

INSPECTION REPORT

HERRICK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120100

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Goffin

Lead inspector: Mrs Jane Morris

Dates of inspection: 28th June to 1st July 2004

Inspection number: 256405

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3–11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	356
School address:	Lockerbie Avenue Leicester Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE4 7NJ
Telephone number:	0116 266 5656
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Smart
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an above average sized city primary school with 323 full-time pupils on roll. A nursery provides for 33 part-time pupils. The school population has declined in numbers since the previous inspection, but is set to rise in the coming year. The school serves a predominantly Asian British community in the Rushey Mead area of Leicester. Ninety–six per cent of pupils do not have English as their mother tongue. Pupils speak mainly Gujerati, Urdu, Kutchi, Hindi and Punjabi. Other ethnic minority groups and different languages are also represented, for example, Shona, Tamil and Pushto. Statistics gathered from national data show the socio-economic situations of families are variable, but are generally below average. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than those expected is above average at 16 per cent. Fourteen per cent of pupils are currently on the school's list of pupils with special educational needs. This is slightly below average. Three pupils, one per cent, have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This figure is below the national average. Pupils' special educational needs are learning, physical, social and language related. The school achieved both 'Investors in People' status and the 'Healthy Schools Award' in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18270	Mrs Jane Morris	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education.
9883	Mr Brian Silvester	Lay inspector	
23300	Mrs Lily Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, religious education, special educational needs.
20230	Mrs Jennifer Clayphan	Team inspector	English, art and design, music, English as an additional language.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** and improving school. It offers very good value for money. Standards are rising because teaching and learning are good. All pupils achieve well, develop positive attitudes and behave well. The headteacher has very high aspirations for the school. The committed and very capable senior management team and an extremely effective governing body make certain that this school is in a strong position to continue to improve. The school includes and supports every pupil very well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All support staff offer very good assistance to all pupils and this clearly develops their skills in English.
- The school improvement plan is steering improvement very effectively. Recently introduced initiatives in literacy are having a significant impact on achievement in all subjects.
- Pupils' understanding of some more complex vocabulary is underdeveloped.
- The high level of staff turnover has caused some disruptions to learning in the recent past.
- Teaching in the nursery is of a high quality ensuring that children make a very good start.
- The school has a very good ethos, is very safe and caring with very good links with parents.

The school has shown very good improvement since the previous inspection. It is more effective. All issues have been addressed. Teaching and assessment are better. Stronger leadership and management have ensured that self-evaluation procedures are very productive. There are enhanced partnerships with parents. Attendance is much improved, as is the curriculum. Pupils' personal development is now very good. The learning environment is safer and more appealing.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

All pupils achieve well. Standards in Year 6 are better than those reported in 2003 when the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs had an adverse effect on overall results. Standards are below average in English, but they are now broadly average in mathematics and science. Standards are rising throughout the school. Pupils achieve very well in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. In religious education and design and technology pupils' overall good achievement ensures that they reach above average standards. In information and communication technology (ICT) pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards.

Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were average in writing, below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. Currently standards are below average in writing and mathematics. Standards in reading are average. There have been improvements to mathematics and reading. Writing standards are lower because the introduction of a programme to support the development of literacy skills has yet to have an effect on writing standards in Year 2. The programme has already contributed to the higher reading and writing standards evident in Year 1.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well overall. They enter the nursery with well below average standards. Their communication, language and literacy skills in English are particularly low. The school is very successful in ensuring that the youngest children achieve very well in this area. At the end of the reception year children meet the goals expected in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. In other areas their standards have improved, but remain below average.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good; it is very good in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Most other subjects show examples of very good teaching. This makes certain pupils learn effectively and achieve well. Teaching has some outstanding features in the nursery. The support offered by teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants to all pupils with English as an additional language and also those with special educational needs is very effective. Assessment procedures are good.

The curriculum offered is good. Very good extra-curricular provision enriches pupils' learning, especially in sport. Resources and accommodation are of a good quality. A very high turnover of teaching staff in the recent past has had a disruptive influence on some pupils' learning. The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are very good and this has a significant impact on pupils' achievements, as do the very good community links and good contacts with other schools and colleges. Partnerships with parents are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has an extremely clear vision and absolute determination to continually move the school forward and improve standards. She manages the school very well and is supported very effectively by other key staff. Together they introduce innovative ideas very successfully. The governance of the school is excellent. Not only are governors very supportive, but their role as a challenging body is extremely well established. All statutory requirements are met. Financial matters are managed very well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Almost all parents express positive views. They have confidence in the school and their opinions are sought and valued. Additional opportunities are much appreciated. Some parents would like more information, but evidence suggests they are kept very well informed. The inspection team acknowledges concerns raised by a small minority of parents about the high level of staff changes, and agrees that this has affected some pupils' learning.

Pupils like school and appreciate the many extra opportunities to take part in interesting activities. They feel very safe and appreciate the care that the school gives them. Their opinions are sought and valued by the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Consolidate the existing high quality school improvement plan that rightly identifies key areas such as the development of pupils' use and understanding of more complex vocabulary and focuses on improving the teaching of mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- Make certain that staffing arrangements to secure consistent, good quality teaching are sustained whilst ensuring that disruptions to pupils' learning are eliminated.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Throughout the school achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Standards across the school have improved and the current Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well in mathematics and religious education.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in their language and physical skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- At the end of Year 2, standards in reading are showing significant improvement.
- Some pupils' understanding of more complex vocabulary can inhibit their achievement and standards.
- Standards in religious education and design and technology have improved since the last inspection and are now above average.

Commentary

1. The majority of children enter the nursery with very limited English skills. Their standards are well below average. Foundation Stage Profiles show that children achieve very well in this area, but the vast majority do not meet the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their reception year in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development or knowledge and understanding of the world. In personal, social, emotional and physical development their standards are in line with those expected. The very good start that children get in the nursery has a beneficial impact on standards in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their communication skills.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (15.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.7 (14.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.9 (15.3)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. In Year 2 standards are currently average in reading and science, but are below average in mathematics and writing. Standards in reading are improving rapidly since the introduction of a literacy teaching programme. This programme is having a positive influence on writing standards in the classes with Year 1 pupils, but the school has yet to feel the full impact of its success on overall standards in Year 2. The scheme has also not had time to have more effect on the already good achievement in the classes from Year 2 onwards. Pupils lack sufficient understanding and development of mathematical language in Years 1 and 2 and this lowers their overall standards in this area. The lack of a consistent approach to the organisation and recording of science investigations inhibits some pupils' further progress in this aspect of the subject.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.7 (26.5)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	25.8 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.9 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3. Inspection findings and early indications from the invalidated data gleaned from this year's test results at the end of Year 6 show standards have improved in English, mathematics and science when compared with the results for 2003. Standards are rising because teaching is consistently good or better and stability has returned to teaching arrangements at the top end of the school. Currently, at the end of Year 6, the inspection shows that pupils are reaching broadly average standards in mathematics and science. Their standards are below average in English, but there is an improvement on last year's standards, which were well below average because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. All pupils are achieving well whatever their capability. There are no significant differences between the standards reached by boys and girls even though some year groups have considerably higher numbers of girls than boys and vice versa. All pupils are building successfully on their prior attainment.
4. In religious education standards at the end of Year 2 are average and above average at the end of Year 6. They have improved significantly since the last inspection. This is also the case with design and technology, where standards of work seen around the school and in lessons are above average. In ICT standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards could not be assessed in other subjects because of insufficient evidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The level of attendance and punctuality is very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' willingness to be enterprising and to take responsibility is excellent.
- Pupils have a wide range of responsibilities in the school.
- Pupils' freedom from bullying, racism and other forms of harassment is very good.
- The level of attendance has improved considerably since the previous inspection.

