

INSPECTION REPORT

MEASHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Swadlincote, Derbyshire

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120146

Headteacher: Mrs Rosemary D Wilson

Lead inspector: Mr Michael J Morgan

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd January 2004

Inspection number: 256884

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	284
School address:	Bosworth Road Measham Swadlincote Derbyshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Nigel Pearson
Date of previous inspection:	21 st September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School serving the large village of Measham. It was formerly a coal mining community and the area has a large amount of rented accommodation along with more recent private housing development. There are areas of social deprivation. Currently the school has 284 pupils on roll. There is no nursery provision at the school or in the village, although local playgroups provide some pre-school experience for young children. There are 10 classes, of which most contain mixed year groups. There are 17 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals. There are 30 children on the special needs register of whom six have statements. The children's levels of attainment on entry to the Reception class are in line with those expected nationally.

The school achieved the Basic Skills Agency basic skills Quality Mark in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3547	Michael J Morgan	Lead inspector	Geography, history, physical education, special educational needs
19432	Susan C Howarth	Lay inspector	
17919	Jennifer Deans	Team inspector	English, music, religious education
33652	Jenny Whittaker	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, Foundation Stage curriculum
19120	Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Although it is providing an acceptable standard of education and is a caring, friendly community, this is a school with serious weaknesses.

New starters are effectively introduced into the Reception class where the children receive good teaching and achieve well. Early progress is maintained in the infants' classes but not consistently later, so that by 11, pupils are not reaching the standards they should. Whilst there are examples of good and very good teaching in all parts of the school, it is unsatisfactory for 10 and 11 year old pupils. Some key subjects are not managed sufficiently well. The behaviour of some, mostly older, children adversely affects the quality of their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and consequently make good progress. At present, the value for money provided by the school is unsatisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are well below average and have declined over the last two years.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory so that many pupils underachieve.
- There is no deputy headteacher and the present senior management team is not effecting change quickly enough. Too many management tasks remain with the headteacher.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and a thorough understanding of the changes needed to raise achievement.
- There is consistently good teaching in the Reception class and children make a flying start to school life.
- Pupils are well cared for by all adults in the school.
- There is imaginative and lively teaching in Year 2 and some Year 3/4 classes.
- Misbehaviour and half-hearted attitudes to learning by older pupils have an adverse effect on their learning and progress.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1998, the school has declined, overall. The quality of teaching and learning in English has improved. The teaching of reading is good and pupils' skills in speaking and listening have improved. Governors have a clearer understanding of school strengths and weaknesses. The quality of education for the youngest children is now good. Attendance and punctuality are now satisfactory. There has, however, been a serious decline in the standards achieved by pupils in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) and insufficient improvement in writing. Teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 classes are now unsatisfactory as are the behaviour and attitudes to learning amongst older pupils. Management of the school is less effective.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* - very low

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

The overall achievement of pupils is presently unsatisfactory.

Children achieve well in Reception and most make sound progress in Years 1 and 2. Achievement by the end of Year 6 is not as good as it should be. Most children enter school with levels of attainment similar to those expected nationally. Most will reach the early learning goals in all the areas of learning, or exceed them by the time they are six, due to good teaching. The standards reached by seven year olds in national tests are improving and are above average in reading. They are still below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. In lessons observed effective teaching has raised standards in writing to above average, and in mathematics nearer to the national average. There was a dramatic improvement in the performance of 11 year old pupils in national tests in 2003 in English, when attainment was well above average and due to very good teaching in Year 6. This has not been maintained and pupils are presently working at an average level. In mathematics and science standards are well below average. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and achieve well. Standards in ICT are below average. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in physical education are good.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Given the opportunity, most pupils can work co-operatively and support each other. Most pupils enjoy coming to school. The very positive attitudes to learning established in the early stages do not remain so for older pupils and unsatisfactory behaviour mars relationships and adversely affects progress. Attendance is satisfactory and most pupils arrive at school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is sound. Teaching is satisfactory overall but there is too much unsatisfactory teaching in Year 5 and Year 6.

Teaching in the Reception class is consistently good and sometimes very good. There is sound and often good teaching in Years 1 and 2. Pupils learn well, work hard and usually enjoy lessons. There are examples of lively and imaginative teaching in some Year 3/4 classes. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory. Teachers' knowledge is sometimes not good enough, explanations are unclear and work is infrequently matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils easily lose interest in the lesson and sometimes misbehave, and progress is limited. All pupils have access to a broad curriculum with good provision for the Foundation Stage. There are opportunities for enriching pupils' experience, such as team sports. Where there is good and very good teaching, pupils make effective progress as these teachers use assessment well. Pupils receive sound levels of support and guidance in their learning and their views about the school are sought and valued. Partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

