

INSPECTION REPORT

FOXTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foxton, Market Harborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119923

Headteacher: Mr Phillip Clark

Lead inspector: Ian Nelson

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd November 2004

Inspection number: 266844

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	86
School address:	Gallow Field Road Foxton Market Harborough Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE16 7QZ
Telephone number:	01858 545328
Fax number:	01858 540171
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Lisa Timmerman
Date of previous inspection:	25 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Foxton primary school is smaller than most schools and serves the village of Foxton and neighbouring rural communities. It attracts families from beyond its immediate area. It serves a mainly white British population and includes children from traveller families. No children have English as an additional language. The proportion entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion with special educational needs is average. One pupil has a statement of special need. Although there are the same number of boys as girls in the school the numbers in each year group are not as well balanced. In the last school year, seven pupils joined and nine left the school other than at the start of the year. However, only 38 per cent of pupils in Year 6 in 2004 started in the school in Reception. Children start school the term after their fourth birthday. When children start in the reception class they generally have the skills and knowledge typical of four year olds, but this varies from year to year. The headteacher has been in post two years, and three of the four teaching staff have joined the school within the last four terms. Awards gained by the school include:

- 2002 School Achievement award
- 2002 Investor in People award
- 2004 Healthy Schools award

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2220	Ian Nelson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Religious education
1104 1	Marvyn Moore	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
3054 4	Gill Battarbee	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Geography History Special educational needs Personal, social and health education
3131 9	Dot Hunter	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education The Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school that gives good value for money. Standards are above average at Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Teaching and learning are consistently good but the girls achieve better than the boys. Leadership is satisfactory and improving, and management is good, but most of those with management roles are new to the school or to their positions within it. Parents are very satisfied with the school. Pupils have positive views of the school, although the casual attitudes of some of the boys slow their progress in lessons.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good, and standards are above average by Year 6.
- The quality of care provided by the school is very good.
- Links with parents are good, and parents have very positive views of the school.
- The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- The school is developing an effective staff team.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- The attitudes and behaviour of a minority of boys in lessons affect their progress and slow their achievement.
- The lack of an outdoor space for the Foundation Stage children slows their physical development.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has addressed all the key issues, raised standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), and improved the provision for the Foundation Stage children.

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	B	A	A*
mathematics	B	C	A*	A*
science	A	B	A*	A*

Key: A - very high; 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.

Overall achievement is good. The inspection finds that pupils are on track to attain above average standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and ICT. They make good progress between the national tests that they take at Year 2 and those at Year 6. Standards in 2004 compared with all schools were well above average and in the top five per cent of all schools in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools at Year 6 the results were well above average, and in the top five per cent of schools in all three subjects. Standards at Year 2 were below average compared with all schools, and well below average compared with similar schools. However, the school's systems for tracking how well pupils are doing show that these pupils made good progress from a low starting point. Work seen during the inspection shows pupils are on track to attain at least average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The knowledge, understanding and skills that children have when they start in the reception class vary widely. In some years children start from a low base and in other years they

start Reception with above average knowledge and understanding. They achieve well in Reception, though the admission arrangements mean that some children do not get the benefit of a full year

before entering Year 1. Most children are on track to exceed the goals expected of their age in most areas of learning before entering Year 1. However, the lack of adequate outdoor space for reception children inhibits their physical development. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Their behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory. Although many pupils have good attitudes to work and behave well in lessons, the relaxed attitude of a minority of boys is not good enough to ensure that they achieve as well as they might. Attendance is below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are consistently good and most pupils make good progress as a result. Girls achieve more than boys in their learning because the casual attitudes of some boys slows their progress. The work the pupils do covers a wide range of activities and experiences. They cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education (RE) and enjoy a good range of after-school activities. The school has very good systems for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. Links with parents, and with other schools, are good. Links with the community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The school has gone through several staff changes recently, so most of those with leadership and management positions are relatively new to their roles. The headteacher is developing an effective staff team. The school has some good management systems for checking pupils' progress, though they need to be more rigorously applied. The governing body is keen and committed but has lost some very experienced governors recently. The school meets all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are very good. A small number expressed concerns over the quality of the information on their child's progress, and on bullying, but the inspection found no evidence to support their concerns. Pupils' views of the school are good, though some feel they do not get enough independence and responsibility. The inspectors agree that the school needs to work on this.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise the achievement and attainment of boys and improve the unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour of the minority of boys in lessons.
- Explore ways of providing a well resourced and secure outdoor area for the Foundation Stage.
- Improve the attendance of pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **good** and pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT by Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well but girls achieve better than boys.
- Standards in ICT and mathematics have improved well since the previous inspection.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children currently enter Reception with the skills and knowledge typical of four year olds, but this varies greatly from year to year. The school's records show that in the last two or three years children started school without some of the knowledge and understanding expected of their age. On the tasks given to check their abilities on starting school, children score better in language and literacy than in physical and creative development. The activities children are given are based closely on the guidance for the Foundation Stage. Consequently, they make good progress and are on track to achieve or exceed the expected goals in most areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. They do particularly well in personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, numeracy and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, not all the children enjoy the benefit of a full year in Reception and this limits the progress some make. Children's achievement in physical development is hindered by the lack of a well-equipped outdoor area specifically for their use.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.3 (14.8)	15.8 (15.3)
writing	14.2 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.5 (17.7)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Standards at Year 2 have fluctuated over recent years, which is not uncommon in small primary schools. In the 2003 national tests they were well above average in mathematics, average in writing and below average in reading compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in mathematics, below average in writing and well below average in reading. The unvalidated 2004 results were below average in all three areas compared with all schools and well below average compared with similar schools. However, the school's records show that these pupils started in Reception with poor knowledge and understanding and have, in fact, made good progress from a low starting point. Work seen during the inspection shows that pupils at Year 2 attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Girls have done better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics over recent years. The gap between girls' and boys' standards has been much wider than that found nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (27.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	31.8 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	33.0 (29.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards at Year 6 are currently above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. This represents particularly good improvement in mathematics and ICT since the last inspection. The 2003 national tests for Year 6 show above average standards in English and science, and average standards in mathematics. Achievement was well above average in all three subjects compared with the achievements of these pupils in the tests they took at Year 2. The unvalidated 2004 results show an improvement in all three subjects, taking them well above average compared with all schools and with similar schools. These pupils achieved very well between the tests they took at Year 2 and those they took at Year 6.