Commentary

5. Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work are good and assist their achievement. They listen well to their teachers and get on well with the tasks given. Pupils co-operate well, understand the need for teamwork and work together constructively, sharing resources. They work hard within a happy atmosphere and they are enthusiastic learners. Pupils concentrate well and persevere. They are exceptionally willing and show very high levels of initiative. They are prepared to promote new ideas and carry them forward. This was seen in their work with projects to support environmental issues. For example, they take full responsibility for the composting programme.
6. Pupils' behaviour is good overall and very good in Years 1 and 2. Some older pupils do present some challenging behaviour, which is usually managed well. The very good social and moral education provided, including a good programme of lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship, has a clear and positive impact on the good behaviour observed.

Pupils have good opportunities to develop their own citizenship role through the school council and through the wide range of responsibilities given to them. They show initiative by, for example, participating in a non-uniform day to raise funds to improve the school environment.

7. Parents have very few worries about bullying. Anti-bullying workshops are provided for pupils. A survey was undertaken with the pupils and the results of this influenced the school's anti-bullying statement. Incidents are very rare, but when they do occur, they are dealt with speedily with parental involvement and in accordance with the school policies.
8. The personal development of the pupils, and their relationship with peers and adults in the school, is very good. Children in the Foundation Stage do very well in this area and reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. Personal development is monitored well by teachers. Formal and informal records are kept and reference is made to this area in their annual reports. Pupils receive positive praise through commendations, certificates, praise postcards and stickers.
9. The school prepares pupils very well for life in a diverse multicultural society. Pupils work collaboratively and respect each other's beliefs and values. The school has links with a Leicester primary school whose pupils are predominantly of white British heritage. Together they share in the different religious celebrations of the pupils of the two schools. Pupils visit local places of interest and visiting musicians and dancers come into the school to perform for the pupils.
10. Spiritual development of pupils is good. School assemblies reflect the religious traditions of all pupils. The provision for religious education is good. Lessons are reflective and seek ideas, thoughts and experiences. The 'Human Values Club' encourages pupils to be good to one another and to be truthful to themselves and others. The school has good links with local places of worship and faith leaders visit the school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003

Authorised absence	
School data	4.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.5
National data	0.4

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

11. Pupils like school and are keen to attend. Exclusions are very rare with only one pupil reported as being excluded during the past year. The level of attendance has improved considerably since the previous inspection. It is now very good and currently well above the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Parents are well aware of the strict procedures on attendance. Extended holidays are strongly discouraged. Parents are rung on the first day of absence if a pupil is absent without a known reason. Certificates are given to pupils for full or improved attendance. The level of punctuality is very good. Parents are regularly informed of the importance of punctuality.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Effective teaching ensures good learning. The school provides a good curriculum enhanced very well by additional opportunities that are made available to all pupils. A very good ethos is shaped by the very caring atmosphere. Links with parents and the community are very good and there are good links with other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

The quality of both teaching and learning is good and ensures that pupils achieve well. Teaching has some very strong features throughout the school, but especially in the nursery where there are examples of lessons that are of an exceptionally high standard. Assessment procedures are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teaching is very good in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, but no more than satisfactory in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers take great care to promote pupils' skills in acquiring and developing their use of English language.
- Teachers and other adults providing classroom support are very proficient at encouraging and engaging with all pupils thus ensuring that they feel valued and are treated equally.
- Ways to develop pupils' understanding of more complex vocabulary requires further consideration in teachers' planning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	18 (39%)	20 (44%)	7 (15%)	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.

12. The school's attention to monitoring the quality of teaching and its impact on learning has paid dividends. This is reflected in the higher proportion of good and very good lessons seen during this inspection and makes certain that now all teaching is at least satisfactory. Although half of the class-based teachers at the school are newly qualified, still training or new to the school, there has been substantial improvement to the quality of teaching. There has been a very high turnover of staff over the past two years and this has caused some parental concerns. Inspection findings show that some changes have caused disruption to the continuity and consistency in pupils' learning, but that the school is now in a stronger position to sustain a higher quality of teaching.
13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Nursery children benefit from high quality teaching because all the adults who work with these children are thoroughly prepared and engage them in stimulating activities. These take account of all children's needs, but especially the need to develop their spoken English skills. A very good balance of teacher led and adult initiated tasks enable children to learn and progress very well even though their attainment on entry is well below average. There is a hive of activity in the nursery, both indoors and out. All children are very purposefully occupied. Adults, some bilingual, support language development constantly and raise children's interest in all the exciting activities available to them.
14. Teaching for children of reception age is good. They are taught in two classes, one purely reception and one for Year 1 pupils and reception children together. Teachers and other adults know the children very well. There is effective planning for these children and this ensures that they experience good quality lessons and learn well. Activities provided are varied and interesting. Reception children also share many of the rich learning experiences that are available to nursery children. All children receive very effective support from nursery nurses and other trained staff. There are some very rare occasions when the pace of lessons for reception children falters and this slows their learning. The class for reception children on their own benefits considerably from the trainee teacher's bilingual skills. This has a very significant influence on children's developing understanding and achievement. In the class for reception

mixed with Year 1 children, the teacher's very good literacy teaching, using the recently introduced programme, is leading to higher standards. Assessment procedures are thorough and the outcomes are recorded systematically. This means that children's progress is tracked successfully and usefully supports planning for the next steps in learning throughout the Foundation Stage.

15. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good. It has some very strong features. The support offered to pupils who have English as an additional language is very effective. Teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants who are specifically employed for this area of the school's work and indeed, all other support staff, play a very valuable role in supporting pupils' good achievement. Together teachers and their assistants make certain that all pupils are included and treated equally and fairly. Teachers' planning is secure and almost always ensures that there are well-matched opportunities for developing learning, so all pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and they achieve well. Gifted and talented pupils are recognised and receive appropriate support and are challenged appropriately. Literacy and numeracy lessons are of a good quality. Although standards in English are below average, teachers are always considering how they can develop pupils' learning in this area more productively. They promote discussions at every opportunity and recognise the need to develop their planning even further to ensure that pupils' broader understanding of more complex vocabulary is fostered, particularly in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
16. In a small number of lessons, although teaching is satisfactory, there is some lack of pace and teachers are inclined to talk too long before getting pupils started on their tasks. This slows learning at the beginning of lessons and results in pupils' behaviour and attitudes not being as good as they should be. However, once pupils start their activities, there is a feeling of purpose and intent and they make good progress.
17. Religious education is taught well and has led to raised standards. Teachers are keen to develop ICT in all their lessons and their plans highlight specific opportunities to integrate its use into other areas of the curriculum. Teaching in ICT is good. Lessons in the ICT suite are productive and pupils' skills are developed appropriately. However, the necessity to gather around one small screen can have a negative effect on the pace of learning. Design and technology is taught effectively to pupils because teachers have good subject knowledge and it is very well supported by governors. Other subjects were sampled and, therefore, no judgements were made about teaching.
18. Assessment strategies are good overall and are developing well. They have been a major feature of the school's work. Pupils expressed a good understanding of effective target setting procedures such as 'My Target Book'. They enjoy using their 'Learning Logs' and talk animatedly about how they are encouraged to describe what they know at the start of a topic in science and then how they review and evaluate their progress at the end.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum for all pupils. Curriculum provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Extra-curricular provision is very good and supports pupils' achievement very well, especially in sport. Resources and accommodation are of a good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has been well adapted to suit the needs of all pupils.
- There has been a high turnover of staff in the recent past that has led to some disruption in learning for some pupils.
- Opportunities for enrichment through activities outside the classroom are very good.
- There is a very good match of support staff to the needs of all pupils and the curriculum.
- Resources in the nursery are very good.

