

INSPECTION REPORT

WATER LEYS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wigston, Leicester

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120079

Headteacher: Mrs D Randell

Lead inspector: Mr C Hemmings

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th November 2003

Inspection number: 258313

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 - 10
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	454
School address:	Guilford Drive Wigston Leicester
Postcode:	LE18 1HG
Telephone number:	(0116) 288 4135
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Stevenson
Date of previous inspection:	10 th December 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Water Leys Primary School provides education for boys and girls from the ages of four to ten (this is typical of the organisation of primary education in Leicestershire). It is much larger than most primary schools nationally; currently there are 454 pupils. This results in a distinct imbalance of girls and boys in some classes. The school is situated in Wigston, which is a suburban district three miles to the south of the city of Leicester. Pupils come from a variety of social, economic and academic backgrounds and one fifth of the pupils come to the school from within the city boundary. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language is high compared with the national average. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is below the national average. When children started at school this year, their skills, knowledge and understanding were broadly average for their age. Currently, 21 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is broadly average. Two per cent have a statement of special educational need which is average. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal time is similar to the national pattern. A small, but significant proportion of pupils are absent from school for extended periods when they make visits to the Indian sub-continent.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14614	Chris Hemmings	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school with some strengths. The governors and staff have worked very hard to overcome the weaknesses identified in the last inspection and to raise the achievements of all the pupils. The headteacher is successfully leading the school's determined drive to raise standards by improving pupils' learning throughout the school. Teaching is satisfactory overall and it is often good. This ensures that most pupils make sound progress. In view of the income received by the school and the pupils' current achievements, the school provides sound value for money. Although several important areas require further improvement, **there are no longer areas of serious weakness.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the way the school ensures that all pupils are helped to feel that they belong;
- the extent to which pupils enjoy coming to school and get on extremely well with each other;
- the provision for those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, which ensures that they make good progress;
- the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's strong leadership for improvement;
- the good teaching in some classes and the very good support provided by learning support assistants;
- the inconsistent quality of learning and teaching across the school;
- the underdeveloped role of subject co-ordinators; and
- the imbalance of the curriculum which results in too little time being given to several important subjects, particularly art and design and music.

Overall, the school has made good progress in many areas since the last inspection in December 2001. The quality of leadership and management has improved substantially. It is now good. There is a comprehensive programme for improvement and development, supported by prudent financial management. Standards in reading in Years 1 and 2 are rising and higher-attaining pupils are making the progress they should be because the school is taking great care to support, stimulate and challenge them. Good progress has been made with raising standards in information and communication technology (ICT); staff are now more confident in teaching this subject, planning is very thorough and there is a very good range of equipment and resources. As a result, pupils learn well and standards have risen. Reasonable progress has been made with the issue related to design and technology. Sound progress has been made in planning the curriculum but there is a degree of imbalance in some areas. The Local Education Authority has provided good support since the last inspection to enable the school to make rapid progress.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Standards, overall, are satisfactory. Pupils make sound progress and they achieve standards that are expected for their ages and abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress. Pupils for whom English is not their first language also make good progress. Children in the Foundation Stage enter school with broadly average levels of skill, knowledge and understanding. This year's group is on course to attain the Early Learning Goals by

the end of the Reception year. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average in Years 1 and 2, and in speaking and listening they are above average. In Year 5, pupils attain average standards in English and mathematics overall. Standards are above average in speaking and listening and science. The results of the 2003 national tests show that pupils are achieving average standards now, although they remain lower than those found in schools in similar circumstances. Higher-attaining pupils make good progress and achieve well. Girls have consistently attained better standards than boys over the past five years. The school has begun to tackle this issue.

Pupils' personal development is good. It is promoted well by the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are very good relationships throughout the school and the pupils are friendly and polite. Pupils enjoy learning, they work well together and behaviour is good. Attendance levels have improved but they are still below the national average. Attendance is adversely affected by pupils being withdrawn from school for sometimes lengthy periods for holidays and visits to the Indian sub-continent during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. Teaching is satisfactory overall; much of it is good but there are some areas for further improvement. Pupils learn effectively and make sound progress overall because teachers' thorough planning ensures that they experience a variety of stimulating activities, which are well matched to the wide range of needs in the classes. In a very small minority of lessons there is insufficient pace and challenge. Children in the Foundation Stage learn well. The curriculum is suitably broad but the attention given to literacy and numeracy is, to some extent, at the expense of other subjects. Parents support the school well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have, through their unstinting hard work, established effective systems for securing continuous school improvement. They have been equally successful in building a very positive atmosphere which has led to some strong teamwork and an improved climate for learning. Governors are actively involved in monitoring the school's work and achievements. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents are pleased with the improvements that they see in the school. A significantly large group of parents consider that they are not kept sufficiently well informed about their children's progress. This is being addressed by the school and inspectors consider that improvement is already clear in the good quality information which parents receive. Pupils throughout the school are positive about how their teachers help them to learn. They think that the behaviour of some pupils is not always good enough but this was not evident in the good behaviour seen during the inspection.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- make the teaching more consistent so that all pupils learn well in all lessons throughout the school;
- further develop the co-ordinator's roles so that they are enabled to take full responsibility for leading the improvements in their subjects; and
- reorganise the existing curriculum to provide better balance between subjects and increase the provision for art and design and music, thereby increasing opportunities to reinforce literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are broadly average in Year 2. In Year 5, standards in English and mathematics are average. In science they are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school.
- Good progress is made by pupils to attain standards that are above average in ICT in Year 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well in English and mathematics.
- There remains an excessive difference in attainment between boys and girls in English and mathematics.

Commentary

Starting School

1. When children start in the Reception classes, assessment data show that their knowledge, skills and understanding are broadly average. This is typical of the profile in recent years. Last year, the Foundation Stage children made good progress and reached the Early Learning Goals in all areas.

School's results in national tests

2. The trend of results in the national Key Stage 1 tests since the last inspection, show substantial variations year on year in reading, writing and mathematics. Reading, writing and mathematics standards have improved over the past two years. In 2003 they were average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (15.6)	15.7 (15.7)
writing	15.0 (15.2)	14.5 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (17.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 84 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Inspection findings

The Foundation Stage

3. At the time of the inspection the children had been in school for ten weeks. They are making good progress in all areas of learning and are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. In physical development they are likely to exceed expectations. There is a significantly large group of pupils for whom English is not their first language. They are achieving well as a result of the good support they are receiving. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs are making good progress.

Years 1 and 2

4. Pupils achieve well and make the progress expected across the Key stage. Higher-attaining pupils make good progress and this is evident in the significant proportion of pupils who are performing above the expected levels. Strategies to raise standards in reading, such as small group work for guided reading, and the use of targets in writing, are proving effective. Standards in speaking and listening are above average because of the focus on this aspect of English. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress. In mathematics and science standards are broadly average. In ICT, pupils make good progress to attain above average standards. In other subjects standards are broadly average.