The headteacher provides determined and purposeful leadership but its effectiveness is reduced by too heavy a burden of management, too little support from senior staff and lack of a deputy. The headteacher has made a thorough analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Priorities for school improvement are identified but require a greater sense of urgency and more rigorous management, particularly by subject leaders and the senior management team. Whilst overall governance is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements, the governing body could usefully develop its monitoring role.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are supportive of the school and particularly approving of the headteacher. They applaud the improved reports on children's progress and value the care and support given to children. Pupils like their school and are clearly fond of their teachers, although less than half the children thought lessons were always interesting. The inspection team supports the views of parents.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Year 5 and Year 6.
- Establish an effective senior management team.
- Improve the leadership and management of the curriculum.
- Raise standards in mathematics, science and ICT.
- Raise expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Effectively monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of school improvement plans.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of children in the Reception class is good. In Years 1 and 2 it is at least sound and often good. Children achieve satisfactorily and sometimes do well in much of Years 3 and 4. Achievement in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory. In the most recent national tests, most seven year old pupils attained the level expected for their age in reading but not in writing and mathematics. At 11, pupils achieve above average results in English, but standards are well below average in mathematics, science and ICT. Girls generally do better than boys other than in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 underachieve.
- Standards in science and in ICT are unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, speaking and listening skills; and in aspects of writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils make effective progress in guided reading.
- Aspects of writing such as handwriting and spelling are undeveloped especially in Years 5 and 6.
- There is a lack of opportunities for pupils to explain their ideas and responses.
- Pupils have unsatisfactory problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
- Standards in physical education are good.

Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is in line with what is expected of children of this age. In the Reception class, effective teaching ensures that children make good progress and most achieve the expected standards in the early learning goals in all the areas of learning. Most enter Year 1 as confident, well-motivated learners. They make sound progress and by the end of Year 2 most pupils are working at a level consistent with national expectations in science and mathematics. Very effective teaching in Year 2 is enabling pupils to achieve above average standards in reading and in their speaking and listening skills. Writing is improving.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (14.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (12.3)	14.6 (14.2)
mathematics	15.1 (14.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results in the national tests in 2003 for seven year olds were in line with the national average in reading but below average in writing and well below in mathematics. Outcomes were the same when compared with the results of schools with a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals. Girls performed slightly better than boys in all three subjects. Standards in reading notably improved in 2003 over the previous two years and there were some slighter gains in writing. Standards in mathematics remain consistently low. Analysis of test outcomes shows that in both writing and mathematics very few pupils are attaining the higher levels.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (22.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.9 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.8 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the 2003 national tests, standards at the end of Year 6 were well *above* average in English, but well *below* average in mathematics and science. There was a huge leap in achievement in English from the previous atypical year when standards were very low, and the gain is still significant when compared with performance over time. The gains were largely attributable to very good teaching last year. Observation during the inspection revealed good progress being made by pupils in Years 3 and 4 where they were being encouraged to write in a greater range of styles and for different purposes. Work seen during the inspection suggests that standards in English in Years 5 and 6 are barely satisfactory. Pupils underachieve in writing, presentation is poor and many pupils' handwriting is unsatisfactory. They have few opportunities to write at length. Teaching often fails to engage pupils sufficiently and this limits progress.
4. Similarly, unchallenging teaching results in unsatisfactory development of problem-solving skills in mathematics. In science, standards are well below national levels because of the weaknesses in teaching and weaknesses in subject leadership. The curriculum provided does not meet the needs of the pupils as lessons are rarely matched to pupils' abilities. More attention is being given to the skills of scientific enquiry, but much more rigour in lessons and a far more imaginative approach are needed if standards are to rise. With the exception of mathematics, girls do better than boys in national tests for 11 year olds.
5. Progress is uneven in Year 3 and Year 4 although the quality of teaching in lessons observed was, more often than not, enabling pupils to achieve standards in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. More emphasis is given to engaging pupils in the planned learning and in using a variety of teaching strategies so that pupils' different learning styles are taken into account.
6. The progress of pupils in their last two years is limited by inadequate monitoring of teaching and learning and the provision made for pupils.
7. Standards in ICT are below average for seven and 11 year old pupils who do not achieve well enough. The computer suite has only been recently installed and its use is not yet effective. Teachers' levels of expertise vary and planning does not take enough account of individual needs. Given the time constraints it was not possible to make firm judgements about standards in all other subjects, although there is evidence of good standards across the school in physical education. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Some pupils have made sufficient progress to enable them to be removed from the special needs register. This good progress is a result of effective structuring of work for pupils by teachers, guided by the support teacher and effective learning support assistants in the classroom. The support teacher operates a well-judged programme of withdrawal of pupils to work intensively with her on an individual basis, tackling key skills and enabling pupils to learn within the classroom context. There are two pupils in the school whose home language is not English and carefully targeted support is enabling them to cope well in lessons and to make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to work are variable and unsatisfactory overall. Their behaviour follows a similar pattern of variability and is also unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is a little below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour and attitudes in the Foundation Stage are good.
- In some classes circle time is being used well.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop independence.
- When not being supervised directly, there are significant numbers of pupils who misbehave.

Commentary

9. Pupils enjoy being at school and there are good relationships between children and most adults in school. In the Reception class attitudes are a strength. In Years 1 to Year 4, attitudes are satisfactory; however, in Years 5 and 6 positive work habits are not sufficiently well established.
10. Behaviour in the Reception class is good. Children work well together and they are interested in what they are doing. As pupils move through the school, their behaviour deteriorates and while satisfactory in Year 1 to 4, it is unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Pupils lack self-control around the school and poor behaviour in some classes disrupts lessons and affects the concentration and learning of other pupils.
11. There are classroom rules on behaviour which, in some classes, pupils have helped to develop. However, teachers' expectations in Years 5 and 6 regarding behaviour are low. When not being supervised directly, pupils' behaviour deteriorates and sometimes becomes boisterous. There is an occasional lack of respect by older pupils for adults. There is evidence of some concern among parents about bullying and the headteacher is responding to these by developing more formal procedures to address complaints of bullying. There are sound processes in place to address incidents of racism.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002-03 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Pupils' attendance is a little below average. The school has good processes in place to monitor attendance and has highlighted the importance of good attendance with parents. However, there are a significant number of absences from holidays taken during term time.
13. There is satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is some evidence of an appreciation of other cultures but this is limited. During the week of the inspection there was a very strong focus on the Chinese New Year and pupils provided a very good musical celebration of Chinese music in assembly. However, there is a lack of spirituality across the life of the school. Children can work well together in pairs but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work together to develop social skills. 'Circle time', during which pupils share thoughts and feelings, is making a positive contribution but is not

consistently embedded across the school. Boys do not tend to work with girls and a 'laddish' culture is developing in older groups. The school has a successful poetry club, run by pupils, and this enhances cultural provision in the school.