Commentary

19. There has been good improvement to the curriculum since the time of the last inspection. It is now well adapted to the needs of the very high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The curriculum arrangements for English and religious education were judged to have weaknesses at the time of the last inspection. They have become good as has provision for mathematics. In science, the curriculum on offer is very good because the subject leader makes certain it is enhanced by stimulating and very appealing additional opportunities. There are useful policies and schemes of work in all subjects. Collective worship is appropriate and meets requirements. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good because teachers and all other adults ensure that pupils receive the correct amount of help to support them effectively.
20. The school's recent high turnover of staff has raised some concerns from parents about the continuity of their children's learning. This is understandable because some pupils' education has been marred by the inconsistency in staffing arrangements. However, the school now has a good match of teacher expertise to curriculum areas and a higher percentage of good and better lessons.
21. The school constantly revises and updates learning opportunities outside the classroom such as the very wide range of clubs that pupils are keen to support. At present there are three or four activities an evening. These include singing, a flourishing science club plus sports clubs. Some activities are taught by experts from outside school. Sports activities are often led by a very committed governor or other visiting enthusiasts. Pupils go on enriching educational visits and visitors such as artists make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Younger pupils belong to an ICT club and there is a new German club at lunchtimes. Breakfast and after-school care is available as well as a club in the holidays.
22. Planning for personal, social and health education is very good and makes certain it permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils learn to think of others and their problems as well as learning to understand their own feelings. There is a very strong ethos of mutual respect so pupils feel happy and confident in school. Pupils are well known to their teachers who amend plans in the light of how well they are doing, although there are some gaps in mathematical planning. Pupils who need support receive very good help from assistants.
23. Well-trained nursery nurses and teaching assistants in the school provide very good support for all pupils and aid delivery of the curriculum very well. The quality of specialist staff, both teachers and nursery nurses, who help pupils in the earlier stages of learning to speak English, is very good. The curriculum provision takes very good account of the needs of the gifted and talented pupils. Resources in the nursery are very good. They are generally good in the main school.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and health and safety provision for the pupils is very good. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are also very good. The involvement of pupils, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views, is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like coming to school and feel secure and happy.
- Parents are very happy with the very good care and support provided.
- Priority is given to promoting pupils' healthy lifestyles.
- The induction of pupils into the school is very good.

Commentary

24. The positive, caring relationship between teachers, other adults and pupils is valued by all. Parents express very positive opinions about this care. Regular health and safety checks of the buildings and grounds, and risk assessments, are carried out very efficiently. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are very good. Parents are very appreciative of this. Teachers and other staff know the pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. The school's very good ethos looks for the positive and aims to reward it. The very good personal support and guidance given to the pupils helps to raise their achievement. The effectiveness of the monitoring and assessment of pupils' personal development are very good.
25. Pupil health and dental checks are carried out. The school works very closely with outside professional agencies, such as the school nurse. The different dietary needs of pupils are very well catered for. For example, free fruit is provided for the nursery and reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2. All pupils are encouraged to drink water. All teaching staff have a first aid qualification.
26. Induction procedures for children starting school are very good. This makes certain that children are secure and confident as they join the school. Most children enter the nursery after attending the pre-school setting, which is situated in the school grounds. The majority of children spend some time in the nursery in preparation for their formal entry in September and meetings are held for parents. At these times the needs and abilities of each child are discussed and this ensures that any requirements are recognised in order to provide a good start to learning.
27. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good. The school council has two representatives from each class from Years 2 to 6 and meets regularly, and they take up the ideas of pupils and then report back. For example, they are currently pursuing the benefits of introducing a nature trail and new play equipment. As well as the school council, pupils have a wide range of responsibilities. The 'Little Rotters' collect materials to be composted. The 'Red Hats' help in the playground and dining hall, the 'Green Hats' pick litter up and the 'Blue Hats' tidy the physical education store weekly. The eco-committee raised money with a non-uniform day and used the resources to improve the school environment. The 'Human Values Club' encourages pupils to be good to one another and to be truthful to themselves and to others. Road safety representatives pass on safety messages to the pupils and help to organise competitions, thus supporting their learning about the risks involved in travelling safely to school. The school gives pupils very good opportunities to show and take initiative. For example, the school bank is run by Year 6 pupils after they have been trained by a local bank. Pupils have also created their own half-termly newsletter for the school. These activities further promote their achievement in areas such as numeracy and literacy very well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. The links with the local community are very good. The school's links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vast majority of parents think very highly of the school and the way it is led and managed.
- Parents are given quality information about the work of the school and their child's targets, achievements and progress.
- The school association raises funds that are used to assist the pupils' progress and achievement.
- The school works very closely and effectively with the local community and this supports pupils' achievements very well.
- Arrangements for transfer to the two main receiving high schools are good.

Commentary

28. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciative of the way in which the school is led and managed. This ensures very strong parental links that have a very positive impact on all pupils' learning. There have been improvements since the last inspection. The information provided to parents is very good. Regular newsletters are sent out and they are also available on the school's website. Translations are available for those parents who request them. The pupils' annual reports are good and tell parents what their child knows, understands and can do. Targets and levels are given in English, mathematics and science. The 'My Target' booklets are used to share information on progress with pupils and parents. In 'Learning Logs', pupils demonstrate how they have met their learning targets. Information about their child's future curriculum is sent out to parents termly. Parents also receive regular reports on how well their child is completing the homework set. A club for parents to inform them how to help their child at home is available, but is not always well supported. There are two formal parents' evenings a year where parents can discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. These evenings are well attended. Workshops are held for parents on curriculum matters, like numeracy. Some parents would like more information, particularly about how they can help their child at home, but evidence shows parents are already kept very well informed.
29. The Herrick School Association organises a number of fund-raising events, such as fayres and sponsored events. The funds raised are used to purchase resources that assist the pupils' progress and achievement. Parents help in school and on trips out. The views of parents are canvassed and parental questionnaires are carried out. Parents attend courses at the school on speaking English and the use of computers.
30. The school has the confidence of and works very closely with the local community. It has good links with local places of worship and the faith leaders visit the school. There are good links with local industry, for example, help was given in painting the school and the infants' playground. One industrialist serves on the governing body. The school shares harvest festival parcels with the local elderly and a home for the blind. A local bank trains pupils to run the weekly school bank. The school has effective links with the local 'Area Improvement Zone'. The school buildings are used by the local education authority for training purposes and summer schools. Local councillors used the school for their audit of the locality. Pupils compete with other schools in the community in tag rugby, football, cricket and road safety quizzes. Coaches from Leicester City (football), Leicester Riders (basketball) and Leicester Tigers (rugby) come into the school to coach the pupils.
31. There are effective links with the two secondary schools to which most pupils transfer. Year 6 pupils spend time in the schools, prior to transfer, and there are 'learning mentors' to support their transition. Meetings are held for parents and there is a good transfer of records. Students from the two secondary schools come to Herrick School for work experience. The school has links with another primary school in Leicester that has a different religious and cultural make-up. The celebration of different religious festivals is shared. The school has good links with the University of Leicester and Bishop Grosseteste College, taking in their students as part of the teacher training programme.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. Governance is excellent and all statutory requirements are met. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has empowered key staff to manage change very effectively. The effectiveness of management is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong commitment to inclusion and a shared determination to maximise the achievement of all pupils.