Years 3 to 5

5. Pupils achieve well in Year 5. They make good progress because work is well matched to individual needs and the teaching is often stimulating and challenging. Progress is more erratic in Years 3 and 4 because there are distinct differences in expectations of effort and performance in different classes. Overall, in English, standards are average, although standards in speaking and listening are above average. In mathematics and ICT, standards are average. In Year 5, standards in science are above expectations because the pupils cover a wide curriculum and are very well taught by the co-ordinator. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs achieve well because they are very well supported.

Whole school matters

6. Pupils apply their literacy skills well in various areas of the curriculum, for example, in history, and they make good progress in acquiring vocabulary and terminology specific to subjects such as science and design and technology. Mathematical knowledge and skills are effectively used in subjects, such as geography and science. Pupils are making good progress in developing ICT skills but the opportunities to use them in all subjects are underdeveloped.
7. For many years, boys have consistently performed less well than girls in English and mathematics. There is evidence to show that the steps taken by the school to address this are beginning to take effect. Similarly, the attention given to raising the attainment of the more able pupils is enabling them to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because there is a thorough system of identification and support throughout the school. Those pupils for whom English is as an additional language make good progress and are often among the higher-attaining pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are good. Their personal development is good, with their moral and social development being stronger than their cultural and spiritual development. Attendance levels and punctuality have improved since the last inspection but attendance is still slightly below the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in and around the school.
- The school has a caring ethos and promotes and sustains good relationships, attitudes and personal development.
- There is an atmosphere of racial harmony throughout the school.
- Although significant behavioural incidents are rare, monitoring is not yet sufficiently systematic to ensure that the school has a comprehensive, well-informed overview.

- The follow-up procedures in the event of unauthorised absence are not sufficiently formalised and rigorously applied.

Commentary

Attitudes and behaviour

8. Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are good. This positive picture has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are well behaved, polite, helpful and courteous to each other. Staff consistently reinforce good behaviour and deal sensitively and effectively with the very few instances of unacceptable behaviour. The school has clear routines that help pupils to feel secure and high expectations of good behaviour are established and reinforced by all the staff. The class monitoring of behaviour is good, but systems for reviewing that there is a clear and informed whole-school overview, are not sufficiently well developed. Pupils' comments indicate that they are proud of their school and that they feel like valued members of the school community. They are interested in the range of activities that the school provides in and out of school hours. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and, as the table below shows, incidences of exclusion are infrequent. There have been few racist incidents and the high level of racial harmony reported in the last inspection remains. This is an important strength of the school.

Ethnic background of pupils

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	306	2	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	65	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

9. When working independently and in groups, pupils are co-operative and listen to each other with respect and interest. Pupils concentrate well except when they are expected to sit on the floor and listen to teachers for too long, particularly at the start of lessons. This leads to fidgeting and loss of attention for some pupils. In lessons where the pace is too slow or the tasks lack sufficient variation and challenge, this is exacerbated. When the teaching is stimulating, challenging, and has good pace, pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and behaviour is very good.

10. Pupils with special educational needs show a positive attitude to learning. The caring school ethos ensures that they feel respected and valued and this supports the good progress that they make in their learning. Where pupils find concentration and behaviour difficult, they are sensitively guided and well managed by teachers and classroom learning assistants in ways that minimise any disruption to the learning of others.

Relationships

11. Pupils' good relationships with adults and with each other contribute to their learning. They are supportive and caring of each other and they are settled, happy and feel at ease in lessons. A small number of pupils feel less secure in the playground, when the football activities of a small number of older boys sometimes dominate the playground culture. When teachers are made aware of this, pupils agree that they handle the situations well. The vast majority of pupils play well together and the "Buddy Bench" is effectively used as a means of helping pupils to find caring playmates. Praise is frequently used and this helps to build up the pupils' self-esteem.

Personal development

12. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and this is actively promoted throughout the school. The adults provide good role models. Pupils receive awards in celebration assemblies for academic achievement and for positive personal qualities that have been noted, such as kindness to others. All pupils are very aware of the school's golden rule, "Never do or say anything to hurt anyone", and the school is a very orderly and caring community. The school's values are promoted through the personal, social and health education programme. In all classes pupils can discuss matters relevant to their personal development during "circle time". Opportunities are created for pupils to enhance their social development through taking responsibilities. A newly formed School Council is at an early stage of development and its members are at present unclear about how they will fulfil their emerging roles. However, the enthusiasm and determination of some members to serve and make a positive difference is impressive. Pupils have shown initiative in successfully organising a Blue Peter "Well Water" appeal. Residential visits in Year 5 and a newly introduced overnight visit in Year 4 provide good opportunities for pupils to experience independence.

Cultural development

13. Pupils are provided with a curriculum that promotes a good understanding of mainly Western culture in subjects such as music, art and design and English. Pupils' understanding of more diverse cultures is promoted well through religious education in which pupils learn about major world faiths, sometimes with the active and positive involvement of visitors from a range of cultural backgrounds. The school has regular multicultural displays. An attractive display on "Diwali" was visually appealing and informative and linked with a recent special celebratory assembly that the children were keen to talk about.

Attendance

14. The school has revised its procedures and manages attendance systematically as a whole school matter. The effect of this is evident in the improvement in attendance figures from 93 per cent (October 2002) to 95.3 per cent (October 2003). Improved home-school links have made sure that attendance rates among ethnic minority pupils are improving and this supports the good progress that pupils make. The very great majority of parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually. Where this is not the case, the school takes prompt and appropriate action in partnership with the Education Welfare Service. Attendance is closely and effectively monitored, however, the procedures to follow-up in the event of unauthorised absence are not sufficiently formalised and applied thoroughly. Most absences arise through sickness, although some parents do withdraw their children from school to undertake long visits abroad during term time.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall and there is much good teaching, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 and 5. Good teaching and learning was seen in every year group. Some of the teaching which was satisfactory overall had weaknesses, nonetheless. The best teaching in the school demonstrates that the new policy for teaching and learning is being fully implemented.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lesson planning is very thorough and this ensures that the needs of all pupils in the class are met.
- Teachers take good care to explain the objectives at the start of lessons so that pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn.
- Teachers use a range of styles effectively to engage and motivate the pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are included in the full range of activities.
- Homework is well planned and closely related to lessons, making the tasks more meaningful to the pupils.
- Learning support assistants are well deployed; they support individuals and small groups skilfully and provide useful feedback to teachers on the progress made by pupils.
- Most teachers use questioning effectively to extend pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding.
- In some lessons teachers do not make good use of opportunities to develop pupils' own methods and ideas.
- In the weakest lessons there is insufficient demand made of pupils and the pace of lessons is too slow to ensure that all pupils maintain their interest and make the progress they are capable of.