4. Standards in English have fluctuated over recent years. The dip in 2003 was caused mainly by the poor performance of boys. The girls have steadily improved standards over the years. The 2004 results show the school widening greatly the gap with the national results, mainly as a result of the girls' good performance. Standards in mathematics and science declined for two years to 2003, mainly because of the poor performance of boys. The 2004 results have reversed the decline with a sharp rise in standards, taking the school to well above the national average. Girls have done much better than boys in all three subjects over recent years. The gap in standards between girls and boys is much greater than that found nationally.

5. Standards in RE, art and design, and history and geography are broadly average, while standards in the making element of design and technology (DT) are above average by Year 6. Not enough work was seen to make secure judgements about standards in music and physical education (PE).

6. Pupils with SEN are well supported so that they make good progress and achieve well in their learning. The school works hard to support pupils from traveller families but their progress is hampered by irregular attendance.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **satisfactory** overall. Punctuality is good but attendance is unsatisfactory. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils like school and enjoy the range of activities provided, but some boys do not work hard enough in lessons.
- Relationships at the school, including racial harmony, are good and all forms of harassment are dealt with very effectively by staff.

Commentary

7. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. The local vicar comes in to school regularly to conduct assemblies. The school arranges regular visits to local churches, synagogues and mosques, which contribute to pupils' knowledge of other faiths. Through personal, social and health education (PSHE) pupils are taught self-knowledge and spiritual awareness. In music, art and design and English, pupils are given the opportunity to study, and reflect on the works of historic and contemporary artists,

poets and musicians. There is little evidence, however, of systematic planning for pupils' spiritual development.

8. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the school rules and know the difference between right and wrong. They like school and enjoy the range of activities provided, though the concentration levels and work rate of some of the boys are not good enough, and their progress suffers as a consequence. At times, the pace of lessons is slowed because teachers need to regain the attention of the pupils and encourage them to listen and not call out. Behaviour in the playground is good. Pupils were keen to talk to members of the inspection team and confirmed during discussions that they felt there was no trace of racial harassment in the school and that isolated cases of bullying were dealt with immediately and efficiently by staff. Pupils with SEN are well integrated into classes and have good relationships with other pupils and with adults. Where pupils receive high quality support in small groups, or individually, they have good attitudes towards their learning, and their self-esteem is high. Sometimes they find it hard to sustain concentration when working independently.

9. The school encourages pupils' social development satisfactorily through regular visits to places of interest. These include a residential visit to Castleton for Years 3 and 4, a week's residential visit to Swanage for Year 5 and 6 pupils, visits to the Black Country Museum, and to the Food Festival at Melton Mowbray. Children in the reception class make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and exceed the levels expected of children of this age. Pupils' relationships with others are satisfactory. They respect people's belongings and school property and treat them with care. Pupils are willing to take responsibility when asked. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils act as mentors and friends to younger pupils at play and lunchtime, and Year 3 and 4 pupils hear children in the Foundation Stage read. However, there is little evidence of pupils taking the initiative themselves. Pupils are pleased to be elected as members of the school council but the school is not yet active enough in allowing and encouraging the council members to make decisions. The head boy and girl are appointed by staff and are not elected by pupils. Their responsibilities are limited to setting a good example to the rest of the school.

10. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school helps pupils to appreciate their own cultural heritage and that of other faiths. Visitors invited in to school include poets in residence, artists giving a display of African artwork and an Indian dance teacher. The school has arranged themed days such as a Victorian Day and a Tudor Day, and pupils have visited a Leicester school that has a large number of ethnic minority pupils, to study Diwali celebrations.

Attendance

11. Attendance, at 92.1 per cent, is unsatisfactory. This is largely because of a small number of families who keep their children away from school for a long period. Owing to the small number of pupils on roll this has a large impact on attendance figures. The school's action to promote attendance is satisfactory. Parents are contacted on the first day of absence basis, but over half of the parents take advantage of the school's policy of authorising ten days of absence per child.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	7.8
National data	5.4

School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

12. There have been no exclusions for a number of years.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are consistently good and most pupils make good progress as a result. Girls achieve more than boys in their learning because the casual attitudes of some boys slow their progress. The work the pupils do covers a wide range of activities and experiences. They cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education and enjoy a good range of after-school activities. The school has very good systems for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. Links with parents, and with other schools, are good. Links with the community are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection, which is an improvement since last time. The school has good systems for checking how much pupils know in each subject.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good.
- Teaching and support staff work well together.
- Pupils with SEN are well supported and achieve well.
- There is some helpful marking in pupils' books.
- The attitudes of some of the boys affect their rate of learning in some lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactor y	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	17	5	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

13. Teaching was judged satisfactory at the time of the last inspection, so has improved overall to be consistently good. There is not the wide range of teaching quality that was found last time, when it ranged from unsatisfactory to very good or better. Leadership and management identified and addressed the unsatisfactory teaching seen at the time of the last inspection and have developed better systems for checking teaching quality on a regular basis.

14. In Reception, children learn well because teaching is based firmly upon the guidance for the Foundation Stage. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the school was criticised for basing children's learning inappropriately on the National Curriculum for Year 1 pupils. The strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development ensures that children settle well and enjoy the activities they are given. Good teaching of basic skills in language and literacy gives children confidence, and they learn quickly. They have good access to books and enjoy stories which promote early reading and writing skills. Children enjoy their mathematical activities and, as a result, many exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they reach Year 1. In general, the teaching tends to dictate too rigidly at times what children will do rather than encouraging them to choose some activities for themselves throughout the day. This prevents them from learning to make informed choices and growing in responsibility as fast as they might

if this were improved. The only area of learning where children's progress is satisfactory rather than good is in their physical development. This is mainly because they lack their own well equipped outdoor area. Teachers and support staff compensate for this as best they can by taking the class outside together, but this is not good enough to ensure the high quality physical development that a dedicated outside play area would provide.

