

INSPECTION REPORT

FOSSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120089

Headteacher: Mr A Bradley

Lead inspector: Mr M Thompson

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th December 2004

Inspection number: 266839

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	326 plus 40 part-time Nursery
School address:	Balfour Street Leicester
Postcode:	LE3 5EA
Telephone number:	0116 2519261
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Debbie Bhebhe
Date of previous inspection:	17 th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Fosse Primary School is a large urban school to the west of the centre of Leicester. Its pupils are from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. The largest groups are the 60 per cent of pupils who are of white British heritage and the 9 per cent of Indian heritage. Since its last inspection, the proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language at home has trebled, and is now 26 per cent. In all, 20 different first languages are spoken by pupils from the school, 11 per cent of whom are in the early stages of acquiring skills in English. This proportion is higher than is found in most schools. In addition, 30 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, a proportion which is similar to that reported during the previous inspection and is well above the national average. The nature of pupils' special needs includes social and emotional, behavioural, speech and communication, visual, or autistic difficulties. The home circumstances of pupils are below average overall, but about 30 per cent are eligible for free school meals. A high number of pupils move into and out of the school during the course of each year. Overall, the attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2537 2	Mike Thompson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science; Information and Communication Technology; Physical Education.
9388	Anthony Mundy	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
1870 9	Nina Bee	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special Educational Needs; Mathematics; Personal, Social and Health Education; Citizenship; Geography; History.
3751	Trudy Cotton	<i>Team inspector</i>	English as an Additional Language; English; Religious Education.
2629 2	Helen Mundy	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage Curriculum; Art and Design; Design and Technology; Music.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Fosse Primary School provides a **satisfactory standard of education** for its pupils. The school ensures that, from a below average starting point and in unfavourable circumstances, its pupils make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Teaching is sound, and the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Children are given a good start to their education in the Nursery Year (Foundation 1 class).
- The school is very good at developing pupils' social skills and gives them excellent moral guidance. Pupils are very well behaved and relate very well to one another.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make rapid progress in learning to speak English, but their progress in developing skills as writers is slow.
- Information from the assessment of pupils is not used well enough in mathematics and science and, as a result, pupils of all abilities are too often given the same tasks.
- Procedures to promote good attendance are unsatisfactory. Attendance rates are well below the national average and too many pupils fail to arrive at school on time.
- The school makes very good use of ICT to help pupils learn in almost all subjects.
- The headteacher shows great sensitivity to the needs of all members of the school community. He ensures that all pupils are well cared for and are treated equally, and that parents are kept well informed.
- Leadership is very good in ICT and good in English, but unsatisfactory in science. The monitoring of provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is unsatisfactory overall.

The school has made reasonable progress since its last inspection in 1999. The quality of leadership has improved and financial planning is better, although the school has an unacceptably high budgetary surplus. Particularly noteworthy are the improvements made in information and communication technology (ICT), which have helped pupils to achieve well. Standards in English, mathematics, science are lower than they were in 1999, and reflect the significant increase in the number of pupils with limited understanding of English and the much higher number of pupils moving into and out of the school during the course of each year.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	D	B
Mathematics	C	D	C	A
Science	A	C	D	A

*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.*

Inspection findings broadly confirm the results of the national tests over the past two years. In comparison with similar schools, (*see the definition above*) the school's performance varies considerably from year to year and was very good in 2004. Overall, **pupils achieve satisfactorily**. Children achieve well in Foundation 1, as do those pupils who are in the early stages of speaking English. Pupils with SEN achieve satisfactorily. In ICT, achievement is good throughout the school. In Reception (Foundation 2), standards are well above average in children's personal, social and emotional development, and average in physical development and creative development. However, they are below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science, although standards in these subjects are below average in Years 2 and 6. Standards in writing are well below average because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and to redraft and improve their work. In physical education, achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. In ICT, standards are below average in Year 2, but average in Year 6. No judgements could be made about standards or achievement in other subjects. Overall, pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good**. Their attitudes towards learning are good. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good overall. Attendance is well below average and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Foundation 1 and in ICT throughout the school. In Foundation 2, and in all other subjects, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour. They make good use of equipment, particularly the interactive whiteboards¹, to make their lessons interesting, and they ensure that all pupils are included in activities. As a result, pupils' learning is satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. It is not detailed enough in the Foundation classes and, in mathematics and science, information from periodic assessments is not used well enough to help pupils improve. The curriculum is satisfactory. A very good feature is the integration of ICT with almost all other subjects. A weakness is the lack of opportunities for pupils to carry out in-depth scientific investigations. The school is good at ensuring the care, welfare and safety of its pupils. Relationships with parents are good, but some parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly enough. Links with the community and local schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the **leadership and management of the school are satisfactory at all levels**. The leadership provided by the headteacher is satisfactory. Governors have a reasonable understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide satisfactory governance. However, some key staff do not monitor the provision in their areas of responsibility rigorously enough. All legal requirements are properly met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

¹ These are large boards on which the screen display from a computer is projected. The technology enables the user to control the images on screen by touching it.

Parents' and pupils' views of the school are very positive. Parents are appreciative of the work of all of the staff, but a significant minority feel that bullying is a problem. Inspection evidence, including discussions with pupils, does not support this view.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in the core subjects by improving the quality of pupils' writing, setting more challenging tasks for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics and science, and providing more time for pupils to carry out scientific investigations.
- Ensure that the skills of all teachers in monitoring their areas of responsibility are improved, particularly with regard to SEN and science.
- Increase levels of punctuality and attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Taken as a whole, standards in Reception (the Foundation 2 classes) are below average in relation to the goals expected of children of this age. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are also below the national average in English, mathematics and science. However, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory, and boys and girls generally achieve equally well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage classes make good progress in developing personal and social skills.
- Pupils' skills in writing are well below average.
- Higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged enough.
- Pupils make good progress in ICT.

Commentary

1. The analysis of the school contained in its annual Performance and Assessment Report judges its performance against all schools nationally and against schools from a similar context. In 2004, the school did particularly well. The 'value added' measure, which compares the relative progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics from Year 2 to Year 6, judged pupils' progress to be well above average overall in comparison with all schools nationally and above average in comparison with similar schools. However, the school's performance varies considerably from year to year because of differences in the groups of pupils tested. When results from the past few years are viewed as a whole, the school's performance is generally as good as that of schools in similar circumstances.

2. The good adult-to-pupil ratio helps the school to cope with the high turnover of pupils and to provide the quality of care needed to help newcomers to settle in quickly and achieve satisfactorily. However, the attainment of some pupils is affected by their home

circumstances, particularly where good punctuality and regular attendance are not considered by parents to be important. The school's systems to address these issues need to be improved.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (26.1)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.0 (26.3)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.3 (28.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. On entry to the Nursery (Foundation 1 class), children generally have low levels of basic literacy and numeracy. Their good progress in Foundation 1 is securely underpinned by the high priority placed on developing their social skills and independence as learners. The very good standards of personal development achieved provide the basis for the very good behaviour and relationships between pupils evident throughout the school. Progress slows in Foundation 2 because of weaknesses in planning and assessment, but is satisfactory overall. At the end of Foundation 2, most children exceed the goals expected in personal, social and emotional development. They achieve the goals for physical and creative development, but fall short of the standards expected nationally in the other areas of learning. Throughout the Foundation Stage, provision for SEN is good, and good support is provided for children with English as an additional language. As a result, these children achieve well.

