founded on the very good liaison with the teacher about the organisation of suitable activities. The teacher allocates an appropriate amount of her time exclusively to these children. The resources to support learning are good. There is a fenced area for outdoor play and wheeled toys to support outdoor activities. Limited evidence is available to judge achievement in some of the areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development.

53. Most children have achieved a significant number of goals in this area. All children can dress independently and manage their own personal hygiene. They understand what is right and wrong and respond appropriately to simple rules such as putting a hand up to answer a question. They work together when running the class Post Office and take turns sensibly when making handprints. They are keen to learn and are able to concentrate when their interest is engaged, for instance at story time. Levels of confidence vary, but most are happy to participate with older children in class activities such as counting. Adults provide good role models by treating each other and the children with respect and courtesy. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to understand one another's point of view, for example when discussing whether they are right or left-handed.

Language and literacy

54. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with others and adults. This leads to sound progress towards achieving the learning goals in this area. When following a familiar story they answer questions clearly and in a structured manner. All know that print carries meaning and show an understanding of the elements of the story, such as the main characters and objects involved. The teacher had organised a stimulating range of activities around the well-known story of the hungry caterpillar. The use of a story bag with models of the characters and cut outs of other objects stimulated a number of learning opportunities. For instance, pupils learned about colour recognition, familiar and unfamiliar objects such as ice cream and salami and about size, as the bloated caterpillar ate more and more. Children learned new words and recognition of these and the initial letter sound 'c' was consolidated by the teacher in a very good follow up session.

Mathematical Development.

55. Foundation children take part in oral numeracy sessions at the beginning of the lesson. Most show they recognise the names of numbers in familiar contexts, can count reliably up to ten, use language such as 'more', 'less', 'bigger,' etc. correctly and compare two numbers or quantities. They recognise common shapes and have some understanding of grouping similar things together. Counting rhymes such as 'Ten in a Bed' are regularly used to support and consolidate learning in this area. Most of the part-time children have achieved at least half of the early learning goals in this area whilst almost all have been achieved by the full-time child.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

56. Children are given opportunities to explore and investigate. For instance they test to find which things float and sink and learn about the life cycle of a butterfly. They are interested in new words such as 'cocoon' and 'cycle' and are able to give simple, sensible definitions of their meaning. The children know where they live and, through stories and discussion, understand some of the important needs of living things. With adult support they use computers to support their learning. Plans show that work is planned to meet the other learning goals in this area of learning.

Physical development.

57. Observations during playtime showed these children moving with confidence, imagination and safety. They handle tools such as scissors safely and with increasing control, for example when cutting out butterfly shapes. They are able to draw and orientate letters as seen, for instance, when they were writing letters on the board during the teacher session about the initial consonant 'c'. Other areas of learning were not observed but are fully covered in curricular planning.

Creative development.

58. Children made handprints during which they learned about colour, texture and shape. Opportunities are provided for them to play imaginatively in the class Post Office. During the caterpillar story they responded creatively when handling the story models. Plans show that over time all the learning goals will be effectively covered.

ENGLISH

59. Pupils in the present Year 2 are doing better than last year's National Curriculum test results indicate. They are attaining average levels in both reading and writing and a significant number are achieving above average levels. Year 6 pupils achieved average levels in English in the Year 2000 national tests. There is a similar picture in the present Year 6, although a significant number of pupils have attainment above average and a number whose achievement is below average.
60. Speaking and listening skills across the school are above average. Younger pupils are able to express their ideas coherently and listen attentively to one another. They take note of the previous answer before asking supplementary questions. The activities that they are given ensure that they make good progress in this area. The teacher ensures that these pupils have many opportunities to describe and think about what they are saying and insists on a high level of vocabulary. Older pupils in Year 3-6 progress well. They form sentences carefully and use a very wide range of vocabulary. Their experiences from reading mean that they often have extended vocabulary. They are able to listen to what is being said and react accordingly. They

are confident to speak out loud in groups. Teachers give them opportunities to express themselves through lessons, assemblies and play reading.