Exclusions

14. Exclusions are few. Every effort is made by the school to avoid this measure. There was just one excluded pupil last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	258	1	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	11	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils overall, although there are serious weaknesses, especially in teaching and in subject leadership. The provision made for pupils' care and welfare is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall because of the ineffective teaching in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' work is marked and assessed regularly, but the information gained is not used well enough to ensure that planned work is matched to pupils' abilities or to ensure that pupils make the best progress they can.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and assessment in the Reception class are consistently good and provide a positive start to school life.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in Years 5 and 6 is not good enough in science and mathematics.
- There is often a lack of rigour and pace in lessons, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- There is lively and imaginative teaching in Year 2 and in some Year 3/4 classes.
- Teachers' planning is consistently clear across the school.
- Teachers do not always plan for the range of pupils' abilities and there is a lack of challenge and opportunities for extended learning.
- Misbehaviour by some older pupils adversely affects learning and limits progress. This behaviour is not well managed.
- There are effective approaches to teaching guided reading and well-chosen resources.
- Most classroom assistants are skilled and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1(2%)	8 (18%)	15(33%)	16(36%)	5(11%)	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.

15. In the Reception class, teaching observed was consistently good. Children are eager to learn and make good progress. This is an improvement from the last inspection when progress was described as satisfactory. This effective teaching is due to a number of features:
- Planning sets out what children will learn and what they will do, and clearly identifies the level of adult support;
 - Good links are made between each area of learning;
 - There is an appropriate balance of adult-led learning and time for child-initiated activities;
 - All staff make observational assessments of children's learning and this information is well used to adjust planning.
16. Clarity in planning and carefully explained learning tasks are also important features of the good and very good teaching observed in the Year 2 class and some of the Year 3 and 4 classes. Teachers plan suitable activities to make sure that all pupils in the class have the opportunity to do well. These activities tend to involve active learning and pupils sometimes work in pairs to solve problems or to create a particular piece of work. This is then shared with the class.
17. A good example of this was observed in a Year 4 literacy lesson. Pupils worked in pairs and small groups to write their own 'rap' poem based on the ideas in 'Boneyard Rap' by Wes Magee. They used percussion instruments to emphasise rhythm and performed their poems with skill and considerable enthusiasm. Adult support was very well judged so that all pupils were able to fully contribute to the activity and to learn well. The encouragement and involvement of the teacher were especially notable in this effective lesson.
18. This degree of engagement in learning was not evident in lessons with the older pupils and especially those in Year 5 and Year 6. Whilst pupils are usually made aware of the planned learning at the start of lessons, teachers often do not use the variety of teaching strategies that are needed if all pupils are to make progress. In English, for example, pupils have few opportunities to write at length and as teaching lacks the pace, variety and liveliness associated with the good teaching elsewhere, pupils do not become sufficiently interested and involved in the activities to sustain the concentration needed to achieve well. In science, some lessons are too teacher led. Teachers are beginning to give more attention to the skills of scientific enquiry, but these opportunities are not yet consistently provided to ensure that pupils develop knowledge and understanding systematically.
19. In effective lessons, teachers show that they have a good knowledge of the subject matter and use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and to prompt them to think further. Classroom assistants often take note of those who respond frequently as well as those more reluctant to contribute. They can subsequently support pupils who do not understand particular points and help them to succeed, as when the teaching assistant encouraged Year 2 pupils to find totals of money by counting in their head. Those working alongside pupils with special educational needs are especially effective in supporting learning and are instrumental in the good progress they make. Effective liaison between the special needs support teacher, class teachers and support staff ensures that there is appropriate support and challenge.

20. In some instances, and especially in Years 5 and 6, teachers' subject knowledge is unsatisfactory, especially in mathematics and science. Tasks are too routine, they lack relevance and challenge and therefore make few demands on pupils. This is particularly the case with more able pupils and leads to inattentiveness, poor behaviour and pupils not doing as well as they could. Pupils are infrequently challenged in their thinking. Questioning is not targeted for specific pupils. Teachers' expertise in ICT is variable across the school, and not always good enough to promote good progress.
21. Teachers know the pupils well and keep accurate records of attainment. Pupils have individual targets for mathematics for example, that are set out in the front of their work books and most are aware of what they need to do to reach the next stage in their learning. However, information is not used well enough to plan for individual improvement and to monitor progress, especially of the more able pupils. Marking is more consistent than it was at the time of the last inspection and one Year 3/4 teacher has set out the features of marking on a large chart in the classroom, clearly expressed so that pupils are aware of what is being indicated in their work. Homework is used to support learning and the recently introduced homework diaries have been well received by parents wishing to support their children's learning at home.
22. Pupils generally have very positive views of their teachers and support staff and feel that much of their learning is enjoyable. Some older pupils suggested that they found science rather dull – perhaps a reflection of the lack of variety in lessons.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is satisfactory. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities that extend beyond the school day. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has breadth but there is unsatisfactory provision for ICT.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is good.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to tackle investigative work in mathematics or science.
- There are too few support staff to meet all curricular needs.
- The new resources for Guided Reading are good.
- Pupils with special needs are provided for well.