4. Inspection findings broadly reflect the results of the most recent national tests for pupils in Year 6. In these tests, about three-quarters of the pupils attained the nationally expected level in English and mathematics, and almost all reached the required standard in science. However, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who exceeded the national target of Level 4 was below average, and this is the reason why standards are below average overall.

5. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory. Although good teaching is to be found throughout the school, good practice is not always identified and shared, because co-ordinators do not monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects rigorously enough. Where teachers' skills are shared, for example in music and physical education in Years 5 and 6, pupils learn well. The organisation of classes in Years 3 to 6, with pupils within each year broadly grouped according to reading ability, has advantages in that it is easier for teachers to pitch reading and writing tasks at the correct level for their pupils. However, pupils in the lower-attaining classes generally miss the contribution of more fluent speakers, and do not make enough progress in their ability to express themselves. In all classes, pupils' writing skills develop slowly. This occurs because they do not have enough opportunity to write at length in English lessons and in other subjects, and to improve their text through reviewing and re-drafting it. Pupils generally develop reading skills at a satisfactory rate, and successfully use a range of techniques to decode unfamiliar words.

6. The main reason why too few pupils attain higher levels in the national tests is that the higher attainers are frequently given the same tasks as all other pupils in their class. This is particularly evident in mathematics and science but also occurs in other subjects, such as geography and history. In some cases, this weakness is linked to the use of photocopied worksheets which inhibit opportunities for pupils to record their answers independently and at greater length. The use of worksheets is particularly evident in

science, where opportunities for higher-attaining pupils to develop greater understanding of scientific principles through investigations are limited by the amount of time available for these activities. Most pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress. Less than satisfactory achievement occasionally occurs when the activities planned are too difficult for the pupils.

7. The school assesses the language needs of all pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) when they enter school. Those at the early stages of acquiring skills in spoken English make good progress and benefit from bilingual support in lessons. However, when they move on to developing skills as writers, their progress is generally slow. Throughout the school, confident and competent EAL pupils work in a range of ability groups. The higher attainers read and write successfully and are among the small group of pupils gaining above average test results.

8. Pupils do well in ICT throughout the school because of the improvements made in the school's resources and the regular opportunities for pupils to use the skills they have learned. Owing to the lack of evidence, no secure judgements can be made about achievement in most of the other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning, and their behaviour is very good. Pupils' moral development is excellent; their social development is very good, and they show good spiritual and cultural awareness. Standards in each of these aspects have been maintained or improved since the previous inspection. However, attendance rates are well below the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy lessons and a wide variety of informal activities and clubs.
- Behaviour is particularly good in the open areas of the school and in the playground.
- Pupils have a very keen sense of right and wrong.
- Relationships are excellent between pupils, and between pupils and staff.
- Attendance is poor, and punctuality unsatisfactory.

Commentary

9. Ninety-eight per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that their children like school. Inspection evidence, including numerous conversations with pupils in all year groups, confirms this very high figure. In classrooms, pupils often concentrate for extended periods, persevering with their work and enabling teachers to move lessons ahead at good pace without frequent pauses or distractions. Their behaviour is rarely less than very good, and is sometimes excellent. In a good ICT lesson seen in Year 5, pupils collaborated very amicably to access a complex audio-visual program. Paired boys and girls worked well together, agreeing when to advance the program or to recall previous sections. Behaviour in the class was consistently excellent, and progress was good.

10. Pupils' personal development is very good. In Years 5 and 6, many boys and girls are mature and independent, and they confidently anticipate transfer to secondary school. In all year groups, pupils are exceptionally polite and cheerful, and are relaxed and adept in talking to visitors. At lunchtimes they queue patiently in the dining hall to choose from a

wide selection of hot and cold food, and they confidently pay the cashier and secure their change. In the confined space of the playground, vigorous ball games rarely disturb the significant number of pupils seated on benches, or reclining on their coats, gossiping or quietly working. Incidents of aggression or bullying between pupils are very rare, and are managed promptly and sensitively when they do occur. As a result, one pupil was excluded during the previous school year.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
225	1	0

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

11. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 performed a nativity play to a large audience of parents and friends. With minimal intervention from adults, they skilfully used microphones to project their dialogue, rhyming couplets and tuneful songs. Their confident speech and movement were exceptional for their age, and the quality of the performance was summarised by a red-eyed parent: *'There wasn't a dry eye in the house!'*

12. In assemblies, teachers sometimes lead pupils in successful discussions of moral values within themes of friendship, difference and consideration for others. Staff are very good role models, and excellent relationships between staff and pupils promote strong moral values. Children in the Foundation classes listen carefully to adults, and confidently respond to questions and instructions. They quickly learn to share, and to wait their turns. For example, in a Foundation 2 physical education lesson, four teams of six children complied fully with the rules of a complex and exciting game.

13. The school provides imaginative support for very good development of pupils' spiritual awareness. 'Learning logs' in Years 5 and 6 are specialised workbooks, encouraging the home-school study of pupils' own interests and experiences. The logs contain a wide variety of good work. Some include poetry, and reflections on contemporary and historical events. Pupils carry their logs in purpose-designed satchels, with pens and pencils, all distributed free in Years 5 and 6. Many pupils are enthusiastic and thoughtful readers. In a classroom discussion about the relationship between events in books and events in real life, a pupil in Year 6 commented that he often reads the Bible to help solve everyday problems.

14. Pupils are generous of spirit, and are involved in activities to improve the environments of the school and locality. They enthusiastically support local and national charities. They have good understanding of western and eastern cultures, and enjoy a wide variety of multicultural and multi-ethnic experiences.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93.5%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9%	School data	1.6%
National data	5.1%	National data	0.4%

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year (2003/4).

15. Although pupils are very enthusiastic about school, attendance overall is poor and is significantly below the national average. Some parents do not fulfil the legal requirement of ensuring their children's regular attendance. The number of unauthorised absences is very high, and some parents react aggressively when questioned by the school or the educational welfare service. Additionally, many families take extended holidays in term time. Although class teachers and classroom assistants help pupils to catch up with work they have missed, some educational disruption is unavoidable. The school is rightly concerned that the long-term achievement of a significant number of pupils is affected by poor attendance.

16. Punctuality is unsatisfactory. Many pupils in all year groups are often a few minutes late for morning school. During the inspection, several latecomers were noted at 9.15am: fifteen minutes after the close of the registration session.