Commentary

15. The table below presents the range of teaching quality seen across the school. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. In Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 5 teaching is satisfactory overall but there is consistently good or better teaching in some classes in Years 4 and 5.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	5 (10%)	25 (50%)	19 (38%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

Common Strengths

16. There are some common strengths in the best teaching throughout the school that enable all pupils to learn well. Teachers take great care to thoroughly plan interesting and enjoyable lessons. A variety of teaching styles and a good range of practical resources are used effectively to motivate all pupils so that they engage fully in the task and achieve well. In the best lessons, an animated, dynamic style of teaching enthuses the pupils, teachers are engaging and humorous and they have very positive relationships with pupils. Teachers are very skilful in accepting pupils' ideas and contributions and then extending their thinking and understanding by asking probing questioning. Classrooms are well managed and pupils are expected to take responsibility for organising their resources. Informative and attractive displays celebrate pupils' achievements and often include questions to stimulate further enquiry. Learning support assistants are fully integrated into the lessons. They work in very close partnership with teachers and provide very good support for individuals and small groups. They have assessment files in which they write how pupils have achieved during the lesson, and detail any problems they may have met. This very good feedback system works well and provides teachers with the information they need to carefully plan the pupils' next steps in learning.

An inclusive approach

17. Teaching is fully inclusive, which means that all pupils, and particularly lower and higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, are given the support they need to succeed. Within classes, the needs of pupils whose first language is not English are well met by teachers and learning support assistants, who exemplify English well and offer the opportunity to rehearse ideas with a partner before sharing them with the class. The language support teacher tracks the progress of all pupils at the early stages of learning English and maps this against ethnicity and rates of attendance. This means that the needs of individuals or groups of children are fully addressed. The bilingual support assistant concentrates appropriately on children in the Foundation Stage, especially those who do not speak English at home. In Year 1, the detailed tracking of individual's progress has led to the use of 'talk partners' and a renewed emphasis on speaking and listening across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to give short presentations to the class about important events at home.

Areas for improvement

18. In the weakest teaching seen there was a lack of pace and vitality. Activities were not sufficiently closely matched to the learning objectives so the pupils were confused and were not enabled to make the expected progress. The expectation of what pupils should achieve was too low; there was lack of challenge. Even in some of the satisfactory lessons, pupils spent too long listening to the teacher and there were too few opportunities for them to contribute their own thinking. Although, overall, the pupils mostly made steady progress they were not given enough time to develop their own ideas and suggestions. This is in sharp contrast with the best teaching seen where pupils moved from task to task quietly and swiftly, wasting no time at all.

Assessing pupils' progress

19. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. The senior management team have introduced a tracking system that clearly shows pupil progress from year to year in English, mathematics and science. Targets for raising standards have been set from this information. There are many good examples of teachers using this system to inform the way they work with pupils. For instance, the teachers in Year 1 have used an analysis of pupils' achievement at the end of the Foundation Stage to plan their work this term. Most teachers are using short-term targets to move pupils' learning forward but not all teachers are confident in this practice. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work books show that there are some very good examples of marking and verbal feedback

which helps the pupils know exactly how to improve. This practice is not consistent in every class, however.

The curriculum

Overall the school provides a broad curriculum but there is some imbalance in favour of literacy and numeracy. A wide range of clubs and activities, within and beyond the school day cater for pupils' varying interests and provide a rich variety of learning experiences. The requirements of the National Curriculum for information communication technology are now met fully which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Provision in this area is now good. Planning for different subjects has also improved since the last inspection, with teachers clearly indicating how more able groups of pupils are to be challenged. The current curriculum has a strong emphasis upon literacy and numeracy in order to ensure that standards improve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides well for pupils who have special educational needs and for those pupils whose first language is not English.
- All pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
- Careful analysis of pupils' achievements means that teachers know when pupils need extra help.
- The school takes good account of pupils' cultural and religious beliefs when designing the curriculum.
- Educational visits and visitors to the school enrich the curriculum and help pupils to understand the relevance of their learning in the wider world.
- Too little time is given to subjects, such as art and design and music to ensure that pupils experience all aspects of the subjects.

Commentary

Planning

20. Teachers' planning is based on national guidelines and it fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Plans clearly identify what is to be learnt by pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs and more able groups of pupils. The curriculum is enriched by regular visits which bring learning to life for pupils.
21. The planning frameworks provided by the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are used well to ensure that lessons have a clear purpose and that pupils make step-by-step progress. Teachers are beginning to plan opportunities for pupils to employ their key literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects such as geography, history and science but as yet this is underdeveloped.
22. The curriculum has a strong emphasis on English and mathematics. Additional time has been committed to reading activities, including paired reading, and to handwriting practice and extended writing. This is having the required effect upon standards in English and mathematics but also the negative effect of squeezing the time available for other important curriculum areas such as music and art.
23. The school provides a good range of after-school activities. These include a French club which is well attended by pupils from Year 2 to Year 5. There is a wide range of sports on offer beyond the school day, including football, basketball and cross-country running. A successful Gujarati club is established and a Punjabi club has recently been set up in response to a request by parents. Both are run by the home-school liaison officer.

An inclusive approach

24. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring equality of access to learning for all pupils. This is evident in the way that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who are in the early stages of learning English are met in lessons. Catch-up programmes are effectively delivered to small groups and their progress is carefully monitored and recorded by teaching assistants in their record files. The support of the ethnic minority support services mean that pupils at an early stage in learning English are able to use their home language and also have an opportunity to develop their spoken English skills.

Moving from the primary school to the high school

25. Good links exist with the local high school, which ensures a seamless transfer and a continuity of learning for pupils at the end of Year 5.

Staffing

26. There are sufficient teachers and teaching assistants who are suitably qualified to teach the curriculum. The classroom learning assistants who support pupils with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English are particularly well deployed by teachers and they are effective in their roles.

Resources

27. Significant recent improvements to the accommodation in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 areas mean that the curriculum can be taught effectively. A greater variety of reading books than was available at the time of the last inspection means that children are able to choose from a wider range of titles and teachers are well equipped to teach guided reading to small groups. ICT resources have improved substantially and all pupils have access to the full range of ICT facilities.

Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support for pupils is good overall. The school takes good care of its pupils and they have trusting relationships with all the adults.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school ensures that all pupils are safe and secure.
- There are close relationships between pupils and staff and this enables the staff to provide individual guidance effectively.

Commentary

Pupils' care, welfare and safety

28. The school takes good care of its pupils and they are all valued equally. All staff take care to know the pupils individually and they have a good understanding of their needs. The arrangements for pupils' health, safety and welfare are good. The school has a comprehensive range of policies which set out precisely how the school will meet its responsibilities to the pupils effectively. These are well known by the staff. Child protection procedures are very good indeed and great care is taken to ensure that those pupils with medical conditions are looked after sensitively and correctly. Regular safety checks are made by the governors, headteacher and caretaker. A sophisticated new security and fire alarm system has been installed and it is routinely tested. First aid arrangements are good.
29. The learning needs of different groups of pupils are well met. In particular, the support given to pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school. The staff know pupils well

and early identification of any learning or behaviour difficulties are quickly diagnosed. Careful assessment leads to clearly defined programmes of learning, which address the needs outlined in pupils' Individual Education plans. Staff liaise closely with parents and outside agencies. Pupil tracking enables teachers to monitor individual pupil's progress and to make the necessary adjustments to lesson plans. Some teachers are skilled in setting personal targets for improvement for pupils but other teachers are not confident in doing this.