61. Pupils in Year 2 read well. In the Year 1/2 class the majority of pupils were able to read out loud from the big book and their comprehension skill was good. They are beginning to make some inference such as from missing words. In the Year 3/4 class this was demonstrated through a lesson with less able pupils. The teacher asked about their understanding and the pupils were able to answer using the clues from the text and from their own understanding of sentence construction. The majority of the oldest pupils in Year 6 are confident, technical readers. They can talk about a range of books they have read and can describe the qualities of different authors. This is a level above that which might be expected for their age.
62. There is a big gap between the most able readers and a significant number who have more difficulty. Pupils in the latter group are not able to read fluently and have difficulty sounding out words. They only know the basic story line and cannot describe the type of books they like with any certainty. This is below the level expected. Despite this, all pupils make good progress in their reading from the wide range of different opportunities that are offered during literacy lessons and in other subjects. All pupils are interested in what they are reading and enjoy any time they have.
63. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have average levels of writing skill and their progress is sound. They present their work carefully and are gaining increasing confidence in their stories. A good number of pupils in Year 2 are able to write at length and can include some description to add excitement. They can use writing in different styles such as poems, letters and reports. They have few difficulties in forming letter shapes and work is presented neatly. Pupils in Years 3-6 make sound progress from the start given to them in Years 1 and 2. Good proportions of pupils are writing with an increasing confidence in a wide range of styles. Their stories are based on good plans and contain a wide range of descriptive vocabulary. This is used to provide suspense. Grammar is well constructed and a number of pupils in Year 6 use paragraphs, direct and indirect speech to good effect.
64. Literacy is used well throughout other subjects. In geography and history there are examples of extended evaluations. Pupils are able to précis information in their own words and can produce lengthy topics. They are able to use word-processors with a high degree of expertise. Older pupils treat this work as second nature and independently complete their work on computers.
65. Teaching overall is good. Teachers' plans closely conform to the National Literacy Strategy. The balance of the work is good and it is geared towards stretching the most able while at the same time reinforcing knowledge that pupils with special educational needs are not certain about. In all the lessons seen concentration levels were high. Pupils often support each other and work very quietly. They are focused on what they are doing because the teachers set clear tasks that are expected to be achieved by the end of the lesson. Marking is constructive. In the best cases in Years 1 and 2 and Year 3 and 4 this also indicates significant steps that have been achieved. These are shared with the pupils but also give the teacher the opportunity to analyse them for assessment purposes. Subsequent work can then be altered to ensure that tasks are consistently challenging. Pupils have a good understanding of their own weaknesses because teachers are able to talk these through. In the best cases in Years 5 and 6 pupils have a short time for reflection at the end of sessions to explain whether they feel they have done their best work and how it can be improved the following day. Pupils with special educational needs have good levels of support. This includes specific literacy targets for literacy.
66. The newly appointed co-ordinator for literacy has the benefit of an experienced teacher to help maintain continuity. Together they have devised a good development plan for the subject and

have set the correct priorities. Resources for the library are good. There is also a good range of books and other material available in the classroom.

MATHEMATICS

67. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measure and data handling). In 2000, National Curriculum test results were slightly higher than this for the younger children but similar for the older ones when compared with all schools.
68. Standards of attainment do not give a clear picture of the quality of the work in mathematics. Approximately one-fifth of the school population is on the register of special education needs. The attainment of these children is below average and, in some cases, well below average, although the quality of teaching and support they receive enables them to make good progress. There are twelve children in the current Year 6 group of whom one-third have individual educational plans to support their special needs. Of the remainder a significant number are attaining above, and some, well above the standards expected. For example, they use difficult fractional parts to interpret pie charts and understand equivalencies between fractions, decimals and percentages. The high levels of attainment by these more able children have been achieved despite the lack of expectations and support for them in some lessons.
69. Using and applying numeracy to solve mathematical problems and in other subjects and the use of ICT to support learning are particular strengths. Lessons regularly contain work dealing with real situations such as shopping, collecting data, representing them in diagrams and graphs and applying time and distance to journeys undertaken. In other subjects numeracy is used when measuring the height of plants in science, understanding concepts such as the present, recent and distant past in history and the use of scale in geography.
70. ICT is established in the school as an important resource and in every lesson children were seen making good use of it to support their learning, for instance, in compiling graphs, learning about number patterns and shapes. There are no significant weaknesses, although the understanding of angle as a measurement of turn is not understood by many younger children.
71. While the quality of teaching is good overall it could be better in some lessons with the older children. Some teachers are not entirely secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, particularly how to use it in classes with three age groups and a wide range of ability. This is shown in some of the mental work with the older children when teaching fails to involve all children, there are low expectations of the more able and little new learning. There is also a weakness in the limited chances for children to talk about the methods used and consider alternatives. The lack of pace and enthusiasm in some of these sessions hinders the level and speed of children's learning and sometimes leads to inattention and lack of interest. In all other lessons mental sessions are good and sometimes very good. Children enjoy learning fresh, quick methods for calculating such as rounding up or down, doubling, halving numbers and using the place value of figures. Many children in Year 5 and Year 6 reach high standards of mental agility when, for example, dividing and multiplying numbers with two and three places of decimals by 10 or 100.
72. Planning is very good; lessons invariably get off to an interesting start when what is to be learned is discussed between teacher and children. Most teachers have effective teaching methods. For instance in a lesson with Year 3 and Year 4 the teacher was quick to spot children having difficulty adding and subtracting three-figure numbers and quickly organised additional teaching with resultant good learning of the place value of figures. A teacher used