Commentary

23. The curriculum is generally broad and meets statutory requirements in providing for all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, there is a lack of balance, as some aspects of ICT are not addressed and the investigative aspects of mathematics and science are limited. Breadth is limited in Years 4 to 6. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides for a wide range of experiences and activities that support the children's good progress; it is a strength of the school. The curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the syllabus taught in Leicestershire schools and is being sensibly reviewed in light of the present rewriting of the agreed scheme.
24. The development of the ICT curriculum has been hampered by resource problems and by some lack of staff expertise. These issues are presently 'on hold' but the school has appropriate plans to bring about speedy improvements. Further training for teachers and close monitoring of the curriculum are necessary to make sure that pupils have planned opportunities to solve problems and to carry out practical investigations in mathematics and science.
25. The school makes appropriate provision for pupils' personal development through the personal, social and health education and citizenship programme and through the regular use of 'Circle Time'.

26. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good, and enhanced by the, usually, good quality intervention by support staff. The progress made by these pupils benefits from the good quality of planning and careful assessment of their needs. Arrangements for in-class support and also the provision made for individuals and small groups outside the classroom contribute to full curriculum access. The curriculum for pupils whose home language is not English is similarly good.
27. The extra-curricular provision made by the school is satisfactory; there is good provision for pupils to take part in after-school sporting activities.
28. The school has an adequate number of teachers but some classes, including Reception, would benefit from additional support, especially during English and mathematics lessons. On some occasions pupils in Years 1 to 6 become distracted or work at a slow pace because the teacher has difficulty coping with all those who require help at any one time. Teachers and support staff work very effectively together. This contributes to the good progress made by pupils with special needs and to equal access and opportunity for all pupils. The new high quality resources for 'guided reading' are enhancing pupils' enjoyment of reading and bringing about higher levels of achievement.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils in the school's work is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The procedures for child protection are good.
- Arrangements for ensuring health and safety are good.
- Monitoring and target setting through year groups are inconsistent.

Commentary

29. The school offers a good standard of care for all its pupils. Pupils are confident to approach members of staff for help or advice when needed. Induction arrangements in the Foundation Stage are good and the school has a 'buddy' system in place for pupils arriving new to the school during the year. These pupils settle quickly in to the life and routines of the school. There are good links with social services on child protection issues and the school handles such incidents sensitively and effectively. There are examples of teaching assistants dealing supportively with pupils, which underpins the caring attitudes of the school. The governing body carries out its responsibilities for health and safety well, using the particular skills of one of their members to good effect. The premises' officer attends meetings of the health and safety committee and issues are dealt with promptly and effectively, subject to budgetary constraints.
30. There is target setting for pupils in literacy and mathematics, but it is not yet consistently applied by teachers. The school has consulted pupils on improving school routines and has acted on their views appropriately. A school council is planned.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has improved annual reports on pupils' progress and their future targets.
- The school does not sufficiently encourage parents in to school to support children's learning.

Commentary

31. The school has strengthened links with parents through the regular 'Friday Focus' newsletters, the reintroduction of the 'Friday Family Assembly' and through improved annual reports to parents. The September meeting with parents provides a good basis for a discussion about children's progress and targets, which are then commented on in the summer term annual report. Parents have praised the headteacher, both for being 'out and about' first thing in the morning to talk to them and for her desire for greater involvement of parents. However, there is little encouragement for active involvement in the school and a number of parents have indicated that they would like to help in school but have not been asked. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept informed of their children's progress and are involved in the reviews of individual education plans. The school has sought the views of parents, for example, on the revised annual reports, and has acted on them.
32. There is a formal policy for homework and homework files are in place but they are not used consistently throughout the school and there is some confusion amongst parents about homework expectations and the amount and degree of parental support expected.
33. The school has satisfactory links with the community and used the local area as a learning resource. School events are well supported and the school engages with the community. For example, pupils are involved with Age Concern and have helped to design a logo for the community bus. Pupils at the school were also asked to design the centre piece for the Millenium Green. The headteacher and all staff are involved with the local 'Group 24 Schools' and there are close links with Ibstock Community College.
34. The school has good links with the two playgroups in the village and there is a good induction process for children new to Reception and their parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Management of key aspects of the school is unsatisfactory. The overall quality of governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A recent review of practice has led to improvements in governance; governors now have a better understanding of the school curriculum.
- The headteacher is setting a clear agenda for improvements in teaching and learning to raise standards. This is supported by appropriate and detailed action plans.
- Self-evaluation systems are not rigorous enough to bring about necessary improvements.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching in Years 5 and 6, and taking effective action to improve it, are unsatisfactory.
- There is no deputy headteacher and the present senior management team is not bringing about change quickly enough; too much of the improvement agenda remains with the headteacher.
- The governing body is not yet effective enough in monitoring and challenging the academic performance of the school.
- The leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory.

- The management of special educational needs is good.