New pupils

30. Induction arrangements for pupils moving to the high school at the end of Year 5 are good. Useful links are established and are being developed further. The induction of pupils entering the school during the school year ensure that they are carefully absorbed into the school community. A new adult/pupil support system has been introduced to ensure that all pupils have a responsible person to speak to if needed. This is working well.

Involving pupils

31. A school council has recently been set up. This aims to provide pupils with a forum for expressing their views. It is too early to judge its effectiveness at this stage. Within classes, teachers seek and welcome pupils' ideas and views.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community is good. Since the last inspection, good progress has been made with strengthening the links with parents so that they are more fully involved in their children's learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school actively encourages and acts upon parents' views.
- Annual reports provide parents with a clear picture of their children's progress in learning.
- Staff are very approachable and readily make themselves available to parents.
- Good, useful links with other schools and institutions are established.

Commentary

32. The headteacher seeks to build closer partnership with parents. She makes herself accessible to parents informally in the playground before and after school. Parents are easily able to speak to their children's teachers to explore concerns, discuss the progress they are making or to share important information.
33. The written reports provide parents with a full and clear picture of their children's progress in all areas of the curriculum. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in progress review meetings and they are informed about their children's individual education plans. A regular flow of informative and interesting newsletters keep parents up-to-date with the life and work of the school.
34. Many parents are actively involved in the school. They make a commitment to regularly supporting learning in classrooms and to helping with clubs and educational trips. Evening events have been organised to inform parents about aspects of their children's learning. A literacy evening was well supported and helped parents to gain a better understanding of how they can support the development of reading and writing. The school has responded positively to suggestions by parents and an evening focused on numeracy has been arranged. The Parent Teacher Association works hard to raise funds for the school and it organises a good range of events, including balloon races, magic shows and musical evenings.

Links with other schools and the community

35. Links with local schools and the community are good. Good progress has been made with consolidating and developing the links with the high school. This ensures that there is a smooth transition when pupils move at the end of Year 5. Useful links with small schools in the countryside have been established and the school has ensured that pupils benefit from a Performing Arts initiative organised by the local Arts College. Visitors from several major religions have helped the pupils to develop a broader understanding and empathy for faiths other than their own.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher and deputy headteacher through their unstinting hard work, and the introduction of some effective management systems, have set an agenda for continuous school improvement. They have been equally successful in establishing a very positive school ethos. The role of the governors has developed considerably since the last inspection, so that they are now well informed. Financial management is a strength and the deficit budget is being managed and monitored well. Data analysis is thorough, leading to effective systems for target setting, but teachers are not consistently confident in setting targets that are sufficiently challenging. The role of curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning is not sufficiently well developed and consequently, there remain inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body is well organised and individual strengths are used well.
- The chair of governors is extremely well informed.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision for improvement, and they are not afraid to take difficult decisions.
- Good teamwork is evident throughout the school.
- Senior staff act as good role models.
- The budget is carefully monitored and spending is closely linked to school priorities.
- The role of curriculum co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
- Performance management systems have been introduced but are not yet fully effective.

Leadership

36. The headteacher with the support of the deputy headteacher has significantly improved the quality of leadership since the last inspection. She has been particularly successful in developing a hardworking, caring and inclusive school community. Although there has been a significant turnover of staff during the last two years, relationships throughout the school are very positive and there is now a whole-school commitment to improvement.
37. Good teamwork is evident throughout the school. The school management team has, for instance, recently been extended to include year group leaders and this has not only enhanced their role, but is beginning to ensure more consistent practice within year groups and across Key stages. Close working relationships have been established by the leader in the Foundation Stage and this contributes to the effective provision for children at that stage.
38. The deputy headteacher and other senior staff act as good role models through their effective teaching and their clear understanding of what needs to be done to secure further improvement in raising standards. The recently appointed co-ordinator for special educational needs has quickly gained the confidence of staff and uses her expertise well to support teachers and teaching assistants in ensuring that pupils are well supported.
39. The roles of subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently well developed. Many have only recently been appointed. There are priorities in the current school improvement plan for them to

monitor pupils' work, and to be trained in the techniques of classroom observation. These plans are at a very early stage so that most co-ordinators, especially in the Foundation subjects, do not yet have a clear understanding of how well pupils are achieving or of how teaching and learning might be improved. It is therefore difficult for them to take a leading role in further developing their subject.

Management

40. The management of the school is sound. Good systems are in place to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school.
41. Rigorous analysis of performance data helps governors and senior managers to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses effectively, but does not always lead to the identification of priorities for improvement. The school development plan is very detailed but over-ambitious. There are too many areas for improvement and they are not sufficiently well prioritised. Recent analysis of the attainment of pupils with special educational needs, however, has led to some targeted individual and small group teaching, which is effectively supporting good achievement by these groups of pupils.
42. The effective tracking and monitoring of pupils for whom English is not their first language means that overall, these pupils achieve well. The language support teacher and the home-school liaison officer work well together and have been successful in raising staff expertise through training. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is in the early stages of development, but the school responds well to external monitoring.
43. Many of the weaknesses in management found at the last inspection have been addressed including the need to introduce a staff Performance Management system. Given the large number and recent turnover of staff, this is taking time to fully implement and has therefore had limited impact on improving teaching and learning.
44. Financial management is good. Falling numbers on roll and high costs to support members of staff on long term sick leave have left the school with a deficit budget. The headteacher, governors and the school bursars, with the support of the Local Educational Authority, have worked hard to put in place a tightly defined programme which will eventually bring the budget back into line, and, at the same time, allow the school to continue with its planned improvements.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	894,100
Total expenditure	868,961
Expenditure per pupil	1,799.09

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	6,169
Balance carried forward to the next	25,139

45. The school has satisfactory procedures to ensure that it applies the principles of best value appropriately. Recent spending to develop an ICT suite and the purchase of ICT equipment through competitive tendering provides a good example. The use of this equipment and its impact on raising standards is being carefully monitored by governors to ensure that money has been well spent. The school could do more to use benchmarking data to compare their costs with those of similar schools. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

Governance

46. The role of governors has improved considerably since the last inspection. Under the good leadership of the chair of governors, well-organised committee structures have been established. The work of these committees is very clearly linked to school improvement. The curriculum committee, for instance, closely monitors the implementation of the School Improvement Plan and ensures that milestones have been reached. Presentations from curriculum co-ordinators informs governors of the outcomes of data analysis and this increases their understanding of target-setting processes.
47. Governors' monitoring role is further developed through a series of planned classroom visits, which are closely linked to school priorities, and through the careful monitoring of the school budget. They have recently introduced exit interviews for departing members of staff to obtain their views on the school's strengths and weaknesses and to gain insights into what might be further improved.
48. Governors are beginning to take a more strategic role, especially in the financial management of the school. They are developing their role as critical friends and are more confident in holding the school to account. Chairs of committees meet regularly. They work well as a team and, through feedback from their individual committees, are beginning to identify further priorities for school improvement.
49. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and staff; they take their duties seriously and work conscientiously. They ensure that all statutory procedures are met. The chair of governors works closely with the headteacher and his considerable knowledge and understanding of the challenges that the school faces supports them as they strive for continuous improvement.

