

INSPECTION REPORT

EYRES MONSELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester

Unique reference number: 120069

Headteacher: Ms Sally Morrison

Lead inspector: Peter Sudworth

Dates of inspection: June 14th - 17th, 2004

Inspection number: 256091

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary with nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	377
School address:	Simmins Crescent Leicester
Postcode:	LE2 9AH
Telephone number:	0116 2773855
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Pick
Date of previous inspection:	16 th March, 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This above average-sized two-form entry primary school, plus nursery, for pupils aged three to 11 years is situated about four miles from the centre of Leicester. There are 377 pupils on roll with roughly equal numbers of boys and girls, including 41 part-time nursery children, who are educated in one of the two daily sessions. Attainment on entry to the nursery is very low. Pupils mainly come from housing in the area surrounding the school, most of which is low cost and of which a substantial amount is rented. The socio-economic backgrounds are much less favourable than usual. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is double the national average, and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs, mainly for learning and emotional difficulties, is well above average. Six pupils have statements for special educational need. Most pupils are of white British heritage, but approximately eight per cent of the pupils are from a range of other ethnic groups. Twelve pupils have English as an additional language, although none is at a very early stage. A higher percentage of the pupils leave or join the school at times other than at the end and beginning of the school than is usual. Five temporary teachers were in post during the inspection. The school loses a large percentage of its pupils at the end of Year 5 when they transfer into the Leicestershire Middle School system. This has an adverse affect on the school's Year 6 national test results. The school has a drama and arts centre which is shared with other local schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2700	Peter Sudworth	Lead inspector	Science; design and technology; physical education; English as an additional language.
32670	Graham Saltmarsh	Lay inspector	
30814	Elizabeth Coley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; information and communication technology; music.
32385	Lesley Hastings	Team inspector	Mathematics; art and design; religious education; special educational needs.
11746	Robin Coulthard	Team inspector	English; geography; history.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Eyres Monsell Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils despite the well below average standards. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils achieve satisfactorily from a very low base at entry to the nursery. The strong leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school keeps abreast of new initiatives and remains alert to opportunities to engage the pupils more effectively in learning. Staff show much determination in managing a high proportion of difficult pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in most subjects, although their attainment is well below average. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage in which the provision and teaching are good
- Provision in science is unsatisfactory and pupils do not make enough progress in this subject
- The headteacher works effectively with the deputy headteacher in providing good leadership and they are supported well by senior staff and the leadership and work of the governing body
- The curriculum structure does not ensure pupils have regular opportunities to build on key skills in some subjects
- Weaknesses in the organisation of the school day do not always ensure best use of time
- Pupils' moral and social development is good, but spiritual development is unsatisfactory; acts of worship are not always meaningful enough and sometimes do not meet requirements
- Very good arrangements are made for the pupils' care, welfare and health and safety

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. There is much better provision of equipment in ICT and its use is better planned for across the curriculum. The regularity of teaching in a few subjects remains an issue and there is still room for improvement in pupils' spiritual development and the quality of acts of worship. There has been improvement in the provision for religious education and personal, social and health education.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Grades in the table below for 2003 have been placed into the next category as they are unreliable because a significant number of pupils had left at the end of Year 5 to transfer to middle school.

Year 6 results

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

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

Pupils' achievements are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in most subjects in other parts of the school. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because of the effective teaching and the well organised curriculum. Despite this, the attainment of most children is well below average at the end of the reception class, except in their physical development, which is below average. This is because their attainment on entry to school is very low, particularly in communication skills. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is well below average in English, mathematics and science and was overall in the lowest five per cent of schools in the country in 2003. Pupils' achievements in science are unsatisfactory. Pupils' attainment is well below average in ICT at the end of Year 2 and below average by age 11. It is also below local expectations in religious education. Insufficient time was available to make secure judgements in other subjects. The school's national test results are affected very significantly by the fact that it loses many of its more able pupils at the end of Year 5 to middle schools. In 2002 when a greater

proportion of the pupils stayed on into Year 6, the school received an achievement award as one of the 200 most improved schools in the country. Over time, the trend of results has been below the national trend.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are nurtured satisfactorily. Pupils' moral and social development is good, their cultural development is satisfactory, but it is unsatisfactory for their spiritual development. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are satisfactory. Several pupils display emotional outbursts, but these are managed well by the staff. Pupils' attendance is well below the national average, despite the school's best efforts, and several pupils are regularly late for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory quality of education.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and about one half of all lessons observed were taught well. Teachers are calm and persevere, despite the lack of co-operation from some pupils, and many having learning difficulties. Assessment of pupils' work and record keeping systems are satisfactory. The curriculum meets requirements, but there is room for improvement in its organisation so that pupils build up their skills more regularly. It is supported by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The staff take very good care of all the pupils, make very good arrangements for their welfare and have good relationships with them. The school works hard with parents and maintains good links with them.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of both leadership and management is good. The headteacher exercises strong and energetic leadership and, together with the deputy headteacher, makes a very significant impact on the day-to-day running of the school and its vision for the future. The governing body is effective in its work and fulfils most statutory duties well, though acts of worship are not always meaningful or held daily. Governors are very committed and make a positive contribution to the school's reflective vision for the needs of its pupils. On the whole, subject leaders manage their responsibilities well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the education their children receive, the progress that their children make and the quality of teaching. The children think well of their school and enjoy the companionship of their friends.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Improve standards in English, mathematics and science
- Make better use of time and organise the school day so that there are more opportunities for effective learning
- Revise the curriculum structure so as to ensure pupils have regular opportunities to learn key skills in science, geography, history, design and technology and music
- Improve the arrangements for pupils' spiritual development, including the provision of daily and more meaningful acts of collective worship

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The children achieve well in the Foundation Stage from a very low base at entry, though attainment levels are mostly well below average at entry to Year 1. In the rest of the school, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in most subjects, but with attainment often well below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall performance of the pupils in Year 6 national tests is affected by significant numbers of pupils who transfer to middle school at age 10
- Pupils make good progress in reading
- Pupils' achievement in science is unsatisfactory
- The well organised Foundation Stage helps pupils achieve well
- Pupils' attainment in key areas of learning is well below average

Commentary

1. Children enter the nursery with very low levels of attainment, particularly in communication, personal development and knowledge of the world. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of the well organised curriculum and good teaching, but their attainment is well below average at the end of the reception class in most areas of their learning and below average in their physical development.
2. The most recent teacher assessments (2003) indicate that pupils' attainment in science was well below average at the end of Year 2. In tests for reading and writing, just over one-third of the pupils did not reach the expected level and just under one-third in mathematics. In the past three years, boys have not been doing as well as the girls by age seven and the difference between their performance in national tests is greater than national differences. The trend in results has been below the upward national trend. Whilst one-half of the 11-year olds reached the expected level in science in 2003, only 18% of the pupils reached the expected level in English and mathematics. On average in the past three years, boys at age 11 have done better than the girls in mathematics and science. Girls have performed better than the boys in English, but by less than national differences. The trend in performance at age 11 has been below the national trend. More pupils were expected to reach the expected levels in English and mathematics in 2004.
3. Year 6 national test results are affected substantially by the fact that a very significant proportion of the pupils leaves the school at the end of Year 5 to attend middle schools. The school's two-form entry reduces to one form for Year 6. Many of the more able pupils leave the school at this stage. This results in a rise in the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 cohort. Sixty-two per cent of the current Year 6 pupils are on the special educational needs register. In 2002, the school was in the 200 most improved schools in the country when many more pupils stayed on into Year 6.
4. In work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment in English at the end of Years 2 and 6 is well below average, but they make good progress in reading because of the attention this aspect receives and the good range of books for pupils to choose from. By contrast, writing is weak because pupils have too few opportunities to re-draft their work and to write at length. Informal writing is often careless, for example pupils interchange upper and lower case letters. Pupils have average listening skills, but their speaking skills are well below expectations. Pupils find it difficult to speak at length and in well formed sentences. They have a limited vocabulary. Many pupils find difficulty with spelling. Despite this, pupils achieve satisfactorily in most aspects of English and they achieve well in reading.
5. Pupils' achievements in most other subjects are satisfactory given their starting points. Their attainment in mathematics is below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. In science, pupils' attainment throughout the school is well below average and their achievements unsatisfactory, partly because of the long gaps between some units of work and insufficient opportunities to be involved in investigative science at an individual and group level. Pupils find it difficult to recall factual knowledge and they do not have enough opportunities to investigate in groups. In ICT

pupils' attainment is well below average by the end of Year 2 and below by the end of Year 6. It is below local expectations in religious education. Insufficient evidence was available to make judgements in other subjects.