Commentary

35. The governing body meets its statutory duties and is committed to a school where all pupils are included in all the opportunities offered. The governors are very supportive of the headteacher, and strongly committed to helping to bring about improvements. Governors regularly visit school and those with curriculum responsibilities observe lessons and discuss issues with coordinators. Governors do not, however, challenge senior managers and staff and hold them to account for the performance of the school. They are not clear about what needs to be done to raise standards and how they can contribute more effectively to the monitoring and evaluation of the school.
36. The headteacher joined the school less than two years ago. She has undertaken a thorough audit of all aspects of provision and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has introduced a number of organisational changes that have led to improved provision, such as bringing the Reception and the mixed Reception and Year 1 class within the school building. The improvement plan shows that she is clear about the priorities for change and is able to plan appropriate actions that, when implemented, are likely to lead to a better quality of education and the raising of standards. However, the management of unsatisfactory teaching lacks rigour and is resulting in standards of attainment that are too low and in unsatisfactory teaching of older pupils.
37. There is no deputy headteacher and this has weakened the capacity to manage improvements. Monitoring of performance and actions taken to raise standards of older pupils are both unsatisfactory. The school's systems for carrying out self-evaluation are neither well established nor challenging. Although the school improvement plan rightly emphasises the raising of attainment across all subjects, improvements in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are not being made quickly enough. The leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory.
38. Performance management systems are in place but not all members of senior management have the understanding and expertise to monitor colleagues and to offer the kind of effective feedback that will improve teaching. Present support for newly qualified teachers and for supply staff is unsatisfactory and this impedes the progress of some pupils.
39. However, some members of staff bring important strengths to the teaching and to subject management. These strengths are not, as yet, being systematically used to influence whole-school improvement. The skills and commitment of a large number of the support staff, when deployed appropriately, also add significantly to the capacity to secure improvement. The good management of special educational needs ensures that identified pupils make good progress throughout the school.
40. Financial management is satisfactory. The headteacher and governing body have approached spending decisions cautiously following a period of some uncertainty resulting from a year with no substantive headteacher and a fall in pupil numbers. The relatively large budget surplus has been earmarked for improvements to the building. Governors should have used available money to strengthen the senior management team in order to secure accelerated progress in school improvement. The principles of 'best value' are not yet being consistently applied.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	620,599
Total expenditure	566,527
Expenditure per pupil	2,023

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	37,456
Balance carried forward to the next	91,527

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Children enter the Reception class in the August or January before they are five. Most of the January entrants, who are the youngest children, join a Year 1 class. On entry children's attainment is broadly similar to that of others of their age. Children's pre-school experiences vary from attendance at a local playgroup to none at all. Children achieve well in most areas of learning and this represents good progress overall. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when children progressed at the expected rate.
42. The Reception class teacher has given a good lead in developing planning so that staff plan effectively together for the six areas of learning. Planning is carefully linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals, sets out what children will learn and what they will do, and clearly identifies the level of adult support. Good links are made between each area of learning. All staff make observational assessments of children's learning and this information is well used to adjust planning. This contributes to the good progress made by children. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led learning and time for child-initiated activities, although the lack of additional adult support means that there are missed opportunities to develop children's thinking, both indoors and outside.
43. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The coordinator, who has the mixed-age class, the Reception class teacher and support staff work well together. Action plans for improvement are clear and evaluations show that priorities of establishing an outdoor play area and improving ICT have been met. Since the last inspection the accommodation has improved and the Reception children now have a large classroom in the main building. There is a secure outside area with easy access from the classroom. This area is relatively new but is not yet regularly used to stimulate outdoor learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships are established and this makes children feel secure and confident.
- Children make very good progress because of the high expectations set for them and the majority will reach the national goals by the end of Reception, which is above average.
- Good induction procedures and established routines help new starters settle well.

Commentary

44. Teaching is good. The care taken to introduce children to school, which involves four visits before starting, ensures that new entrants settle quickly and feel secure. Relationships are very good, children are trusted, they are treated with respect and they in their turn are polite, kind and listen sensibly to each other. This contributes to the good progress they make. There is very little adult help to support learning, nevertheless children concentrate well during their play activities and work well independently. During a circle time in the Reception class children enjoyed singing a song, "When I'm feeling happy, when I'm feeling sad" and then happily offered suggestions about things that cheered them up. Almost all children including the new entrants joined in; they spoke clearly and in sentences, for example, "I like playing with my little sister", and other ideas included a cuddle, flowers and a necklace. During this session a child with special needs was very well included and supported by a classroom assistant, who had a very good understanding of his needs. Even when he became disruptive the other children

continued with their work. Children were praised and thanked for listening so well. The session ended with them passing a 'thank you' around the circle.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning and assessment are good.
- Elements of the literacy hour are taught in a fun, active way.
- Teachers and support staff focus on developing children's vocabulary and understanding of language.
- The lack of adult support at times means that opportunities are lost to raise standards during play situations.