Capacity for improvement

50. The strong leadership, teamwork and vision of the governors, headteacher, and senior managers, together with the effective systems that have been introduced to support developments, means that the school is well placed to introduce and sustain further improvement.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The school has maintained the good provision for children in the Foundation Stage that was found at the last inspection. Children start school in the September before their fifth birthday and at the time of the inspection had been in school for about ten weeks. The majority are taught in two classes where all children are aged four and over. A few of the oldest are in a class with Year 1 pupils. The majority of children have attended some form of pre-school provision. There is a significant proportion of children for whom English is not their first language. They are well supported and, together with all other children, including those with special educational needs, they achieve well. Children are making good progress in all areas of learning and are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception year. In physical development they are likely to exceed expectations. The quality of teaching is good overall. Staff know the children well and careful regular assessment means that activities are well matched to children's needs. Planning is thorough and covers all areas of learning, but there is an imbalance in the weekly timetable with insufficient time being given to pupils' creative development. Staff work well as a team and are ably led by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. The accommodation which has recently been upgraded is very attractive and resources are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the good teaching and high expectations of staff.
- Routines are well-established.
- Positive and supportive relationships enhance the good development of children's confidence and self-esteem.

Commentary

51. Although this is only their first term in school, children move confidently between activities, and around the rest of the school. They know what is expected of them and the majority behave well. The very few children who have behaviour difficulties are sensitively supported and teachers make every effort to include them in a wide range of activities. Staff work well together and provide very good role models through their positive and enthusiastic approach to their work. Most children concentrate well and are fully involved in their learning. Children are continually encouraged to be proud of their own and each other's achievements and this helps to promote high self-esteem. Classroom routines are well-established and this supports children in becoming more independent in their learning. For instance, the majority of children can undress themselves confidently before a music and movement lesson in the school hall. Children know how to share and take turns and consequently they work well together. Staff ensure that there are opportunities for children to express their feelings and help them to become increasingly aware of the needs of others. Children are encouraged to become more aware of their own learning through setting their own targets and explaining in what areas they would like to improve. They respond well with comments like, "I am trying to write my own name", and, "I am trying to take turns and share". The supportive learning environment which all staff create ensures that children enjoy a very positive start to their school life.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Appropriate emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills.
- The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and is often good.

Commentary

52. The majority of children are likely to reach the early learning goals in communication language and literacy by the end of their Reception year. Through a range of well-planned activities staff are particularly successful in developing children's speaking and listening skills. Consequently, children are confident in expressing their ideas and talking about the work they are doing. Staff use effective questioning to encourage children to extend and explain their thinking. When listening to a story, for instance, about Mog and Bunny, children were asked, "How do we know that Mog loved Bunny?" Children responded with appropriate ideas. They are also encouraged to form their own questions. Listening skills are equally well developed. Children respond promptly to instructions, and are beginning to listen carefully to each other. They enjoy books and are building their literacy skills well. They are beginning to have an understanding of the different elements of stories and are able to predict what might happen next. Staff choose books carefully so that children can relate the story to their own experience and this ensures that they listen and respond well. Through a carefully constructed phonic programme children are learning initial letter sounds, and the more able are using this knowledge effectively in their early attempts at writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of practical activities which engage the children's interest and ensures that they learn well.
- Teachers find opportunities across all areas of learning to promote mathematical development.

Commentary

53. The quality of teaching is good and most children are working at the expected level for their age. Staff use a good range of number songs and rhymes to support children's counting skills, so that many children can count reliably to 15 and beyond. Many opportunities are found throughout the school day for children to practice counting and this increases their confidence. Staff plan stimulating activities which gain the attention and enjoyment of all pupils and ensure that all, whatever their ability, can take part and succeed. They then use skilful questioning to ensure that the most able are suitably challenged. In a counting activity a child with significant behaviour difficulties managed to count to four accurately and to put the correct numbers of toys in a box, much to his delight and that of all the class. Once some more toys had been added, more able pupils successfully worked out how many toys there would be if there were one more or one less. Children are beginning to recognise and use the correct mathematical names for solid three-dimensional shapes. Good use is made of homework to support this area of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards, but the work on display indicates that standards are at the expected level. Staff use the local environment well to ensure that children learn more about the world they live in. A visit to a local farm has been organised and local walks provide opportunities for children to look for signs of autumn and learn about the natural world. They are beginning to understand how their bodies work through making simple puppets with moving arms and legs. Staff successfully raise children's awareness of their own and others' cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff strengths are used well in this area of learning.
- Other areas of learning are supported well through physical activity.

Commentary

54. There are good opportunities to support children's physical development. They learn and achieve well so that many children are likely to exceed national expectations by the end of their year in the Reception class. Good use is made of one of the school halls for physical activity. One of the lessons observed (which was linked to a recorded radio programme) was competently led by a classroom learning assistant who is a trained Nursery nurse. Children were very keen to take part and showed self-reliance in the way they responded quickly to instructions. A range of skills were developed during the lessons, including speaking and listening, co-operation, and mathematical skills. Children move freely and confidently in a variety of ways and the most able are beginning to move with control and good co-ordination. Again, as in many of the lessons observed, children with special educational needs were sensitively supported and encouraged to take a full part. Children are also encouraged to use movement to express their feelings and to refine and repeat their actions in order to further improve. Through physical activity children are becoming more aware of their bodies and are beginning to have an understanding of the benefits of exercise and the importance of keeping healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiastic teaching in music and dance supports children's good development.
- There are insufficient opportunities in the weekly timetable for children to develop their creative skills and to initiate their own activities.

Commentary

55. Only two opportunities were observed during the inspection which contributed to children's creative development. In a music lesson, enthusiastic and animated teaching encouraged children to learn and sing a range of songs. They join in confidently and are beginning to develop a sense of rhythm. There is evidence from wall displays of children having opportunities to paint, and role-play areas are set up in each of the classrooms. The weekly timetable, however, does not show sufficient opportunities for children to develop their creative skills through experimentation, exploration, and co-operative play. More opportunity should be given for children to devise their own activities. Staff have understandably focused their

teaching on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, but they have reduced pupils' language and number opportunities by providing an unduly narrow curriculum.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to very good but is satisfactory overall. The recent redeployment of strong teachers across Year 3 to 5, is beginning to have an effect on standards. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The quality of work planned for pupils is good and this means that they generally achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are improving.
- Standards in pupils' speaking and listening are above average.
- Detailed planning indicates what pupils need to learn next.
- The work of teaching assistants supports pupils' learning well.
- Teachers' use of questioning helps pupils to understand more.
- Marking tells pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- A very small number of pupils are not learning as much as they could do.
- Sometimes pupils do not get enough time to develop and share their own ideas.