6. The achievements of higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs, pupils from different ethnic groups and pupils with English as an additional language mirror those of other pupils. The pupils' attainment is broadly similar to that reported at the last inspection, although it is not as high in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	11.5 (12.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.0 (11.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	12.4 (13.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	20.3 (24.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	20.3 (23.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	23.6 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Attendance is well below average and there is a significant amount of lateness.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school behaviour improvement programme is producing positive results
- Strong management is helping the school to address the issues of well below average attendance and punctuality
- Stamina for learning is low for some pupils, particularly in the afternoons
- Pupils with behavioural problems can have an adverse effect on lesson quality

Commentary

7. As at the last inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour during lessons and when they are around the school are generally satisfactory, although in the afternoons particularly, some pupils' concentration and stamina for learning deteriorate. Teaching time can be lost as a result as teachers respond to the resulting distractions. This means that occasionally lessons are not always fully developed and some of the brighter pupils are consequently not stretched. Such situations occasionally result in frustration for both teachers and pupils alike.
8. The school is working hard to improve behaviour further with the use of assertive discipline strategies and overall behaviour management involving a cohesive approach by all staff through the whole school behaviour improvement plan. Every aspect of behaviour is now being coherently and corporately addressed. There is a tangible sense of common purpose, strong leadership, moral support across the school and lack of racism. Pupils and staff work within the school's clear rules and this is delivering results as they work together to resolve challenges and settle the whole school community in a spirit of cheerful, combined effort. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and the majority respond positively. The employment of an adult to work with targeted pupils and their parents allows any concerns or issues to be dealt with rapidly whilst providing the school with invaluable knowledge and insights into the needs of individual pupils. Its success is seen in a significant reduction of fixed-term exclusions.

9. The previous inspection noted that attendance was well below the national average and the position still remains the same. Some parents and carers do not ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually. The school works extremely hard to counter these attitudes. It monitors attendance and punctuality regularly and contacts parents quickly if pupils are absent. It is doing all that it can to encourage parents into a greater partnership to remedy any problems relating to attendance. It has built up a very good data base, which greatly assists in managing and monitoring the problem, and pursues the reasons for absence rigorously.
10. Pupils' moral and social development is good because provision is strong. Pupils are encouraged to grow in both confidence and maturity. The consistent implementation of effective procedures for promoting good behaviour helps to achieve a secure understanding of right and wrong. Teachers and other adults in the school set good role models and treat the pupils and one another with respect, courtesy and above all kindness. Pupils in turn are generally well mannered towards each other and to adults, including visitors, who receive a warm welcome. Pupils are encouraged to work and play together in pairs and groups and, as a consequence, develop the skills necessary to build constructive relationships with others. Through a very effective reward system, which recognises every possible positive contribution to behaviour and life in school, pupils develop social skills and confident attitudes about life as a member of a caring community. Pupils respect their elected school council, which is serious and enthusiastic about its responsibilities. The school council has taken a significant role in improving the playground facilities, other whole school projects including the 'Healthy Schools Award' and has been instrumental in agreeing rules for the school. A weekly assembly celebrates, recognises and rewards individual achievements, including good attendance and behaviour.
11. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, an improvement on the previous report. There are some opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of living in a multi-cultural society, but these are not extensive. By studying artists from western and other cultures, pupils learn to appreciate a range of artistic styles. Displays around the school of artwork, other languages and cultures do help to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures and lifestyles. They learn about the values and beliefs of others and gain an understanding of different societies in religious education, history and geography and from out of school visits.
12. Pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory, as at the last inspection. Whilst pupils are generally happy to express their own feelings and listen with respect to those of others, the acts of collective worship are not always very meaningful or daily and add to the unsatisfactory provision, and little attention is paid to enhancing pupils' spiritual development when planning the curriculum.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with about one half of all lessons observed being taught well. Assessment of pupils' work and record keeping systems are satisfactory. The curriculum meets requirements, but there is room for improvement in its organisation so that pupils build up their skills more regularly. It is supported by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The staff take very good care of all the pupils, make very good arrangements for their welfare and have good relationships with them. The school works hard with parents and maintains good links with them.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and enables the children to achieve well
- Teaching assistants are effective in their support of the teachers
- Several pupils lack concentration and this affects their learning

Commentary

13. One half of lessons seen were good, but one-tenth of lessons were unsatisfactory, mainly because of an insufficient focus on the aims of the lesson or unsatisfactory class management so that pupils did not make enough progress. There was more good teaching in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6

6. The teaching observed in the Foundation Stage was good. The quality of teaching is similar to that reported at the previous inspection.

14. Teaching in the Foundation Stage helps the children to achieve well from their very low attainment on entry to the nursery. The Foundation Stage unit is well organised with good team work. Effective use is made of all staff in the unit, which enables the pupils to work in small groups with adult supervision. This enables them to receive the help they need and to make small steps forward on a continuing basis so that they are prepared well for work in Year 1.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2 %)	0 (0%)	24 (48%)	20 (40%)	5 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

15. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory. Lessons are prepared well and the staff make good use of the national materials available in planning their lessons which are well matched to pupils' different needs. Higher attaining pupils are well catered for in English and mathematics lessons through the ability grouping arrangements. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs, when they work in small groups on reading recovery programmes, is good. This contributes to the generally good progress that many pupils make in reading by age 11 because early difficulties are sorted out. Pupils learn to remember letter sounds and begin to put sounds together to read simple words. Class teachers and support assistants have good relationships with each other and there is clearly a good dialogue between them, which is reflected in consistent approaches to learning and behaviour management. In class lessons, the pupils, particularly those with emotional difficulties, are well supported by the teaching assistants. They provide effective support for the teachers because they are very skilled in quietly managing the pupils' behaviour, and this helps the teachers to maintain a satisfactory flow to the lessons. Satisfactory use is made of homework to promote pupils' English and mathematical skills.
16. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and duly give praise when it is warranted which boosts the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. They show much patience and a calm manner with them, several of whom in each class have weak listening skills and poor levels of concentration. At times the lack of visual stimulus to learning hinders the pupils' progress. For example, the inadequate use of 100 squares in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 is hindering pupils' understanding of the sequence of numbers. They respond well when they work with the computers, and teachers are alert to ensure that good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. They also show higher levels of concentration when they discuss pictures, but many pupils find it difficult to sustain their interest when a lot of listening is involved.
17. The quality of questioning is satisfactory. Teachers revise well on previous work, although several pupils do not easily recall what they have done before and this hinders the pace of learning. Often the same few pupils answer the questions whilst others in the class remain as passive observers. Teachers do not use questioning enough to bring out knowledge from the pupils and there is a tendency to impart information. This is shown in the comparatively few questions that pupils ask of their teachers in enquiring further about the lesson content. Insufficient use is made of video clips to interest and secure the pupils' knowledge, as in getting the pupils to understand the process of pollination in science.
18. In some lessons, teachers engage pupils in paired discussion effectively to negotiate an opinion or to provide ideas and this helps to boost pupils' confidence. It also helps pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers explain pupils' learning tasks well and check that they understand what they have to do before they commence their activities so that they can begin them quickly. However, the pace of working is often slow when they work, and consequently pupils do not always achieve as much as they could because they lack concentration or their difficulties with reading and writing hold them back. In some lessons the concluding part is not exciting enough in taking learning forward or consolidating what the pupils have learned.

19. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. These pupils are fully included in lessons and in the best practice as in Year 2, the teaching assistant sits alongside the pupil and quietly engages in conversation in the introduction to the lesson so understanding is secure. However, teachers do not yet make individual learning plans for these pupils to map out the strategies and techniques that are to be adopted to ensure that they make good progress in learning English. Pupils from different ethnic groups are well integrated into classes and fully included.
20. Assessment is satisfactory. The school's tracking of pupils' progress is satisfactory. There are good records in English and mathematics and pupils have individual targets for improvement and these work well. Teachers test pupils and moderate work samples at regular intervals. However, teachers are not regularly made accountable for the progress that their pupils are making against their National Curriculum target levels in different year groups. Good analysis is made of the performance of boys and girls in national tests and their success in answering individual test questions. Analysis of performance by different ethnic groups awaits development. Marking is satisfactory but inconsistent in quality. The best marking indicates to pupils how they can improve their work. Too often, however, pupils ignore their teachers' comments about their work and so they do not profit from their mistakes or increase the level of pride in their work.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and enhanced by a range of initiatives, visits and visitors and a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation is good and resources to aid pupils in their learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good accommodation for drama
- ICT is used well across the curriculum
- Accommodation is used well
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good
- The planning of the curriculum does not ensure that pupils receive regular enough teaching in some subjects and curriculum time is not always used effectively enough
- Limited outdoor apparatus for the Foundation Stage restricts the children's physical development

Commentary

21. Considerable curriculum review has been undertaken since the last inspection and many of the key issues have been dealt with satisfactorily. The provision for religious education has improved and now meets statutory requirements. Pupils are developing collaborative skills and some opportunities are provided for them to exercise responsibility through the work of the school council and paired reading project. However, the spiritual element is not planned for sufficiently well across the curriculum and there are limited opportunities for pupils' awareness of multi-cultural issues. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.
22. The recent curriculum review and a new school curriculum framework linking subjects together to make learning meaningful and relevant provide for a satisfactory curriculum. However, there are some weaknesses. This is because the long-term planning across the year does not, as yet, ensure that pupils receive regular teaching in science, so that they can investigate confidently. Equally it does not build up pupils' knowledge and skills in some other subjects sufficiently frequently, such as in geography, history and design and technology. A strength is pupils' regular use of ICT across the curriculum. There is a good allowance of time for personal, social and health education. It is taught regularly with added opportunities to develop their maturity through links with other schools, including a special school.
23. In general, curriculum time is not always used productively. The first 25 minutes of each day, early morning activities, are often too leisurely and the work provided at this time does not build securely on their existing skills.
24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are very thorough with appropriate targets. Regular feedback is given to pupils with special educational needs in lessons and recorded. However, targets are mostly for behaviour and literacy and there are few targets for numeracy, which does not focus action that needs to be taken to increase pupils'

progress. Teachers and support staff are fully aware of the implications of particular children's needs and resources are adapted or modified appropriately with good provision for disabled pupils. ICT is used well to assist the learning of pupils with special educational needs. More able junior pupils' involvement in a creative literacy project with other local schools, involving professional artists and dramatists, supports their creative development. Drama is a strength in the school and the school's involvement in a local education authority drama project is helping to promote pupils' oracy, listening and speaking skills.

25. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for later stages of learning with close liaison between Foundation Stage and Year 1. There are good links with other schools before transfer. The link with a special school is helping pupils to understand the needs of pupils who are less fortunate than themselves.
26. The school provides satisfactory opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning outside lessons. A residential camping trip for Year 5 pupils offers a good range of outdoor opportunities. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular opportunities. The school participates in a good number of local and national initiatives and has gained the 'Healthy Schools Award'. Its involvement in improving the school environment and concerns for environmental issues are a curriculum strength as seen in the siting of a proposed wind turbine in the school grounds.
27. There is a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified teachers and support staff, though the school seeks to obtain more staffing stability following a number of unavoidable staff changes. Permanent appointments have now been made. There is a good balance of new and experienced staff. The accommodation is good, clean and well maintained. It is enhanced by its theatre provision, lobby and changing rooms, ICT suite and multi-media learning provision. In addition to an adequate number of classrooms, the school has further developed the Foundation Stage unit, although the provision for outdoor play is limited and restricts the opportunities for physical development. There are several functional rooms, which help to cater for pupils needing small group attention, including a Nurture Group room. The school is equipped well for pupils and staff with disabilities and prides itself justifiably on providing for all pupils whatever their needs. Resources for learning are adequate.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are very well cared for, their views are sought effectively and a happy and safe environment has been created for them. The school is committed to their health and safety. The school provides satisfactorily for the pupils' support, advice and guidance based on monitoring.

Main strengths

- The school is a safe and caring environment for children to learn in
- Children with difficulties and challenging behaviours are well supported and guided
- Induction for Foundation Stage children is very good
- The Nurture Group works well for the young pupils with emotional problems that it caters for

Commentary

28. The children are provided with a very caring and supportive environment, as at the last inspection. Parents acknowledge that adults in the school have a real concern for the care and welfare of their children. The good relationships between staff and pupils help to create a comfortable atmosphere where pupils know that they are valued and supported and in which they can share their concerns. Pupils know that they are important and that their views will be taken seriously. Staff make every effort to get to know pupils well so that each child gets the help that he or she needs. Pupils with academic, personal or emotional problems are treated sensitively with a keen desire to resolve their situation. As a consequence, pupils know and trust the adults in the school and they are very confident in their relationships with all staff.
29. Child protection procedures are in place and the staff have been appropriately trained in their use. The school is particularly conscientious in ensuring that any concerns are reported, documented and further referred, should the need arise. Health and safety checks of the premises and equipment are carried out regularly by a specialist outside consultant, who evaluates each risk and who provides a written assessment for the school, detailing further action where necessary. The overall condition of the school site and the ongoing upkeep is of a very high standard, as are the maintenance records kept by the premises officer.