Commentary

45. The teaching of literacy is good and ensures that the majority of children will reach the national goals by the end of Reception. It is well structured so that pupils enjoy an interactive whole-class session and then the teacher works with a focus group. A range of worthwhile activities is linked to the objectives for the week. Reading resources are attractive and children enjoy their guided reading sessions. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of literacy. Children who are already reading know to use the initial sound or look at the picture if they are unsure of a word. Those of above average ability can re-tell a story in order and explain the different characters. They have an understanding of capital letters and full stops and are beginning to write a sentence with support. Children working at the expected level for their age point to words as they read and re-tell a story with some prompting. Children in the early stages of reading are keen to talk about the pictures but cannot yet read words independently.
46. The Reception teacher engages children skilfully in stories; they listen attentively, respond well and love imitating the voices in the story of Owl Babies. Her clear speech is an excellent model for developing vocabulary. Paired work is used for children to secure ideas before answering; the teacher has high expectations and follows up questions on a big book with a more challenging one which involves reasoning. The children know the story well and because this is done as a game they are keen to answer and show that they have a very good understanding of the text.
47. During a play session two children play with owl baby puppets and act out the story using good expression in their voices; they use the resources sensibly and tidy up quickly and carefully when asked to do so. As there is no other adult in the classroom, the teacher cannot share in the success of this activity.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a range of fun interactive activities.
- Assessment is well used.
- Mathematical vocabulary is well modelled by teachers.
- The new entrants are taught alongside Year 1 children and the younger children do not always receive the support they need.
- The lack of support at times means that children in both the Reception and the mixed-age class do not have the opportunity to have their learning extended by another adult.

Commentary

48. Good and very good lively teaching means that children are enthusiastic about counting. It ensures that the majority are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of Reception. They enjoy a range of number rhymes and games in order to develop their skills. There is a quick pace in oral mental sessions and questions are targeted at children of different abilities and ages (in the mixed-age class). This means they all have the opportunity to contribute. There is a good focus on mathematical vocabulary and explanation: the more able children say, "Five and two make seven" when playing a dice game. The new entrants can recognise numbers one to five out of sequence. Teachers make learning fun and children make good progress. Activities are practical; therefore, children enjoy listening and counting the bounce of a big ball and counting in different voices, such as a posh voice, and the voice of a witch. Children working at or above the expected level for their age respond spontaneously and comment when working on one more and one less, "Counting backwards, that's how you do one less".

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is based on relevant topics.
- There are good links with language and literacy and this helps develop children's communication skills.

Commentary

49. Good planning helps link aspects of this area of learning together and staff are able to reinforce what has to be learned across a range of interesting activities. Teaching is good. Tasks are practical and new topics are carefully introduced, and therefore children remember them well. There is effective follow-up through a range of reading and writing activities. This helps children make links in their learning and contributes to their good progress. The majority are likely to reach the national goals by the end of the Reception year, which is above average.
50. Children can name body parts and understand that some things, such as bleach, are dangerous. The improved provision for ICT means that they are developing satisfactory computer skills. They have good mouse control, know the names of the computer parts and with a little prompting successfully remember how to program the Pixie toy. Everyday use of technology is encouraged so that children confidently use torches, a till and the cassette recorder.
51. The provision of a darkened tent enables children to investigate and explore light and dark. They discover what happens when they shine torches through colour paddles and on reflective surfaces. They are excited and share ideas with each other, "it shines, it's glowing, it shines back at you". The children concentrate for some time during this session, they show high levels of self discipline and their behaviour is exemplary.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning for a wide range of activities.
- Very good use of the hall to develop skills.
- Lack of opportunities to develop outdoor adventurous activities.

Commentary

52. Good planning for a wide range of activities provides good opportunities for children to develop dexterity. Children use small tools such as glue spreaders and paintbrushes well. They manipulate play dough confidently with their hands and with equipment provided. The school has thoughtfully provided left-handed scissors and the majority of children have good cutting skills. During an outdoor play session children use wheeled toys confidently; they have a good sense of space and keep a safe distance from each other. Good encouragement from a nursery nurse means that one child puts great effort into steering round a corner.
53. Teaching is generally good. Excellent teaching observed during a physical education lesson in the Reception class showed that children use space well to travel at different speeds and change direction when asked to do so. When involved in a bean bag game they show good control and reasonable accuracy for their stage of development. They behave very well and are thoroughly involved in the activity.
54. The lack of outdoor climbing equipment means that children have no opportunities to experience adventurous or imaginative physical activity outdoors, or the sheer joy of outdoor physical exercise. Their progress in this area of learning is satisfactory and the majority are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of Reception.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good planning for a wide range of media.
- Children work with independence and concentration.
- Children are taught the techniques for handling materials effectively.

Commentary

55. Good planning and teaching mean that children experience a range of opportunities which are well linked to other areas of learning. Children know a range of songs and rhymes by heart and sing tunefully. A variety of tools are provided for children to express themselves creatively. They draw winter trees using charcoal, paint elderberries using juice and produce detailed pencil drawings. They explore pattern and select from a range of natural and man-made materials to make their representations. Teachers' high expectations lead to work being done carefully and presented tidily. Children make good progress and most are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of Reception.
56. During a painting session, good questioning helped the children to understand how to make a shade darker or lighter. In a role-play activity, children played co-operatively in the shoe shop and used the relevant vocabulary, "I'll have the blue ones for the baby please".

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory overall by the time they leave the school because teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 are not good enough.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1.
- Standards in Year 2 are above average and improving because of good teaching.
- There is improved reading throughout the school as a result of a well-structured guided reading programme and the provision of good resources.
- Classroom assistants provide good support for lower attaining pupils.