very good teaching techniques when supporting a group of Year 6 children in a lesson. There were visible signs of their confidence growing as they learned how to find the areas of triangles by viewing them as halves of squares and rectangles. Children are managed well, usually through the motivating nature of the content of the lesson and the challenges teachers set them. For example, in a Year 4, 5 and 6 lesson clear targets were set, children were encouraged to use resources such as calculators and to work independently. This resulted in very good learning through concentration, productivity and ability to tackle difficulties. By the end of the lesson skill, knowledge and understanding of pie and line graphs had improved considerably.

73. Teachers use resources are used very efficiently. There are clear methods in place for setting work out in books and good attention given to correct figure formation. Children use ICT confidently, independently and very competently and teachers have good methods of checking what they have learnt from the programs they have used. When a screen robot was being used in the Year 4, 5 and 6 class to draw shapes, good learning was promoted when children were asked to explain the way it had been programmed and predict what might happen if an element were changed. Classroom assistants are used very effectively, especially to support the progress of children with special educational needs. When supporting a Year 6 boy with work on fractions, the assistants, by using a step-by-step approach and reference back to what the pupil had previously learned about halves and quarters, ensured good progress.
74. The quality and use of ongoing assessment are very good. That was characterised by the many ways applied by the Year 1/2 teacher to confirm children are progressing and her use of this information to plan future lessons. This enabled her to identify some counting difficulties and, in the main part of the lesson, problems a few children had in answering questions about a graph on favourite crisp flavours. Marking is also used extremely well in this class and the Year 3/4 class. Comments not only encourage the children but also often suggest ways in which they can improve. Another good feature of mathematics is the regular use made of homework to support lessons, provide opportunities to extend learning and involve parents in children's education.
75. The curricular leadership has improved significantly since the last inspection and planning throughout the school is now consistent. This ensures that new learning is built securely on what children know and understand. There are good systems in place to track children's learning as they progress through the school. Targets for improvement, based on assessment and agreed between children and staff, are beneficial in supporting learning. Lesson evaluation helps the co-ordinator to identify areas for development which are then put forward for inclusion in the school improvement plan.

SCIENCE

76. In 2000, science attainment according to the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 was well above the national average and very high when compared with similar schools. Standards continue to be above average. In 2000, National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' were below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools. The standards of the present Year 6 pupils have improved and they are now attaining above average levels.
77. Attainment in scientific enquiry and investigation is particularly good in both age groups. Literacy and numeracy skills are used effectively in science. This is evident in the listening and talking sessions and in the way children record their work. Numeracy skills help them to measure accurately, for instance, amounts of water in millilitres when investigating the waterproofing properties of materials. ICT is used extremely well to support learning, for

instance when Year 3/4 children use computer programs to research about animals which had been brought into school by the 'Animal Ark'.