- The very clear vision and high aspirations of the headteacher and other key staff are making certain that standards are improving.
- The quality of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated very effectively.
- High staff turnover has impacted on the continuity of some pupils' learning in the recent past.
- The governing body helps to shape the vision and direction of the school through their very productive involvement in strategic planning.

Commentary

32. The headteacher and governing body are fully committed to supporting and including all pupils and involving their parents and the community in the work of the school. The vast majority of pupils come from homes where English is not spoken and their poor communication skills in English as they enter school present challenges to raising achievement. However, the school is able to promote and secure pupils' good achievement. The employment of bilingual teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants to support these children provides a powerful tool and promotes closer links between home and school for many pupils. This aspect of the school's work is led and managed very well. The management of the support for pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils is very good. There are clear procedures.
33. All involved in the leadership and management of the school are single-mindedly working towards driving up standards. The school has made considerable strides forward. Very good self-evaluation procedures and clear analyses of data, introduced since the previous inspection, have enabled the school to focus squarely on its strengths and weaknesses. The quality of teaching has been monitored very closely and this has had a significant impact on staffing arrangements. Many difficult decisions have been made and there have been many changes, some of which have interrupted the continuity of pupils' learning. These disruptions have caused some parents consternation. However, pupils now have access to a higher percentage of good and very good lessons than at the time of the last inspection. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated. Changes have proved to be a challenge for some to accept, but have emanated through the headteacher's very well directed and strategic management of the school.
34. The current teaching team is dedicated and extremely hard working and provides a very positive ethos for the pupils. The deputy headteacher, who is also the Foundation Stage leader, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the English as an additional language leader all fulfil major roles in securing the school's success in its improvement. The three 'unit leaders', who guide curriculum provision for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 plus individual subject leaders also support the headteacher in her quest for improvement very well. They ensure that the school is doing its best to fulfil pupils' needs both academically and socially. It is clear that the initiatives and strategies introduced by the headteacher and her management team are now established and the time is right for consolidation of the very effective school improvement plan and reflection on recent successes.
35. Governors are exceptionally highly committed to the principles of inclusion and raising achievement. The headteacher's vision is also their vision. They have a wide range of strengths and pro-actively promote the school within the city and the local community. They have forged very good industry links. They exhibit extraordinary knowledge and dedication. The headteacher has fully involved them in establishing a very high quality school improvement plan to the extent that they have helped to prioritise issues for action. They have also initiated strategies for evaluating their own effectiveness. They are fully conversant with the school's strengths and weaknesses and give unstinting support and encouragement to curriculum leaders. Budget management is very good. The headteacher and governors have managed to eradicate a very significant deficit budget over the past four years. This area of the school's work is of the highest calibre and has improved greatly since the last inspection.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	748,134
Total expenditure	786,071
Expenditure per pupil	2,233

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	47,536
Balance carried forward to the next	9,599

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Specialist teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants are very experienced and skilled, and pupils learn well with them.
- Home languages are used well to ensure that children and pupils are not hampered in their learning by a lack of English.
- The school deploys the number of specialists very skilfully to ensure that they are used where they are needed most.
- The use of a particular learning programme for younger pupils is resulting in rising standards.
- Non-specialists are highly aware of the need to present specific vocabulary, but do not always ensure that pupils understand it all.

Commentary

36. Despite the reduction in funds for specialist staff since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has remained at high levels where specialists are involved, and good initiatives have ensured that non-specialists make a valuable contribution to all stages of pupils' acquisition and development of English skills.
37. Around 96 per cent of the school population normally speaks English as an additional language and many of them do not use English at home. The whole staff ensure that children and pupils have rich opportunities to learn and to practise speaking English. Staff involve parents and carers well in pupils' learning. The skilful use of a blend of home languages and English for younger children and pupils results in good sustained levels of interest in lessons and a rapid development of the ability to chatter and communicate using simple language. This is developed well through a literacy programme that teachers use to extend and develop growing speaking skills into a confident and accurate knowledge of the elements of written language.
38. Highly skilled and experienced specialists support slower learners in some lessons with the result that they make good progress and all pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. In classes of older pupils, although teachers do their utmost to introduce a wide range of words and phrases in all subjects, there are occasions that illustrate that pupils have not fully understood the newly introduced more complex vocabulary sufficiently well. The school recognises this as an area for focused development and is already tackling it as a top priority. The school uses the skills of specialist teachers very well to support and extend higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. Children's attainment as they start school in the nursery is well below average in all areas, but especially in communication, language and literacy, and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Children achieve well because teachers recognise each and every child's needs and the correct emphasis is placed on developing their learning alongside providing the appropriate amount of adult support to enable this to happen. Although the vast majority do not reach the goals expected at the end of the reception year in areas of learning other than personal, social and emotional and physical development, they have acquired a good understanding of spoken English and are beginning to use this knowledge as they develop their learning in all other areas of their curriculum. They all develop positive attitudes to learning.
40. Foundation Stage children are taught in three different settings within the school. These are the nursery, a separate reception class and some reception children share a class with Year 1. All children receive their full entitlement to the Foundation Stage curriculum and this promotes effective learning. About 75 per cent of children attend the on-site pre-school setting before starting in the nursery. There are very effective links with this pre-school. During the inspection all the children from the pre-school were seen totally integrated into the nursery for a morning, thus providing very good preparation for their transition to school.
41. Nursery children benefit from purpose built and very spacious facilities. These provide a wealth of rich learning opportunities both inside and out, and are shared with reception children. The better security, presentation of the learning environment and equipment all contribute to the higher quality of provision that is now on offer to these children. This area of the school's work has improved well since the last inspection. The Foundation Stage leader, who is also the deputy head, knows exactly what these young children need. Her leadership and management of this area of the school's work are very effective. She provides examples of excellent teaching. Along with the team of very experienced, well-trained and capable nursery nurses and teaching assistants, the Foundation Stage leader ensures that there is good achievement by children from a very low starting point. This is because not only do teachers understand the needs of these young children, but nursery nurses and teaching assistants provide very valuable, mother tongue support for the children who almost all have English as an additional language. Children's very good progress in this aspect is assured. The exciting curriculum and stimulating daily timetable in the nursery ensure that teaching is of a high calibre in all areas.
42. Reception teaching is good overall. There are, however, some occasions when the pace of lessons could be increased. Arrangements for the reception class have concerned some parents who feel the changes in staffing have caused disruption to their children's education. The inspection team understand and agree that this has been the case in the recent past. The nursery nurses and teaching assistants have provided continuity for these children, but the lack of a permanent teacher has caused issues. Children are now taught consistently by a very enthusiastic, capable 'Graduate Teacher Programme' trainee, supported by a supply teacher. They benefit from this trainee teacher's good teaching and bilingual skills. The school has managed to stabilise the situation for these children at present. The teacher with reception children and Year 1 together makes certain that the reception children are well catered for. Teaching is good or better especially in literacy lessons. The support of a nursery nurse ensures that reception children's needs are met very appropriately. All reception children are achieving well overall.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults provide very good role models. They know the children and their parents very well.
- The organisation of the classrooms and daily routines encourage independence and provide ample opportunities for discussion.
- Relaxed 'starts to the day' ensure that children feel very secure and they quickly settle to very purposeful activities.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are of a very good quality in the nursery and good in reception. All adults are very well organised and calm, creating a purposeful learning environment. They are well known to and provide security for both parents and children. All children achieve very well even though their understanding of instructions is very limited as they start school. In the nursery the teacher and all other adults are very clear about what it is children need to learn. They focus on developing children's social skills alongside every aspect of each area of learning. An exciting and well-balanced range of self-initiated and adult led activities are very well planned and enable children to develop their personal skills very well. Days begin in a relaxed but focused manner. Parents are welcomed and help to settle children who confidently explore what is on offer. All adults engage with the children to ensure that they soon become engrossed in purposeful tasks. Children learn how to relate to one another and to adults in a very wide range of stimulating situations such as a 'camping' role-play area complete with barbecue, a water-filled canal system with lock gates to manoeuvre and a garden area to explore.
44. In reception, children build successfully on their previous experiences in the nursery. They too are given very secure and calm learning environments. The majority are keen to participate. They behave well. The vast majority of children are likely to reach the expected goals in this area of learning. This is because very considerable effort is put into teaching them how to approach and learn from a rich assortment of experiences in a sociable way that recognises the needs of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Fully trained teaching assistants and nursery nurses offer very valuable support.
- Role-play areas have a very wide variety of high quality equipment to stimulate speaking skills.
- Classrooms provide a wealth of opportunities for promoting early reading and writing skills.
- The school's involvement with outside agencies helps support children with delayed speech or hearing impairment very effectively.