17. The attendance expectations of the school are too low. The school does not have a policy for attendance and punctuality, and current procedures for ensuring attendance are unsatisfactory. The school office staff do not systematically contact parents on the first day of a pupil's unexplained absence. Pupils do not assume any degree of responsibility for attendance, and are not subject to the peer pressure or friendly competition between classes that would be likely to improve the overall figure. Class teachers rarely challenge latecomers or question pupils returning after unexplained absence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. The school provides good quality care for its pupils but needs to improve the quality of teachers' assessments of their pupils' work.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage their pupils very well and have high expectations of their behaviour.
- Teachers sometimes do not use information from their assessments well enough in their lessons to match the level of challenge to pupils' differing needs.

- Teachers ensure that all their pupils take a full part in lessons; they are generally good at encouraging the pupils and making their lessons interesting.

Commentary

18. The school satisfactorily meets the needs of pupils through its teaching. The quality of teaching is not as good as that seen at the time of the previous inspection because expectations are now higher than they were.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	2 (4%)	18 (37%)	26 (53%)	2 (4%)	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.

19. The quality of teaching varies within the Foundation Stage. It is good in Foundation 1, where responsibilities are shared between a Nursery nurse 'in charge' and her experienced colleague, and is satisfactory in Foundation 2. Teachers' planning is unsatisfactory in Foundation 2, where lesson objectives are often unclear and, when clear, are too numerous and often unchallenging. Daily plans are insufficiently detailed. For example, specific guidance is not provided for Nursery nurses and other adults working in the classrooms. Daily planning is satisfactory in Foundation 1. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers' records do not always include children's strengths and weaknesses, or their next steps for learning. Despite these weaknesses, teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall because teachers' organisation is good, their behaviour management is very good and, as a result, children's learning is satisfactory.

20. In other year groups, the best teaching is in ICT, because the planning introduced by the subject co-ordinator provides a clear structure to lessons and ensures that all pupils have achievable challenges at a level appropriate to their individual stage of development. However, this is not always the case in many other subjects. A detailed scrutiny of samples of pupils' previously completed work showed that in mathematics and science, and in some of the non-core subjects², teachers frequently provide all pupils with the same basic task. This method of working relies on the activity being pitched at an average level, with lower attainers given extra help to cope with the task and higher attainers being expected to produce higher quality or a greater quantity of work. Therefore, the teacher is unable to fully control the outcomes of the task, and consequently not all pupils achieve as well as they might. Teachers' over-use of photocopied worksheets, particularly in science, contributes to this weakness.

21. Throughout the school, teachers are generally good at including all pupils in lessons. They do this through clear and interesting explanations, by good use of interactive whiteboards, and by targeting individual pupils with questions to keep them alert. However, they occasionally fail to adjust their teaching methods sufficiently to accommodate the limited concentration span of some of their pupils. Where this occurs, the support provided for lower-attaining pupils by classroom assistants is crucial and ensures that satisfactory learning takes place. These assistants know pupils well, are fully aware of their own roles in the classroom, and help lessons to run smoothly. Teachers manage their pupils very well and create a good atmosphere for learning. This generally enables them to work with individuals or groups and enables the pupils to get on with their work, without undue disturbance.

² The non-core subjects are subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

22. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is satisfactory. Assessment procedures relating to these pupils are also satisfactory. All pupils with SEN have targets to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills as well as behaviour. However, these targets are not promoted consistently enough, either in lessons or in the marking of pupils' work.

23. Teaching is satisfactory for bilingual pupils who are still developing competence and fluency in English, but the assessment of their language and literacy is not specific enough to fully guide the planning of their work. These pupils would also benefit from more opportunities to hear and use models of good English to enable them to construct sentences and use tenses correctly. Pupils who have achieved reasonable competence in English show a good degree of confidence and independence in lessons.

24. The needs of pupils who arrive during the course of each year are quickly and satisfactorily identified. As a result, these pupils are quickly integrated into their new classes. Teachers' day-to-day assessment of their pupils through observations and questioning in lessons is satisfactory. Pupils' work is regularly marked but, in mathematics and science in particular, teachers' marking does not give enough guidance about how work could be improved.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, as are activities that enrich the curriculum for pupils. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for ICT has improved greatly and is enhancing pupils' learning.
- Pupils with SEN and pupils learning to speak English are included fully in daily life in school.

Commentary

25. The quality of the curriculum is similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection. The school provides a satisfactory range of experiences to enrich learning, including an annual residential visit. Pupils' participation in sport and the arts is satisfactory, with outside expertise in coaching adding to the quality of support. There is a range of after-school clubs, such as football, performance and art, and these are well attended and enhance skills and learning. Provision for ICT has improved greatly since the last inspection, and improved resources and expertise have driven up achievement in the subject. The ratio of computers to pupils exceeds the nationally recommended target figure. The effective use of interactive white boards is adding zest and pace to lessons. Resources for pupils learning English as an additional language have also been enhanced, and reflect the cultural diversity found within the school. The curriculum in literacy and numeracy follows national guidelines, and there is adequate coverage of the non-core subjects.

26. Pupils of all ages and ethnic groupings are included very well in the work and life of the school. There is a clear understanding of the different needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and those with SEN, and this is evident in the activities provided for these groups of pupils. Pupils at the early stage of learning to speak English make good progress, because they are given time to settle in and benefit from bilingual support. Provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory overall. These pupils have satisfactory individual education plans, which generally address the need to develop skills in literacy, numeracy and behaviour. Pupils who have difficulty in developing social skills are included in a specific programme that concentrates on the development of social

interaction. Given that behaviour in the school is good, the programme would appear to be successful.

27. Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory. Pupils discuss and reflect on important issues, at both a personal and a wider level. Lessons are planned soundly and encourage pupils to develop their skills as future citizens. From an early point in the Foundation Stage, children learn to take turns and share.

28. There is a satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. The large sports hall is a valuable asset and enhances learning in physical education and in out-of-school clubs. However, the premises have yet to be fully modified to meet the requirements of the Disability and Discrimination Act, and pupils with mobility problems would be unable independently to access the library, the ICT suite or the Year 5 and 6 classrooms.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares well for its pupils. Overall, pupils are given satisfactory support, advice and guidance. The school is good at involving pupils by seeking and acting on their views. The caring environment has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. These aspects maintain the standards noted during the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and learning support assistants conscientiously respond to pupils' needs.
- The school values pupils' opinions and suggestions.
- Midday assistants are untrained in child protection.

Commentary

29. The school has good procedures for child protection. Most adults understand the issues involved and have recently received formal training. However, midday assistants are untrained and are not fully aware of the meaning of 'child protection'. Staff and governors have not yet agreed a policy for physical intervention. The headteacher has collated all the information necessary for a policy, and is aware of the requirement for formal agreement. Overall, there are good procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils. The school's health and safety policy ensures the safety of pupils on site and during off-site visits but does not include a formal risk-assessment programme. The site and the school building are in good condition, and present no apparent risks to health and safety. Three members of staff are fully trained in first aid. Care is good for children in the Foundation classes. Staff constantly alert them to potential hazards in activities.

30. A good induction system settles children into the Foundation 1 class. Pupils joining other year groups settle quickly and happily into the school's routines, and are informally supported by 'buddies' for as long as necessary. In Year 6, pupils are confident about secondary transfer, and they participate fully in events organised by secondary schools.