15. The consistently good teaching in Years 1 to 6 ensures that pupils learn well and make good progress. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection and the school has built a strong staff team. Teachers and support staff work well together so that all pupils are well supported. Those with SEN receive good support so that they feel confident to contribute to whole-class discussions and are successful with the tasks they are given in lessons. Consequently, they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). Teachers place a strong emphasis on basic skills so that pupils have a good grounding on which to build. They use the whole-class sessions in literacy and numeracy well to ensure that pupils develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to make good progress in their learning. Teachers are adept at asking questions aimed at specific pupils' ability in a subject so that, even in whole-class sessions, all get work that is hard enough. In group work, teachers set different tasks for different ability groups and set clear targets for pupils. There is evidence of some good marking in pupils' books that tells them how to improve their work. For example, one pupil is told, 'See -----'s book for another way to solve this'. The marking also gives a clear indication of where pupils have needed help and where they have succeeded unaided. For example, '----- was able to complete this activity practically but found this difficult'. This enables teachers to set work in future lessons that is hard enough for each pupil. For the most part, the lessons motivate pupils, but a minority of boys have poor attitudes to learning, do not concentrate well on the tasks they are given, and so do not progress as fast as the girls do. Occasionally, the teachers have to spend too long encouraging them so that the pace of the lesson slows. This reduces the consistently good teaching and learning to a level that is satisfactory in some lessons.

16. Teachers check regularly how well pupils are doing and use this information to set targets for different ability groups. Teachers use a combination of formal tests and their own marking to check progress. As in most schools, the systems for checking progress in English, mathematics and science are more comprehensive than in other subjects. The school makes good use of the information from the annual national tests at Year 2 and Year 6 as well as using the optional tests in Years 3 to 5. They use this information to group pupils according to their ability in lessons so that they can provide at the right level for all pupils, including those with SEN. The school predicts how well pupils are likely to do in the national tests, and where individuals or groups may need extra help to reach the expected standards for their age so that extra support can be provided where it is needed.

The curriculum

The school plans a **good** range of activities and experiences to help pupils to learn. They cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education, and include a good range of after-school activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good use of literacy and links between subjects provides the pupils with plenty of opportunities to practise their skills and to understand the relevance of their learning.
- The lack of an easily accessible outdoor area for the youngest children limits the development of their physical and independent learning skills.
- All the school activities and areas of learning are carefully planned to include pupils with SEN and this helps them to achieve well.
- The wide range of out-of-school activities, themed days, exciting events and interesting visits motivate the pupils and contribute to their achievement.

Commentary

17. The children in the Foundation Stage, including those with SEN, benefit from a good ratio of adults to help them to learn through carefully planned activities that the children enjoy, so they make good progress. However, the lack of an easily accessible outdoor learning area limits the children's independence and opportunities to make choices and decisions about their activities.

18. The quality and range of activities and experiences planned for Years 1 to 6 have improved since the last inspection. The learning is planned in a two-year cycle to provide appropriate progression for the mixed-age classes. The headteacher is leading a review of this planning in order to develop a more interesting and exciting approach to learning, but some aspects of the review are incomplete. For example, the order in which pupils learn different skills has not yet been fully agreed for all subjects and there is no cohesive overview of the links between different subjects. However, the staff have worked hard to include a high proportion of practical work, themed days, visits and visitors as regular activities in the pupils' learning. The Year 3 and 4 pupils demonstrated the success of this approach by speaking knowledgeably and enthusiastically about Romans when they questioned a teacher in the role of 'Boudicca', took part in a Roman feast, and looked forward to their visit to Cirencester.

19. Effective links are made between subjects and this helps pupils to understand the relevance of what they are learning. For example, a lesson for Years 1 and 2 linked ICT, DT and art and design. The pupils created pictures in the style of the artist, Mondrian, and transferred them onto the computer. The central place of literacy in the curriculum has also been carefully planned and is effective in developing the pupils' skills and making their learning interesting and relevant. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 look forward to, and benefit from, residential trips that bring their learning to life. Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about trips to Swanage, which focused on history and geography.

20. Pupils take part in a good range of out-of-school activities that contribute to their learning and provide them with good opportunities to work and play with pupils of different ages. Activities include netball, football, athletics, rounders, gardening, recorder and computer, and some pupils learn to play the flute. The church also organises a Summer Holiday Club for all local children. This provides good opportunities for the children to socialise in a wider forum. The well structured PSHE programme is supplemented by the children's work with the community during Harvest Festival and Christmas. In addition, the school has close links with the local church, which aids pupils' learning.

21. Pupils with SEN have full access to learning, both in lessons and in out-of-school activities. Their IEPs highlight their targets for improvement. The pupils are well supported by the teaching assistants, who communicate closely with the class teachers to ensure that the pupils make good progress. The work of the learning support teacher is good. She encourages, challenges and enables her pupil to make good progress, thus ensuring that the pupil's self-esteem is maintained.

22. The school has recruited a good match of teachers and support staff. The relatively new staff group has quickly become a coherent team, and the teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievements. Overall, the school's accommodation and resources for learning are good.

23. The grounds are attractive, well maintained and well used to support pupils' learning. The parents' association has recently funded a 'trim trail' on the school field. This has been a significant improvement in the outside provision for the pupils and is being well used in their physical development.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for pupils' care, guidance, health and safety. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good child protection procedures.
- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good.
- Pupils have a good and trusting relationship with adults at the school.

Commentary

24. The designated child protection officer is the headteacher, who has received recent training and has passed this on to all other members of staff. The child protection policy is detailed and comprehensive but was last reviewed in February 2003 and needs to be updated to reflect current legislation.

25. The health and safety policy is very detailed. The local authority has recently carried out an in-depth health and safety survey, and recommendations have been implemented. The school has a large number of staff fully trained in first aid and has very well equipped first aid facilities. Details of all accidents are meticulously recorded. Regular fire drills take place and the fire alarm is tested at regular intervals.

26. Staff know all pupils well. The headteacher holds regular discussions with all staff to discuss pupils' problems, achievement, attendance and attitudes. Pupils' personal development is monitored meticulously. Pupils interviewed during the inspection confirm that they feel their concerns are taken seriously and staff give them help and support if needed.

27. There are good relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are able to learn confidently because they feel that staff care for them, and they value the advice, guidance and help they receive.

28. The school has satisfactory arrangements to involve pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. The recently formed school council meets at regular intervals and the school is a member of the National School Councils Network. Although pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions, the school does not take sufficient account of decisions made by the council. This is an area of the school's work that needs to be further developed.