78. Year 2 children know the importance of taking exercise and eating the right kinds of food to keep healthy. They sort materials such as wood, paper, plastic and metal into groups based on simple scientific criteria such as hardness, softness and flexibility. Most understand the meaning of an investigation, how to observe what happens and write down simple conclusions such as 'The force of air moved the paper'. Most can explain changes they observe, such as what happens when a plant is not watered or when a material such as chocolate changes when heated.
79. Year 6 children know how to work methodically through a scientific enquiry. They know how to carry out a fair test and can predict the outcomes if an element in an enquiry is changed. For example, when finding out about the differences in temperature and wind speed in and around the school their conclusions recognised that the time of the year and the time of the day were important factors. In their work on opaque, transparent and translucent properties and on seed dispersal and food chains, these children show they have good knowledge and understanding of materials and life processes.
80. Overall, the teaching is very good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, write lesson plans with clear learning objectives which children understand, have high expectations and challenge and inspire the children to learn. In the Year 1/2 class there was very good new learning in the lesson about air as a force. Interesting pictures were used and a wide-ranging discussion took place to introduce the topic. Children were made aware of and understood exactly what they were expected to learn. This had been carefully based upon their existing knowledge and understanding. Very good resources had been organised and the tasks well matched to the differences in age and abilities. When blowing through a straw at different objects to see which ones they could move, children had the chance to learn by using their own ideas and methods. For example; 'When I blow can I move the smaller objects further than the bigger ones?' 'Does the direction I blow from make a difference?' Bubble blowing and the demonstration of the wind force of a hair dryer were other ingredients which made the lesson such a success. Throughout, the teaching and the classroom assistant support were of very high quality
81. The previous days' visit of the 'Animal Ark' to the school was used extremely well in the lesson with Year 3/4 children to improve their scientific knowledge and understanding. The very good teaching resulted in most children learning the definitions of predator, prey, producer and consumer by the end of the lesson. Learning about food chains was well developed through the high quality of questioning and the use of children's contributions. Good learning took place when children responded enthusiastically to the tasks they were given, worked at a good pace, concentrated hard and were productive. The teacher showed very good skills when supporting different groups. She used the time as an opportunity to assess what children had achieved, to remind them of her high expectations and suggest other resources they might use such as computer programmes. Children using these showed very good ICT skills. There was very good support for children with special educational needs, who made good progress during the lesson. The classroom assistant had been extremely well briefed before the lesson and showed good step-by-step teaching techniques as she helped these children towards achieving the lesson goals. The use of a graphic picture of a cheetah attacking a wildebeest brought a dramatic element into an extremely successful lesson.
82. The planning for science is now consistent and builds upon children's skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The use of a three-year cycle of topics ensures that children do not repeat work previously covered. There are good systems in place for assessing children's attainment and these enable the school to plan targets for improvement.

The subject is well resourced and the school makes good use of resources beyond the school, such as Didcot Power Station and science resources at Bracknell. The school also participates in science workshops held in other schools. A good feature of the science in the school is the manner in which teachers relate it to the everyday life of the children. For instance, when a visitor from 'Create' supported children in conducting an audit of energy waste in the school, writing an action plan of improvement and evaluating the results.

ART AND DESIGN

83. Pupils' standards by the end of Year 2 are as nationally expected and above the national expectation by the end of Year 6. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. This is because of the good range of opportunities that is given by classteachers in the regular lessons. The improvement since the last inspection is due to the more focused time that is given to learning particular skills.
84. In the younger class, pupils are taught to use paints and brushes. They are given exercises that help build their confidence. These are very often linked to topics or themes in other subjects. Pupils show good skill. They can blend colours and know which shades to use to enliven their paintings. They can talk about a range of different media that they have used, including pastels and pencils. In the older classes the pupils build upon these earlier experiences. They are able to use their understanding of life drawing to enhance topicwork in geography and history. Work is well presented and care is taken to ensure that they follow the teacher's explanations. Good examples of different styles are on display and the pupils are pleased with the way that teachers value their work. They can talk about some artists that they have studied and are beginning to discriminate among those pictures that they like and give explanations for this. Computer art is used well. Pupils are able to use the painting programs to help them draw, shade and tone pictures.
85. All pupils progress well because the teaching is good. The skills learnt at each stage of the school are usually built upon continuously and this helps ensure that pupils understand the reasons for the decisions that they are making. They enjoy art lessons and look forward to them. They are good at working independently. Even the youngest pupils are able to gather together any resources that they need and often work for extended periods on their drawings. They are highly motivated in doing their best work and this is demonstrated in the work on display and in their own books and sketchpads. Teachers plan the activities to link other work that is going on and are conscientious about ensuring that sufficient time is given to the subject. There is no overall plan that shows which art skills will be developed each year and so teachers tend to work in isolation from each other. However, work closely follows the nationally agreed syllabus and the curriculum is in the process of being reviewed.
86. The co-ordinator for the subject has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the subject and has a clear view about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Resources for the subject are adequate and teachers ensure that they are all available when lessons take place. When possible these are laid out to ensure that pupils can choose what they need and this helps build their independence.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. Pupils reach standards that are in accord with national expectation at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. As in art, pupils are taught particular skills as the basis for the exercises that they are doing. This might include food technology such as making cakes or by assembling models.