31. All pupils receive good individual care and support from class teachers and from the headteacher, who is sensitive, accessible and reassuring. Classroom assistants develop good relationships with pupils and are skilled in curricular and personal support. They significantly improve the achievements of pupils with SEN, and are always attentive to the needs of other pupils. In conversation with inspectors, pupils in all year groups said that they would confidently approach an adult for help with personal or academic difficulties. Class teachers consistently apply the school's behaviour management policy, and sincerely praise pupils' individual work and effort. Pupils in all year groups avidly collect house points and stickers that acknowledge their achievement, effort and good behaviour. Sustained good work and personal qualities are rewarded with headteacher's stickers.

32. Class teachers have satisfactory knowledge of pupils' academic development. Although the teachers set targets with pupils, assessment procedures do not adequately identify strengths and

weaknesses in attainment groups or year groups. The school's informal programme for PSHE encourages self-care and care for others. Personal development is adequately monitored through pupils' work in their learning logs, and through work and awards collected in their Records of Achievement.

33. Pupils in all year groups are encouraged to respond to teachers' comments in annual written reports, and to complete regular questionnaires about school life. Pupils were very influential in selecting fixed equipment for recent playground improvements. Although pupils do not seek to establish a school council, many in Years 5 and 6 would clearly have much to contribute within a formal structure.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall, the school has good links with parents and satisfactory links with the local community and with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although some parents do not fulfil the legal requirement of sending their children to school each day, most are supportive of the school.
- Teachers' clear and informative annual written reports are helpful to parents.

Commentary

34. The inspection confirms the school's good relationships and good communication with parents in all racial and ethnic groups. A few parents and friends provide valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals, but the school has not recently enquired if parents have skills or interests to help broaden the curriculum. The parents and friends association organises regular social and fund-raising events, and raises significant amounts of money for the school each year. Recent purchases have included a variety of computer hardware, and numerous small items for classrooms. Good co-operation is established between the parents' group and the governing body, and some families are active on both committees.

35. Many parents enthusiastically support their children's education, but some are indifferent to the school's attempts to involve them. A significant number do not ensure their children's regular and punctual attendance. In discussion with an inspector, parents were unaware that attendance overall is significantly below the national average.

36. Parents are well informed of the school's routines and expectations when their children enter the Foundation 1 class, or when they join other year groups during the course of the school year. Parents have very good access to Foundation staff, and communication is always good. At the start of each academic year, parents receive useful curriculum details, enabling them to monitor and support their children's learning. At consultation evenings, parents have adequate time to review progress and discuss targets, but some complain that the school's open-plan layout does not offer adequate privacy in their discussions with teachers. Each week, several parents happily accept the open invitation to join their children for a school lunch.

37. Teachers' annual written reports are good. They show in some detail what pupils have learned, and suggest their next steps for improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Newsletters are informative about events and important dates but are generally limited to one side of A4 paper. Consequently, opportunities are missed to include brief examples of pupils' exceptional work, or to remind parents of the importance of their children's regular attendance. The school prospectus and the 2004

governors' report to parents conform with legal requirements, and they include much useful additional information.

38. The school makes satisfactory use of community resources to broaden the curriculum and improve pupils' learning and sporting attainment. The headteacher astutely leads the school's bids for private and public cash grants for additional resources. His efforts have helped to secure a magnificent sports hall, playground equipment, sports equipment and a toy library. A diverse range of visitors from the community help to enliven pupils' learning; recently, these have included a

dancer, an environmentalist and an 'exotic animal' presenter. Regular visitors include youth-team representatives of Leicester's professional soccer, rugby and cricket clubs. Pupils in all year groups explore many local places of interest, including the National Space Centre. Multicultural and multi-ethnic links are good, but international links are underdeveloped.

39. The school has satisfactory links with other educational providers, and fulfils its allotted role in a development group centred on a local secondary school. Each year, student teachers and secondary school students are carefully inducted and mentored, and they make a useful contribution to school life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory at all levels. The headteacher's leadership is satisfactory. Leadership provided by key members of staff varies, but is satisfactory overall. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors and staff share the headteacher's strong commitment to inclusion.
- Staff work well as a team.
- In general, teachers' skills in monitoring their areas of responsibility need to be improved.

Commentary

40. The headteacher is held in high regard by all members of the school community. He is very sensitive to the needs of staff, pupils and parents and has ensured that the school has retained a 'family' feel during a period of significant change. He gives firm and competent leadership and shows a strong commitment to the school. He is well supported by his deputy, who provides a very good role model to staff through the quality of her teaching. The leadership team monitors the effectiveness of the school satisfactorily, and works hard to address its weaknesses. Under the headteacher's leadership the school's performance is generally as good as that of schools in similar circumstances.

41. Staff share the headteacher's very strong commitment to the development of pupils' personal and social skills and to the inclusion of all pupils, and this contributes to the school's very good ethos. The quality of leadership and management in key areas of the school's work is variable. It is very good in ICT, good in English, satisfactory in mathematics, but unsatisfactory in science. The monitoring skills of many of the co-ordinators in the non-core subjects also need to be developed.

42. Provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactorily led and managed overall. However, the management of this important aspect of the school's work is not as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection, when it was judged to be good. The day-to-day help for pupils given by the specialist teacher and the teaching assistants is managed satisfactorily. However, there are no clear systems to monitor the quality of the support given to pupils with SEN, which inspection evidence shows to be variable. In addition, the co-ordinator has no clear picture of how these pupils do in all areas of the curriculum. This is

unsatisfactory. Provision for pupils with EAL is satisfactorily led and managed. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning in this area has not brought about a consistent approach to teachers' use of assessment information. As a result, work is not consistently well planned to meet the pupils' changing needs as they develop skills in spoken and written English.

43. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage, although the acting co-ordinator has limited experience of teaching the very youngest children. A large team works closely and amicably in three small classrooms. The co-ordinator successfully guides the curriculum, but does not closely monitor her colleagues in adjacent classrooms, including a newly qualified teacher. There is no policy or action plan to guide the development of the Foundation Stage.

44. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors visit regularly and successfully fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school through their monitoring of its work, including observations of work in classrooms. Some governors have children at the school, and know it well through their day-to-day contact and their participation in school events. Governors receive termly reports from the headteacher and meet regularly in committees, and as a full governing body, to oversee the work of the school and to evaluate progress made. They effectively use information gathered from their monitoring to inform their discussions, and apply principles of 'best value' satisfactorily when making decisions. All legal requirements are properly met.

45. School administration is efficient. The secretarial staff ensure that teachers are able to focus on their professional duties and are not diverted from their work by administrative tasks. They know pupils and their families very well, deal competently with day-to-day queries, and contribute strongly to the smooth running of the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income*	873,299.00	Balance from previous year	79,002.00
Total expenditure	783,594.00	Balance carried forward to the next	89,705.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,275.00		

* NB: the total income figure includes the balance from the previous year.