29. In personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons, pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions and to develop their speaking and listening skills. Pupils with SEN receive good quality care and integrate well in to the life of the school. The school has made good arrangements to support the single child having a statement of special educational need. It makes good use of the specialist teaching service, which provides a support teacher for two mornings a week on a one-to-one basis. A useful brochure has been produced for parents of children with SEN, and the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) works well with pupils to ensure that they make good progress and thrive.

30. Induction arrangements for pupils are satisfactory. A playgroup is operated from the school and many reception children, who have attended this playgroup, are already known to staff when they arrive. School staff do not carry out home visits but a small welcome pack is given out containing information to parents of prospective pupils. If necessary, parents of children in the reception class are allowed to stay with their children during their first few days at school if necessary. As a result of the school's policy on admitting children in the term following their fourth birthday or admitting those of statutory school age at any time throughout the school year, the reception class contains pupils of varying age groups and abilities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and with other schools and colleges are **good**. Links with the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision to parents of information about the school and of pupils' standards and progress is very good.
- The school has good procedures for obtaining parents' views and dealing with complaints or concerns.

Commentary

31. Parents' views of the school are good. They feel that the school treats their children fairly, they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on and they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, a problem or complaint. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that:

- their children like school;
- children behave well;
- their children are not bullied or harassed at school;
- staff treat children fairly;
- teaching is good.

32. A minority expressed concerns about bullying in school and the information they receive on their child's progress. The inspection team agrees with all the positive remarks made but did not find evidence to support the concerns expressed by a minority of parents.

33. Pupils' reports are issued annually and are of very good quality. They describe, on a subject-by-subject basis, what pupils have studied, how well they are progressing, and what targets they need for improvement. These are supplemented by three well attended parents' evenings a year.

34. Currently, the involvement of parents in the education and progress of pupils with SEN is satisfactory. They are involved when their children's needs are first identified and, subsequently, updated termly at the parent consultations. The new SENCO is reviewing this process and updating the school systems and record keeping. This will enhance communication by making information more accessible and ensure that the system operates consistently across the school.

35. The school prospectus is well produced in a parent-friendly fashion and, as well as the governors' report to parents, gives good information about admission arrangements, school policies and procedures. The governors' annual report is detailed and includes all the required information. The school produces informative monthly newsletters containing details of activities and future events.

36. The school has developed a very good website, which is regularly updated and contains work from each class to enable parents to see what pupils are studying. Letters sent home to parents are duplicated on the website and the school has made provision to parents without Internet access to use school computers on a regular basis.

37. Parents are regularly surveyed to obtain their views. The headteacher is available to parents at all times should they wish to obtain advice or seek his opinion. A small number

of parents help in school by accompanying pupils on school trips, hearing readers or helping in the reception class. The school has a thriving, successful and supportive parents' association that raises substantial funds.

38. Links with the community are satisfactory. The community is invited to various school functions and pupils raise money for community charities and make up parcels for the Leicester Homeless Project. The school has strong links with the local church and the vicar, who is a member of the governing body, comes in to school to conduct weekly assemblies. A local playgroup uses the school hall on a regular basis and the school is currently looking at ways to further strengthen and develop its links with the community.

39. The school is a member of a cluster of local primary schools and has arranged literacy workshops for the other primary school teachers. Regular meetings of the headteachers of these schools take place when matters of mutual interest are discussed. The school loans its hall to one primary school each week for PE lessons. The school has good links with the feeder secondary school. Year 7 teachers from the secondary school come in to the primary school regularly to meet

the pupils. The school has good arrangements for the transfer of its pupils to secondary school. Parents are given good information to enable them to make an informed choice for their children's secondary education. Staff visit the feeder secondary school and arrangements are made for pupils to attend 'taster' days.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The school has gone through several changes of staff and governors recently, so most of those with management positions are relatively new to their roles. The school meets all statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is developing some good management systems for checking pupils' progress, though they need to be more rigorously applied.
- Although most of the teachers are new to the school, or to their positions within it, the staff work well as a team.
- The governing body is keen and committed but has lost some very experienced governors recently.

Commentary

40. The work of the governors is satisfactory. Having lost some very experienced governors recently the governing body has some vacancies. The changes also mean that most governors are new to their particular positions of responsibility. Consequently, they are very keen and committed but lack the collective experience that they used to be able to call upon. The governors are addressing this issue by seeking training courses for individuals and groups of governors to improve their knowledge and understanding. They are also working hard to fill the vacant places. Despite their lack of experience, the governors have good committee systems in place to ensure that they work efficiently. They are growing increasingly sure of the information they receive about how well the pupils are doing in the national tests at Year 2 and Year 6. They understand how the school predicts the likely progress of different groups of pupils, and that such small year groups can lead to fluctuations in overall standards year by year. Governors have a clear understanding of the school finances and how these are used to meet the targets in the school improvement plan. They understand the need to get the best value they can for the budget they have, and have very clear systems in place for effective financial management. They maintain an appropriate carry forward, having earmarked some funds currently for building improvements to the cloakroom area. They ensure that the school gives good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	307,847.00	Balance from previous year	42,434.00
Total expenditure	293,824.00	Balance carried forward to the next	56,427.00
Expenditure per pupil	3,416.00		

41. Leadership is satisfactory overall, but with some distinct strengths. The headteacher has been in post since January 2002, having taught at the school since qualifying as a teacher in 1997. He is a popular leader with staff and with parents. He shares his clear vision for the school's future with his staff and the governors. The focus is very much on the achievement of pupils, and the headteacher has a lot of evidence to show how well they are doing. Under his leadership, the evidence shows that achievement of most pupils has been good. He has built up a strong staff team during the last two years, which have seen several staff changes. However, as so many of the teachers are so new to their areas of responsibility, some have not been in post long enough to have had a significant impact on their subject areas. All those with leadership responsibilities are fully committed to including all pupils in the whole life of the school. The school improvement plan highlights many of the school priorities for further improvement but misses the significant one of girls achieving so much better than boys. Leadership overall is keen and committed and the main thing it lacks is depth of experience. Staff compensate for this with their enthusiasm.

