

INSPECTION REPORT

STONEBOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Loughborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120104

Headteacher: Mr R W Jones

Lead inspector: Mr A C Jolly

Dates of inspection: 21-23 June 2004

Inspection number: 258046

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 259

School address: Stonebow Close
Loughborough
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE11 4ZH

Telephone number: 01509 646217
Fax number: 01509 843105

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Hardwick

Date of previous inspection: April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stonebow Primary School is an average sized primary school in Loughborough, providing education for 259 pupils, including 37 in the Reception year. Most pupils live in the area and come from housing development association and privately owned housing. Pupil mobility¹ is low and there is a very low staff turnover. The headteacher, who has led the school since it opened in 1991, is due to retire. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high, about 16 per cent, most predominantly of Indian descent. There are six pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, with Gujarati and Arabic the main home languages. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs is below average overall but the percentage with statements is broadly average. Their needs are mainly specific learning and moderate learning difficulties. Attainment on entry, measured by tests taken in the Reception year each September, is below average. More houses are to be built very close to the school in the near future and the school will have to be extended to accommodate the projected increase in numbers.

¹ Pupil mobility signifies the number of pupils who start or leave the school at times other than the start of the Reception year or the end of Year 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8750	Mr A C Jolly	Lead inspector	English History Physical education Personal, social, health education and citizenship English as an additional language.
19342	Mr T Heavey	Lay inspector	
26405	Mrs C Bond	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music Religious education
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Geography
30580	Mr D Bateson	Team inspector	Special educational needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This good school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils and enables them to achieve well, particularly in the key subjects of mathematics and science. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The headteacher and governors provide good leadership and management to the school. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in mathematics and science are above average in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage² is good, so pupils receive a very secure base for future learning.
- Early literacy skills are well developed by Year 2 but standards in English need to improve by Year 6.
- The school's budget deficit is too high.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good.
- Teachers do not give advice consistently enough on how to improve when marking pupils' work.
- Standards in art and design throughout the school, and in information and communication technology in Year 6, are above average.

The school has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Levels of attainment have improved in mathematics and science. Pupils' skills are more developed in using and applying their knowledge to real life mathematical problems and their investigative skills are improved in science in Year 6. Assessment information is now used satisfactorily to plan work at appropriate levels, although it is not used further to set learning targets for individual pupils. The co-ordinators monitor schemes of work well and some pupils' work in their subjects. Not all co-ordinators monitor teaching to ensure that strategies are implemented consistently to raise standards. The quality of teaching and learning and overall standards have improved since the last inspection. The school is well placed to sustain this improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Achievement is **good**. Pupils benefit from good provision in the Foundation Stage. They are on course to attain all the goals children are expected to reach nationally by the end of the Reception year. All pupils achieve well in this early phase. This good progress continues into Year 2, so that pupils attain above average standards in the key areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science. National test results in Year 2 are particularly impressive. The good

² The Foundation Stage in this school is two classes for Reception age pupils.

progress in mathematics and science is continued in the older years, so that pupils' attainment in Year 6 compares well with their national test performance four years earlier. Standards in English in Year 6 are only average, however. Although pupils achieve satisfactorily they are not challenged and extended as in mathematics and science. Standards in art and design throughout the school and in information and communication technology in Year 6 are above average, so that achievement is good overall. Pupils who have special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils are well behaved, have good attitudes to learning and are very punctual. Levels of attendance are above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning are **good**, which reflects an improvement on the last inspection report. The learning needs of pupils in mixed aged classes and from a range of ethnic backgrounds are provided for well. There is a good, balanced curriculum and pupils receive effective care and satisfactory guidance and support. Partnerships with parents, other schools and the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher has laid solid foundations for the future and is highly committed to ensuring that all pupils receive an effective and stimulating education. His good leadership is supplemented by valuable contributions from key staff. The school is well managed and operates effectively as an orderly, purposeful community. The governors have a clear grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and give good support.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents expressed positive views about the school. A minority expressed some reservations about the school's approach to their suggestions and concerns but the overwhelming majority indicated satisfaction with many areas of school life. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enjoy the activities offered to them. They are very positive and appreciative of what the school offers them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Build on the improved standards in Year 2 to raise standards in English in Year 6 to match those in mathematics and science.
- Ensure teachers give more consistently constructive comments on how to improve when marking pupils' work in Years 3 to 6.
- Reduce the budget deficit.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** throughout the school. Standards are above average in mathematics and science in both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in English are above average in Year 2 but this is not maintained to Year 6 where standards are average. Current standards in English, mathematics and science represent an overall improvement since the previous inspection in the standards attained.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics and science are above average throughout the school.
- Standards in literacy are above average in Year 2 but this is not sustained to Year 6.
- Standards in art and design throughout the school and in information and communication technology in Year 6 are above average.
- National test results for Year 6 pupils fell in 2003.
- Good progress is made by pupils who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

Commentary

1. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 were impressive in 2003 and the provisional results for 2004 confirm this rising trend. The results show that standards in Year 2 were above average in writing and well above average in reading and mathematics. This is illustrated in the table below.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (15.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.8 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.5 (17.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Pupils join Reception with standards below average as measured by the Reception class tests. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage because of the consistently good teaching to ensure they on course to attain the goals children are expected to achieve nationally by the end of the Reception year.
3. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 has focused on the key skills of literacy, numeracy and scientific enquiry. This has resulted in above average standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2. The development of early reading skills is particularly impressive as it ensures above average standards from Year 1 onwards. Pupils are also given considerable stimulus with the development of writing as teaching has a clear focus on how pupils can develop ideas into a sequence of sentences.

4. The quality of teaching from Years 3 to 6 does not sustain above average standards in English. Standards in writing in Year 6 are only average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are extended less in the tasks they are asked to do and the teaching lacks the sense of purpose and drive evident in Years 1 and 2. There is stronger leadership in mathematics and science and standards continue to be impressive in Year 6 so that pupils' attainment is above average in those subjects. Pupils' ability to solve practical problems in mathematics and carry out scientific investigations is better than at the time of the last inspection because the teachers have adapted their schemes of work and teaching to focus on those skills.
5. Standards have improved in information and communication technology at Year 6 and they are above average. Throughout the school, standards in art and design are above average and this is reflected in the attractive work on display. The work in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory.
6. Achievement is good throughout the school. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are clearly identified and addressed. They achieved the nationally expected levels in the recent tests in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, make good progress and attain appropriate standards in relation to their ability. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are well identified and they make good progress. They have benefited from extra classes and holiday sessions in mathematics and sport to improve their attainment and fulfil their potential.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.0 (28.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.5 (30.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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

7. National test results in English, mathematics and science dipped in 2003. This was in line with the pupils' prior attainment and reflected the fact that almost one-third of the year group had special educational needs, many specifically for problems associated with literacy. Test performance was below average in English but above average standards were maintained in science. Standards have been above average overall in national tests in mathematics for the last three years.
8. The major feature of the lower performance in national tests in 2003 in English was that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was well below the national average. The percentage attaining the expected Level 4 was average in mathematics and science. The percentage attaining the higher Level 5 was average in English and mathematics and well above average in science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' **behaviour is good**, and they display **positive attitudes to school**. Their good attendance is enhanced by very good punctuality. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The combined efforts of parents, school and pupils ensure that children attend school regularly and in very good time.
- The school is an orderly community because pupils' enthusiasm for school helps them to work hard and behave well.
- The school helps pupils to develop a caring and responsible attitude.
- Pupils occasionally lose concentration or become fidgety when the pace of the lesson is less brisk.