Commentary

56. Early indications from national tests in 2003 show that by the age of seven, pupils reach standards that are average in reading and writing when compared to all schools. This is a similar picture to the previous year. In writing, a larger proportion of pupils achieved the higher level this year when compared to similar schools. This represents an improvement on the 2002 results.
57. The inspection found that pupils are reaching average levels for their ages in reading and writing but above average levels in speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in that what they need to learn is clearly identified in teachers' plans and teaching assistants skilfully encourage them to achieve their best. Pupils whose first language is not English make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants help them to develop their spoken language. The most able pupils do well because teachers are aware of their needs and challenging work is set for them. They are sometimes provided with special sessions in small groups. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when these pupils were often set work which was too easy.
58. Standards in speaking and listening are above average for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and also in Years 3 to 5. Pupils are keen to answer questions, share their ideas and give reasons for their opinions. This is due to the way teachers encourage pupils to use a wide range of vocabulary with precise technical terms linked to specific subjects. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts with one another during lessons so they can prepare what they want to say. Pupils in Year 2 confidently explained the term 'digraph' to explain when two letters are used to make a single sound.
59. Most pupils are achieving well in reading because they have opportunities to work with their teachers in small groups for guided reading and the school has invested in a much wider range of reading books recently. Pupils are encouraged to read at home with parents and carers and this helps them to become more confident and read more widely. Younger pupils are able to explain how they tackle unfamiliar words so that they are more able to read independently. Older pupils read more widely and are able to locate information quickly in non-

fiction books as well as using the library catalogue system effectively. Reading book areas in classrooms are attractively laid out with lively displays of favourite authors and areas where pupils can browse whilst choosing their books.

60. The school is working hard to improve standards of writing. Pupils are given targets to improve and teachers comment on these when they mark books and sometimes refer to them in lessons. In their plans, teachers make sure that pupils have read examples of different types of writing before they write for themselves. Younger pupils are given frequent opportunities to talk to a partner about what they want to write. Year 1 pupils prepare presentations to their classes to help them gather ideas for writing. Older pupils are given a good range of opportunities to extend their writing.
61. In the best lessons, teachers give very clear explanations so that pupils know exactly what they need to learn. They make sure that all pupils are given tasks that challenge them and they use teaching assistants effectively to support small groups. Teaching is less successful when there are limited opportunities for pupils to share and develop their own ideas and when more able pupils are not challenged. Where teachers' explanations are too long or unclear, pupils become unsettled and make less progress as a result.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent part of a very good literacy session in which Year 5 pupils learned how to use metaphors to improve their poetry writing.

Earlier in the week pupils had written some lines of poetry. The teacher noticed that where pupils used rhyme, the words chosen lacked effect. She decided to remind pupils of how to use similes and metaphors. After reading together some well-known poems containing powerful figurative language, pupils readily began to create their own lines. One boy quickly offered, "The sea is a blue sheet of paper". As ideas came thick and fast, pupils realised the power of such language. Another boy added, "The moon is a white shirt in a dark closet". Pupils used 'style feature' cards to help them write. These contained key features of effective poems that they had read earlier in the week. The most able pupils had to choose six and their poems had to contain all of these features. All pupils worked energetically so that, by the end of the lesson, lines like, "The desert is a dried up sea, crumbling like a biscuit", showed that their writing had improved dramatically on previous attempts.

62. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for improvement but as yet her role is underdeveloped. She has worked hard to extend and organise the reading resources and brought about improvements in teacher's' knowledge of the subject. She has yet to monitor work in classrooms or to evaluate the impact of programmes designed to help pupils who are not achieving as well as they should.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The good speaking and listening skills shown in literacy are used and further developed in many other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to formulate their ideas and to present their ideas, in science, for example. They learn to use vocabulary that is specific to the subject. They listen carefully to their peers and respond thoughtfully. Reading and writing skills are purposefully developed in other subjects where pupils undertake research and learn to write for different purposes.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**. Since the last inspection the school has improved its records of pupils' achievements and this is helping to raise expectations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented consistently in all classes.

- Most pupils achieve well because all teaching is at least satisfactory.
- Homework is relevant and is closely related to the lessons.
- There is a consistent approach to teaching calculation.
- There are some significant weaknesses, even within the otherwise satisfactory teaching.
- Planning and challenge for the more able is not consistent in Year 3.

Commentary

64. In the national tests for seven year-olds in 2003, results were average. Ninety per cent of pupils reached the expected standard and 29 per cent achieved the higher level. These figures are exactly in line with national expectations but below average when compared with similar schools. Standards seen during the inspection were satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs, and pupils from ethnic minority groups, make good progress because their needs are well met. The trend of attainment since the last inspection shows that girls have been performing better than boys. The school has been actively addressing this weakness and evidence gathered during the inspection confirms that boys and girls are now making similar progress.
65. Pupils make sound progress in mathematics throughout the school. Most pupils start school with average levels of mathematical knowledge and understanding and they make reasonable progress through Key Stage 1 to attain the levels expected. Samples of work show that pupils in Year 2 have covered an appropriately wide range of topics. There are clear indications that work is suitably adjusted to provide greater challenge for the more able pupils in some classes but this practice is not completely consistent across the year group. Useful, new assessment procedures have been introduced to provide clear pictures of the progress being made by pupils from year to year. These data show that many pupils in the present Year 4 and 5 did not make sufficient progress last year. It is evident that the dynamic teaching within these year groups has enabled pupils to make good progress over little more than half a term. Pupils in Year 4 can explain and give reasons for their choices when classifying shapes and can apply their mathematical skills in solving problems. Year 5 pupils have a consistent approach to using subtraction accurately. They know how to investigate the relationship between perimeter and area. There are many examples, in lessons and in pupils written work, of using mathematics to solve problems successfully. There is insufficient use of computers to support learning in mathematics lessons.
66. Teaching was at least satisfactory and there were many examples of good teaching. In Years 1, 4 and 5, very good teaching was seen. In Year 1, pupils made very good progress in a numeracy lesson when they found numbers that were one or ten more than any given number. Clear explanations, effective use of a range of resources including number squares and cards and very good use of practical equipment all helped the pupils to grasp and consolidate the concept.
67. Other strengths include:
- clearly planned lessons with learning objectives that are explained to pupils;
 - the strong emphasis given to using correct vocabulary and terminology;
 - skilful questioning that challenges and extends pupils' thinking and understanding;
 - the very good relationship between teacher and pupils;
 - the valuing of pupils' contributions to the lessons;
 - the planning of different levels of activities which means all pupils can achieve;
 - the very effective work of support assistants in the 50 per cent of lessons where they were present; and
 - the good links made by teachers with previous learning.