Commentary

45. Children achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good in the nursery and good in reception. Teaching always takes great account of the very low standards of English language acquisition that children have as they begin their schooling. Teaching assistants and nursery nurses provide very productive support in this area. Teaching inspires children to want to learn, listen and talk. The classrooms provide a wealth of opportunities for children to do this as they discuss with adults and one another. They develop a desire to learn to read and children listen to stories with interest. They try out early writing skills with developing confidence and understanding. They are given the opportunity to recognise and write their own name from the earliest stages. Promoting further knowledge of vocabulary is always a top priority for all adults working with the children. Role-play areas such as a 'travel agency' and 'office' give children the chance to practise their developing literacy skills very well.
46. In reception classes the newly introduced literacy programme is having a significant impact and children are learning their letter sounds very competently. They are beginning to use these to

write recognisable words and sentences. Children make a good attempt to sound out words as they are reading. They are able to recognise some key words and their 'Reading Together' books are completed frequently by the teacher, other helpers and, on some occasions, by adults at home. Good progress is evident. The school makes certain that additional expertise is sought and used very well to ensure that any child who has additional language development needs is very well catered for. Any child with delayed speech or hearing impairment is very well supported by experts who visit the school regularly and by the very skilled staff who work with them on a day-to-day basis. By the end of the reception class children have achieved very well, although they will not meet the expected goals.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan very stimulating activities that include interesting counting and sorting games.
- There are very good quality resources to support practical activities.
- Small group activities encourage the development of the language of mathematics, although this area needs further development.

Commentary

47. Good teaching ensures that children throughout the Foundation Stage take part in well-structured and well-resourced practical activities to promote their awareness and understanding of the value of numbers. They learn and achieve well, but the vast majority are unlikely to reach the goals expected by the end of the year.
48. Very good teaching in the nursery makes certain there are detailed plans so children learn successfully and they respond well to practical mathematical activities. Assessments provide clear guidance for teachers and their assistants to ensure that lessons extend children's knowledge with a wealth of well-focused tasks that develop their ability to count and recognise numbers. Children became involved in role-play games such as when they acted out boarding and leaving a train so they began to understand the concepts of more and less. A table covered with a wide selection of different kinds of socks gave children an interesting task as they tried to find matching pairs. A small number of children were confident in counting and recognising the numbers one to ten and beyond.
49. In the classes with reception children teaching is good. Children take part in many practical activities and games such as 'snakes and ladders' that encourage counting skills and the recognition and use of higher numbers. Activities using the water tray encourage vocabulary relating to capacity well. However, the interpretation and use of mathematical language takes longer to become established. This results in the slower development of mathematical understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching ensures that stimulating activities are very well planned to support the full range of aspects in this area.
- Quality discussions take place between the children and the teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning in this area are very good both in the nursery and the reception classes. They develop children's confidence very well and promote and broaden their awareness and knowledge of the world around them. Although children do not meet the expected goals by the end of the reception class, they achieve very well in relation to their previous knowledge. This is because the tasks that are prepared for them are motivating and the quality of all adults' discussion ensures that all are fully involved and they are continually adding to their knowledge and vocabulary. They are challenged to think and to express their thoughts aloud.
51. Children are given ample opportunities to work at the computer both independently and with help. Reception children visit the computer suite regularly and are developing mouse control well. Children explore materials, find out about themselves and living things and the environment around their classroom. They find out about how things grow. In one focused group the bilingual teaching assistant in the nursery ensured that the children understood why it was necessary to repot sunflower seedlings and to provide a stake to support them. Carefully planned topics help children to consider their local area and to think about the past and present. They celebrate events and explore both Christian beliefs and their own faiths. This ensures that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are followed. Reception children dramatised the story of the 'Wedding at Canaan', dressing up in their finery to play the parts. Important festivals that are celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims are respected, as are important Christian dates. Photographs showing children celebrating Eid, Christmas and Divali show how they are encouraged to develop an awareness and understanding of different cultures very well. Designing and making models is a strong feature of children's experiences and construction sets are of a high quality and are used with a real purpose in mind.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children do particularly well in this area and reach the expected goals by the end of the reception class.
- Opportunities for developing balance and hand to eye co-ordination are good.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are of a high quality in the nursery and good in reception. Achievement in this area is very good with the vast majority of children on course to reach the anticipated Early Learning Goals. Children can balance and use their bodies on ride-on toys and equipment with increasing skill and confidence. Reception children can move their bodies with good control and awareness of the space around them. Cutting activities in the nursery illustrate that a small number of children cannot yet manipulate smaller items such as scissors competently, but with the very good support they gain these skills quickly.
53. Teachers ensure that the outdoor environment is used at every opportunity to promote the development of physical skills. Children are given opportunities to explore and develop their spatial awareness frequently both indoors and out of doors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide variety of creative experiences is offered.
- A range of different and high quality art equipment and resources is introduced to the children.
- Teachers plan very well for different role-play scenarios and 'small world' play that stimulate children's imagination.