46. Financial administration is sound. Governors are provided with regular statements of income and expenditure to help them fulfil their responsibilities in monitoring the school's finances. The information above shows that the amount of funding brought forward into the 2003-4 financial year is unacceptably high and well in excess of the national 'benchmark' of five per cent. Discussions with the headteacher and governors show that much of this is allocated for future expenditure on teaching staff to provide a period of stability during the change in leadership which is to take place at the end of the school year.

47. Even though standards overall are below the national average, pupils make satisfactory progress from a below average starting point and are doing as well as could reasonably be expected. Unit costs are broadly average and therefore the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Provision for children of Nursery age (the Foundation 1 class) is good, and these children achieve well. Provision in the Reception classes (Foundation 2) is satisfactory, as is children's achievement. At the end of Foundation 2, most children are likely to exceed the goals expected at this age in their personal, social and emotional development, and for this reason standards are well above average in this area of learning. Standards are average in both physical and creative development, as most children are likely to achieve the goals in these areas of learning. However, only about half the children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, and so standards are below average in all of these areas. Provision for SEN is good, and children for whom English is an additional language receive good support.

49. Previously, children entered Foundation1 in the school term following their third birthday and then moved to Foundation 2 in the school term following their fourth birthday. From the beginning of the 2004-5 school year the arrangement changed, and all children now enter Foundation 1 at the start of the school year following their third birthday, and move to Foundation 2 a year later. The changed age-profile of the children means that reliable comparisons with standards of attainment on entry in previous years cannot be made. Inspection findings show that there are variations in the attainment of the different year groups of children. The attainment on entry of children currently in Foundation 1 is below average, while the attainment of children who joined Foundation 2 at the start of term is well below average. Since the school has no standardised assessment procedure for children entering the Foundation Stage, it cannot accurately judge and record their attainment on entry within a wider context.

50. At the time of the inspection, 35 children were on the Foundation1 roll, attending either morning or afternoon sessions. Forty children were in two Foundation 2 classes. Seven children in the Foundation Stage speak English as an additional language, and 12 children are assessed as having SEN.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attitudes and behaviour are always very good and are sometimes exemplary.
- All relationships are very good.
- Children have very good social skills.
- Some activities in Foundation 2 do not have clear objectives.

Commentary

51. Overall, achievement in this area of learning is good. The school's satisfactory induction programme welcomes parents, and quickly settles their children into their classes. Children are keen to attend and they have very good attitudes to learning. Relationships are very good between children, and between adults and children. Teaching is good overall and is consistently good in Foundation 1. In all classes, support staff contribute significantly to children's good learning. All Foundation Stage children amicably share resources, and patiently wait to take turns. Their behaviour is consistently very good. All children are expected to complete activities, although some activities in Foundation 2 are purposeless. Many Foundation 2 children concentrate for extended periods of time, and are rarely distracted by classroom bustle. Children are very independent. For example, in Foundation 1, they can unzip their coats and wash and dry their hands without help from their teachers. All Foundation Stage children have good understanding of right and wrong because adults constantly highlight examples of good behaviour and mutual respect. The standards of morality established in the Foundation Stage provide a firm basis for the excellent moral development of pupils throughout the school. In Foundation 2, children have some understanding of faiths and cultures. They dress in costumes from a variety of cultures, and play in their 'home corner' at cooking in both eastern and western styles. During the inspection, all Foundation Stage children were captivated by Year 2 children performing a nativity play. Later, children in Foundation 2 accurately recalled some of the details of the Christmas story.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Nursery nurses in Foundation1 have very good questioning skills.

Commentary

52. Overall, achievement is satisfactory in this area of learning. All children listen very attentively to adults, and to each other. During the inspection, adults' very good questioning skills in Foundation 1 developed children's thinking and speaking skills. For example, when encouraged to interpret the emotions of a child who had wrinkled his nose at a pungent pot-pourri, children said in unison *'He doesn't like it !'*. Children with speech and language difficulties receive good support from teachers, Nursery nurses and the school's special needs co-ordinator (SENCO). During the inspection, all children with special needs participated fully in all lessons. All the children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Foundation 1 and satisfactory in Foundation 2. In Foundation 1, good teaching of phonics³ is integrated with other areas of learning. In Foundation 2, phonics teaching is satisfactory. Children of average attainment can recognise sounds at the beginnings of words, and a few can recognise some complete words. However, support staff in Foundation 2 are inadequately trained in the teaching of reading. Higher-attaining children in Foundation 2 use phonic knowledge well to improve their story writing. For example, one child wrote *caroa*

³ Letter sounds and blends of sounds.

(karaoke) on her Christmas gift list. Very good examples of mark-making are displayed in Foundation 1, and most children understand the link between writing and communication. For example, when answering the telephone they often 'write' extended messages for their friends. In Foundation 2, some children can write their first names but are not always corrected when they randomly mix capital and lower case letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in Foundation 1 have good understanding of the properties of shapes.
- Teachers do not plan systematically to develop children's mathematical vocabulary.

Commentary

53. Children achieve satisfactorily overall. They make good gains in learning in Foundation 1 because the teaching is good in this class. Progress slows, but it is satisfactory overall in Foundation 2 and reflects the quality of teaching in these classes. In using numbers, for example, children of average attainment in Foundation 1 can recite numbers to twenty, and count with their teachers at registration periods to determine the number present. By the time they reach Foundation 2, higher-attaining children count objects accurately to ten and understand terms such as *'take away'* and *'all together'*. All Foundation Stage children have a good repertoire of number rhymes, which help to underpin their learning. Children of average attainment in Foundation 1 correctly recognise simple shapes, and discuss their properties. In a good session seen, children played a musical game involving the use of mathematical shapes. The Nursery nurse asked good questions to make them think carefully about their answers. For example, when a child was asked how he knew a shape was a triangle, he carefully and accurately counted the sides. However, a scrutiny of children's work and teachers' planning indicated little further development in teaching knowledge of shapes in Foundation 2. Children of average attainment correctly apply their knowledge of positional vocabulary, including *'sideways'* and *'backwards'*, while higher attainers understand the meaning of terms such as *'in between'*. In a physical development lesson, for instance, children showed that they understood the difference between *'giant'* and *'little'* steps. However, the teacher missed the opportunity to extend their mathematical vocabulary by asking them for alternative words for these actions.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- No significant strengths are apparent, but teachers' planning needs to be improved.

Commentary

54. Overall, children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning. Teaching is satisfactory. It is good in Foundation 1 and satisfactory in Foundation 2. In Foundation 1, the Nursery nurses continually question children about past and current events in the classroom and at home, and make good use of resources such as photographs to stimulate conversation about activities. In the Foundation 2 classes, children use a variety of constructional toys, but they are not expected to relate models to their experiences of the real world. Consequently, they build indiscriminately, often with size as the only objective. In the computer suite, the children learn to use paint and drawing programs. Their mouse control is good, and consequently they sometimes change programs without permission by clicking an interesting icon. Although all children have good access to computers, supervision of their activities is often inadequate. All adults are adept at teaching ICT skills to young children. One interactive white board is available in the Foundation Stage and is used confidently by staff and children. Several aspects of this area of learning, normally readily available to Foundation Stage children, were not seen during the inspection. For example, magnifying glasses, magnets, torches and information books were not available to develop children's early scientific skills. An analysis of teachers' planning indicates that investigative and observational work are sometimes neglected.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- No significant strengths or weaknesses are apparent in this area of learning.