68. In some lessons, teachers miss opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking. Sometimes teachers are unclear in their explanation and, as a result, some pupils are not sure what to do. In a few lessons the more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged.
69. Assessment in mathematics is sound. Teachers use a range of strategies to assess pupils' work. Marking is generally purposeful and most teachers provide constructive feedback that tells the pupils what they have done well or badly and what they need to do to improve. In one class, books were marked exceptionally well, with clear indications to pupils of how far they had succeeded in the main purposes of the exercises. Each term there were additional comments on areas for further improvement. This very good practice is not evident in all classes however, and marking is cursory in a very small number of classes. Optional national tests are now being analysed in great detail to identify individual and group strengths and areas for development. These are being used well to form small groups who are gaining from intervention programmes.
70. Co-ordination of mathematics is good and it is having a positive impact upon pupils' opportunities to achieve well. Since the deputy headteacher became the co-ordinator in January he has improved consistency in curriculum planning across the school. The National Numeracy Framework is used carefully by all teachers to plan sequences of lessons so that all pupils are gaining a secure knowledge and understanding of basic number facts. Lesson plans are detailed and set out precisely what the different groups of pupils will learn. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to establish a common approach to the teaching and learning of numeracy. For example, all pupils are taught the same, agreed methods of addition and subtraction throughout the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. Pupils are using mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. There are several examples of the use of charts and graphs in science and geography. Year 4, in particular, plan work in history, geography and science specifically to provide opportunities to take measurements, organise numerical information and make graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory** overall, with some strengths.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Year 5 as a result of the good teaching in that year group.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning science; they enjoy learning to think like scientists.
- Generally, there is insufficient use of ICT to support science.
- The subject co-ordinator has insufficient opportunity to influence standards throughout the school.

Commentary

72. Standards are average in Year 2, and in Year 5, pupils are attaining above average standards. Observations of lessons in Years 1 and 2, and the evidence of work completed so far this year, show that pupils are making sound progress in developing their scientific knowledge and understanding. In Year 2, pupils are making good progress in learning to predict, carry out an investigation and record their findings, for example, when exploring the waterproof properties of a range of materials. They know that they need to carefully follow the same procedures each time to make it a fair test. Pupils in Year 5 have a good understanding of scientific procedure. They know how to undertake enquiries systematically and to record their observations and ideas carefully. Most pupils have a secure grasp of vocabulary and they use it confidently to communicate what they know and understand about the elements of a balanced diet, for

example. All pupils make good progress because they undertake a range of activities which are carefully matched to their different levels of attainment. Boys achieve as well as girls and pupils from ethnic minority groups and those with special educational needs all make good progress.

73. During the inspection three lessons were seen; in these the teaching varied between satisfactory and good. In the best lessons seen, pupils responded very enthusiastically to the animated and engaging style of teaching. They were keen to make suggestions and offer explanations. They tried hard and persevered well. Older pupils show considerable initiative in devising their own scientific tests. With the teacher's encouragement, they probe the evidence deeply and they are able to formulate their own conclusions. Key Stage 2 workbooks show that some teachers have very high expectations of pupils' effort and performance. Useful feedback is given which helps pupils to improve their work. However, workbooks also show that in some classes there is considerable use of worksheets and marking is cursory.
74. There have been several improvements since the last inspection. These include:
- the raising of standards, particularly at Key Stage 2;
 - the use of a coherent scheme of work which has an appropriate emphasis upon active enquiry and investigation;
 - the increased use of mathematical knowledge and skills to measure accurately and present findings in chart, graph and table format, and the purposeful development of speaking and listening skills within lessons;
 - the positive leadership provided by the co-ordinator;
 - routine assessment of pupils' progress at the end of curriculum units;
 - the careful analysis of available data to evaluate the achievements of different groups of pupils and the strengths and weaknesses of different aspects of the curriculum; and
 - resources are well organised and carefully matched to the planned curriculum.
75. There are two key areas for further improvement. The co-ordinator has been unable to observe lessons and evaluate teaching and learning throughout the school and this inhibits her impact upon raising standards in all year groups. ICT is well used in Year 5 to develop pupils' research skills and to explore the structure of creatures and materials using a microscope, and is used for similar purposes in Year 2. Elsewhere ICT is not being used sufficiently to maximise pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information technology overall is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a substantial improvement in resources, their organisation and the expertise and confidence of staff.
- The co-ordination of ICT is good and it is resulting in improved standards.
- Teaching of skills is good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to ICT.
- ICT is not used to support learning in other subjects sufficiently.

Commentary

76. Raising standards was a key issues at the time of the last inspection. Good progress has been made. Standards in information and communication technology are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 5. In the three lessons seen, pupils made good progress in developing and consolidating skills, such as changing text size and colour, combining text with graphics and graphical modelling. Displayed work and the evidence within written work indicates that

pupils are making good progress in all aspects of word-processing and graphics in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are making good progress from the below average standards found in the last inspection to gain a secure grasp of the core skills. They combine images and text confidently and manipulate objects on screen to create plans of their classrooms, for example.

77. Very good progress has been made with improving resources. A substantial investment in new computers and software has resulted in a new, well-organised computer room in each key stage. Following an audit of individual needs, a programme of training, with New Opportunities Funding, and support for all staff, provided by the LEA, has led to greatly improved staff confidence and capability. Whole-class teaching, with a maximum of two pupils per computer, ensures that all girls and boys have equal opportunities to learn.
78. Planning for ICT is thorough. A scheme of work based upon national guidance, with additional units to smooth the transition from Year 2 to Year 3, ensures that all pupils experience a coherent and progressive curriculum. Examples of work indicate that most aspects of the curriculum are being taught well. The school has selected the use of the Internet and control technology as areas for further development. Planning documents and conversations with teachers and pupils confirm that the new resources are being used well.
79. The teaching is good. Very clear explanations and effective use of the digital projectors, underpinned by good subject knowledge, result in pupils swiftly learning how to:
 - type text and change the size and colour of the font in Year 2;
 - access, import and modify the size of clipart images in Year 3; and
 - select and insert items, and rotate, enlarge and reduce them in Year 5.
80. Teachers are well aware of the range of needs within their classes and they carefully challenge and extend the more able. Questioning is used effectively to cause pupils to think hard about what they are learning and how they might improve their work. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teachers have high expectations of pupil's capacity to concentrate, keep up and to work independently. Pupils respond very well to this and work hard, with obvious pleasure and pride in their achievements.
81. Conversations with pupils confirm that they have very positive attitudes to ICT. Within lessons they eagerly explain what they are learning and confidently demonstrate the new procedures they have just mastered. Pupils share resources readily and very well; they take care to take turns to use the equipment.
82. ICT is very well co-ordinated. Good progress has been made with improving the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. A carefully structured programme has been systematically implemented and the co-ordinator has a secure understanding of what aspects of the subject can be further developed. Short-term planning is monitored and new assessment procedures ensure that pupils' progress is systematically tracked. Monitoring of teaching and learning is mainly through sampling work and discussions with pupils and teachers. Opportunities to observe teaching and learning in ICT have been limited. Governors take a close interest in the development of the subject and the effective use of the new resources and visits to observe lessons have been made.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. During the inspection, the use of ICT seen in classrooms was limited. Good examples were seen in science, in Years 2 and 5. The older pupils gathered information using a CD-ROM and examined a small creature in fine detail through a microscope linked to a computer. Examples in books and displays confirm that computers are used in classrooms to consolidate numeracy and literacy skills. This is an area for further development.