88. Younger pupils have the opportunity to make moving models and use various types of paper engineering such as hinges and flaps. Older pupils in the juniors are also given regular sessions with an assistant who helps them understand woodworking tools. These sessions are very good. During the inspection a group of pupils was making a small bird table. They were using a wide range of tools including saws and hammers. They were being asked to measure and mark the wood prior to building their models. Pupils of all abilities showed good levels of competence and were able to talk enthusiastically about safety issues to do with sharp tools.
89. Pupils' progress is sound throughout the school. Over the past two terms teachers have planned a variety of activities. These include, with the older pupils, the opportunity to take objects apart to see how they work and then redesign their own models in light of what they find. They also have the opportunity to develop more skills through a range of visits and visitors who have become involved in the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are particularly keen to undertake practical activities. When they are involved in these the levels of concentration are extremely high. There are no incidences of bad behaviour because of these high interest levels. Teachers give clear explanations of what they want the class to do and have sufficient subject expertise to answer any difficult explanations. In the juniors they do not always give sufficient time to the disassembly element of the subject or to evaluating how designs can be improved.
90. The curriculum for the subject follows the national guidelines closely and work is being done to improve this even further. The subject has improved since the time of the last inspection, especially in the range of tools and media that are now available. The school is very aware of the need to develop this subject and is ensuring that it is allied to work in other subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

91. By the ages of seven and eleven children are achieving standards in line with the National Curriculum targets appropriate for their age. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection, although there has been a significant improvement in the planning for the subject. Although only one lesson was seen, work done this school year was analysed and some Year 6 children took part in a detailed discussion about geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. However, it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching.
92. By the age of seven children have studied geography on a local scale. They have learned about how weather influences the types of clothes people wear and the activities they pursue. Through drawing maps of their way to school, for example, and studying maps of other places, they have learned to recognise features which give places their character, such as rivers, hills and coastlines. They know the countries of the British Isles and have an awareness of places beyond their own locality. The study they have made of Africa, linked to stories they have heard, has given them an understanding of similar and different characteristics of contrasting places - for instance, climate, animals and people. In sequencing the production of bananas and the growing of corn they have some knowledge of how location affects the lives of people.
93. By the age of eleven children are able to describe and compare climate, vegetation, animals and human features of localities which contrast with their own - for example, the Amazon Rain Forests. They have a sound knowledge of the continents, oceans and important countries in the world and can name and locate important places in the United Kingdom. Most understand how to use keys, direction and scale when interpreting maps and are confident when searching for information in an atlas. They recognise physical and human processes - for instance, the landscape changes caused by rivers and the types of farming in the immediate locality. Following the visit of the 'Animal Ark' they used a range of geographical skills to investigate places and environments from which some of the animals come.

94. Curricular planning is good and all the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000 are covered. A sound scheme of work ensures that new learning is built on what children already know and understand. Children of all ages use ICT confidently and competently to research topics. Other resources are good and the school makes effective use of visits, such as the residential week in South Wales, to study geography first hand.