Commentary

55. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children in Foundation 2 show good awareness of the movements of others and good co-ordination. In physical development lessons they confidently use the full area of a large sports hall. Teaching is satisfactory. In a physical development lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher's clear instructions reminded children of the disciplines of a complex relay race. All children remembered their team responsibilities, and clearly understood the meaning of '*winning*' and '*coming second*'. In Foundation 1, children show good motor skills when riding their wheeled toys in their outdoor area. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children have good fine motor skills. For example, children in Foundation 1 were engaged for some time in pouring water accurately from a jug into a thin-necked plastic bottle, and understood the importance of collaborating to keep their hands steady. All children have some grasp of what a healthy lifestyle is. They know that fruit is beneficial, and they are learning to discriminate when selecting from the wide variety of food available at lunchtime.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- No significant strengths are apparent in this area of learning, but teachers' planning needs to be improved.

Commentary

56. Children achieve satisfactorily overall. Foundation Stage children can name many colours, but their drawings are often immature. Children in Foundation 1 use a wide variety of collage materials to make very attractive winter gardens. In a Foundation 2 class, they made large individual collages of the Nativity, using fur, paint and coloured paper, and responded well to the teacher's suggestions about suitable colours for clothes and complexions. Imaginative play is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. For instance, in one Foundation 2 class, children enacted the story of the Nativity, using finger puppets. A higher-attaining child suggested that they could be guided by the book of the Christmas story. However, the activity was not fully planned, and progress was limited by inadequate resources. Children's artwork is greatly valued by adults, and is displayed attractively.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are well below the national average.
- Pupils at the early stages of learning to speak English make good progress.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in English and in other subjects.
- Teachers encourage pupils and value their contribution in lessons.

Commentary

57. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in writing are well below those found nationally. Standards in reading and speaking are below average. Pupils' listening skills are average. These findings broadly reflect the school's most recent results in national tests.

58. Standards in English have declined since the previous inspection. This is because changes in the profile of the school, particularly the significant rise in the proportion of pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English, have affected attainment overall. In addition, pupil mobility is high, and almost a third of pupils have reading and writing difficulties. The impact of these factors has been lower results in the national tests.

59. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Work in lessons meets the broad ability levels found in each year group, but planning for individual needs could be better. Pupils at the early stages of learning English benefit from bilingual support and make good progress. However, bilingual pupils moving on from the early stages need more specific guidance with sentence work and tenses if they are to achieve their best. The higher-attaining pupils are not always stretched enough, particularly in writing, so few reach the higher levels in the national tests. There was no marked difference in achievement between boys and girls evident during the inspection.

60. Teachers respond positively to the wide range of pupils' competence in spoken English across the school. Their skilful use of questioning encourages pupils to join in and answer questions in lessons. Because pupils' contributions are valued, they gain in confidence as speakers. However, there is a marked difference between the quality of pupils' speech in classes within the same year group. In the lower-attaining classes, pupils miss the contribution of more assured speakers in discussions and collaborative tasks. Discussions in these classes can be flat, with less confident speakers struggling to explain their ideas.

61. Throughout the school, the high proportion of pupils who have difficulties with their reading is reflected in the well below average national test results in reading. In Year 1, pupils achieve well as they link letters with their sounds. In Years 2 to 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily. They see themselves as good readers and the more capable read with growing accuracy and fluency. Pupils who have difficulty with their reading use picture cues satisfactorily and recall words by sight to help read unknown words. All pupils read

books that are at an appropriate level, but few know the difference between fiction and non-fiction. The majority of pupils in Year 6 enjoy reading, but higher attainers need a wider choice of books in group reading sessions. Average and higher-attaining readers are beginning to read between the lines and draw inferences from text. Pupils explain how their work with comprehension is helping them to make better progress. As one pupil states: *'It makes you look more closely - for the evidence in the book'*. Pupils' effective use of ICT skills to research information about authors motivates them to read independently and to make more informed choices.

62. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their written work. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make steady progress overall in learning how to write independently and to join sentences together. The best progress is made in Year 1, where average and higher-attaining writers draw effectively from their work in phonics to improve their spelling and writing. In Years 3 to 6, pupils keep the reader in mind as they structure narrative and non-fictional writing. In general, however, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to create, read through and improve longer pieces of original work. Teachers' effective use of the interactive white boards is adding zest to lessons and enabling pupils to model, share and improve their writing.

63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some aspects that are good. Nine lessons or parts of lessons were observed, of which one was very good, four were good and four satisfactory. Teachers have good subject expertise and manage their lessons well. Whilst grouping by ability works satisfactorily for most pupils, there is a need to ensure that work for the highest-attaining pupils is challenging enough. Giving them the same 'core' writing tasks and worksheets as other pupils does not always provide this. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and are encouraging to all groups. Targeted help for pupils with SEN enables them to make sound progress in lessons. Marking in Year 5 provides a good exemplar for helping pupils to improve their work.

64. Leadership is good and the subject co-ordinator has the expertise to move the subject forward. The school uses test results to monitor pupils' progress, but makes less use of ongoing assessments of portfolios of pupils' everyday work. Libraries and book resources are appropriate for learning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. Provision for developing pupils' writing across the curriculum needs to be improved. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills in using different forms of writing in subjects such as history and religious education. There are also limited opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills in all subjects. However, in all classes, pupils make satisfactory use of their developing competence in reading to access information in reference books and on the Internet.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The teachers confidently use the interactive whiteboards to support learning in all lessons.
- Assessment information is not used well and, as a result, pupils of all abilities are too often given the same task.

Commentary

66. Standards are below average in Year 2. Given pupils' below average levels of language skills and mathematical ability on entry to the school, their achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Pupils also achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6, but standards are below average in Year 6. Some pupils in all year groups have difficulty in understanding the language in which questions are couched.

67. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Of the six lessons seen, two were good and the remainder were satisfactory. In all lessons, teachers give pupils many opportunities to explain what they are doing and to apply their knowledge and understanding of number to problems, especially those expressed in words. Lessons are satisfactorily planned but do not always take account of the widely differing needs of pupils. A detailed scrutiny of samples of pupils' previously completed work showed that too often all pupils are given the same 'core' activity, regardless of their potential. When this happens, the higher-attaining pupils in particular do not always learn as well as they could. However, during the course of the inspection, teachers showed that this need not be the case. An important factor in the success of a good lesson observed in Year 2 was the way in which the teacher had carefully varied the task to match the learning needs of her pupils. She was able to do this effectively by using the assessment information which she had collected about individuals. In part of another lesson, in Year 3, the teacher successfully used a good system that enabled pupils to assess how well they were doing. This required pupils to hold up either a red, orange or green card depending on how securely they felt they were learning. As a result, the teacher was able to adjust her teaching to ensure better understanding. This good practice was not evident in all classes.