Commentary

54. Children are taught well in this area in reception and teaching is of a high quality in the nursery. Children learn and achieve well. Children begin to develop their skills in using colour and experimenting with different shapes and textures because teachers encourage their independence and give them numerous opportunities to find things out. Their standards, however, will not be in line with those expected at the end of the reception year. Children are given ample opportunities to paint, draw, model, use collage materials and sculpt. Musical opportunities are made available frequently to the children and they are learning how to hold musical instruments correctly. They are given lots of opportunities to dress up and play imaginatively. They play in the 'home area' and use 'small world' equipment to create scenes that they discuss with adults such as the story of a train ride, which introduced 'farm-related' words to them. The classrooms reflect the attention given to this area of the curriculum. They are colourful, very well presented and celebrate the many different types of activities that are offered.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving because all pupils are achieving well.
- The curriculum for younger pupils, including the introduction of a detailed literacy programme is very good. This is resulting in rising standards, especially in reading.
- The consistently good quality of teaching takes very good account of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and this ensures that pupils throughout the school learn well.
- More needs to be done to ensure that older pupils understand the meanings of and can use complex vocabulary and phrases.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

55. Pupils start school with well below average skills in English. They all achieve well and by the end of Year 2 their standards are below average. This improvement in standards is maintained in Years 3 and 4. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' achievement during this year has been good. However, the impact of the consistently good and very good teaching at the top end of the school has had insufficient time to compensate for some lack of continuity in learning caused by numerous changes of teachers in the recent past. An initial analysis of this summer's invalidated results in national tests at the end of Year 6 and inspection evidence indicates that although overall standards in English have improved they are still below average.
56. In 2003 the majority of pupils in Year 2 attained at the average national level in writing, but standards in reading were below average. This year's results show that there have been significant improvements to reading in response to the school's emphasis on developing this area. Although overall writing standards have fallen slightly, more pupils reached higher levels. Inspection findings show that Year 1 pupils are reaching higher standards because they have

benefited from a very good start to their education in the nursery and they have also gained from the recently introduced and very effective literacy programme. This improvement looks set to have a positive impact on writing standards in Year 2 in the coming year.

57. Samples of pupils' work from throughout the year indicate that teaching and learning are good overall. During the inspection there were examples of very good lessons. In some instances, teachers have to work extremely hard in order to ensure that pupils learn well. Examples of very good practice include skilled questioning techniques that constantly intrigue pupils, for example, pupils were highly motivated as the teacher led a discussion about the character of 'Titania' as portrayed in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Teachers have high expectations of performance, which extend pupils well. Very high expectations of good behaviour and a brisk pace enable pupils to concentrate without distractions and, therefore, to learn well. Detailed and thoughtful planning ensures that pupils work at appropriate levels on interesting tasks. Very good teachers build very good relationships with their pupils and these engender high levels of confidence and a willingness to work hard. Sometimes teachers omit a plenary session or have a very brief review, which lessens opportunities for pupils to consider what they have learned during the session. Teaching assistants and specialist language teachers give very good support. This enables pupils of lower ability and those with special educational needs or who are in the earlier stages of acquiring English to make good progress in their learning.
58. Because of the very high numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language the school is giving emphasis to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in all year groups. The use of partner discussions in all classes ensures that pupils are involved well in their learning and that they all have plenty of practise in thinking and explaining logically. Not all pupils find it easy to adapt this to speaking to an entire class. To help develop this skill, several teachers are starting to use dramatic situations effectively, which is helping pupils to gain confidence. In most classes speaking skills are not far below average, although there are times when pupils lack the necessary vocabulary. On occasions pupils revealed that they had not understood vital vocabulary in lessons, which indicates that class teachers need to check and check again for total comprehension.
59. Pupils listen attentively when they expect that the lesson will be interesting. The dedicated use of the literacy programme for teaching reading and writing is having a very positive effect in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have high levels of confidence and enthusiasm when reading and writing and their accuracy is developing well. In Years 3 to 6 teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy with additional emphasis on a broader use of vocabulary and phrases, and some pupils are starting to savour and apply them. For example, in a religious education lesson in Year 5, pupils volunteered 'what goes around comes around' and 'a friend in need is a friend indeed' to illustrate the moral of the 'Good Samaritan' and stories from other religions. As a result they illustrated how they could interpret and make use of some common sayings.
60. Leadership and management of English are very good and have ensured that improvements since the last inspection have been very good. Weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been rectified and are now strengths. For example, aspects of the curriculum have been renewed and adjusted so that it is more appropriate for the many pupils who speak English as an additional language. In addition, the main library has been re-housed and refurbished. Each class has a weekly study session in the main library and pupils throughout the school are familiar with where specific reference books are to be found and how to conduct research. Assessment has improved, and is now good. Pupils are beginning to take part in assessing their own achievements and increasing use is being made of personal targets, which are reviewed regularly.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Teachers make good use of language and literacy across the curriculum. Numerous opportunities are provided for pupils to use and extend their speaking skills in all subjects. Lists of vocabulary and phrases appropriate for different subjects are offered as valuable reminders to pupils. Their literacy skills are used well to support learning through imaginative and factual accounts in history, geography and religious education and to reflect their thoughts in personal, social and health education. Pupils record their scientific investigations clearly.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and are now average in Year 6.
- Pupils' achieve very well in Years 3 to 6.
- Increasing pupils' understanding and use of mathematical language are recognised as areas for further development, particularly in the younger classes.
- The quality of teaching and learning is at least good in most lessons with teaching assistants providing very good support.
- There is some lack of challenge for higher attainers in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

62. Indications are that test results for the current Year 6 are higher than those reported in 2003, which were below average. In Years 3 to 6 achievement is very good and very good quality teaching is raising standards. Learning over time is very good despite staff turbulence, which is likely to have affected pupils' rate of learning in the past. English teaching programmes, supported by specialist language teachers and speech and language therapists, are having a significant impact on pupils accessing learning in mathematics. Teachers throughout the school are aware of pupils' learning difficulties related to the use of mathematical language and recognise this as an area for continued development. For example, there are some pupils who find difficulty in following some instructions associated with mathematical tasks. Since the last inspection, the school has worked very hard to develop the curriculum, resources, monitoring and assessment and staff expertise, all of which have seen good improvement and are beginning to have a positive impact on standards.
63. By the end of Year 2, standards are well below the national average as pupils concentrate on developing the language needed to develop their mathematical ideas. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, higher attainers and those who are English speakers are often set work that is not sufficiently challenging, with the result that the numbers attaining higher levels are low.
64. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good and when the quality of teaching is very good pupils become fully engrossed in their work. The quality of presentation of work is consistently neat and marking is regular and usually encouraging, although the quantity of recorded work is low in Years 1 and 2. A strong feature of teaching is paired and group discussion when pupils have good opportunities to give explanations. Learning is good where concepts are taught well. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs learned the concept of 'half' by cutting fruit in half, eating half and sharing. Pupils in Year 1 discovered how the passing of five minutes feels when they have that time to complete a task. Support, in lessons and small groups for pupils with language difficulties and those with special educational needs, is very good and enables pupils to make consistently good progress in lessons. Teachers' planning is consistently good in mathematics and teachers are evaluating and amending lessons dependent on evaluation of pupils' learning. There are some

inconsistencies in the use of assessment to match work to the needs of higher and lower attainers in Years 1 and 2.