30. Children with difficulties and challenging behaviours are very well supported and guided. Their welfare and happiness are embedded into the overall caring ethos of the school. Under the auspices of the LEA Behaviour Improvement Programme, the school has appointed a lead professional from within the staff to head up and manage this whole school initiative. Together with a specific budget, additional resources and external support, this is helping to deal with concerns about pupils' behaviour and conduct. A recently appointed learning mentor has proven to be a significant asset to the school in this respect. Working with both staff and parents, the mentor has observed children and developed effective responses to pupils with learning, emotional, and social difficulties. Development of the post has been rapid and tangible benefits were noted during the inspection. For example, the number of off-site exclusions has been significantly reduced following the opening of a room in the school which caters for pupils whose behaviour does not warrant them continuing their lessons in class.
31. Induction procedures are comprehensive and reassuring for both parents and children. The Foundation Stage leader's visits to local playgroups and meeting with all parents before their children start school establish good relationships. There are further opportunities for them to meet when the children attend sessions before they enter. The provision of an informative and well laid out 'Foundation Stage Brochure' supports their understanding of what, and how, their children will learn. Parents and carers are actively encouraged to participate in this introduction to school and the school welcomes the opportunity to discuss and resolve any worries or concerns.
32. The school's Nurture Group is very well established and gives highly effective support to young children with a variety of needs. During the inspection it was noted just how determined the staff are to improve dialogue and partnership with the parents of children in the group. Additionally, good teaching and the focused development of the children's social skills are all contributing towards early re-integration into their classes. The records and observations of these individual children are of a very high quality; they are detailed, informative and support the child's further development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents. There are good links with local schools, colleges and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides parents with very good and detailed information
- Parents' views are continually sought and acted upon
- The school works hard to engage parents and the wider community in every aspect of school life
- The school lacks a parents' association to bring parents together

Commentary

33. As at the last inspection, most parents show a good level of satisfaction with what the school provides. The few parents who attended the meeting before the inspection were supportive of the school and had no serious concerns. This was confirmed by the responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and in conversations with parents during the inspection. They have confidence in the staff and feel that the teaching is good. They are appreciative of the support the school gives to them as well as to their children. There are clear procedures for dealing with the small number of formal complaints, which the school may occasionally receive.
34. Information provided for parents is very good. The prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented and contain helpful and relevant information. A particularly good feature is the weekly newsletter sent out by the headteacher, which keeps parents well informed of current and future events and class activities. This is reinforced by a particularly refreshing and innovative 'Daily Bulletin', which is compiled by the headteacher and is displayed in the school. This brings news and events of the day together with 'Grumbles', 'Pat on the back' and 'Thought for the day' sections for staff and visitors alike. The 'Daily Bulletin' conveys the positive tone of the school, especially in the way that it endeavours to include all parents and pupils in its work.
35. School reports to parents are detailed, informative and user friendly. They are well set out in plain English with set targets, which are arrived at through discussions between teachers, pupils and their parents. Attached to each report is a separate sheet for parents to add their own comments,

together with an invitation to discuss any concerns they may have. This reinforces the open door policy of the school.

36. The school is constantly seeking the views of parents on a wide range of issues; from what the school is providing to other more specific issues. Recently the school sought the views of parents regarding the erection of a small wind turbine in the school grounds. They have been kept updated on the project and have given their full support to this proposal.
37. The headteacher and her staff work very hard to engage parents in the life of the school and to support their children's learning. Several parents help their children by hearing them read at home, and encouraging them to do homework. There is always good attendance at parents' meetings and school performances. Other parents are actively involved in helping the school, on visits, in class, and with various school functions and local activities. The school further enriches pupils' understanding of life in their community by regular visits and trips, for example to local parks and nature reserves, botanical gardens and the National Space Centre.
38. The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has established good links with the local church and other organisations. The school benefits from the voluntary support of a local branch of a major bank in a literacy scheme initiative. The school choir has performed at the Leicester Music Festival and also visits the local elderly community. In the same way, the school uses its good accommodation for drama and school productions to involve the local people in supporting the children and the work of the school in the wider community.
39. The school site is available for a range of community and local group activities, including dance and drama, which benefit the school in many ways and involve the participation of pupils after school hours and occasionally at weekends, which heightens its profile locally.
40. There are good and productive links with other local schools. The school is actively involved in a family of schools in the area, including links with a special school. Good practice is shared in joint training and in the discussions of common issues and goals with other schools. There are strong links with local secondary schools, some of which are also part of the Local Education Authority's Behaviour Improvement Programme cluster of schools, and thus provide strong support and co-operation with each other. Secondary teachers visit the school prior to transfer and visits are arranged for pupils to see their next school, familiarise themselves and take part in activities and sample lessons. This reassures pupils and their parents.
41. There is currently no parent association at the school to reinforce further the school's links with parents. However, a recently appointed parent governor is working towards creating an association following imminent consultation with parents to gauge their support and enthusiasm.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and well managed and governors and key staff contribute effectively to developments.

Main strengths

- The head and deputy make a very significant impact on the day-to-day running of the school and undertake their duties energetically
- Planning reflects well the needs of the pupils
- Staff are strongly supported and guided by the senior managers
- The school derives considerable benefit from national and local educational initiatives
- Governors are very committed and make a positive contribution to the school's strategic development

Commentary

42. As at the last inspection, the headteacher exercises good and energetic leadership and an effective 'hands-on' approach to leading the school. In close partnership with the deputy headteacher, she maintains a high profile around the school, promoting its values and standards amongst the pupils. She actively supports the staff and maintains daily contact with some difficult pupils to reinforce the school's expectations of behaviour and response. The deputy headteacher assists very well with this and provides first day cover for absent colleagues. In this way, he has gained a thorough

knowledge of every pupil. The school's leadership is effectively supported by an efficient administrative staff, who provide visitors with a ready welcome to the school.

43. Leadership is reflective and focuses well on the perceived needs of the wide range of pupils in the school. The school is fully aware of the challenges it faces in providing for pupils whose average attainment on entry is very low and whose backgrounds in many cases are affected by social deprivation. A thoroughgoing review of the curriculum has taken place recently and developments are planned in all subjects to provide engaging resources and memorable experiences to stimulate the pupils. This is to compensate for the pupils' comparative lack of worthwhile life experiences and their acute lack of general knowledge, which were evident in the inspection.
44. The headteacher involves the school in worthwhile outside initiatives provided by the Local Education Authority and other bodies. A particularly appropriate and successful current initiative is the two-year project, 'A Little Drop of Yellow', involving workshops and experiences in drama. Amongst the objectives are: to raise pupils' confidence, explain local social tensions and improve communication skills.
45. Management of the school is good and reflects the practices related to the school's Investors in People status. Staff with posts of responsibility work very well together to ensure the purposeful and smooth running of the school. Communication is very good at all levels. Management focuses on raising standards, the development of appropriate school priorities and developing of the professional effectiveness of each member of staff. Staff development is well organised with effective systems for providing for teachers' continuing professional development through courses. Courses that match the aspirations of individual staff and are relevant to the school's priorities are made available. The school has a good record in equipping teachers for promotion. The development of the senior management team owes much to its involvement with the national Primary Leadership Programme.
46. The development of teaching is methodical. Lesson observation by the senior managers and team leaders is systematic and leads to the provision of points of development for individuals. The school operates a good system for the sharing of good practice.
47. Newly qualified teachers and other staff appointed to the school are very well provided for and supported, with good opportunities for watching and working alongside colleagues. A succinct and lucid staff handbook provides good guidance for all staff on day-to-day procedures and classroom practice.
48. Overall, subject leaders manage their responsibilities well, though some are new to their roles and their effectiveness cannot yet be assessed. They have undertaken thorough reviews of the schemes of work so that they cater as well as possible for the pupils' needs in the drive to improve standards. They analyse assessment data effectively and plan appropriate priorities for development. Some useful analysis has been made of pupils' work and the quality of teaching.
49. Governors are effective. They have a very good awareness of their responsibilities and engage in regular governor training. They bring a keen interest in the school's development and their varied professional skills are well used to advance the work of the school. Governors are well informed about what goes on. They have a good knowledge of the pupils' academic and personal needs, but their analysis of the school's priorities does not give sufficient weight to the aesthetic, cultural and spiritual dimensions of the curriculum. Governors fulfil their statutory requirements with the exception of ensuring that daily collective worship takes place. They are well involved in strategic planning and make a good contribution to the school development plan by monitoring and challenging where appropriate the plans they receive in draft. Governors have been particularly effective in improving the quality of the school environment.
50. School planning is thorough. The long-term school development plan clearly reflects the school aims and principles. Areas of development are appropriate with suitable criteria for judging the success of each initiative. Shorter term planning is relevant and realistic. The annual school improvement plan is of good quality. It incorporates monitoring and evaluation of subjects and an annual action plan for each.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,067,267
Total expenditure	1,093,795
Expenditure per pupil	2,901.31

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	57,553
Balance carried forward to the next	31,025

51. Financial planning is very carefully and responsibly managed. The school is operating at present with a negative budget for the third successive year due partly to the loss of pupils at the end of Year 5. However, the governors have been prudent with their spending and ensured a sufficient carry forward to cover this eventuality. All expenditure is very carefully considered and controlled. The school seeks the best value for the money it spends. Governors are fully aware of the implications of the present situation and are in control of the situation.
52. The forward thinking leadership, staff commitment, team effort and good governing body involvement, together with the valued services of the Local Education Authority, are significant positive factors in the school's work. Together they show much determination to improve the quality of education for the pupils and provide opportunities, which will counteract the pupils' very low attainment on entry and the larger than usual number of pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.