68. All teachers provide a good variety of activities within their lessons. They are aware of the importance of teaching the correct mathematical vocabulary, and generally do this satisfactorily. Staff are good at motivating and encouraging the pupils, but although they value every answer and encourage pupils to 'have a go' there are times when too few pupils take part in question and answer sessions. Particularly effective are the occasions when pupils have their own equipment, such as an individual whiteboard or a number 'fan'. This allows them all to show their answer to the teacher, and thus gives the teacher the opportunity to assess how many are achieving success. All teachers make good use of their class interactive whiteboard during lessons.

69. Throughout the school, most pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons and are keen to learn. At the start of a lesson for pupils in Year 6, for example, there was an excited 'buzz' as higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils answered the teacher's questions about patterns in sequences of numbers. Pupils in Year 2 were similarly keen to answer questions and joined in enthusiastically as they investigated the concept of halves and quarters.

70. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has a sound understanding of the standards that the pupils are attaining. There has been some external monitoring of teaching, and the co-ordinator has an accurate picture of the quality of teaching. Although there is a satisfactory system for tracking the progress made by individuals, there is insufficient monitoring of how well teachers use this information when they plan lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use skills and knowledge they have been taught in mathematics when they work in other subjects. For example, they use graphs and charts to record their findings in science and geography, and they use their skills in measuring when planning and making their assignments in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information from assessment is not used well enough to help raise standards.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to gain a greater understanding of scientific principles through open-ended investigative work.
- Very good use is made of ICT to help pupils learn.
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

72. Standards have declined since the last inspection, when they were judged to be broadly average. From a low starting point, pupils make steady progress as they move from Year 1 to Year 6 but the standards attained are below average in both Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are some differences in attainment between boys and girls, but these appear to be attributable to individual differences and do not occur as a result of weaknesses in provision.

73. Pupils' below average attainment in English, particularly evident in their limited vocabulary, inhibits pupils' progress. This situation is not helped by teachers' over-reliance on the use of photocopied worksheets for pupils' recording, which, although useful in focusing pupils on the scientific principles involved, limits opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing.

74. Teaching and learning in science are satisfactory. Six lessons were observed during the inspection, of which four were good and two satisfactory. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work showed that teaching is not always of this quality because of the following weaknesses which have an impact on pupils' learning and on the standards attained in Years 2 and 6:

- * all pupils are generally given the same basic tasks to do, so there is not always enough challenge for higher-attaining pupils;
- * in Years 3 to 6, teachers' marking of pupils' written work does not give pupils enough information about precisely what they need to focus on to improve. Where helpful comments are made, they are not generally followed up through the use of corrections.

In addition, practical and investigative activities are sometimes too directed by teachers and do not give pupils enough opportunities for independent investigation.

75. A noteworthy feature of provision in this subject is the very good use of ICT. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards in lessons, to clarify tasks and to reinforce learning. For example, use of a whiteboard in a Year 2 lesson helped pupils to understand how they were expected to record the results of their investigation into air power. In Year 6, the teacher's use of an interactive quiz helped to consolidate learning about food chains. In the ICT suite, pupils have regular opportunities to work on science-related activities. For instance, pupils in Year 6 used the Internet for research when producing multi-media presentations about the habitats of animals.

76. Pupils with SEN play a full part in lessons. Where tasks are too challenging for them, they are given clear explanations and are helped to record what is required.

77. The leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has not had enough time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school and has a limited understanding of provision in classes outside the key stage in which she works. There has been inadequate improvement in provision since the last inspection. Two of the key weaknesses previously identified, namely the need to develop pupils' skills of investigation and problem-solving, and the lack of monitoring of teaching and learning, have yet to be addressed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led, and standards are set to rise because of this.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is thoroughly integrated into the teaching of other subjects, so pupils are given frequent opportunities to practise and improve their skills.
- Teachers make very good use of the good equipment.

Commentary

78. Pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move from Year 1 to Year 6. Owing to the low starting point when pupils enter Year 1, standards are below average by the end of Year 2, but they reach an average level by the end of Year 6.

79. The dynamic subject co-ordinator is a very good leader and manager of the subject, even though she works in school only on a part-time basis. Under her leadership, provision in ICT is significantly better than it was at the time of the last inspection in 1999. Weaknesses in the curriculum have been addressed, improvements have been made to the equipment available, and teachers' subject knowledge is better than it was. As a result, pupils make better progress. Through her careful monitoring, she has a very clear understanding of the quality of provision and has a very clear plan of action for further improvement.

80. The ready availability of ICT equipment and the regular opportunities provided for pupils to work in the ICT suite mean that they frequently practise what they have learned. Pupils use computers independently and with confidence because teachers are skilled in teaching and reinforcing the skills that pupils need. A further reason is that the curriculum in place in Years 3 to 6 develops pupils' skills in a carefully structured way and progressively 'layers' the challenges within each lesson. This means that higher-attaining pupils are able to work at a more advanced level within the same core task as their classmates. Those with SEN achieve well because of the good help given to them by classroom assistants or when working in partnership with classmates.

81. A high proportion of teachers and classroom assistants have completed training in ICT and, in addition, the curriculum for Years 3 to 6 gives very clear detail of precisely what has to be learned and how this is to be achieved. This is particularly useful in helping address the need for greater subject knowledge when teaching or supporting pupils in Years 5 and 6.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. The computer suite is used very well for the direct teaching of ICT skills and for the application of these skills to support learning in other subjects. For instance, pupils in Year 1 practised their skills in using menus and in manipulating images on screen when combining graphics and word-processing to correctly sequence the key events in the story of the nativity. In Year 5, pupils developed their note-taking skills when researching the ways in which different animals have adapted to their habitats.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

No judgement can be made about the quality of the provision in this subject.

Main strengths and weaknesses

There are no significant strengths or weaknesses.

Commentary

83. Owing to the way in which the timetable was arranged, only one lesson was seen. Further evidence was obtained through a scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work and discussions with a small group of pupils in Year 6. The work recorded in the small sample of pupils' books seen was of a satisfactory standard, and the discussion with pupils showed that they have a reasonable knowledge of key features of major world faiths. However, within the time available to inspectors, it was not possible to arrive at a firm judgement about pupils' achievement or the standards attained across the breadth of the curriculum.

84. The curriculum follows the expectations of the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus, and provides pupils with opportunities to study a range of major world faiths. For example, the theme of 'celebration' is used successfully to reflect the religious diversity found within the school. It also identifies links between different faiths, such as the importance of light during celebrations of Diwali, Christmas and Hanukah. Good opportunities are taken to link learning with pupils' own experiences. For instance, as part of their study of the nativity story, pupils in Years 1 and 2 made links with special happenings in their own lives. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the wide range of books and resources related to other cultures and faiths available in school. Evidence from pupils' work shows broad coverage of the curriculum, but not enough emphasis on recording and writing from a personal point of view.

85. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. Spiritual aspects of religious education have improved since the last inspection. Music and symbols, such as candles, help to create times for quiet reflection.