HISTORY

95. By the age of seven and eleven children are achieving standards in line with the National Curriculum targets for their age. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Although only one lesson was observed, the current years work was analysed and Year 6 children took part in a detailed discussion about their skill, knowledge and understanding of history.
96. Year 2 children have a sound understanding of the passing of time. They have compared toys in Victorian times with those of today and learned how classrooms have changed over this period. They show knowledge of aspects of history beyond living memory through the study of people such as Guy Fawkes. They distinguish between past and present within their own lives through, for example, learning about the history of 'Mother's Day'. For this lesson each child had been asked to bring a photograph of his or her mother. The teacher used this very successfully by relating it to the origins of the celebration. The lesson planning, use of resources, class organisation and the management of children were good. What children were expected to learn was shared with them at the beginning and, at the end, their success in achieving these goals was checked effectively by good questioning and discussion. This resulted in most children learning more about everyday historical terms such as the *near* and *distant past, origin* and *annual*.
97. Year 6 children have a good knowledge of aspects of the history of Britain and the wider world. They are able to fit major historical events such as the World Wars, Vikings, Victorians and Ancient Egyptians into a time scale. Through the in-depth study of features of past societies and famous people, they can identify changes and important discoveries which have influenced the lives of people - for example, Egyptian culture, Joan of Arc and the development of the motorcar. They show some understanding of how the past is represented through pictures, photographs, museum display and ancient relics. By comparing the world map of today with one of the 16th Century, for instance, they show they can interpret historical evidence when linking important journeys of discovery.
98. The curricular planning has improved since the last inspection and all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. There is a good scheme of work, based upon a three-year cycle of topics. This ensures that, as children move through the school, learning is built securely on what they know and understand and that they do not repeat work. Resources are good and the school makes effective use of resources beyond the school through visits to local museums and places of historical interest such as the Ashmolean Library in Oxford.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

99. Pupils exceed the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and they are well above the national expectation by the end of Year 6. This is because the teaching reflects the need to incorporate ICT work in all aspects of each subject. In all classes work on computers is an intrinsic part of

the lesson. It is especially good in word processing in English, drawing in art and research work in geography and history.

100. Progress in learning is good throughout the school, as the teaching is very good overall. Pupils have good skills and have no difficulty in using the programs and hardware that are available. Often pupils use computers before school for homework or research. At these times there is no direct teacher supervision other than by their keeping a watchful eye on what is being done. This demonstrates the high level of competence of the vast majority of pupils. Pupils are willing to help one another and can quickly sort out any problems that they encounter. They can talk about what they are doing and explain the use of different programs for different purposes. Even the younger pupils are able to use a database to tally up their ages, interests and lifestyles. They word-process English work and use the painting program to work in another medium.
101. Older pupils can program a cursor to move around a screen to draw out letters. They can repeat the directions and instructions to build flower shapes and know how to re-program the cursor when it moves in a wrong direction. This is at a level well above that expected for their age. The competence of teachers has increased through some detailed training. While some members of staff feel that they do not have a high level of understanding, they clearly do have. The pupils are being directed into work that is challenging and exciting. Pupils respond very well to the challenges that they are set. They regularly use the Internet to find information and access the school's website that the headteacher has developed. Parents are rightly impressed with the good skills that are being taught throughout the school.
102. All aspects of the curriculum are taught and this is one reason why the standards are so high. Work is planned to build on skills by having regular, short instruction sessions. Sufficient time is then given to practise and discover how the process works. The number of computers per pupil is good and they are easily accessible within each classroom. There is an improving set of software and also a range of other hardware such as digital cameras and scanners. In one lesson these were being used to good effect when a visitor was showing the class some snakes and insects. A portfolio of pictures would later be used for research purposes. There has been a very good improvement since the last inspection.