42. Management is good. The headteacher has introduced a good range of systems for checking how well the school is doing. Self-evaluation, therefore, is largely accurate. He has put in place comprehensive systems for tracking how well pupils are achieving, and these enable teachers to set targets for individual pupils. He regularly analyses the results of the annual national tests at Year 2 and Year 6, and the optional tests in Years 3 to 5, in order to forecast the likely achievement and standards of each year group, and to plan to meet their specific needs. Most of this analysis is very thorough and accurate. For example, the school has identified a particular year group that includes a large proportion of pupils with SEN, where many are not on target to reach the standards expected of their ages by Year 6. Plans are now in place to ensure that these pupils are given extra support to ensure that they all achieve as well as they might and to try to get them to the expected levels in the national tests. However, these systems are still being developed and had not picked up the significant differences in achievement between boys and girls over recent years. The headteacher has developed comprehensive systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning. These include regular observations of lessons, looking at pupils' work and checking teachers' planning. Subject co-ordinators are increasingly involved in checking the quality of the provision in their subjects. The leadership and management of the SEN provision are good. The co-ordinator is new to the school and, to date, has made good progress in reviewing the policy, creating an action plan, re-organising and streamlining the paperwork, and increasing the involvement of parents and pupils. Performance management is fully in place and is used to identify staff development needs. The school has accurately identified as a significant barrier to achievement the irregular attendance of some pupils, and is working with other agencies to resolve this issue.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good – an improvement since the last inspection. Children are prepared well for transfer into Year 1 from the time they enter the reception class. Most begin school in the term after their fourth birthday and attend full time, although some do not start until they are almost five years of age because of local arrangements. When children begin school, their knowledge and understanding are broadly as expected for their age, although there is a wide range from year to year. All children achieve well because the teaching is good. There is challenge and high expectation in most lessons, with activities clearly matched to the different needs of individuals. There is also good evidence of clear planning, based on the six recommended areas of learning. The effective and enthusiastic Foundation Stage teacher works well with the teaching assistant and both provide excellent role models for the children. There are very good systems for checking children's progress in all areas of learning. The overall accommodation is satisfactory, but the lack of an outdoor space for the Foundation Stage children slows their physical development and detracts from the quality of their learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to foster the children's development, so they make good progress and achieve well.
- Supportive relationships are established, so children's self-esteem is raised and they feel confident and happy.

Commentary

44. This area of learning is particularly well taught. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children are likely to have exceeded the expected levels. Most conform to the high expectations of the staff, and the good role models of the adults mean that the children know what is expected of them. Children know the routines, behave sensibly and settle to tasks quickly, so that the atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Children are interested and eager to learn. Many stay on task for long periods and are motivated to succeed even when not directly supervised.

45. Adults constantly encourage children and praise their efforts so that all can feel successful. They intervene when necessary with good questioning, which extends learning, and they encourage the children to take a pride in their work. There is consistency in routines so that children know to put up their hands, take turns and listen to others. This was clearly seen in circle time, when they waited their turn to talk and responded to others' comments. Children generally share well and help each other. There are very supportive relationships, so that all the children feel secure and confident to seek help when required.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Adults take every opportunity to develop children's language skills, with varied activities that motivate the children to achieve well.

Commentary

46. Children make good progress and many are expected to exceed expectations in this area by the time they enter Year 1. Adults continually talk to children and provide imaginative activities to help them to think and choose appropriate language to describe what they are doing. Children become confident in speaking and are happy to talk to adults, and older children who join them regularly for paired reading time.

47. Books are readily available and most children take them home regularly to share with adults. They understand how to use books, and enjoy them. There is good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. Children make good progress in sound recognition, and learning through rhymes, sound and picture games. Constant reinforcement from adults helps the children to recognise sounds and match them to letters. They are given targets which are simply explained but which give real opportunity for them to develop their language skills. In the reception class they mainly concentrate on emergent writing, and attempt to spell words on their own. Staff ensure that children hold pencils and crayons correctly, and that letter formation is accurate.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers take every opportunity to promote mathematical development in all activities.
- Teachers plan a wide range of activities to ensure that children achieve well.

Commentary

48. Teaching is good in this area of learning, where a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding is provided. Children make good progress. Many have reached the Early Learning Goals and are moving into the national numeracy objectives. Most children persevere even when they find learning difficult, and they make good progress. They count to 10, and some count to 40 using the number line. They sing rhymes to help them count and teachers use these rhymes imaginatively to extend and develop children's understanding. Children have opportunities to write numbers and the most able are beginning to match objects to numbers. Adults question children well and constantly use a variety of mathematical words, such as 'above', 'below', 'under', 'over',

'beside', 'one more than', 'one less than', 'tomorrow' and 'yesterday' in many incidental ways to help to develop vocabulary. Most pupils know the main colours. They recognise shapes such as square, triangle and rectangle, and are beginning to develop an understanding of their properties. For example, they know that a triangle has three sides and that a rectangle has four.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning provides a wide range of activities to promote learning.
- Children begin to explore different materials and understand their differences.
- Children are familiar with and confident in their use of computers.

Commentary

49. Teaching is good. Good provision extends children's knowledge and understanding well so that they make good progress. They are expected to reach or exceed the levels expected of them by the time they reach Year 1. Activities are planned so that they give opportunities for children to widen their experience and their vocabulary. The teacher stimulates their curiosity and enhances their understanding by exploring topics such as pets, where the children design and make suitable homes for them, after exploring what their needs will be. Children choose their materials appropriately, and identify the tools and resources they require to complete the task. They have opportunities to make bread and notice how the ingredients change when mixed and heated. They learn about their own culture by taking part in festivals such as harvest and begin to understand that other groups celebrate different festivals, such as Diwali. Children have the opportunity to use a computer in the classroom and have sessions in the computer suite weekly. They are confident and eager to talk about their activities. They use digital cameras to record their work and enjoy displaying the things they have made. They spend time listening to taped stories but do not have access to audio centres, which would enable them to listen individually.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children benefit from well planned activities in the hall.
- The lack of good outside play provision hinders pupils' learning.

Commentary

50. Children enjoy physical activity both indoors and out but make only satisfactory progress, so that it is likely that some will not reach the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children have access to the outdoor play areas, but these are inadequate for their needs. There is a restricted choice of toys and appropriate large climbing equipment. Children, therefore, miss spontaneous opportunities to develop their imagination and experience from a full range of activity. The resources, including ride-on toys, prams and home corner equipment, are barely satisfactory. Children lack the benefits of an outdoor classroom with a play-house, a climbing frame and better playground markings.