65. The subject leader has managed changes and initiatives well and offers good leadership to the subject. The curriculum has good breadth, but using and applying mathematics is a weaker strand because pupils experience some difficulties with their interpretations of mathematical language. This area for improvement is recognised by the school and has a high priority within the school improvement plan. The recently introduced 'Target Books' and 'Learning Logs' show pupils' involvement and understanding of their own learning is an emerging strength, but these are areas that are not fully embedded in practice. Monitoring, tracking achievement and staff training are very good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Mathematics across the curriculum is good. Teachers plan well for opportunities to learn through other subjects because they recognise the need for pupils to practise their use of mathematical language in a variety of contexts. This supports pupils' understanding of ideas and awareness of number throughout the school day, but there is still more to be done to promote a greater awareness and understanding of more complex vocabulary. They are given opportunities to apply mathematics in a range of situations and subjects such as science, ICT, history and geography. The construction and interpretation of line graphs to support science investigations is very useful and this work is also consolidated in ICT lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good with teaching assistants and other adults playing a vital role during practical activities.
- The introduction of scientific vocabulary receives a high priority, but some pupils need to develop their understanding still further.
- A high priority is placed on teaching science in a practical way, but there is a lack of a structured and consistent approach to conducting and recording investigations from the earliest stages.
- The subject leader is very committed and knowledgeable. She provides a very good role model for others.

Commentary

67. Standards at the end of Year 6 showed improvement since the last inspection until 2003. Results had risen from being well below those expected to being average in 2002. In 2003, results reflected the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and standards were below average in relation to all and similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that, once again, pupils are now reaching average standards in Year 6. Achievement is good. Early indications are that test results have improved. Pupils at the top end of the school have recovered well from some disruptions to their progress over time that resulted from changes to staffing arrangements. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and this enables them to take part in experiments and record their results with an appropriate level of help. Lessons show that all pupils, both girls and boys and pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly in relation to their prior attainment. Additional help guides their learning, but does not deter them from cultivating their independence. Higher attaining pupils are confident in expressing their evaluations of why things happen in their investigations. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on pulse rates pupils could explain why their heart beats faster

during exercise and what happens when the exercising stops. Pupils produced graphs to illustrate their findings and explained their interpretations of their results. Higher attaining pupils evaluated their results particularly well.

68. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were average and have been maintained at this level this year. All pupils achieve well. Years 1 and 2 pupils' lack of language skills sometimes limits their ability to raise questions or explain what they are doing and this means very few pupils reach levels beyond those expected.
69. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teaching assistants play a very valuable role in developing pupils' science work as does the teacher with responsibility for English as an additional language support. They make certain that pupils are kept fully involved in their experiments, discussing with them how they can find out more. Teachers pay a lot of attention to introducing and promoting the use of appropriate vocabulary. They do this well, but the meanings of some words pose problems for pupils. Sometimes they experience some difficulty when they try to use more complex language to evaluate their findings or to explain cause and effect. The school is rightly focusing on this as an area for continued development to ensure that pupils can interpret test questions correctly.
70. Teachers give pupils practical tasks and investigations that enable them to find out for themselves. Stimulating activities promote effective learning and achievement. However, there is a lack of a whole-school approach to science investigations that ensures that pupils raise questions, predict, plan and record investigations in a systematic and structured way from the earliest stages. Pupils have some difficulty in expressing themselves clearly on paper, but there are signs in Year 1 that this is becoming less of a problem. For example, pupils returned to the classroom having been out into the school grounds to listen to sounds. They recorded their observations very confidently and capably. Assessment is good. Teachers ask pupils to complete a 'brainstorm' of their existing knowledge as they start the term's work and then their progress is reviewed with them at the end of the topic. Presentation of work is of a high standard in Years 5 and 6.
71. The school is in a strong position to resume the trend of improving standards. The subject leader has a very thorough understanding of the subject and its needs. She leads and manages very well. Her enthusiasm impacts on the very good extra opportunities on offer to pupils and supports their good achievement. She provides a very good role model for her colleagues with her very good teaching. However, as yet there have not been opportunities to share this good practice. Visitors come to school to talk about a variety of topics. Clubs are held that give pupils additional and very productive learning opportunities. Notice boards encourage pupils to think of science issues within real situations, and the school's work in promoting environmental awareness and sustainability is very commendable. There have been good improvements since the last inspection. The role of the subject leader has improved significantly and monitoring of pupils' work is well established. Greater attention is being paid to the teaching of science in a practical way.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of ICT skills is good and teaching assistants offer very effective support in lessons, as does the subject leader.
- Teaching is not always as profitable as it could be because teachers have to group all the class around one small screen in order to introduce pupils to a new application.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- ICT is used well across the curriculum.

Commentary

72. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average and all pupils are achieving satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs. Key vocabulary is introduced clearly. The teacher who leads English as an additional language support, and is also the ICT subject leader, works with pupils in ICT lessons to make sure they understand exactly what is expected of them. Her use of 'mother tongue' to explain any areas of uncertainty is very productive. Pupils' skills are improving as the school has focused its attention on using ICT to support other areas of the curriculum and this makes certain that pupils are taught how to use applications such as 'Excel' and 'PowerPoint' for a purpose. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that standards are rising. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are already beginning to reach levels above those expected.
73. Teaching is good. Plans have clear learning objectives and staff work hard to provide a motivating and relevant context for pupils' learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to develop pupils' learning as they explain, in detail, the procedures to follow. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made good progress in using a graphing tool to access and interpret information from a database. Pupils were able to recognise a bar graph and could explain their findings to the inspector. All pupils' progress is assured because they have sessions in the newly established ICT suite where they have access to a sufficient number of computers and can work in pairs as they undertake tasks profitably. They also use computers in the classrooms at every opportunity. Lessons in the ICT suite could be more productive if all pupils did not have to group around one small screen to be introduced to a new application, program or CD-ROM. This has inhibited the raising of standards and the level of achievement in some lessons. The school has budgeted for the purchase of an interactive whiteboard and indications are that this will alleviate this situation in the very near future.
74. Teaching assistants have a secure knowledge of ICT. Their support is very valuable. They ensure effective learning both in whole-class teaching sessions and when working with individuals on the computers. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the use of ICT. Internet access has ensured that pupils have many opportunities to develop their research skills and their knowledge of the wider world. The school is well placed to improve standards.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and committed to ensuring the best of support for both teachers and pupils. She has really got to grips with promoting ICT further during the nine months she has had the responsibility. Coverage of the curriculum has been assured and this has been established throughout the school. A helpful portfolio of work has been produced to support teachers when they make assessments of the standards reached by pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. There is still work to be done to raise standards, especially in relation to assessment and monitoring the effectiveness of teaching, but the school appears to be well placed to secure better standards and achievement in the near future.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. Pupils use ICT well to support their learning across the curriculum. Word-processing skills are used to support literacy skills and enhance displays of their writing through use of colour and different fonts and borders. A range of numeracy programs successfully reinforces and extends pupils' mathematical skills. Pupils use a range of graphs and spreadsheets to record science experiments. They are competent in using a range of draw and paint tools as well as searching the Internet to find text or pictures. They cut and paste from websites in order to enhance their research work in a variety of subjects.

HUMANITIES

One **geography** lesson and no **history** lessons were observed during the inspection, therefore, no judgements can be made about overall provision in these two areas. **Religious education** was inspected fully.