Commentary

53. Children enter the nursery with very low levels of ability, very restricted communication skills and very low levels of personal development and general knowledge. Their physical development is better, but still well below average. The provision for learning in the nursery is satisfactory overall, with good development in children's personal, social and emotional development. Provision in the reception class is good overall, and includes a special emphasis on developing communication, language and literacy skills. Children's achievements over their time in the Foundation Stage are good. Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the reception classes. There are good learning opportunities for children with special educational needs and those children for whom English is an additional language. At the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children do not meet the early learning goals because they are starting from a very low base on entry to the school. They attain standards that are well below average in most areas of their learning and below average in their physical development.
54. The curriculum is good. Children have good opportunities to select from well chosen activities that meet the children's needs. The staff are supportive of the children and relationships are strong. All staff make individuals feel valued and ensure that they are included in all activities. The accommodation is very good. The three main classrooms are large, bright and airy with plenty of space for all activities, including role-play areas. In addition there is a reading room where groups of children can go quietly to look at, and read, books at various times. Overall, resources are satisfactory and appropriate for the various areas of the curriculum, but the provision of large outdoor play apparatus is inadequate, and was an area for improvement at the last inspection.
55. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Leadership is well informed and enthusiastic, which has resulted in successfully combining teachers and support staff into an effective team. Management is systematic and detailed. Comprehensive assessment and tracking procedures are organised to give teaching colleagues a clear view of children's progress and achievement through the early years' 'stepping stones' and to inform the teachers of what each child needs to learn next. Foundation Stage staff make very good arrangements for children as they start school and work hard to establish supportive links with parents. An innovation since the last inspection has been the setting up of the Parents' Partnership and Play Project (PPP club) where parents are encouraged to come into school weekly to spend some time in their child's class. They experience at first hand how their children are taught, which gives them some insight into ways in which they can help their children at home. Good arrangements enable children to make a smooth transition into Year 1. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good induction procedures create an ethos of partnership between parents and the school
- Clear routines are established in nursery and these give the children security and trust
- Staff have clear expectations about behaviour
- Many children find it difficult to take turns and work in pairs and groups

Commentary

56. This area of learning has a high profile throughout the Foundation Stage. Many children enter the nursery with very low personal and social skills and little curiosity about the world around them. The very successful induction procedures and the welcoming atmosphere ensure that children and their parents become familiar with the surroundings very quickly. Through daily interaction and the PPP club, parents are involved in their children's learning. Good routines and structures help to build the

children's confidence and self-esteem. The beginning of every session in both year groups follows a familiar pattern, and children respond well to finding out how many are attending, what the date is and what the weather is like. Children know and trust their teachers and supporting adults and are happy to come to school.

57. Teaching is effective because teachers have clear expectations of children's behaviour and achievement. Work is planned so that each individual child gains in confidence and is successful. The activities provided help them to learn the difference between right and wrong. A system of rewards and sanctions, illustrated by moving a child's peg from the sun to the rainbow or cloud, motivates children to try hard with their behaviour. Even at the end of reception, a significant minority find it difficult to work collaboratively together and share a task, for example when asked to collect up paper butterflies in pairs. Staff plan many opportunities for children to develop these social skills and continually offer encouragement, support and praise.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers develop children's listening and speaking skills well, although on occasion miss opportunities to correct their speech
- The children enjoy using the reading room and show great interest in books

Commentary

58. Children enter the nursery with very limited communication and literacy skills. In the nursery, the same vocabulary is reinforced in a variety of ways. Children achieve well, so that by the end of reception, the majority of them can listen and communicate their ideas through speaking and drawing. A very small group will have developed sufficient skill to write sentences independently. Their speaking and listening skills improve because staff have a good understanding of how young children learn, and in all activities there are good opportunities for children to develop their language skills. However, staff can sometimes miss opportunities for correcting children's speech, as for example when a child declared, 'I have drunk it all.' Their low level communication skills have an impact on their interactions with each other, and for some time the children play alongside, rather than with, each other.
59. The teaching of language and literacy is good. In nursery, phonic games, such as hiding articles which begin with certain sounds, are popular and reinforce initial sounds. In Reception, story telling and good questioning ensure that all children have the opportunity to enjoy and develop their language. Word lotto and matching pictures to words reinforce early reading skills of recognising words by sight. They enjoy looking at books and using the reading room at appropriate moments. The books available for the children are of an adequate quality and quantity and the staff plan to expand the number of books in the reading scheme.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is good.

Main strengths

- Number is continually reinforced by teachers and support staff through everyday activities
- Effective use is made of number rhymes and practical activities
- Support staff make daily assessments of pupils' progress

Commentary

60. Teaching and learning are good. Nearly all sessions include number rhymes or songs and the children join in with enthusiasm. In nursery, the 'special person' for the day counts the number of children present, if necessary with adult help, and the children work out the date. Practical activities strengthen their understanding and include placing the correct number of pegs in the frame, and drawing the correct number of caterpillars on the leaves. The outside environment was used well by reception during the inspection for a butterfly hunt, where children had to collect paper butterflies in pairs. This led to the discovery of different ways in which two numbers could be added to make the number six. Mr. Mole, a puppet, also contributed to the teaching! Everyday, support staff make

continual observations of children's responses to the teacher and of their mathematical development, which are then transferred to the child's individual profile. This effectively informs the staff of the individual progress of each child and what they need to learn next. Most mathematical concepts are taught orally, so children are not given sufficient opportunity to develop their skills in recording numbers. By the time children leave the Foundation Stage, most securely count and recognise numbers up to five, and a few can do so to a much higher number.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

Main strengths

- Children develop good ICT skills
- The children achieve well in broadening their knowledge in this area of learning

Commentary

61. Good opportunities are given to develop children's knowledge and understanding through discussion and observation. Teaching and learning are good and good quality planning helps to ensure that all children achieve well. The nursery play area was imaginatively transformed into a jungle with animals who live in that habitat. In reception, one child was able to explain to the class why a butterfly would not realise that a monkey's mother looks just like the monkey. He knew that a butterfly and its young, the caterpillar, look very different. The teacher very effectively encouraged this child to teach his peers. Stories from different countries, such as 'Handa's Surprise', help children to understand that not everyone comes from this country but stories can be very similar across the world. Opportunities are given to celebrate festivals from other cultures such as Divali, and Barnaby Bear begins his roaming around the world with reception children, which develops their knowledge of different types of place. The use of computers allows them to develop their hand/eye co-ordination well through the careful control of the mouse when using a paint program. They identify icons and tools, and use their skills to draw a picture of a friend on the computer.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of opportunities is provided to extend children's manipulative skills
- A good secure area outside supports physical development, but there is a lack of large outdoor play apparatus

Commentary

62. The children's physical development when they enter nursery is of a higher standard than other areas. They achieve well and some are on course to meet the early learning goal for this area. Whilst there are balancing beams in the secure play area, opportunities for challenging children's physical skills are not adequate because there is no outdoor climbing apparatus. Staff are always there to offer support and encouragement for new skills, such as learning to pedal a tricycle. Teaching is satisfactory and good in some instances. Planning shows good provision for the development of specific skills, such as hand/eye co-ordination, pencil control, cutting, sticking, handling paintbrushes and manipulating materials. For example, a display of rainbow fish illustrated the children's dexterity in weaving. Staff develop well the children's understanding of the use of space.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is good.