51. In lessons in the hall, children pay good attention and are responsive to teachers' expectations. They stretch, and are aware of balance and begin to make sequences of movement. They move in different directions and the teacher's use of language continually reinforces mathematical and positional vocabulary. Children use space well and are imaginative in their activities. They explore movement and dance expressively to music from 'Peter and the Wolf'. Children have good opportunities to develop fine motor skills in a variety of activities in the classroom. They use scissors, thread beads, build with construction toys and handle paintbrushes, crayons and play-dough confidently.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning gives many opportunities for creativity in a variety of situations.
- Children are imaginative and produce careful work.

Commentary

52. The activities planned in the reception class allow for children to develop their language and imagination well so that, by the end of the year, they will have achieved well and are likely to have reached the expected goals in this area. Role-play is encouraged so that children develop their imagination. For example, they become builders or post office staff, and the home corner becomes a café, shop or a vet's, as required. Children paint and colour as well as using scissors and glue to make models. They like to sing, and tap out or clap the beat when they use percussion instruments, enjoying the rhythms of the music.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve high standards in English because they are well taught and their progress is carefully monitored.
- The central place of literacy in all areas of learning provides pupils with good opportunities to practise and improve their skills.
- Pupils with SEN receive good quality support, and this enables them to make good progress and achieve well.
- Although systems for checking how well pupils are doing are good, the analysis of the information from them is not quite detailed enough yet.

Commentary

53. Since the last inspection the school has made good improvements to the provision in English, and standards have risen significantly. Standards of work seen at Year 6 are above average and at Year 2 they are broadly average. Girls have achieved much better than boys over recent years.

54. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above the standards expected nationally, and they achieve well. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils are confident when speaking with other children and with adults, and they engage readily in conversation. Most pupils listen attentively and concentrate well. However, on occasions, their determination to answer questions and give their opinion leads them to call out and speak over each other. Lessons do not always make the most of opportunities to develop the pupils' skills of speaking to the whole class.

55. Pupils achieve well in developing their reading skills. Standards are above average in Year 6, and average in Year 2. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils are taught a good range of skills to use when tackling new words. Although the majority of pupils understand the skills, they do not always use them, and this sometimes slows their progress. However, they have a good understanding of the newly structured reading schemes and enjoy selecting both fiction and non-fiction books. The good quality, regular reading support makes a significant contribution to their improving standards.

56. In Year 6, the pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and spoke about their favourite authors and types of books, which included J K Rowling, Jacqueline Wilson and 'I'll try any modern fiction'. The majority of pupils take their reading books home and complete their reading record. The school provides a useful booklet about 'helping your child at home', which parents appreciate. However, for the younger pupils and those with SEN, the reading record book provides little regular guidance for parents about the next steps towards helping their individual child. The school's central library area is well organised with sufficient books of good quality. There are areas for pupils to sit and study, and the majority of pupils spoken to were able to explain how they had found and used books for topics. They also described the good use made of the mobile library service.

57. Despite fluctuations in standards over recent years, there has been significant improvement in the quality of writing since the last inspection, and pupils achieve well. Standards in Year 6 are above the national average. Girls continue to achieve better than the boys, although by a smaller margin than in the past. Standards in Year 2 are rising and are broadly average. In order to further improve standards the school has re-allocated and increased support for pupils with SEN, and developed writing skills in other subjects. For example, the Year 5 and 6 history topic about the Victorians provided good opportunities for pupils to research and write newspaper reports about famous characters who interested them. Year 1 and 2 pupils enjoyed preparing instructions to make a clown's hat. Making their learning relevant in this way motivates pupils and helps their understanding and competence. The work in pupils' books is neat and tidy.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school, and this is having a positive impact on pupil achievement. The lessons are well planned and organised, and work is prepared for different ability groups. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well, both as a teaching tool and to interest and motivate the pupils. For example, Year 1 used a computer program to help them learn about instructions, and they built a robot. All the pupils have individual targets to involve them in their own learning, and systems are in place to check on pupils' progress. The good marking in pupils' books is positive and helps pupils see ways to improve, but this is not consistent. All the teachers have high expectations of pupil behaviour but some pupils, mainly boys, do not always behave appropriately, and this slows their progress and distracts others. The newness of so many teachers to the school leads to some minor inconsistencies in teaching English and checking pupils' progress in different classes.

59. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils during lessons and, as a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school has recently increased the level of support for pupils with SEN in order to help them achieve well. They work in small groups and the good communication between the teaching assistants and the teachers ensures that their needs and progress are checked on a daily basis.

60. The management provided by the relatively new subject leader has been good. Over the last year she has reviewed the policy and presented it to governors. Her training has involved her in some elements of checking the standards pupils achieve throughout the school, though this analysis needs to be more detailed. In order to improve standards in reading she has re-organised the school reading schemes to good effect, and she has also worked alongside the headteacher to understand and analyse the information of how well pupils are doing. She is fully committed to improving standards, works closely with colleagues and is developing a clear vision for the future.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. The use of language and literacy in other subjects is good because the school is developing a strategy to ensure this happens. This is highlighted in the planning and made clear to the pupils. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils practised their descriptive writing in a history lesson following a visit by a teacher in the role of Boudicca. They wrote, 'When they went into battle they might have realised they had made a mistake - she was bloodthirsty and powerful'. Year 1 and 2 pupils practised their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills during a local area topic that included elements of both geography and history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, with a strong emphasis on basic number skills.
- Support staff help pupils well with their learning.
- In some classes effective use is made of ICT to practise and consolidate number knowledge.
- Teachers cater well for different ability levels in a class.
- Sometimes whole-class sessions are a little too long and some children lose interest.
- The difference in attitudes between boys and girls leads to girls making more progress than boys.

Commentary

62. Achievement is good and standards are above average by Year 6. Standards vary from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group. In the 2004 national tests they were well above average compared with all schools and with similar schools. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average. Standards in some year groups are below average, mainly due to particular special educational needs of some of the pupils. However, the school's systems for checking how well pupils are doing show that nearly all pupils make good progress. Although progress is generally good, the school's records show that girls achieve better than boys. This is because some of the boys have too relaxed an attitude to lessons and do not make enough effort with their work.