Commentary

9. The effectiveness of the home-school partnership is seen at its best in their joint efforts to ensure pupils attend school regularly and make the most of their time there. Pupils are eager to come to school and parents support the school's efforts in ensuring that their children are able to get to school each day in very good time.
10. Pupils' enthusiasm for school reflects well on the encouragement offered by parents, and on the mutual respect that characterises relationships between pupils and their teachers. Some 90 per cent of parents confirm that their children like coming to school, while the overwhelming majority of pupils responding to their questionnaire say that they like their teachers. There are very warm relationships across the school that result in a friendly atmosphere. Pupils are keen to please adults in the school by working hard in class, and behaving well. Even when not directly supervised, as in a Year 2/3 religious education lesson where pupils rehearsed their speaking and listening skills with a partner, they acted sensibly and with considerable sensitivity for such young children. It is only when the pace of a lesson slows or lacks challenge that pupils become restless and risk distracting others from their task.
11. The high expectations of behaviour of the staff, who themselves act as good role models, and the consistent application of the simple behaviour code are sufficient incentive for pupils to behave well. Pupils act responsibly and work hard because they know that they should do so. They are well instructed from an early stage in their education to distinguish between right and wrong. They develop a self-discipline that makes a good contribution to their learning experience. Even in the dining room and the playground there is no aggressive or over-boisterous behaviour. In its recent history no pupils have been excluded from the school.
12. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a strong moral code promoted in assemblies and in personal, social and health education and citizenship sessions. Pupils are encouraged to act responsibly, and to develop a care and concern for others. The activities of the school council and involvement in the school's many sporting, musical, dramatic and environmental activities enhance their social development, and help them to see themselves as members of a wider, diverse community. Hand in hand with a growing awareness of other regions, races and cultures and with good guidance from the staff team, pupils are presented with opportunities to demonstrate their concern for the disadvantaged in society. As well as raising money for local and national charities, they are developing a caring partnership with a school in Uganda and sending gift shoeboxes to remote parts of Europe. Such activities make a significant contribution to the preparation of these pupils as responsible and caring world citizens of tomorrow.

13. In the Foundation Stage, children are taught to be aware of themselves and others, and to care for both. The school actively promotes a culture of sensitivity and concern for others throughout the rest of the school. Assemblies are appropriately used to open pupils' eyes to the world about them, often resulting in wide-eyed wonderment, as on the occasion when they viewed pictures of the Earth seen from the first moon landing.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

14. Attendance is above average. The school's good attendance record, together with very good levels of punctuality, keeps it within the top thirty per cent of the country's schools. This achievement reflects the effectiveness of the school's procedures and the goodwill of parents. The registration process complies fully with legal requirements and little time is lost between activities.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good** overall. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The enrichment of the curriculum with a wide range of activities and experiences is a particular strength. Assessment, although satisfactory, is the least impressive feature.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Assessment has also improved and is satisfactory. Teachers make better use of information gained to plan work, but it is still not used sufficiently to help individual pupils make better progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the class, with solely Reception age children, is consistently very good.
- The learning needs of all abilities and from all backgrounds are well addressed.
- The marking of pupils' work does not consistently give sufficient guidance on how pupils can improve.
- The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is consistently good.
- Teacher assistants are used well to support the learning of groups and individuals.
- Occasionally, the teaching of older pupils does not proceed quickly enough and pupils are not given sufficient challenge in the work they are asked to do.

Commentary

15. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Three-quarters of teaching is good or better, which is almost double the findings of the last report. This reflects a significant improvement.

16. The teaching in the Reception class, with solely Reception age children, is very good and is particularly impressive. The teacher provides stimulating opportunities for imaginative play to guide the children at this early stage of learning. She has a very clear understanding of the children's needs to plan an innovative and appropriate curriculum. Teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage because it is targeted effectively at developing the skills in the key areas of learning and the children's attainment is assessed very thoroughly. This ensures that children make good progress to be on course to attain the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.
17. The quality of teaching has clearly improved in Years 1 and 2, which is reflected in particularly impressive test results this year although there are no national comparisons available yet. The teachers are aware of the beneficial effects of the implementation of the national strategies for numeracy and literacy, which has given a very clear focus to what they try to teach in lessons. There is very effective teaching of letter sounds in all classes and this give a solid foundation to the development of reading skills, which are good throughout the school. The teaching of basic skills in numeracy and literacy is consistently good. There is now a greater emphasis on solving practical, real-life problems in mathematics, in response to the criticisms in the last report. This has helped to drive up standards. Teachers use teaching assistants effectively to ensure the diverse needs of pupils from a range of backgrounds and varying abilities are addressed. This is particularly noticeable for pupils with special educational needs who are well identified and receive good support. These pupils are given clear targets, which are sufficiently practical for teachers and teaching assistants to implement. The teachers also ensure that there is no underachievement by pupils from minority ethnic groups. Those pupils learning English as an additional language receive good support in the early years so that they attain the nationally expected standard in Year 2. The work provided for these pupils throughout the school gives them full access to the National Curriculum.
18. In Years 3 to 6, teaching continues to be good overall. Art and design is particularly well taught, which contributes to the above average standards in the school and the high quality displays of work in many classrooms. The teachers ensure that they cater, in their planning, for the learning needs of pupils in different year groups in mixed age classes.
19. There is a greater emphasis on developing investigative skills in mathematics and science that ensures that above average standards are maintained. Teachers are aware of the benefit of relating work to other areas of the curriculum and opportunities are often taken to do this. They have good subject knowledge in all areas, which enables them to plan appropriate work. Occasionally, lessons do not proceed with sufficient pace, particularly in literacy. Standards in English by Year 6 are only average and although pupils achieve satisfactorily, they are not challenged and extended as much as in mathematics and science, from Years 3 to 6.
20. This tends to happen in the main activity part of the lesson when pupils are not given a clear enough understanding of what must be completed by a particular time. Also, the planning of work sometimes does not give sufficient attention to the need to extend able pupils and ensure there is more challenging work if they complete tasks earlier than the rest of the class. Procedures to assess how well pupils are doing have improved and are good in mathematics and science.