Current work in **history** and **geography** was sampled and suggests that pupils are likely to be working at appropriate levels in both these subjects. Indications are that the curriculum coverage is thorough and that the school has improved the below average standards reported previously in geography.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement in standards by the end of Year 6.
- Religious education promotes spiritual awareness, morality, social development and citizenship well. It reflects the multicultural nature of the school effectively.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

77. Standards have risen by the end of Year 6 to above average, from below average as was reported in the last inspection. Achievement is good. This is very good improvement from the situation at the previous inspection. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average having developed from a low standard on entry. Achievement is very good. The quality of work, both written and oral, shows pupils reflect and consider important issues illustrating good awareness of the needs of society and similarities and differences between world religions. Year 6 pupils wrote movingly their own 'I have a dream' speech after the style of Martin Luther King, touching on areas such as war and terrorism, violent crime, starvation and racism. Their efforts were very thought provoking. Pupils concentrate on understanding friendships, feelings and families as well as festivals and pilgrimage for Christian and other religions.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is good and visits to a mosque, the Gurdwara and a church as well as visitors to school frequently heighten new knowledge and understanding. Teachers make certain the pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop very quickly an understanding of other faiths and religions that are different to their own. This ensures that they acquire solid foundations on which to build their knowledge effectively. During the inspection the Church of England vicar visited, showing her special clothes and explaining their significance. Religious festivals are always marked with interesting displays in the entrance hall of the school. At times such as Diwali, parents are involved in preparing a feast for the whole school to enjoy. In lessons there are good opportunities for pupils to share their views with each other and the whole class. Literacy is well developed in this subject as pupils write comparisons of places of worship, and a play with the same moral as 'The Water Carrier' from the Sikh religion. Class teachers question pupils well to heighten their awareness of, for example, the similarities of morals taught in different religions.
79. The subject leader has managed and led very well, having shown strong commitment to developing this subject since the last inspection. She has been a member of the working party developing the new syllabus that is about to be introduced throughout the authority. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in planning the scheme of work and developing the profile of the subject and resources, visits and visitors. The curriculum action plan shows

appropriate development and refinement such as improving assessment and further promoting the use of ICT.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology is reported fully, but as no lessons were seen in **art and design, music** or **physical education** it is not possible to report on overall provision in any of these areas. However, planning, evidence around the school and talking with pupils suggest appropriate coverage of the curriculum in all these areas.

80. In **art and design** the quality of the displays around the school indicates that pupils are learning to observe closely and to experiment with a wide range of media. Evidence suggests their skills are developing well and are generally at average levels. Younger pupils have studied Mondrian's patterns and the dotted patterns of Aboriginal art, while older pupils have looked at paintings by Monet, Turner, Picasso and Boccioni and achieved effective work in their styles. Pupils have undertaken some work in three dimensions including using clay to make tiles and artefacts in connection with a history topic about the Indus Valley civilisation. Pupils have sketchbooks, but they are generally underused.
81. In **physical education**, pupils are given appropriate experiences that ensure that they are well supported in their learning. They cover all areas of the curriculum at least satisfactorily. Swimming is programmed into the school's timetable for pupils in Year 4. Pupils are given very good additional sporting opportunities. There are numerous clubs for pupils to attend both at lunchtime and after school. Many of these come as a result of the involvement of a governor who has a very strong interest in sport and gives freely of his time to ensure that pupils are given extra support, and this improves their achievement. His commitment has involved attending child protection training and becoming a qualified football coach and a driver of a minibus so pupils can travel to sporting fixtures away from the school. Links with secondary schools are also very productive and enable pupils to develop more ability in a variety of activities. Winning the 'Healthy Schools Award' came as the result of the school's very determined efforts to develop this area. It has proved beneficial to pupils' learning. Dance provision is supported effectively by visits from experts who lead workshops to develop pupils' skills and raises achievement in this area of the curriculum.
82. During the inspection pupils were heard taking part in **music** lessons, but no lessons were formally observed. Indications are that the school makes sure that pupils have opportunities to learn to play instruments including keyboards, xylophones and glockenspiels. Due attention is paid to different cultural influences. During an assembly younger pupils were introduced to the musical talents and achievements of a young Asian musician who lives within their own community. Pupils sing with enthusiasm during sessions accompanied on the piano by a friend of the school. Their rendition of 'The Ugly Bugs' Ball' showed great enjoyment and keen participation by all.

Design and technology

Provision in **design and technology** is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership and management are very good as is governor involvement.
- The school has forged links with local industry and takes part in challenges to improve pupils' achievements.

Commentary

83. Standards of work seen in lessons, in books and on display around the school show that standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were below average by the end of Year 6. All pupils achieve well. Displays of a variety of hats and headdresses in Year 6 are colourful, well-constructed and of an above average standard as are the recently made instruments that can be seen in classrooms. Pupils in Year 1 have designed and made good models of playground equipment. Photographs of good quality purses, slippers, electric buggies and the outcomes of a variety of other projects indicate that pupils learn well and have a thorough understanding of the design process. They evaluate effectively their own work and that of others.
84. Teaching is good. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the needs of the subject. This ensures that pupils learn and achieve well; many achieve very well. Classroom displays show that a wide range of techniques and processes are introduced to pupils. They experience and work with resistant materials, textiles and food technology in many interesting ways throughout the school. All pupils have a design and technology book that illustrates how skills are taught in a systematic and challenging way. Pupils are taught to follow a design brief and why it is important to evaluate how successful they have been and what they would do differently if they did the project again. Good progress is evident.
85. The subject leader is very knowledgeable and has undertaken work scrutiny, supported work on assessment and monitored standards. She leads and manages the subject very well. Her enthusiasm for the subject ensures that it has a high profile and that pupils are given many additional opportunities. Clubs are held after school, one for Years 1 and 2 and one for Years 3 to 6, which help to develop and improve skills further. The nominated governor for this area of the curriculum is not only knowledgeable about the subject, but has taken time to visit lessons, write up reports about what he saw and has given feedback to his colleagues on the governing body. He initiated and then became involved with the subject leader in a business led project in which pupils took part when they were challenged to design a moving 'desk tidy'. This project also involved the effective use of control technology when pupils used computer links to make their models move. The governor's understanding of the demands of the subject is impressive as is his awareness of the need to seek ways to strive for continuous improvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. Insufficient lessons were seen to report fully on this subject. Documentation and discussions with the subject leader and pupils indicate that the developments and provision in PSHCE have a significant and positive impact on pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school in general and towards one another in particular. The school is serving its pupils very well. It has been credited with the 'Healthy Schools Award'. The subject is led very well and management is very effective. The school gives a great deal of attention to pupils' personal development. It addresses sex education and raises awareness about drugs and alcohol abuse during weekly timetabled sessions. Visitors to the school make a significant contribution to this aspect of the school's work. Knowledge is promoted successfully within other areas of the curriculum, as was seen in science displays showing how pupils researched healthy diets. ICT also supports PSHCE well. This was in evidence when pupils researched a website to discover how to identify and then prevent the spread of common infections. The school makes certain that it celebrates pupils' involvement and successes in out-of-school activities, as well as those that happen in school. The school council gives pupils opportunities to take part in a useful part of the school's work and this fosters their awareness of citizenship. The involvement of the school in a wide variety of projects to support environmental issues also develops this area of pupils' learning very well.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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