63. Achievement is good because teaching is consistently good and pupils learn effectively. Lessons follow the guidance in the National Strategy and there is a good emphasis on pupils learning basic number skills. They enjoy the challenging mental calculation sessions that teachers build into the opening part of a lesson. Sometimes these opening whole-class sessions are a little too long to keep such a wide ability range involved, and some pupils lose interest. Teachers are good at directing questions and activities at different ability groups. This helps to ensure that all pupils get work that is hard enough. When teachers set group or individual tasks these are also set at different levels to cope with the ability range within the class. This ensures that all pupils, including those with SEN, have every opportunity to learn effectively. Learning support staff make a good contribution towards pupils' learning. They work well with teachers to support groups of pupils

and make sure they all get the attention they need to be successful. In whole-class sessions support staff usually sit with, and help, less able pupils so that they can contribute successfully. This helps to boost the self-esteem of these pupils.

64. The school has good systems for checking how well pupils are doing in mathematics. Staff use this information well to set targets for pupils to aspire to. The analysis of information on pupils' progress enables the staff to predict how well they are likely to do and to plan to meet pupils' needs effectively. For example, the current Year 6 pupils are attaining above average standards but the pupils in Year 5 are not attaining such high standards. The school is planning to address this issue by enhancing the staffing to provide extra support for these pupils so that they can achieve well. Although the analysis of pupils' performance is generally good, it lacks a little rigour. For example, the school was not fully aware of the widely different achievement rates of boys and girls.

65. The headteacher is effective as the co-ordinator for mathematics and checks the quality of teaching and learning regularly through observing lessons and looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to consolidate mathematics learning in other subjects. For example, they use their measuring skills in science investigations, and they make good use of computers to practise basic number skills and reinforce learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve good levels of knowledge and understanding.
- Most pupils are well motivated and interested in their learning.
- Individual targets need to be developed so that pupils can take more responsibility for their learning.

Commentary

67. Standards at Year 2 are broadly average. The teacher assessments at Year 2 in 2004 show standards were well below average compared with all schools and similar schools. However, inspection evidence shows that these pupils' knowledge and understanding are better than the assessments suggest, and achievement is good. At Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils show a good understanding and explain scientific ideas well. This picture reflects that seen in the last inspection. Between 1999 and 2003, girls' achievement was much better than that of boys but the 2004 national tests show that boys' standards have risen sharply and that they achieved as well as girls that year.

68. By Year 2, pupils make observations, carry out simple tests and record their findings in different ways when undertaking investigations. By Year 6, pupils have acquired sound investigative skills, and the majority achieve well. Almost all plan and conduct their own simple experiments, and record their findings both informally and in a formal way.

69. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers tell pupils what they are to learn and what is expected of them, and pupils respond enthusiastically to well focused instruction. Teaching is brisk,

with no time wasted, and good questioning helps pupils to learn effectively. In the best lessons seen during the inspection, teachers' lively presentations captivated pupils' interest right from the start, and there was high expectation and challenge. In one lesson, where pupils were learning about healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle, they explored the idea of healthy lunches, suggesting ways of keeping a balanced diet but choosing foods they liked. They considered the proportion of each food they would need and used nutritional information to consider the amounts contained in their choices. This challenged their thinking and raised awareness about the food they actually ate. All the pupils enjoy science, investigate keenly and generally work well in groups. However, a minority of older boys are easily distracted and do not concentrate enough on the matter in hand.

70. The subject co-ordinator is new in post and is quickly gaining an overview of the strengths and development areas of the subject. Work is based on national guidelines and on a programme that takes account of the fact that pupils are in one class for two years. Staff plan activities to meet the needs of pupils with widely ranging abilities, including those with SEN.

At the beginning and end of each topic, pupils are assessed, so that teachers can keep track of their progress, and can plan for the next stages of learning. However, this does not yet involve the pupils enough in understanding how well they are doing or in setting their own targets for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**, which is a good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are motivated to achieve well.
- Teachers check regularly how well pupils are doing and use this information to plan future work.

Commentary

71. By Year 2, standards are broadly average. Good progress is made in Years 3 to 6 so that, by Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils are eager to learn. Some make very good progress and all pupils achieve well, including those with SEN. Since the last inspection the school has improved resources and staff training, and this has had very good impact on the teaching of ICT skills throughout the school.

72. Teaching is good overall. The school's ICT scheme is used well to ensure good progress in learning the skills of word-processing, graphics, data handling, control, monitoring and modelling. Lessons in these skills take place weekly and pupils are enthusiastic and well motivated. The size of the suite and the numbers of machines mean that there needs to be careful planning so that time is not wasted as pupils wait their turn on the computers. They respond well to the high expectations of teachers. They are confident working alone or in pairs, when they give each other good support, and they have good opportunities to use their skills to enhance other work.

73. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 quickly become adept at finding and using programs, saving work into their folders and using robotic toys to develop spatial and directional skills. They create pictures in the style of artists such as Mondrian and use the Internet to find information. In Years 3 and 4, pupils extend their knowledge of sending emails and learn to add attachments. They combine graphics with text using various effects, such as changing the size of font and creating shadow or blocked print. Multimedia activities are a feature of Years 5 and 6, where pupils make PowerPoint presentations for their classmates. They learn to use spreadsheets to make calculations of such items as a bill in a Chinese restaurant, become proficient at computer-aided design programs and select appropriate sensors to carry out data-logging experiments safely.

74. The enthusiastic co-ordinator provides effective leadership in the subject and has worked very hard to raise the profile of ICT in the school, so that teachers are confident in their teaching. Pupils have the opportunity to join the computer club and are encouraged to practise touch typing both there and in their free time. This enhances their word-processing skills. Resources are good and are well used in classes and in the suite. The introduction of an interactive whiteboard and the identification of more links with other subjects are priorities identified by the school for further development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. Information and communication technology is used to consolidate learning in English, mathematics and science, where graphs and data handling opportunities are exploited well. The digital microscope is used in science, and all age groups use the digital camera. Pupils use the

Internet to investigate topics in history and geography and have a developing understanding of the advantages of such research. They access databases such as those that provide census information, and they use this to build up a picture of people in their village in the past.

HUMANITIES

Work was sampled in RE, history and geography as not enough lessons were seen to be able to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Two lessons were seen in history, one in RE and none in geography. Pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicate that attainment in all three subjects is in line with expectations.