21. The information gained from assessing pupils' progress is used much better to plan pupils' work, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. It is not extended, however, sufficiently to guide pupils' learning. Individuals do not have a clear grasp of what their targets are to enable them to make better progress. This is accentuated by the inconsistency in the marking of pupils' work. There are good examples in Year 6 of the teacher and pupils both assessing the quality of work against agreed criteria. Some teachers give clear, constructive comments. However, teachers in Years 3 to 6 too rarely give written comments to pupils on how to improve their work. This limits their progress. Pupils are given appropriate work to do at home and procedures for this are satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10 (28%)	17 (47%)	9 (25%)	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.

The curriculum

The school offers a **good** curriculum which provides a broad and balanced range of activities and which affords a good preparation for secondary school. Overall, accommodation and resources are satisfactory but with aspects for improvement. Enrichment is very good.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched by a very wide range of clubs, visits and visitors.
- All pupils have equality of access to the full curriculum.
- There is very good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- Aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

22. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, which prepares the pupils well for secondary school. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy but other subjects receive an appropriate time allocation. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects. A weekly afternoon integrated workshop session provides very good opportunities for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to participate in several curriculum areas, including food technology, appliqué, practical mathematics, art and design and music. The school always looks for ways in which the curriculum might be improved and teachers are encouraged to be innovative. Curricular planning is good and ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met for all subjects. A rolling programme of topics ensures that the pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat work year on year. The teachers plan carefully for the work which the pupils will do each term and each week. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and the school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship.
23. Most parents are pleased with the range of activities that allow the pupils to pursue their interests outside lessons. The curriculum is enriched by a very wide variety of clubs. These include sports, science, art, spelling, recorders and a choir. About 20 pupils, some from other schools, participate in an after-school Gujarati club. Sports teams are organised for specific tournaments and these have achieved notable success. A very good range of school visits enriches learning further. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from residential visits to London and to Plas Caerdeon in Snowdonia. The school makes effective use of the knowledge and expertise of visitors whenever possible.
24. There are sufficient experienced, well qualified teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The information and communication technology manager provides particularly effective support. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. Strengths include the information and communication technology suite and the library. However, there is a shortage of space in cloakrooms, in the hall and in the mobile classrooms. Building extensions are planned to remedy some of these issues. Access for disabled pupils and adults is broadly satisfactory, although some door entrances make wheelchair access rather difficult. Outside, there are adequate sized playgrounds, a large field and a small wildlife area, used regularly for work in science. There are adequate resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books in the library.

Care, guidance and support

The school's **good** provision for the welfare, health, safety and personal security of its pupils is one of its strong features. Adults in the school provide **satisfactory** levels of support, advice and guidance for those in their care. Arrangements to seek, value and act upon pupils' views are of good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high standard of health and safety provision, in which the site manager plays a prominent role.
- The sensitive application of policies relating to the security and personal protection of pupils creates an atmosphere of safety and well being.
- The school is keen to consult with pupils and makes them feel valued because they are taken seriously.
- The marking of pupils' work provides insufficient guidance.

Commentary

25. The detailed health and safety procedures, based on local authority policies are applied in a professional manner with a strong contribution from the site manager who brings his commercial experience to bear in maintaining the high standards.
26. Welfare arrangements are given a high priority. Sixteen adults in the school hold the basic first aid certificate, while the nominated first aider and her colleague have received additional training and ensure that records are maintained and that proper procedures are followed. The headteacher, as the designated person for child protection, has undergone appropriate training along with his deputy, and they promote a high level of alertness within the staff team.
27. The teachers listen to pupils informally in the classroom and formally through the democratic process in the school council. In addition, members of staff make themselves available to pupils outside the classroom. For their part, pupils responding to the questionnaire were almost unanimous in declaring that they would feel able to approach an adult in the school with any concerns they might have. This level of interaction with pupils is made possible through the very good relationships that exist across the school community.
28. The lack of clear guidance and the inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work detract from the otherwise good standard of support and guidance given to pupils in this school. This deficiency is partly offset by the good quality annual progress reports, which include targets for the following year, and offer to pupils the opportunity to evaluate their own efforts. The tracking of progress and setting of targets in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs are of good quality and help to guide future teaching and learning. There are good arrangements for new pupils joining the Reception class.

Partnerships with parents, other schools and the community

There are **good** links with parents, other schools and the community, which make a good contribution to pupils' education and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of parents express very positive views.
- Parents give active support to their children's education.
- There are productive links with other educational establishments.
- The partnerships with local organisations that promote pupils' personal and cultural development are good.
- A significant minority of parents believe that the school does not consult sufficiently with them on matters relating to the education of their children.

Commentary

29. The great majority of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and those responding to the questionnaire, expressed very positive views about the school. They agree that their children like coming to school, that they make good progress and that they behave well.

30. The one negative comment shared by a significant minority of parents related to the extent to which the school seeks the views of parents. Most recently, this concern was about a new policy on school uniforms, with some parents feeling that the school did not seek their views. The school recognises the significance of this observation and has agreed to take remedial action.
31. The headteacher estimates that about sixteen parents are regularly involved directly in school activities, and that many more volunteer their services to support educational visits or special events. The 'Friends of Stonebow' arrange many social and fundraising events to provide equipment for the school, and in that way they make a good contribution to the education of its pupils.
32. Local organisations, through the influence of their members who are parents at the school, have helped to extend pupils' learning by involving them in charitable projects in other countries. For example, pupils are involved in raising money to provide books for a school in a remote village in Uganda.
33. Membership of the local pyramid of schools provides a solid platform for the sharing of information and resources, while longstanding partnerships with colleges of secondary, further and higher education open up new teaching and learning experiences for the school. The good relationships with the main receiver school involve exchange visits and lengthy placements for Year 6 pupils that ease the trauma of transition to the next phase of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has given the school a clear vision and purpose.
- The governors have a clear grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The school has too high a budget deficit.
- A school ethos has been created which encourages and supports pupils from all backgrounds and abilities.