Geography and history

86. No lessons were seen in geography and only one history lesson was observed; therefore, no overall judgement can be made about provision or the standards attained in these subjects. In the single history lesson seen, in Year 3, the pupils learned about the Ancient Greeks, and the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. The interactive whiteboard was used well by the teacher to reinforce and develop pupils' understanding of what Greek theatres looked like.

87. In geography, pupils in Year 2 have been studying their local area, while in history pupils in Year 1 have been learning about the story of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. Teachers' planning, photographic evidence and samples of pupils' work shows that this study was linked well with other aspects of the curriculum, such as art and design and literacy. Pupils made colourful two- and three-dimensional pictures and models of

fireworks, and used their developing literacy skills effectively as they wrote about the story. In addition, dance and drama were promoted well during an assembly when pupils retold the story to the rest of the school.

88. In Years 3 to 6, in both subjects, samples of pupils' previously completed work show that too often all ability groups are given the same task. When this happens, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged enough and sometimes the work is too difficult for the lower attainers. When interviewed, pupils in Year 6 had only a limited recall of previous work. For example, they could only recall very basic facts about two of the themes previously studied: 'Life in Tudor times' and 'World War Two'. However, pupils spoke enthusiastically of their current geography topic about 'Mountains' and their work in making three-dimensional models of mountains from papier-mâché. Assessment procedures for history and geography are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The sports hall is a very high quality facility which helps pupils to make progress.
- Monitoring does not pick up variations in the quality of teaching and learning.
- The way in which curriculum time for swimming is arranged limits pupils' progress and affects standards in Year 6.

Commentary

89. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and, overall, standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. In all lessons seen, pupils showed control of their movements and balance and an awareness of space appropriate for their different ages. However, standards in swimming are below average in Year 6. The school's records show that only about half the pupils in this year group achieve standards expected nationally. This is because the way in which the timetable is arranged means that pupils do not have extended opportunities to develop and consolidate their skills. These are necessary because most do not have opportunities to swim outside school time. The subject co-ordinators have already identified this weakness and intend to address the situation.

90. The subject co-ordinators have limited opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in all classes. As a result, they are unaware of some of strengths in teaching which need to be shared and the weaknesses which need to be addressed. In some classes the issue of differences in teachers' subject expertise is recognised and teachers effectively share their skills. For example, one of the Year 5 classes is expertly taught physical education by a Year 6 teacher while the Year 6 pupils are taught music.

91. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are wide variations in its quality. The best of the five lessons seen was excellent while the worst was unsatisfactory. Where lessons are taught by teachers with expertise, learning is rapid as the level of challenge is skilfully developed, and new learning is securely based on prior knowledge. Teaching of this quality was seen in a Year 5 basketball lesson in the superb sports hall. The space available meant that the teacher was able to give pupils excellent opportunities to develop their skills in small-group activities before putting these into practice in game situations. In all three lessons which were good or better, a significant factor in learning was the teachers' good modelling of correct techniques, such as balances or the different ways to pass a ball. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils are not given enough opportunities for vigorous exercise because too much time is spent in giving directions and too little is allowed for practice. To some extent, this weakness is due to teachers' over-reliance on a commercially produced scheme of work which does not reflect the time available for some lessons. In almost all lessons, pupils were very keen to learn, attentive and very well behaved.

92. The spacious sports hall is used well during the school day, including lunchtimes, and helps compensate for the cramped playground and the lack of a sports field.

93. The school has made satisfactory progress in physical education since the last inspection.

Art and design / design and technology

94. No overall judgements about provision and the standards attained can be made because no teaching was seen in these subjects, and pupils' practical skills could not be assessed. Pupils' original work is extensively displayed, is of high quality, and is greatly valued by staff and pupils. Although art and design contributes well to pupils' spiritual development, pupils' work, and other art displayed throughout this multi-ethnic school, is largely influenced by western sources.

95. All displays include work related to a variety of curriculum subjects. For example, in displays of design and technology by Years 5 and 6, pupils used their skills in ICT to merge text and graphics to plan 'treasure boxes'. The designs of Year 6 boxes were significantly more advanced than those of Year 5, indicating good progress. In art and design, pupils in Year 6 used clay effectively to reproduce accurate three-dimensional patterns of decaying leaves. In Year 2, a very attractive design and technology display was based upon the biblical story of 'Joseph and his coat of many colours'. However, all designs shared a common template, and all materials used were similar. Since pupils' input was limited in this way, higher-attaining pupils were unable to develop their skills in design and construction.

96. The art and design co-ordinator is the Nursery nurse-in-charge. Although she has good subject knowledge, and is technically proficient, she has limited understanding of the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Neither she, nor the co-ordinator for design and technology, has an action plan for subject development.

Music

97. Owing to the timing of the inspection, shortly before Christmas, no judgement can be made about standards overall or the breadth of provision. This is because all the activities observed involved singing, as part of the school's preparation for its celebration of Christmas, and there was limited recorded evidence available of other elements of the subject such as composition or musical appreciation.

98. Standards in singing are satisfactory. In their Nativity play rehearsal, pupils in Year 2 sang clearly and tunefully into a microphone, and carefully matched their actions to the words and music. Some singing was accompanied by simple wind instruments, played very effectively in unison. The rehearsal contributed significantly to the spiritual development both of the performers and of the audience of Foundation Stage children.

99. A singing lesson in Year 3 was satisfactory, while a similar lesson, also for pupils in Year 3, was good. In this lesson, pupils made good progress because they were stimulated by the teacher's knowledge and expertise, good questioning, and enthusiasm for the subject. In the satisfactory lesson, the teacher clearly explained breathing techniques and used some technical vocabulary, but neither teacher nor pupils demonstrated any enjoyment in singing. The clear difference in the techniques of the teachers indicates that good practice is not shared. In a satisfactory lesson seen in Year 6, pupils sang clearly in French and English. They understood some technical vocabulary, such as *octave*, *pitch* and *chord*. However, the teacher did not use her good knowledge and expertise to improve pupils' posture and singing technique.

100. The music co-ordinator is a part-time teacher. Her subject knowledge is very good, but she has too little time to monitor teaching in this large school. The subject has no policy and no development plan.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

101. Despite the lack of a formal programme, PSHE has had a significant impact on pupils' personal development. Staff effectively develop pupils' understanding of important 'life skills', such as keeping safe and knowing the difference between right and wrong, through many different areas of the curriculum. For example, the syllabus for religious education is used to deal with feelings, respect, and valuing others, while healthy eating and looking after oneself are considered in science and physical education. Aspects such as sex and relationships and citizenship are addressed as pupils move through the school. Each year a travelling classroom, 'The Life Education Caravan', visits. The pupils learn more about their body and feelings and, as they get older, how to make decisions. The school has recently taken part in a PSHE day when important issues were highlighted and developed. There is no doubt that PSHE has had a significant impact in the school, although the arrangements for it appear to have been somewhat 'ad hoc'.

Good practice needs to be identified and drawn together to form clear guidelines for each year group to follow.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
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	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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).