Main strengths

- A wide variety of creative opportunities is provided
- Teachers work hard to foster the children's imagination

Commentary

63. Teaching and learning are good with appropriate opportunities given for children to explore colour and shape with a wide range of techniques and materials. Nursery children painted their butterflies very brightly and then folded them over to produce very effective symmetrical wings. Children in reception had recently produced a successful model of their local area from junk material, including their houses, cars, and landmarks such as traffic lights. They investigated sounds with interest and enjoyed making music by clapping and playing percussion instruments. Each Foundation Stage room has a role-play area, the theme of which is constantly changing, and children are given good opportunities to develop their creative and imaginative skills. However, their communication skills are at such a low level that a significant number of children have difficulty expressing and developing their ideas independently.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in national tests are overall very low
- Reading is well taught
- Pupils do not attempt enough writing at length
- Redrafting and correcting work are not used enough to improve its quality
- Learning support assistants make a good contribution to the progress of pupils they support
- Planning is of good quality and reflects well the needs of the school's pupils

Commentary

64. Current standards in English are well below average throughout the school, similar to the school's results in national tests at the time of the last inspection. There is a particular weakness in writing because pupils do not attempt enough substantial, formal writing and do not regularly redraft work. Over time the attainment of boys has been very inferior to that of the girls by the end of Year 2, but boys have made up much of the difference by the end of Year 6. Overall pupils achieve satisfactorily.
65. Listening skills are satisfactory and have been a focus for development this year. They are effectively developed in Years 1 and 2. Teachers compensate for pupils' underdeveloped listening skills by reading to pupils and carefully questioning them on what they have heard and by valuing their answers to increase their confidence. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are required and encouraged to listen receptively. They listen well to instructions, to presentations by teachers in lessons and in assemblies. Speaking is less well developed. Few pupils were heard making extended oral contributions in lessons. Answers are in the main very brief. Pupils will talk readily about their experiences and about what interests them, but many are reluctant to take part in debate or speculation. Their difficulties are increased by the behaviour of a small minority of pupils who seek attention and interrupt too much. Useful question-and-answer sessions are regularly curtailed because of a likelihood of testing behaviour. Pupils' speaking on formal occasions, such as assemblies, is inhibited by a lack of self-confidence. Drama and role-play are being increased as teaching methods to remedy the deficiency.
66. Pupils' reading is taught well and pupils make good progress at this from their mainly low starting points. In Years 1 and 2, they learn to sound out syllables methodically and to look for other aids to understanding, such as picture clues. From an early stage, pupils observe punctuation and convey a good sense of meaning to the listener. By Year 6, higher-attaining pupils read very fluently, with a good sense of characterisation. They reflect dialogue well. They have well developed tastes in literature. At least one pupil has read all the Harry Potter stories and Tolkien's children's books. The good range of books available in the school is a strong incentive to pupils to develop their reading well.

67. Handwriting is practised well, and pupils gradually learn to adopt a cursive script, but they mostly use pencil throughout the school. Fully joined writing is introduced later than is usual for most pupils. The quality of written work remains a significant area for further development. Year 2 pupils keep diaries and are quite adventurous in their choice of vocabulary. By Year 6, pupils learn to write in a good range of styles and to use appropriate grammatical and literary devices. The use of simile was very well demonstrated in a Year 4 pupil's accomplished and imaginative writing: *'The tree seemed to be alive. It waved its branches like the waves of the sea encouraging the wind to play its trumpets and drums louder and louder.'*
68. In some lessons observed throughout the school, pupils were unable to maintain the degree of concentration required to produce written work at their best standard because of interruptions by other pupils. Although pupils can use dictionaries, too few check spellings unless prompted by the teacher. Informal writing tends to be careless, and too little re-drafting takes place, by hand or using ICT.
69. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lessons observed ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. Teachers use the structure of the National Literacy Strategy effectively. Lessons are planned well and resources are good. Some teachers readily share their enthusiasm for English, for example the way they read to the class. Some lessons are purposeful and relaxed. The teachers show great patience and manage pupils' behaviour well. This encourages pupils to do their best and to work responsibly on their own or collaboratively. Learning support staff make a valuable contribution to progress in English lessons and pupils specifically under their charge make good progress. In a few lessons, the style of teaching is restricted and tense, lest bad behaviour should develop. This leads to an under-use of questioning and limits the depth of learning, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. Marking is satisfactory, but varies too much in its usefulness as a means of telling pupils exactly how they may improve their standards. Too few examples were seen of pupils having corrected their work in response to teachers' marking.
70. Leadership and management are good, although those with responsibility for each key stage have taken over only quite recently. The subject has undergone a thorough review leading to a revision of schemes of work so that they cater as well as possible for the pupils' needs. A principal and worthwhile aim at present is to drive up standards by the use of more stimulating resources. During the inspection, for example, two community police vehicles proved to be an exciting stimulus for pupils in Year 6 to develop report writing skills. The use of drama is being increased to develop pupils' imaginations and self-confidence.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. The development of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Most teachers provide pupils with satisfactory opportunities to develop their use of formal and informal speaking. Pupils use note-making skills in a range of subjects. Technical writing is practised, for example in science. Year 1 pupils used ICT well to word process labels of their addresses, and showed good awareness of the layout and knew where capital letters were needed. On occasions, pupils make good use of the Internet and the multi-media studio to research their studies.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range and good quantity of work is produced covering all aspects of the National Curriculum in mathematics
- The co-ordinator has made a good start in the leadership and management of the subject
- Inconsistencies in behaviour management prevent pupils achieving well

Commentary

72. Standards are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 because the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and low attaining pupils in each class is higher than average and the proportion of high attaining and gifted and talented pupils in classes is lower than average. This is particularly so in Year 6, where 62% of pupils have special educational needs, more than double the national average. The reason for this imbalance in the class is that a large number of average and

high attaining pupils leave the school in Year 5 to go to middle school. Achievement is satisfactory and pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language also achieve satisfactorily.