Commentary

34. The headteacher has led the school from its inception in 1991 and he has established an ethos where pupils of all abilities and from a range of cultures are welcomed and valued. There is a race equality policy that is translated into very effective practice. He has provided good leadership, establishing a clear educational direction that has resulted in improved standards since the last inspection.
35. He has benefited from the support of key staff, particularly the deputy headteacher who was appointed from another school and has brought new ideas and complemented an established, capable team of teachers. She has brought renewed drive and vigour to the school and a desire to bring about further improvements.
36. The leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. All necessary documentation is kept to identify pupils' needs and measure their progress and individual education plans are integrated into classroom planning.

Good planning for individual targets for those pupils with special educational needs leads to good progress in learning. This good practice in setting individual targets is not extended to other areas of the school.

37. The co-ordinators now take a more active role in monitoring schemes of work in response to criticisms in the last report. The good leadership and management in mathematics and science have been a significant factor in the success of these subjects. A clear job description has been developed for the role, which is largely followed for English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, however, there is little monitoring of teaching to ensure standards are maintained and improved. The leadership of English has been less strong but the co-ordinator, who is recently appointed, recognises the need to analyse past performance and implement new teaching strategies in Years 3 to 6 to ensure standards rise to match those in mathematics and science.
38. The composition of the governing body has a satisfactory balance between those associated with the school as representatives of teachers, teacher assistants and administrative staff and others with an outside perspective and a long-standing interest in the school. The current chair of governors was a member of the temporary governing body before the school opened and has retained his interest and involvement. Governors, therefore, have a very clear idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are a well organised body who give good support to the school. They have a clear perception of how numbers will grow as a result of the nearby house building. Some of their decisions have been influenced by the desire to be pro-active and anticipate a future rise in pupil numbers. This has resulted in the school maintaining higher staffing costs than can be justified in the short-term. Ninety five per cent of the school's current expenditure is on staffing, which is the major reason why there is a significant budget deficit. Financial management is satisfactory. The finance committee meets regularly and the school has the support of a local education authority financial assistant. Clear financial procedures and best value principles are followed but the governors understand that harsh strategic decisions may have to be taken to reduce costs if income does not increase as the projected numbers of new pupils in the new housing would indicate.
39. The arrangements for the professional development of staff and governors are good. Needs are carefully identified and appropriate training provided and this has had a positive impact, for example, in pupils achieving above average standards in information and communication technology in Year 6. The headteacher and governors have been particularly successful in retaining an experienced and capable group of teachers who work well as a team.
40. Induction arrangements have developed in the last two years and are now good. A newly appointed member of staff has visited the school for an extended period before her appointment to be well prepared for her first teaching post. Each new teacher has a senior teacher as a mentor and the governors are preparing an induction programme for the new headteacher.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	536,103
Total expenditure	578,207
Expenditure per pupil	2,232

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	- 16,281
Balance carried forward to the next	- 58,385

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children will reach or exceed the level of attainment expected for this age group by the end of the Reception year.
- The quality of teaching is good, with some excellent elements in the Reception class.
- The children make rapid progress and have very good attitudes and behaviour.
- There is very good leadership by the Foundation Stage manager.
- The more formal organisation of the mixed Year 1 and Reception class limits opportunities for effective adult intervention.

Commentary

41. Standards on entry to the two classes are below the levels expected for children of this age in all areas of learning, and this is confirmed by local assessment procedures. Good induction processes enable the children to feel secure and comfortable from the outset. This emphasis on the care and development of the individual child is evident throughout the Foundation stage. There is a good ratio of adults to children in the Reception class, which is a significant factor in the very effective teaching and learning that takes place there. All children, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, make good and rapid progress in both classes. Most will achieve the early learning goals in all six areas, and a significant proportion in the Reception class will exceed them in personal and social development, creative, mathematical and language development. Overall, attainment by the end of the Reception year is average, reflecting good achievement compared to the below average standards on entry.
42. Accommodation in the Reception class is very good, with an appropriately secure outdoor area, which the children use well throughout the year. The spacious classroom for the mixed Year Reception/Year 1 children is in the main school building, and there is a designated play area for the class. Reception children from the two classes share activities at times but these were not in evidence during the inspection.
43. Leadership in the Foundation Stage is very good, and management is good. The leader is passionate about her philosophy in which children are actively involved in their own learning, and eagerly aspire to meet her high expectations. As a result, planning for children's learning, which is shared by both teachers, is focused and detailed, very effectively linking all areas of learning to provide a stimulating and balanced curriculum. In the Reception class, teaching strategies ensure that every opportunity is used to develop learning in the most creative and exciting way. Together with the support staff, the teacher forms an excellent team, which is always well deployed. In both classes, adults are well briefed about their roles and make a significant contribution to children's progress. But in the mixed Reception/Year1 class fewer opportunities are available for the staff to be directly involved with children's learning in free choice sessions. Both the teacher and the

nursery nurse are often timetabled for specific teaching activities with small groups of children, leaving Reception children to follow play routines without the aid of adult intervention to extend their learning. Although the children have very good attitudes to their learning and behave well, these routines are limited and assessment opportunities are missed.

44. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall, often very good with some excellent elements in the Reception class. Strengths of teaching are very good planning, the encouragement and engagement of children through very positive relationships, and expectations of appropriately high standards in all areas. In the mixed Reception /Year 1 class, however, the more formal weekly timetable limits opportunities for Reception children to benefit consistently from the structured play activities that are planned. Thorough assessment procedures enable staff to track children's progress through the Foundation Stage, and information is used effectively to respond to individual learning needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are effective induction procedures that help children to adapt to new routines quickly.
- There is a good emphasis on independence.
- Members of staff provide good role models and promote very good relationships.

Commentary

45. There are sensitive procedures for admitting children to the Foundation Stage that ensure that these early experiences inspire confidence. As a result, routines are quickly followed, and records illustrate that children demonstrate an eagerness to become involved from the earliest moments. Many have attended pre-school provision elsewhere, and good communication ensures that all children's needs are familiar to the staff. The stimulating environment invites participation.
46. The very good teaching and learning in this area of development are based on adults' high expectations of behaviour and involvement that are constantly reinforced. In the Reception class, personal, social and emotional development is a planned element every day, with good links made to the guidance for the early learning goals, particularly about relationships. Consequently, children are eager to converse, and to show what they are doing. Children's independence progresses well, as does their ability to work and play alongside each other. Adults in the class seize every opportunity to encourage social development and independence. Children in both classes select easily from a wide range of suitable activities when they are not engaged in focused group or class work. They show good concentration and are eager to learn. Children are encouraged to care for themselves and to manage their own hygiene. They are taught to listen carefully and to take part in group activities. Good teamwork between all members of staff makes a valuable contribution to this quality of learning. All adults are good role models for the children in daily routines. Consequently the children help each other well, and show sensitivity towards others in their play. They have a clear understanding of the difference

between right and wrong, and recognise the need for a common code of behaviour. By the time they transfer to Year 1 most children will reach the standards expected for their age group, and a significant number will exceed them.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good and varied opportunities provided for speaking and listening, which are often excellent in the Reception class.
- Strong relationships encourage children to share conversation and ideas freely.
- There are regular opportunities to learn to read and write.
- Role play activities are not regularly supported by adult intervention in the Reception/Year 1 class.