Commentary

57. By the end of Year 2, standards are above expected levels in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Recent test results show an improving picture and a significant number of the present Year 2 pupils are working well towards attaining at a higher level. This represents good achievement in Years 1 and 2, reflecting the good teaching seen during the inspection. There has been improvement since the last inspection.
58. In spite of the dramatic rise in the recent end of Key Stage 2 tests, standards in the present Year 6 are no better than average. Too many pupils are not achieving at a level that might be expected given their previous performance, especially in writing. Boys' writing is generally not as good as that of the girls. Pupils are making better progress in reading because of a well-structured approach to the teaching of guided reading. The significant investment in high quality resources has encouraged enjoyment in reading and resulted in well-motivated learners in these sessions.
59. Speaking and listening are in line with expectations overall but progress is better in Key Stage 1 where pupils are offered frequent well-planned opportunities to discuss purposefully in pairs and to collaborate in a group. In Years 5 and 6 opportunities for focused pair and group discussion are often missed, with the result that many pupils are content to remain silent during whole-class discussion, whilst the more vocal, usually boys, respond to questions.
60. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand and use a good range of vocabulary. Key Stage 2 pupils show good understanding of vocabulary, including a range of technical language, but often need prompting to speak at length or to respond beyond the factual. Some teachers of the older pupils do not use supplementary questions well enough to encourage the children to reflect on what they are saying and to become more detailed and articulate.
61. Pupils in Year 2 read appropriate texts accurately and often with good expression. They can use a range of strategies to help them when meeting new or difficult words. Their response to questions shows that they read with understanding and that they have opinions about stories and characters. This quality of work resulted from the teacher's excellent modelling of reading aloud, very skilful questioning and the encouragement and valuing of every child's contribution.
62. In Year 6 pupils read accurately at an appropriate level. Some read fluently and with good expression. Achievements in reading are improving as a result of the good teaching and learning taking place in the short guided reading sessions. Pupils keep reading journals and, through a variety of relevant and interesting activities, are encouraged to respond critically to the

texts that they read. Teachers and classroom assistants work hard with questions and encouragement to support better understanding of features of genre and more complex language structures.

63. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and the pupil for whom English is not the home language. The school has a good team of support staff who are usually very clear about their roles and whose work is well focused on what their pupils are to learn. This results in good levels of achievement for these children.
64. The school has made some progress towards improving the teaching of writing but this has not, as yet, impacted on Years 5 and 6. Disappointingly few of the older pupils show evidence of attaining at the higher levels in their writing. There are good opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and to write at some length, especially in Years 2, 3 and 4. Very good teaching of writing was seen in a Year 2 literacy set where the teacher's use of skilful questioning and lively role-play resulted in a very high standard of letter writing, using word-processing. Pupils, in the role of grandma, were encouraged to write letters to their sister to tell her about the dangerous wolf in the woods.
65. The best teaching in Key Stage 2 was seen in Years 3 and 4 where pupils are beginning to make good progress in writing. Poems of a good standard were produced by Year 3 pupils who had become very motivated by opportunities to take part in group performance of poetry. Having enjoyed reading a range of poems, many of them great fun to perform, the pupils wanted to be able to do the same with their own work. The level of commitment to the task resulted in successful outcomes for all, both in terms of writing and of performance. A class of mixed Year 3 and 4 pupils made very good progress in the understanding of instructional writing because of the teacher's very lively explanations, well supported by visual examples, and the opportunity to follow instructions in order to make a mask.
66. In Years 5 and 6 pupils underachieve in writing. Presentation is poor and the handwriting of many pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length. The teaching of the older pupils lacks the pace, variety and liveliness observed in other classes. Pupils seem uninterested in learning because teachers do not use a range of strategies to provide the motivation to write for a true purpose and to write well. Activities are not planned well enough to meet all learning needs within the class. Because the teaching often fails to engage them, pupils are developing unsatisfactory attitudes to learning and some are disruptive. Teachers are too often having to spend time dealing with inappropriate behaviour and this slows progress yet further.
67. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory and have most obvious impact in the improvements in the teaching of reading. The subject coordinator is aware that there remains much to be done and she is clear about the areas of underachievement. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet sufficiently rigorous in identifying and dealing with this underachievement. There are suitable plans that have good potential to move the school forward, but these are not followed through vigorously enough to ensure that there are consistent and lasting improvements. An example is the introduction of a new handwriting scheme that is still not being followed consistently. There are similar inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work and in the use of target setting to help pupils know what they need to do next in order to improve. Many of the older pupils, therefore are not attaining levels of which they are capable.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

68. The school does have plans to guide teachers in developing pupils' language and literacy in other subjects. The use of talking partners in science in Key Stage 1 gives pupils good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Additional writing sessions in history and geography provide valuable opportunities for extended writing practice. In all subjects teachers put appropriate emphasis on the use of precise technical vocabulary.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory **overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average in the infants, but below average in the juniors.
- Good teaching in some year groups engages pupils well.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to apply their learning to problem-solving situations.
- Planning relates well to the National Numeracy Strategy.
- In some lessons there is a lack of challenge and pace.
- ICT is not used to support planned learning.
- There is good support for pupils with special needs.