73. Pupils complete a wide range and good quantity of work covering all aspects of the mathematics curriculum including investigations and using and applying mathematics. By the end of Year 2 pupils estimate, measure, collect and organise data, record results, draw graphs and answer questions based on them. They tackle problems and investigations and are developing adequate mental strategies. By the end of Year 6, most pupils show below average skills of mental calculation. The skills of the higher attaining pupils are satisfactory, but other pupils recall basic number facts only slowly and some are reticent to try. Pupils interpret graphical data and make inferences and can present the data in a variety of forms.
74. Teaching and learning in mathematics are satisfactory overall. Teaching was good in half the mathematics lessons seen but there are inconsistencies in its quality across classes. Where teaching is good high expectations for behaviour are set and there is good use of praise and encouragement, which enable pupils to listen well and join in the lessons. In the best lessons, teachers are enthusiastic and set a good pace, resulting in pupils working hard and achieving well. Most pupils co-operate well in pairs and groups, which was not seen at the time of the last inspection. Teachers circulate well assessing pupils' progress and understanding and give good feedback to enable pupils to understand how they can improve. However, pupils are not often involved in evaluating their own learning. Where teaching is less than good, it is because the management of the behaviour of challenging pupils in the lessons is inconsistent. Sometimes time is not used well and concluding sessions, when the pupils are gathered together, are too rushed to allow good consolidation of the learning. Teachers and support staff have good relationships with each other and with the pupils. All lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged by good questioning and more exacting tasks set. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported by the teaching assistants enabling them to access the curriculum well and experience success.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has made a good analysis of assessment data and planned appropriate priorities for development. He works closely with the governor responsible for mathematics ensuring the governors are well informed about standards and developments. Regular half-termly assessments are monitored by the co-ordinator and used to influence future teaching and learning. The co-ordinator monitors the planning and scrutinises samples of work to ensure the full curriculum is covered. He has not yet had the opportunity to observe lessons in order to support colleagues and identify aspects of the curriculum, which may need improvement. Mathematics lessons have been monitored by the headteacher and deputy and useful observations made to help improve standards such as improvement in teaching mental strategies. Resources are now satisfactory and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

76. Numeracy is now taught satisfactorily in other subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Year 5 pupils carried out a survey of local traffic in geography, tallying to collect the data and preparing to present and interpret the data graphically. In ICT, pupils were measuring the circumference of their heads and drawing graphs. In another science lesson in the ICT suite, pupils were using sensors to measure how much light passed through different materials in order to choose the best fabric to make a tent in which to grow plants.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum organisation does not allow the pupils to engage in science work regularly enough
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out their own investigations
- Pupils enjoy working practically when given the opportunity
- Pupils' poor general knowledge and weak writing skills hinder their work

Commentary

77. Pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory despite the fact that their attainment is very low at entry. Pupils' attainment is well below average at ages seven and 11, a fall since the last inspection when attainment was judged below average. Pupils' well below average attainment by age 11 is due in part to the school losing many of its more able pupils at the age of ten to middle schools with the result that few pupils reach the higher levels. It is also due to pupils' poor general knowledge and their difficulty in remembering factual detail. This is partly because the pupils do not have regular opportunities to work in the subject because all the lessons are confined to one part of the term. Consequently pupils sometimes do not engage with science for a full half-term. Their difficulties in writing also hinder their progress in lessons. Furthermore the pupils do not have enough opportunities to investigate for themselves in science and to think about the process of fair testing.
78. The arrangements for science teaching meant that few lessons could be observed during the inspection as science was only being taught in Years 2 and 5. Consequently it is not possible to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. In the lessons seen, pupils showed much interest. A few Year 2 pupils remembered some of the detail to indicate the differences between animals and plants from their previous lesson and more able pupils recalled that animals had senses and nurtured their young. Good use was made of a pop up children's book to show how individuals differ, for example by colour, facial features and size. In the follow-up work pupils worked enthusiastically in creating books about themselves and made good use of mathematics in measuring their headspans and drawing round their feet to compare their size with other pupils. However, their written work is often mixed up with other subjects in the same book and it is difficult for the pupils to look back on the sequence of their science work. In the Year 5 lesson, pupils had an elementary knowledge of reproduction and no pupil was able to explain the term 'germination'. They had a limited knowledge of the factors that plants need for growth.
79. Overall, too much is done for the pupils in science lessons and a scrutiny of work indicates that often the practical work is too formal with the teacher doing much of the demonstration and the measuring out of materials for experiments. Not enough use is made of questioning to draw out knowledge and ideas from the pupils. When pupils do write up their work, their generally weak writing skills slow up the pace of work and their written assignments sometimes remain unfinished. In their completed work there is little evidence of pupils reasoning predictions and explaining conclusions. In the work seen in Years 1 and 2, mathematical accuracy is sometimes sacrificed because the pupils work on blank paper and their scales go badly awry when drawing up their results in graphical form.
80. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader's action plan indicates a main priority to improve standards, but the ways in which this is to be done need more careful thought. She has held meetings with groups of teachers to discuss the programme of work and approaches to teaching it and modelled a lesson. She has not had much opportunity to monitor teaching but she scrutinises work across the school and reports back to staff on the observations. Much has been done to re-organise the satisfactory resource provision across the two buildings so that teachers have quick access to relevant equipment for their age groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is used well across several areas of the curriculum, which represents good improvement since the last inspection
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent
- Leadership and management have been effective in securing improvement in the resourcing of ICT

Commentary

81. Standards in ICT are well below national expectations at the end of Year 2 and below national expectations at the end of Year 6. Pupils' achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were preparing computer presentations in connection with their cross-curricular work on the

police. After a good demonstration by the teacher on how to set up the title page and subsequent pages with bullet point information, pupils prepared on paper the information they wanted to convey. In the next lesson they transferred this to the computer, being able to present a slide show by the end of the lesson.

82. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with a wide range in quality dependent on teacher expertise. Where teaching is good, effective demonstrations enable pupils to be clear about the task set and be sure about how to achieve the desired result. The pace of the lesson is well judged because the activity has been carefully planned. In a Year 1 lesson, good questioning led to pupils developing an understanding of the variety of sources which can be used to gain information. Year 5 pupils learned how to use the computer to take readings of the amount of light which passed through different materials. Good teacher support helped pupils to understand why the test needed to be fair and how to achieve this, how to make predictions and record their results. They were encouraged to use correct technical terms, for example, 'calibrate'. In the least successful lessons, learning was of a lesser quality because some pupils were happy to remain on the fringe of activities and teachers did not make enough use of pupils' own prior knowledge to move understanding forward, preferring to intervene in the answers to some questions too early. Not enough use was made of assessing what the pupils had learned in order to guide the next lesson.
83. Leadership and management of the subject are good, based on a very good knowledge of the curriculum and what the school needs to do to improve further. Resources, both hardware and software, have improved since the last inspection and lessons are now time-tabled regularly, which represents good progress. Whilst in-service training has been provided for many staff, the school recognises the need for further training. Good modelling of lessons is offered by the co-ordinator for other members of staff and an appropriate department action plan is in place, which includes the monitoring of teaching and learning quality. Assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory, and Year 6 has already begun setting up a portfolio of pupils' work to aid this. Accommodation for ICT is good, with the multi-media studio being available for use as well as the ICT suite.

ICT across the curriculum

84. During the inspection, evidence was seen of effective use of ICT in several subjects. Good opportunities for developing skills were given in science, where Year 2 pupils were learning about themselves and produced a graph of pupils' eye colour. In English, Year 3 wrote thank you letters on the computer, and Year 1 used the computers for problem solving in mathematics. A Year 6 display presented information in three-dimensional pie and bar charts.

HUMANITIES

Geography, history and religious education

No lessons were seen in history and two in geography.

85. No **history** lessons were taught at the time of the inspection, and no judgement can be made on current provision. The subject is blocked and taught in part of the year only. Indications from pupils' work are that the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are studied adequately to fulfil requirements with good use made of resources, visits to museums and use of the Internet, to find out about the past. However, the blocking of lessons has drawbacks in that pupils forget their knowledge because of the long gaps between teaching different units of work.
86. The teaching of **geography** resumed only recently after a substantial block of time had been allocated to history. Too few lessons were sampled to provide an overall judgement on provision. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall. Pupils' achievement in the lessons was unsatisfactory because they had too little recollection of key words in the subject and their general knowledge was very limited. This is due in part to the very long gaps between units of work. Lesson planning was good. Teachers plan collaboratively to ensure that parallel classes receive an equal level of provision, and that the course is coherent and suitably challenging for the range of pupils.
87. In the lessons observed, teachers had adequate subject knowledge and provided suitable resources. The task, in both Years 3 and 4, was to select a holiday destination to suit a person with particular likes and dislikes. However, pupils' response was limited because few knew, for example, which countries use the euro, or the relative times of journeys by air to different parts of the world.