Commentary

47. Children progress well because adults in both classes constantly encourage them to talk and expect them to listen. Language development opportunities are built into planning for each day, and all members of staff take every chance to extend children's vocabulary, which is a main strength of the good teaching. In the Reception class, there is some excellent practice, with impressive techniques of using every point raised by a child as an opportunity for enrichment for the whole group. Very imaginative role play experiences further embellish children's language development, as adults extend learning by regular interaction. Children make very good progress in speaking and listening, ensuring that most will achieve or exceed expected levels by the end of the Reception year.
48. Children in both classes have very positive attitudes to books, and show great confidence in talking about stories or characters. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing early reading skills, and children make good progress. Most will achieve the expected standards for their age by the end of the year. Writing skills are given great prominence, in play and in more formal activities. Children form their letters well and many of the oldest group are able to write independently. This term, opportunities are regularly provided for children to become familiar with the process and content of the National Literacy Strategy. Classrooms are rich in annotated displays of children's work and useful vocabulary. Consequently, there is good achievement that will enable most children to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's level of mathematical development is low on entry so they make good progress to attain the nationally expected standard for their age.
- A wide range of good practical activities is provided every day to develop mathematical skills.

Commentary

49. Teaching is good and teachers develop children's understanding of numbers and computation well. As a result, most children will achieve the expected standards for their age by the end of the Reception year. A small proportion will exceed those levels in their ability to manipulate numbers and to reason mathematically. Children in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class benefit from opportunities to experience the learning of the older pupils in their class, particularly in the vocabulary they hear such as digits, divide, total and equals. The good focused activities in both classes enable the children to develop mathematical concepts and appropriate language. They have good support as they explore the properties of sand and water, discovering for themselves the meaning of such words as 'full' and 'empty'.

50. Children are able to consider number values correctly, such as different ways of making 6, and some children are able to record this with pictures. They recognise numbers up to 20 easily and in the Reception class are able to count to 100 with adult support. Children's enthusiasm for mathematics is very noticeable in both classes. There are some good resources around both classrooms to encourage mathematical thinking, which teachers and support staff use well to enhance learning, and children achieve well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The members of staff provide a wide range of stimulating experiences to develop children's understanding and knowledge.
- Children enter the school with limited general knowledge and they are given good opportunities to expand it.

Commentary

51. The good teaching in this area means that children take part in many first hand experiences that widen their knowledge and understanding of the world. Many enter school with limited experiences of learning in this area, and have had few opportunities to develop their observational skills. Planned activities such as walking round the school grounds, or building with construction equipment, are used well to provide children with opportunities to build up their knowledge, and to see the world from different viewpoints. Children investigate objects and materials as they play, with supportive adults on hand to extend learning or suggest modifications. The dynamic structure of play routines in the Reception class makes a significant contribution to the pace of children's learning there.
52. In both classes, children are encouraged to use the computer to record pictures and ideas. They show very good mouse control, and well developed keyboard skills. Children are able to click on an icon, drag and draw a shape and fill it with colour. Many children are able to complete captions for their pictures independently. Younger children learn early mapping skills as they search for buried treasure, and investigate the power of magnets as their search takes them into the play sand. The 'pirate' topic gives opportunities to think about which 'galleons' will float or sink, and making the 'ship's biscuits' enables them to observe changes. Children begin to think about their own culture and beliefs, and those of others as they learn about special times and celebrations. They make good progress and achieve well. Most will achieve the goals they are expected to by the end of the Reception year.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An interesting range of appropriate activities and resources is provided.
- Children in the Reception have good, regular access to a safe outdoor area.
- Children in Reception/Year 1 do not have continuous access to a designated outdoor play area.

Commentary

53. Teaching is good in this area of learning. Achievement is good and most children are likely to achieve the expected levels for their age group by the time they leave the

Reception classes. Particular emphasis is placed on using pencils and paintbrushes to produce recognisable drawings. Good hand control is developed through this and through such activities as cutting out shapes or picking up sequins. Children show increasing skill in handling tools, objects and malleable materials.

54. In both classes children are able to negotiate space well, and can adjust their speed and direction with good body control. They are encouraged to move with confidence and imagination. There is a range of appropriate equipment to promote balancing and climbing skills, including apparatus in the school hall that they use regularly. Both classes have a designated safe outdoor play area, but only the Reception class has consistent, daily access to an area for regular physical development. The teacher in Reception/Year 1 does her best to provide a suitable curriculum for this area of learning despite the difficulties.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **good**. Achievement is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very wide range of opportunities for children to explore a variety of media in art, to make and listen to music and to use their imagination.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The level of children's creative experiences is low on admission but they are stimulated to make rapid progress in this area.

Commentary

55. Children develop their skills very well, particularly in using their imagination, and make very good progress. There is some excellent planning in the Reception class in the use of musical stimulation, which is very well taught. The very good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage ensures that children have a thorough understanding of their learning, which is reflected in the good standards of art throughout the school. Line, perspective and clarity are features of children's pictures, achieving standards in this aspect that are above expected levels. From the earliest days after admission to school, children are looking closely at the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh, and trying to reproduce the style. The high expectations of learning in this area contribute significantly to children's very good achievement. Children's work is enhanced by effective displays that provide a stimulating learning environment.
56. Children's early musical experiences are a particular strength of the teaching in the Reception class, enhancing the very good role play provision. Every aspect of life aboard the 'pirates' ship' has been explored and provided, including the rats and the ship's cat. Children create 'seaside music' by using different instruments to interpret sounds evoked by pictures. This very effective development of children's imagination also contributes well to spiritual learning. There are good role play opportunities in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class, too, where children take on the role of train drivers and passengers. However, expectations here are that children will follow the guidance of adults from earlier lessons, and continue to develop play sequences themselves. There is limited adult intervention. As a result children find it hard to make progress in this creative play area.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in national tests in 2003 for Year 2 were well above average in reading and above average in writing.
- National test results in Year 6 in 2003 fell and were below average.
- Standards in reading are good, benefiting from good teaching of letter sounds.
- Standards in English are above average by Year 2, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards are average in Year 6, similar to those in the last report.