MUSIC

103. Too few lessons were seen for an overall judgement to be made about the standards that are being reached. However, pupils sing enthusiastically in assemblies. Older pupils can talk about their preferences in pieces of music that they have listened to and can understand how different patterns can be made using different instruments, tempo and texture. There are some opportunities to compose music but these should be increased. Younger pupils are learning some songs and are beginning to understand how we use different types of music.
104. The older pupils appear to enjoy their music lessons, although there were some minor interruptions during teachers' explanations. In the Year 5/6 class the teacher was using examples of African music and instruments. The pupils could understand how some of these worked and could recall facts that had been given to them. However, they were not able to become involved in the lesson because the teacher gave out too much information without practical work to back it up. In assembly the older pupils lead the singing. They do not get embarrassed about performing to the school and this helps the younger pupils' self-confidence.
105. The school holds several performances each year and is involved in festivals and concerts within the area. Several pupils learn instruments and enjoy the improvement that they are making. Although there is not a hall to perform in, a classroom is cleverly utilised to allow parents to enjoy the work that their children are doing.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

106. Achievement in games is above average when compared with the standards expected in the targets of the National Curriculum. Most children leave school with above average achievement in swimming. In the gymnastics lesson observed standards were average although the teaching in this area, and in dance, is seriously restricted by the lack of suitable indoor accommodation.
107. The teaching in the gymnastics lesson with Year 1/2 children was of good quality. Classroom furniture had been moved to provide enough space for children to work safely in a range of basic activities. These were preceded by vigorous 'on the spot' exercises and attention to the importance of exercise and its beneficial effect on the body. Children were challenged to perform turning, balancing and jumping movements along benches and mats. There was good teaching when they learned the meaning of sequence through reference to simple activities. The teacher used children's performances effectively to draw attention to aspects of sequencing such as taking off and landing. The children learned the importance of good posture to improve the quality of their sequence. Good teaching techniques enabled them to add more fluency when they had to make decisions about which movements gave fluency to their performance. Resources were well used and the classroom learning assistant provided good support for the less agile and confident.
108. In the very good games lesson with the Year 3/4 class, children showed good skills and tactics in a range of competitive situations. The lesson began with a series of running and dodging activities. The importance of exercise to health and well-being was discussed and aspects of safety in PE reiterated. Skills involving handling, placing and passing a rugby ball were introduced. The teacher showed very good knowledge and understanding of PE in the way the difficulty of these was increased. She used very effective techniques in using children's demonstration to improve the learning of others. Pair games introduced a competitive element and children tried out their own ideas and methods to develop tactical skills. For instance, in the back-to-back tag game, some used an immediate dodge movement when the signal to go was given. The conclusion, involving larger games, provided opportunities for the development of team skills and the principles of attack and defence. The teacher used and organised resources well. The learning support assistant, who had been well briefed by the teacher, successfully supported a child with special educational needs in movements to improve mobility and co-ordination.
109. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and now effectively supports the teaching of PE through out the school. Despite the unsatisfactory amount of indoor accommodation, the school tries very hard to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The participation in the 'Top Sports' project has improved teaching skills and widened the range of games played. Resources are good and PE is enhanced by extra-curricular clubs that include netball, basketball, football, cricket and tennis. This is highly commendable for a school of this size. A mini Olympics for older children has been introduced in the summer term to increase competitiveness.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110. Pupils reach the standard expected by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Younger pupils understand some simple bible stories and about the life of Jesus. They can talk knowledgeably about Christian festivals such as Christmas and

Easter. They have some understanding of why we celebrate them and the influence Christianity has on their lives.

111. Older pupils have some understanding about other faiths that they have studied. They can make links between the similarities and differences between these and their own religion. They have an increased understanding about the Bible and other world religious texts such as the Qur'an. Pupils can talk about their own opinions concerning right and wrong. They show increasing maturity in their argument and discussion. Their use of English language is good.
112. The quality of learning and teaching is sound across the school. From the small number of lessons seen it is clear that teachers use a variety of different experiences to interest and excite pupils' interest. In this they are successful as they have sufficient subject knowledge. Work is often linked to other subjects such as English and this helps show the relevance of religion to pupils' lives. Teachers plan work to ensure that there is discussion, some basis for knowledge and then reinforce this through written exercises. All of the work follows the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils present their work carefully and precisely. They take a pride in ensuring that it is completed and the older pupils also undertake some homework. Pupils are expected to try to think for themselves and this encourages their independence. Work is marked carefully and generally takes account of what needs correcting as well as those things that have been completed well.
113. The co-ordinator for the subject has reviewed the provision within the school and is involved in ensuring the school provides similar opportunities to other schools. Christian values form the backbone for all work that is undertaken and religious education is an important part of the curriculum.