In a good lesson seen, the teacher coped well with a class containing some difficult children and in general the pupils made good efforts to increase their competence in using atlases, and gained a good understanding of some key words associated with world travel.

88. Developments planned for the current school year have not been fully achieved because of the absence through illness of the subject leader. However, a thorough review has taken place recently, and good developments are now firmly planned. Good quality documents outlining this indicate that schemes of work are being developed that meet national requirements and reflect the actual needs of the school's pupils.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning meets the needs of all pupils
- There is good support for pupils with special educational needs
- Some pupils' lack of enthusiasm results in limited recorded work

Commentary

89. Standards in religious education are below local expectations, but pupils start Year 1 with a very limited knowledge and achieve satisfactorily. At the time of the last inspection religious education was not being taught in all classes nor was the Agreed Syllabus being followed. These issues have now been dealt with and the school has made satisfactory progress since then. Teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that there is good coverage of the subject throughout the school.
90. Teaching was satisfactory in the lessons seen. Teachers plan their work well and ensure that the needs of all the pupils are met. Learning support assistants are effective in making sure that pupils with special educational needs join in and understand the lessons. Drama was used well in religious education, for example in a Year 3 lesson to help the pupils identify with the feelings of guilt felt by Zaccheus when he met Jesus. The use of paired discussion enabled all pupils to reflect on their learning and experiences. In Year 2, pupils listened to a Hindu story of the creation of the world and compared it to the Biblical version. In lessons where behaviour was not managed effectively, some pupils did not tackle their work with interest or have pride in the quality of their work.
91. Younger pupils were not able to remember much content of their work in religious education beyond what they had been taught very recently. However, they remembered discussing kindness and friendship. Year 5 pupils talked enthusiastically about their work on heroes and heroines and remembered a moving assembly on Ann Frank linked to this work. They showed understanding of the different beliefs of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism and talked about festivals like Easter, Ramadan and Diwali associated with these religions.
92. Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed coordinator is enthusiastic and plans to train staff to introduce the new Agreed Syllabus and enrich the subject by visits to places of worship and enhancing resources. She ensures that teachers' planning is appropriate, talks to teachers about their training needs and monitors lessons and work. She works closely with the co-ordinator for personal, social and health education linking the subjects to reinforce the development of tolerance and understanding of other religions and cultures.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

No lessons were seen in art and design or design and technology, three in music and two in physical education.

93. In **art and design** the curriculum is planned satisfactorily to develop the pupils' artistic skills and ideas. They study the work of different artists as was seen in some attractive Year 1 paintings in the style of Monet and some carefully detailed Year 6 drawings using the style and techniques of Van Gogh. Observational drawings and paintings of flowers, plants and trees in Year 2 show the pupils are developing skills well in a range of media. The pupils have used computers to paint and draw

and some work in Year 5 showed effective use of colour. Art is used as a tool across the curriculum, as seen in history with patterns and designs for Greek urns in Year 4, in religious education in a collage of the street in Amsterdam where Ann Frank lived, and in geography with a Year 5 collage of Llandudno. Artists have worked with younger pupils in school to develop some very good quality ceramic and card dragons and an underwater scene. The subject leader has only recently taken on management of the subject. She has plans to review the curriculum and policy and improve resources and ensure that all staff are confident in teaching in all media. She has set up an art club and has observed colleagues teaching in several age groups in order to support improvement. There is no evidence of recent three-dimensional work and art from different cultures is not well represented. The pupils do not use sketch books to record their observations at regular intervals. However, the subject leader has appropriate plans to deal with these issues.

94. **Physical education** was not a major inspection focus and only two full lessons were observed with brief glimpses of others. Planning indicates that pupils engage in a full range of physical activities during the course of the year, including good arrangements for swimming. A satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to engage in extra-curricular activities supports the physical education curriculum. The teaching in each of the two lessons observed was satisfactory and pupils made satisfactory progress. The lessons were well planned with clear learning intentions. Teachers set a good example by their own form of dress for physical education lessons. Pupils enjoyed the activities and participated well, though clearer demonstration of techniques for catching and throwing would have benefited the pupils before they practised. Good use was made of coloured equipment and this prevented any squabbling about which piece of equipment belonged to each pupil. A significant problem is that pupils miss physical education if they forget their kit and pupils were sidelined for this reason in each lesson seen.
95. There was very little evidence of **design and technology**, although it is clearly planned for. The very small amount of work seen was of a low level in Year 1 in which pupils had made play equipment, but this largely comprised two boxes stuck together. Year 5 pupils had made musical instruments and their quality was more appropriate for their age and of a satisfactory standard using a range of materials. Year 4 pupils' designs of their own nets to produce cereal boxes benefited from examining commercially produced products. Year 6 pupils enjoyed examining moving toys in small groups as they studied the way in which the toys were powered, how the vehicle was controlled and the idea of front and rear wheel drive. They were challenged to think about how the models they worked with were constructed and how they might be adapted to be more manoeuvrable.
96. It was only possible to see three **music** lessons during the inspection and one choir rehearsal, so it is not possible to make a judgement on standards or provision. In some of the music lessons seen, there was not enough musical content, and there are indications that the music scheme is not stimulating enough to engage the pupils' interests and promote their knowledge and understanding of music. Good teaching and learning occurred when planning met the needs of all the pupils, and engaged them in musical activities. This encouraged the development of good listening skills and offered opportunities for fun and enjoyment. The choir, which is organised through external support, sang tunefully and enthusiastically, and was well drilled. They give regular performances, and this activity builds pupils' confidence and makes a good contribution to their social development. Resources are adequate and accommodation is good, although the music studio can get rather warm at times.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is good.

Main strengths

- The school gives good attention to pupils' awareness of healthy living
- The school is alert to promoting pupils' awareness of environmental issues

Commentary

97. Personal, social and health education is a regular feature on time-tables and is supported by initiatives, such as the school's involvement in the Behaviour Improvement Programme aimed at improving pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The Nurture Group initiative to help develop needy pupils' social skills in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is proving successful and providing some pupils with a secure base for their morning activities. The school has successfully participated in the Healthy Schools Award and intends to further this activity and seek further awards. This is involving pupils in life choices, heightening pupils' awareness of their own safety and making them aware of the need for a healthy and balanced diet. Pupils are taught about the importance of exercise and this is being encouraged in the pupils' own involvement in the school's travel plan. Pupils' understanding of democratic principles is underpinned through the election of pupils to serve on the school council and committee members undertake their duties with a ready maturity as they make suggestions to improve the quality of school life. Pupils receive good awareness training in drugs education and healthy living and are made aware of the dangers of smoking and excessive alcohol consumption. Such education is sometimes achieved through drama activities.
98. Within their daily classroom life, pupils are consistently reminded of the need to be thoughtful to one another, although not all pupils respond by being sufficiently mindful and thoughtful of others. At times when they gather for discussion in a circle, they are reminded that only one person speaks at a time and that polite listening is a social grace. Discussion with learning partners in class helps them to be cooperative and to negotiate decision making and to have regard for the other person's point of view. The school's involvement in eco-management is helping the pupils to become involved in their own care for the environment. There are advanced plans to position a wind turbine in the school grounds.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	6
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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