Commentary

57. Standards by Year 2 are above average, reflecting an improvement on the last report and good achievement. Standards in Year 6 are average, reflecting satisfactory achievement, maintaining the standard found at the last inspection and those attained in national tests four years earlier.
58. The most recent provisional national test results for Year 2 pupils confirm the upward trend in performance in both reading and writing. For Year 6 pupils, however, the 2003 results showed a decline to below average standards, influenced by a year group who had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The trend in the English test results in Year 6 has been more volatile than for mathematics and science.
59. Pupils join the school with average levels of literacy. The early teaching of letter sounds is particularly good and so pupils attain above average standards in reading by Year 2 which gives them a good foundation for later years. Pupils' writing also develops promisingly and a significant proportion of pupils are expressing their views clearly in a correctly punctuated sequence of sentences by the end of Year 2.
60. This improvement is not sustained to Year 6. The introduction of a new approach to developing literacy skills from Years 3 to 6, however, is beginning to be translated into higher standards, particularly in Year 3. More opportunities, in the form of extended writing tasks are now being provided for pupils to develop their writing skills. The pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, predominantly of Indian descent, are almost all fluent English speakers who make particularly good progress, so their level of attainment is in line with that of other pupils. This doesn't influence the lower level of attainment in English compared with science and mathematics. Pupils receive regular practice in handwriting and spelling and standards are satisfactory. A greater priority has been given to speaking and listening. Standards are improving but currently remain satisfactory.
61. Teaching is good overall. It is better and more consistent in Years 1 and 2 where there is a greater level of challenge for the pupils than in the later years. The strong features of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is the consistent approach to developing pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils are involved in all lessons through brisk introductions, featuring good questioning to evoke clear responses. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. The

different learning needs of a wide range of pupils are well addressed. Those pupils who are at an early stage of language acquisition receive effective, targeted support from a teacher from the Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Achievement Support Service. Tasks are related well to National Curriculum requirements in speaking and listening and reading and writing. Good teaching and support, predominantly within their class, sustain pupils with special educational needs. Teacher assistants provide consistently good support, being both sensitive and purposeful while meeting the pupils' learning needs. One particularly noteworthy feature is an after-school spelling club, which is both well focused on children's learning needs and well attended.

62. On the rare occasions where teaching is less effective it is because there is insufficient challenge for pupils at all levels. This tends to happen in the main activity part of lessons when pupils work too slowly with insufficient sense of purpose. The planning of lessons does not cater regularly enough for extra challenge for able pupils, particularly when they complete a less demanding task. This is more noticeable in Year 3 to 6, having a detrimental effect on standards.
63. There are satisfactory arrangements to assess pupils' work. However, the marking of pupils' work is variable in quality. There is a good system in Year 6 for pupils and the teacher to judge whether a piece of writing has met a list of criteria. Some teachers regularly write useful comments after a pupil's piece of writing. However, comments on how pupils can improve are not given consistently enough in Years 3 to 6. Additionally, the information gained from assessment is not used sufficiently to identify targets for individual pupils to ensure they make good progress. Therefore, although achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, it is only satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The Year 6 pupils are attaining standards similar to those that would be expected taking into account their results in the Year 2 national tests four years earlier but are no better.
64. The co-ordinators of English are relatively new to the position and are currently providing satisfactory leadership. They are receptive to advice and acknowledge the need to analyse more closely dips in performance, such as in the Year 6 national tests in 2003, and to devise effective strategies to raise standards further by Year 6.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects. There is a significant emphasis on learning through topics that give opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. This is particularly noticeable in historical projects. The school has identified the development of speaking and listening skills as a priority and there are examples in other subjects, apart from English, where this is a regular feature of lessons. In a Year 5 lesson on geography for example, there were group discussions to debate whether certain statements about Kenya were fact or opinion. Role play is also used to increase pupils' involvement in subjects across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the previous inspection and are now above average.

- Teaching is good and this enables all groups of pupils to achieve well.
- Subject leadership and management are effective and contribute to good standards.
- The quality of marking is variable; it does not always tell the pupils how they might improve.

Commentary

66. By Year 2 and Year 6, all groups of pupils, including the high attaining and those with special educational needs, achieve well. Standards in basic numeracy and in other areas of mathematics are above average throughout the school, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. This results from good teaching and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Boys and girls attain equally well.
67. By Year 2, the pupils make quick mental recall of number facts to 10 and beyond. They have a good understanding of basic numeracy, including place value in two digit numbers, the simpler multiplication tables and the concept of half and quarter. The pupils apply this knowledge well to solve simple word problems and to calculate change when buying items. They draw accurate block graphs to represent data.
68. By Year 6, the pupils use all four number operations well to make quick mental calculations. They make effective use of written methods of short and long multiplication, including decimals. They have a good understanding of equivalent fractions and they calculate simple percentages accurately. The pupils apply their numeracy skills well to solve real life problems in a variety of contexts. They draw and measure angles accurately. They represent data carefully by means of graphs and tables and they calculate the range, mean, median and mode of sets of data.
69. Teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good and is a significant factor in the pupils' achievement. The teachers ensure that all groups of pupils are fully included in learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress. There is a strong focus on developing the pupils' mental calculations and on encouraging the pupils to apply their mathematical skills in solving problems. In this context, teaching has improved since the previous inspection. The teachers make useful links with other subjects whenever possible. In a Year 5/6 lesson, for example, the teacher developed quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts by using road distances in Kenya, which the pupils were studying in geography. The teachers organise group work well, matching tasks closely to the pupils' differing needs and providing an appropriate challenge for higher attainers. This was apparent in a Year 2/3 lesson, where difficult real life problems enhanced the pupils' understanding of division. There is good provision for gifted and talented pupils. A small group of such pupils attend mathematics sessions led by secondary school staff. The teachers make good use of resources, including computers and pocket calculators, to develop the pupils' skills. The teachers use plenary sessions well to consolidate and assess pupils' learning. They mark pupils' work regularly and positively, but there is often insufficient written guidance as to how pupils in Years 3 to 6 might improve. Regular homework is set for these pupils.
70. Subject leadership and management are good and are having a positive impact on standards. The co-ordinators monitor the quality of planning and teaching with a view to gaining an overview of practice and standards. There are good procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress. The teachers make effective use of information gained from assessments and from an analysis of national test results to plan the next steps in learning and to set targets for differing groups of pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. There is a commitment to use mathematics across the curriculum, which influences all planning. The pupils make good use of their mathematical skills in a wide variety of subjects. In science, for example, pupils in Year 6 use the computers to generate accurate bar graphs of the numbers of different mini-beasts found in one day. Pupils in Year 1 measure and compare their heights. Pupils in Year 5 make accurate readings of forcemeters during an investigation into stretches and pulls and they draw accurate bar line graphs of water temperatures whilst investigating insulation. In geography in Year 6 to draw accurate line graphs and bar graphs comparing the climate of England and Kenya and accurate pie charts of land use in Kenya.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average across the school, with half of the pupils in Year 6 attaining the higher Level 5 in national tests.
- Teaching and learning are well planned and well organised in most year groups, with a good emphasis on practical activities.
- Learning is not as good as it could be when some mixed age classes have too little support.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular but does not consistently give pupils guidance on how they can improve.