HUMANITIES

84. In humanities, pupils' written work was sampled in history and geography at Key Stage 2, with two lessons seen in each subject. There is every indication from this evidence that standards are average in both subjects at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, no lessons were seen in either subject and the work sampled in geography was small. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects.
85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2, with some good teaching in geography in Year 4. Some improvements have been made since the last inspection and these include common planning formats and assessments at the end of each curriculum unit. The overuse of published photocopied worksheets, noted at the last inspection, has now ceased. Work is suitably differentiated for different groups of pupils. Planned activities support pupils in developing their literacy and ICT skills in the context of these subjects. Work in both subjects is based whenever possible on field trips and other first hand experience.
86. Co-ordinators in both subjects have only recently been appointed. Monitoring has been limited to scrutiny of planning and some sampling of pupil's work. Although there are plans for future monitoring in classrooms, co-ordinators do not yet have sufficient knowledge of the standards pupils attain or the quality of teaching and learning to successfully lead their subjects and effect improvement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for the subject is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of visitors from different faith communities who contribute their expertise, particularly for the younger pupils.
- Meaningful links are made between religion and people's everyday lives.
- The subject co-ordination in Religious Education is well organised and effective.

Commentary

87. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection remain in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. One full lesson and one part of a lesson were observed. Written work and long and short term planning and displays were studied. Additionally, discussions with pupils indicate that at least satisfactory progress is made throughout the school.
88. In a Year 1 lesson, a visiting Sister from the Church Army used nativity models and role-play imaginatively to illustrate the significance of giving presents. Displays and whole-class books show that religion is being linked interestingly to people's everyday lives. A range of visitors from several major religions have talked with pupils and shown them how members are welcomed into their various faiths. Good use is also made of visits to places of worship. There are examples of interesting interactive homework that encourages parents to discuss religion with their children.
89. The curriculum has been well planned by the effective subject co-ordinator, who leads with clarity and provides examples of good practice. Teaching and learning have started to be monitored in certain year groups, with others to follow. Formal assessment has now been introduced, using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidance on expectations for each year group. These are improvements since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

90. Only one lesson of **physical education** was seen during the inspection and so it is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. The limited evidence suggests that it is satisfactory in all four areas. This is a similar picture to that of the last inspection.
91. From discussion with teachers and pupils it is clear that the curriculum offers all four strands of the subject over the course of each Key Stage, including out door and adventurous activities. There are adequate resources available and the availability of two spacious halls means that pupils can exercise safely.
92. Good use is made of outside providers to give specialist training, particularly in football and basketball. Outside the school day, pupils are also involved in cricket, tennis, rugby, junior squash, karate, golf and horse riding.
93. In the lesson seen in Year 2, pupils made good progress in passing and travelling with a ball. The session was clearly planned to give opportunities for pupils to consolidate skills they had learned in the previous lesson as well as to extend them. The teacher skilfully adapted part of the lesson when initially pupils found the task too hard. There was a strong emphasis on safety during physical activity and pupils were beginning to understand the effect that exercise has on the body.
94. The role of the subject co-ordinator is underdeveloped. There is a system for recording pupils' performance in the skills and techniques taught. However, there is currently no overview of whole-school strengths and areas for development due to a lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the subject.
95. In **music**, pupils were only observed during one class music lesson in Year 4. Pupils were able to sing in two parts tunefully, rhythmically and with enjoyment, and to perform simple compositions on untuned percussion instruments at a standard appropriate to their age. In a group violin lesson, enthusiastic and skilled teaching enabled Year 2 pupils to play simple tunes together and make good progress. In some year groups, such as Year 2, pupils benefit from regular singing with teachers with particular musical expertise who teach classes other than their own. However, not all classes benefit from this and there is no opportunity for regular singing at Key Stage 2. There is a sound scheme of work in place for music and an assessment system, but for the last two terms there has been no subject co-ordinator and, therefore, no whole-school strategic subject leadership or monitoring of teaching and learning. There has been only limited progress since the last inspection. The school choir was disbanded earlier this year, having been conducted temporarily by a governor, and there are plans to restart it. Some pupils sing on occasion with Leicester Arts choir. The headteacher welcomes enrichment opportunities in music, including visits by professional musicians, such as drummers, and has strengthened the partnership with the local specialist Arts College. This link provides regular orchestral opportunities for instrumentalists but is becoming of broader benefit to the school.
96. Standards in **art and design** are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 5. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and it is, therefore, not possible to make firm judgements about the quality of teaching. Inspectors talked to the co-ordinator, headteacher and pupils and studied displays and folders of planning and photographic evidence. By the end of Year 5, pupils are able to control and use colour, texture and pattern. Two-dimensional work is sound throughout the school and drawing is the area best developed. There was a little evidence of printmaking. There is insufficient opportunity for pupils to develop three-dimensional art and design. This was an area of weakness identified during the last inspection which has been only partly addressed. Cardboard modelling with a visiting artist and a limited amount of clay work was evident in photographs. Very good, colourful batiks have been produced by more able pupils from Years 2 to 5, working together with a visiting artist. The development of pupil's painting skills is evident in several informative and attractive displays

throughout the school. Pupils study and can recall art by predominantly Western artists and can create work effectively in the same style as artists, such as Warhol and Clarice Cliff. Across the curriculum, drawing is used well for close observational studies in design and technology and to illustrate within Science. The co-ordinator of art and design has guided the curriculum but does not monitor teaching and learning in the subject and strategically develop it across the school. Assessment procedures are now in place.

97. Standards in **design and technology**, have improved since the last inspection and they are average now. Pupils experience a broad, well-balanced curriculum which enables them to acquire the necessary designing and constructional skills and techniques when working with a good range of materials. For example, designing skills are well taught in a packaging project in Year 3 where the teacher develops an understanding of how three-dimensional packets are designed and manufactured. In Year 1, pupils are taught to use simple tools when making fruit salads. Photographs show that pupils successfully constructed different types of shelter using natural materials during a residential visit. As they progress through the school, pupils learn to use a variety of mechanisms, including simple levers and cams, to make moving models. Teachers subject knowledge has improved as a consequence of professional development led by the subject co-ordinator. Assessment information gained at the end of each unit of study provides the co-ordinator with a view of standards achieved. An area for further improvement is the use of ICT for design and control.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Commentary

98. The school gives a high priority to pupils' personal development. A good variety of topics and activities are planned into the curriculum provided for all pupils, including work on diet, health, drugs and personal safety. The pupils show good awareness of the importance of being safe and taking good care of themselves. They know that a balanced diet and taking regular exercise is essential to maintaining their well-being. A School Council has recently been established and this is giving pupils the chance to voice their opinions and to learn to discuss matters democratically. This is at an early stage of development and the school plans to expand the range of opportunities available to all pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
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	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	2
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	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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