Religious education

76. Standards of work seen were broadly average. Pupils learn about a good range of religions as they move through school. The school ensures a good balance between learning facts about different religions and considering social and moral issues, and how religious beliefs impact on people's responses to such issues. Pupils consider the story of the Good Samaritan from the Christian religion, for example, and the morality behind the story. They consider the promises made by Buddhists and how these might affect everyday decisions. Teaching was good in the lesson seen. The teacher used a video effectively, stopping at significant points to engage pupils in discussion on the story of Guru Nanak's childhood. As a consequence of the good teaching, pupils were involved and well motivated. There are regular checks on how well pupils are learning. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning about right and wrong and about other cultures and faiths. Religious education provision meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

History

77. Pupils achieve well in history, and standards across the school are in line with national expectations. From discussion with the pupils it is evident that they enjoy the recently re-designed history topics that are practical, based on a range of interesting and often unusual experiences, and linked to other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke knowledgeably about the local maps they had been studying and were able to express ideas and opinions about the changes in the local area over time. Year 3 and 4 pupils were highly motivated by the imaginative range of Roman experiences planned by the teacher. For example, the pupils had 'interviewed Boudicca', made and worn their own togas and taken part in a Roman feast. Consequently, they showed a good understanding of some main changes, events and people in England during Roman times, and were looking forward to their next visit to Cirencester. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed learning about

timelines and offered thoughtful ideas about how to tell the age of a household item or a toy.

78. Teaching was good in both lessons seen during the inspection. The imaginative and practical format of the lessons encouraged the pupils to take part, and think hard about life in a different time. This brought the subject to life and the pupils achieved well. A few pupils in each lesson had insufficient personal control and began to behave inappropriately. However, the teachers used good strategies to regain pupils' interest and maintain their concentration. Some good class systems are in place to check the pupils' progress but, currently, the subject co-ordinator has insufficient time to gain a systematic overview of standards and achievement.

Geography

79. The work seen suggests that standards in geography are in line with expectations and that the pupils achieve well by Year 2 and Year 6.

80. In Years 1 and 2, pupils show a good understanding of their local area and demonstrate how to find their way round the large-scale class map of the village and where various classmates live. The main geography themes for older pupils are planned for the spring and summer terms. The Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about the work they will cover on the environment during the spring term. They are looking forward very much to their residential visit during the summer term, as this will also have a geography focus. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 showed their understanding of the geographical features that have been carefully linked into their current history topics. For example, map work has been used to good effect in both the Roman and Victorian topics.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

These subjects were sampled. No lessons were seen in art and design, DT, PE or music, so no judgements can be made about the overall quality of provision.

Art and design

81. Little work was seen in art and design during the inspection. Where it was seen, standards were broadly average. It included paintings of houses by pupils in Years 1 and 2 to support a geography project on their locality. Roman mosaics were produced by pupils in Year 3 and 4 to support their history topic. There were also some pictures on display to support work on different religions, including Diwali pictures. Year 1 and 2 pupils had used the computer to generate pictures in the style of Mondrian. However, the lack of high quality art indicates that art was not a strong focus of the school at the time of the inspection.

Design and technology

82. Finished work was of good quality, with standards above average. The Year 3 and 4 Roman topic had led to pupils making model chariots using a variety of materials. They had developed their skills in measuring, cutting and joining in order to achieve success with their models. Older pupils had made musical instruments, including stringed instruments. Pupils benefited from a visiting expert and, as a consequence, all achieved high standards of finished work.

Music

83. Pupils sing in class and in assembly, compose music and listen to the works of famous composers. In Years 1 and 2 they listen attentively and use a range of un-tuned percussion, some of which they make themselves. By Year 6, pupils use correct musical vocabulary, recognise musical notation and use tuned percussion to compose and perform.

84. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to learn an instrument, taught individually or in small groups by a peripatetic teacher, but there is very limited take up of this opportunity. The school runs a recorder group for pupils from Year 1 onward, and the ensemble regularly accompanies hymns in assembly, as well as joining in events in the village and in the nearby town. Pupils are encouraged to sing and take part in the mixed choir, which not only performs in school, but also entertains the local community at special festivals such as harvest or Christmas. The choristers join with other schools in the regional Young Voices programme in Birmingham, where they sing in a massed choir and begin to develop a real appreciation of the pleasure which music can give.

85. The co-ordinators work hard to promote music throughout the school. One teaches music in Years 3 to 6 and this, with the use of a commercial scheme, provides a good basis for ensuring progression in pupils' learning and experience. Resources are good and well used.

Physical education

86. From speaking to pupils and from discussion with the co-ordinator, it is clear that the school works very hard to encourage physical activity both during the school day and in many extra-curricular activities, and pupils clearly understand the benefits of exercise. All strands of PE are taught, including swimming at a local pool, and pupils enjoy the challenge this brings. There is a wide range of after-school clubs to develop games skills further, and there are good opportunities for competitive sport with local schools. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy a range of mixed-gender activities such as football, netball and cricket. Pupils enjoy dance activities and explore movement through music, with boys particularly enjoying maypole and country dancing.

87. The subject co-ordinator has clear ideas for the development of the subject through the school and encourages the involvement of professional sports people, such as members of league football and the county cricket clubs to coach the children. He ensures pupil participation in matches and events with other schools, so that the more talented are extended, and all pupils experience competitive and cooperative activities. Facilities and resources for physical activity are good. The hall is spacious, there are good hard surface areas, and the school benefits from a well used trim trail on the playing field.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This subject was sampled.

88. The areas of learning in PSHE are carefully planned and include a good range of activities and opportunities for all the pupils. For example, during the autumn term all the

classes work with the Life Education Caravan when it visits the school. The pupils will study their relevant part of the two-year programme and cover aspects such as 'friendship' and 'peer pressure'.

89. Other areas of learning are taught through the school's Healthy Schools programme. In addition, pupils learn about their responsibilities in school through a range of jobs they carry out, and parents spoke very positively about the way in which pupils of different ages play and work together both in school and at home. Pupils also learn about their role in the community, for example through their links with the senior citizens at Harvest Festival and their close links with the local church. In addition, sex and drugs awareness education is carried out in line with school policies.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	3
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	3

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