Commentary

72. The standard of work seen in lessons and books confirms that pupils' attainment is above the national average by both Year 2 and Year 6. This shows good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were only average for older pupils. Pupils are admitted to the school with limited knowledge and understanding of the world but they achieve well, and make good progress.
73. Teachers' assessments this year judged that all Year 2 pupils have achieved the national standards, and a third exceeded them. Year 6 pupils' test results dipped slightly in 2003 but still matched national averages, with over half the pupils attaining the higher Level 5. The drive to improve standards has been maintained in lessons.
74. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their difficulties. They receive good support from their teachers, and from well-briefed teaching assistants in some classes. Pupils whose first language is not English attain standards comparable to their classmates, with appropriate guidance and help where required. All pupils display good attitudes to their work and great enjoyment, working well together on tasks requiring collaboration.
75. Teaching is good. Year 2 pupils develop a good understanding of scientific principles and of experimentation. In one lesson, teachers enabled pupils to investigate different ways of making sounds with musical instruments by classifying the instruments into groups according to playing technique. These observational skills were then enhanced while watching a video extract that included different sounds. Good questioning helped pupils to make appropriate suggestions about how echoes are made. Year 6 pupils develop their scientific thinking further while researching the characteristics of mini-beasts, working collaboratively and successfully sharing information with good use of technical language. These lessons were well planned, and there was appropriate support to ensure that all pupils were able to make good progress with the tasks they had to do. In occasional lessons the pace of learning is slow because pupils need more adult help than is available. When this happens, the need to teach different topics to two different year groups at the same time is a contributory factor. These problems were not typical and there is plenty of evidence of investigational work and the understanding of fair testing principles.

76. Leadership and subject management are good. The subject leaders have a good overview of provision and attainment, working very hard to address the issues raised in the last inspection report and to develop every aspect of science constantly. Assessment procedures are thorough and used well, but teachers do not always take opportunities to tell pupils how they might improve when marking their written work. Resources are sufficient and well organised, and there are some effective displays to stimulate learning further.
77. Pupils have good opportunity to use their mathematical skills in a science club. Increasingly, pupils use the computer for research and record findings through computer-generated graphs and charts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**. The school reached its target ratio of eight pupils to one computer a year earlier than planned.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- By Year 6, standards have improved and are now above average.
- Teaching is good and enables all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- The information and communication technology manager makes a significant contribution to learning.
- Information and communication technology is used widely to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- There is a need to develop further the coordinators' monitoring role.

Commentary

78. By Year 2 and Year 6, all groups of pupils, including high attainers and those with special educational needs, achieve well as a result of good teaching and improved provision since the previous inspection. Standards are average by Year 2, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection, and are above average by Year 6, which is an improvement. Boys and girls attain equally.
79. By Year 2, the pupils are making good progress in developing their keyboard skills and mouse control. They change the size, style and colour of fonts, to match the purpose of their writing. They use the tool bar confidently to generate imaginative and colourful pictures and patterns and they move items around the screen. With adult help, the pupils access the Internet to find out about various topics, such as different countries in geography. They devise a set of accurate instructions to program a floor robot.
80. By Year 6, the pupils confidently access the Internet to research information in a variety of subjects. They make satisfactory use of spreadsheets to enter, retrieve and analyse data and they use information and communication technology well to compose musical pieces. The pupils vary font size and style to suit the audience for their writing and they combine text and graphics effectively to produce a very informative school newspaper following a visit to the offices of the Leicester Mercury. The pupils make use of the school's digital camera and they communicate by e-mail.

81. Teaching is good and is enabling the pupils to make good progress. Provision is greatly enhanced by the contribution of the information and communication technology manager. The teachers make very good use of information and communication technology in a variety of subjects. This gives the pupils the opportunity, for example, to represent mathematical data graphically and to observe art from different cultures. The teachers provide the pupils with opportunities to contribute to the school's informative 96 page website. They maintain a good balance between direct teaching of information and communication technology skills and independent learning and this helps to develop the pupils' confidence.
82. Subject leadership and management are good and are having a positive impact on improved provision. The co-ordinators have drawn up a list of websites which colleagues might find useful in their teaching. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' progress and there is a useful collection of work samples from each year group, which shows the progress made by pupils. The introduction of pupil assessment record books is included in a clear action plan to raise standards further. There is a need to develop the co-ordinators' monitoring role further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. The school is committed to using information and communication technology widely across the curriculum and effective planning ensures this occurs in many subjects. In geography, pupils find out about the Isle of Wight and Kenya. They regularly use the internet to find up-to-date weather conditions in Kenya and news items in the country's leading newspaper. They produce good quality multi-media presentations on Kenya and on European countries such as France and Switzerland and use their information and communication technology skills to produce a school newspaper. They also use information and communication technology to compose music.

HUMANITIES

84. No **history** lessons were observed and as a result, no overall judgement on provision, standards and the quality of teaching is possible. From a scrutiny of pupils' work, it is evident that older pupils have studied a range of historical topics including a World War 2 project that developed pupils' empathy and involved art and design and music. There is also considerable integration of history across the curriculum in Year 1 and 2, particularly linking English, art and design and music. The co-ordinators have a good understanding of the priorities for the subject.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show respect for each other and major faiths.
- Effective use is made of topics to embrace religious understanding.
- Good use is made of community diversity.
- There are good links made between assembly themes and class lessons.
- Pupils are not clear about the differences between culture and faith.
- Teachers do not follow the plans sufficiently closely to avoid some repetition in topics.

Commentary

85. The school continues to use the local guidelines effectively. This ensures that pupils reach the expected standards for their age at Years 2 and 6, as they did at the time of the last inspection.
86. Many pupils begin school with limited experience of the world beyond their home and family. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection but talking with pupils and looking at their work confirms that good teaching has helped them broaden their horizons, particularly for younger pupils. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall and make satisfactory progress.
87. The school makes good use of the community to enhance the provision for religious education. Visiting speakers and parents bring personal experiences into the classroom, which bring learning alive and help pupils to understand difficult concepts. Teachers deal very sensitively with pupils' understanding of the faiths represented in the school, and this contributes significantly to the school's very inclusive ethos, where pupils show great respect for each other.
88. Religious education is taught through a range of topics, linked well to other subjects in the curriculum. Stories in assembly introduce pupils to specific aspects that are developed further in lessons. The subject matter of the topics is planned to cover two years so that classes where there is more than one year group are not repeating work. At present, however, not all teachers are following the planning sufficiently and several classes are covering the same work. There is a heavy emphasis on Islam and Hinduism through the school, together with Christianity, but little reference to any other faith even though planning includes work to understand the faiths of Jews and Sikhs.
89. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Planning for lessons combines the strands of the local guidance well, and this is further embellished by the worldwide links that are made in assemblies, when pupils learn about the application of religious traditions to everyday life. This also encourages pupils to consider the need for charities. The school council is organising a collection of books and toys to send to Uganda, and feedback from visits made by staff members to schools there helps pupils to understand how their contributions can make a difference. Although there are many benefits to this organisation of learning, there is also some confusion for pupils. Cultural elements of teaching, such as the introduction of Indian and Chinese foods, are thought by some pupils to be key factors in faith. Resources for teaching religious education also cover a range of cultural factors, contributing to the misunderstanding.
90. Although leadership of the subject has been satisfactory in developing planning and offering advice to teachers, there are some gaps in management of the subject that have allowed confusion and repetition of learning to creep in. There is to be new local advice for next term which will enable the subject manager to make the necessary adjustments to the provision and improve standards.

Geography

Provision for geography is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched by local fieldwork and by worthwhile visits further afield.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology.
- The coordinators' monitoring role needs further development.

Commentary

91. In Year 2 and Year 6, the achievement of all groups of pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, is good. Standards are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Boys and girls attain equally.
92. Teaching is good and enables the pupils to make good progress. The teachers ensure that all groups of pupils are fully included in learning. They use questioning well to make the pupils think carefully and to recap previous learning. There is a strong focus on developing the pupils' mapping and atlas skills and on using a variety of sources to research information. The teachers provide good opportunities for extended writing which help to develop the pupils' literacy skills.
93. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear action plan which seeks to raise standards further, but the co-ordinators' monitoring role and the use of assessment to inform future planning need further development. The curriculum is enhanced by local fieldwork and by worthwhile visits further afield.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Very few lessons were observed in **art and design, design and technology, music** and **physical education**. No detailed judgements about teaching are possible.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very stimulating art displays indicate that art and design plays a significant role in the curriculum.
- There is a regular after school art club for the older pupils.
- In design and technology, although pupils make imaginative products which are of good quality; their design skills are less well developed.
- Music has a high profile in the school and pupils enjoy all opportunities they are given to make music.
- Whole school singing is tuneful and pleasant.
- The school is receiving support from the Sports Co-ordinator Programme to promote good teaching of physical education.
- The hall is too small to facilitate a full range of physical education activities.

Commentary

94. An analysis of displays and of other work indicates that all groups of pupils achieve well in art and design. Standards in both two and three-dimensional work are above average, which is an improvement on the previous inspection for pupils in Year 2 and reflects the previous findings for Year 6.

95. By Year 6, the pupils are making very good progress in developing their skills in two and three-dimensional work, using a variety of media and techniques. They produce detailed observational drawings of flowers and good quality work based on the style of well known artists such as Turner, Riley, Picasso, Klee and Kandinsky. The pupils have a good understanding of the work of different schools of art, such as the Impressionists. They develop their cultural awareness by producing high quality paintings of the Kenyan flag and by using a variety of materials to produce very effective models of African masks and insects. They produce effective appliqué work on tie-dye and batik, using an African influence. The pupils are familiar with Indian art and they devise imaginative Rangoli patterns. In clay work linked to history, the pupils make effective sarcophagi and face masks in the style of the ancient Egyptians.
96. An analysis of pupils' work in design and technology indicates that all groups of pupils achieve well. Standards are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. By Year 6, the pupils use their design and technology skills well to enhance work in other subjects. In work linked to history, they make sound models of air raid shelters, using a limited amount of resources; good models of Tudor houses complete with hinged doors; and satisfactory coiled pots in the style of the ancient Greeks. They make satisfactory slippers and design eye-catching posters advertising the features of the product. They make effective musical instruments, such as guitars. Little evidence was seen of the designs for these models and although the pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and suggest ways in which it might be improved, this is not a consistent practice. In food technology, the pupils make satisfactory fruit salads and healthy fruit and nut bars.
97. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils receive a curriculum in music that reflects the key learning outlined in the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play a variety of instruments with an appropriate emphasis on rhythm and pulse and experience a range of music from all over the world. Most teachers use opportunities in the school day to reinforce pupils' knowledge of rhythm by using clapping routines, with very positive results. Younger pupils have good diction, and are able to respond well to instructions about dynamics and pitch.
98. There is a weekly choir practice for older pupils, which is well attended, and many pupils take part in school productions. Some older pupils learn to play recorders and to read music. The school takes part in an annual 'music week'. Visiting instrumentalists enhance pupils' learning well, giving good opportunities for different experiences such as how to play African drums. This blends well with music chosen for assembly, where pupils hear the drums played as accompaniment to an African choir, contributing effectively to spiritual development. There are two subject managers who are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject. They are successfully introducing new resources to support the subject.
99. The school provides a wide range of sporting activities in physical education. It ensures all pupils can swim 25 metres as all those in Years 2 to 5 are taken to the local swimming pool for a block of lessons during the year. The school has good outdoor facilities. The headteacher has been co-ordinating the subject for Years 3 to 6 but the school has now appointed a new member of staff with expertise in this subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

100. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good and all pupils achieve very well. There are regular opportunities for the pupils to discuss issues in circle times or as part of the work covered in a number of subjects. In geography, for example, the

pupils discuss the moral and social responsibilities of tourists in developing countries such as Kenya. There are opportunities for the pupils to develop social skills in school productions and clubs and during school visits. Older pupils participate in community workshops in school, helping younger pupils with reading and other activities. The pupils show concern for others by supporting a good number of charities, including an orphanage in Bulgaria. The pupils learn about the need for a balanced diet and personal hygiene as part of a healthy lifestyle. The school participates in the National Fruit Scheme. There is formal sex education for pupils in Year 6 and the school nurse helps with this part of the curriculum. Younger pupils learn about human growth and development through a worthwhile topic entitled 'Busy bodies'. In science, the pupils learn about the dangers of alcohol and drugs misuse.

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

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