Commentary

69. At the last inspection, standards were below average at the end of Year 2 but above average by the end of Year 6. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests standards were well below average at the end of both years. This represents a decline in the performance of the older pupils and a continuing trend of poor results for the younger pupils. Attainment at the higher levels for both Years 2 and 6 is well below expectations.
70. Standards of work seen during the inspection are close to average in Year 2 but remain below average for the older pupils. Pupils make reasonable progress in Years 1 and 2. This is not the case for pupils in Year 6, who do not achieve as well as they ought.
71. By the age of seven, most pupils have learnt the two, five and tens times tables and count confidently to 100. Lower attaining pupils work with numbers to 10 and they are beginning to develop strategies for mental calculation. With good encouragement from a teaching assistant they practise counting on by holding a number in their head. The average pupils work close to level 2, the accepted level for their age. They can order numbers to 100 and have a developing understanding of place value. The above average pupils work with some confidence above the expected level for their age. They can clearly explain their strategies for working out answers and demonstrate a sound knowledge of place value when adding on ten. About half of this year group can apply their knowledge of mathematics to solving simple problems involving numbers up to either 20 or 100. At times, the use of worksheets in both Years 1 and 2 prevents pupils from investigating numbers and developing their own methods of recording.
72. The oldest pupils in school are taught in two ability sets. The lower ability pupils are grouped with Year 5 pupils in set 2. By Year 6, pupils have progressed to formal methods of recording. They have a clear understanding of place value and know their tables up to 10. The more able pupils, in set 1, are confident working with equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals. They work at the expected level for their age but do not achieve as well as they could. The average to below average pupils in set 2 are able to add and subtract two- and three-digit numbers with varying degrees of accuracy. There are insufficient opportunities for all pupils to apply their skills in problem solving and investigative situations. Progress is unsatisfactory.
73. Teaching is generally satisfactory; it is good or very good in Years 2, 3 and 4; elsewhere it is satisfactory apart from some unsatisfactory teaching observed in a Year 5/6 lesson. There is a consistent approach to planning throughout school and this is impacting well on the structure of lessons. Most teachers share the learning objective effectively with pupils so that they understand what they will learn. All pupils have targets in their books but the teachers rarely refer to these during lesson beginnings or in the plenary session.

74. Good teaching includes questioning that enables all pupils to participate. Thinking time is given so that pupils can be clear about their ideas before answering. When lessons are lively and challenging pupils listen attentively and use mathematical vocabulary well to explain their reasoning. Resources were well presented and tidily organised. Teachers had high expectations of effort and behaviour and this meant that pupils worked with concentration and cooperated well with each other.
75. This momentum is not maintained in Years 5 and 6, where some lessons progress at a slow pace, and teaching strategies fail to involve all pupils sufficiently well. In a set 2 lesson observed pupils lost interest and became disruptive. In the most able set all too often volunteers are chosen to answer. Many of these are boys. Tasks are too routine, they lack relevance and challenge and therefore make few demands on pupils. An analysis of Year 6 books shows that teaching does not have high expectations of effort or work rate. Pupils in set 1 do not take pride in their work. Books are untidy and there is little volume of work. By contrast the work from the set 2 pupils is neatly presented to aid column addition and on some occasions helpfully marked. In both sets there is a lack of opportunities for interesting, in-depth investigations or problem-solving approaches. In all work scrutinised there was evidence of marking although this is inconsistent; only occasionally does it include a comment on progress or provide developmental feedback for the pupils. ICT is not used as well as it could be; it is not used to develop pupils' thinking or to enable them to apply their learning to other contexts.
76. In the majority of lessons support staff understand what is expected and work well with pupils. In a Year 2 class the teaching assistant encouraged pupils to find totals of money by counting in their head.
77. The school has analysed the attainment of pupils and identified the need to improve problem solving and to challenge the higher attainers. As a result teachers are expected to plan problem solving into their lessons and additional resources for the higher attainers have been provided. Currently progress in this is limited and it remains a priority for further development. The co-ordinator, who is relatively new to leading the subject, is developing her monitoring role well. As a result of monitoring teaching, she has introduced a much needed assessment system throughout school. This is in the early stages and the impact of this is yet to be evaluated. The coordinator's enthusiasm and commitment, combined with clarity of thought and the use of systematic monitoring programme, are crucial to raising standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Pupils use mathematics in different subjects, mainly science and geography, but this is incidental rather than planned and is an area for further development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**, and is much worse than at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are close to national requirements by the end of Year 1, but are falling in Years 2 to 6, and are now well below national levels by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is unacceptably varied in Years 3 to 6, which leads to uneven progress from class to class.
- The skills of scientific enquiry are not given enough emphasis.
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory.
- Links with other subjects are limited.

Commentary

78. Most pupils make sound gains in learning as they move through Years 1 and 2 and reach standards, which are close to national requirements by the end of Year 2. This is because the teaching is at least sound, and is sometimes good. Teachers give satisfactory emphasis to developing the skills of scientific enquiry, such as, when pupils from Years 1 and 2 carry out a simple investigation to establish from a range of materials which are waterproof. However, the subject, often linked to 'topic' work, has too low a profile to ensure pupils make the best possible gains in learning. The later picture is much worse, especially in Years 5 and 6. Results in the national tests are below those of similar schools. Standards are now well below national levels because of weaknesses in teaching, especially in Years 5 and 6, weaknesses in leadership, and the implementation of a curriculum, which does not meet the needs of many pupils because it is not matched carefully to their needs.
79. Teaching varies from unsatisfactory to good in Years 3 to 6. However, there are more weaknesses than strengths, and as a result, many pupils do not achieve as well as they can. For example, work is rarely matched to pupils' abilities, which results in pupils in different year groups in the mixed age classes completing the same work. This especially affects the more able who are not challenged enough. Some teachers do not manage pupils well. As a result, many do not have good attitudes to learning, which slows progress. Some lessons are too heavily teacher led, with teachers asking too few questions to move pupils forward. Teachers' expectations of presentation and marking are unacceptably varied, and subject knowledge is not always secure, indicating that further training is required.
80. There is evidence that teachers are starting to give more attention to the teaching of the skills of scientific enquiry, such as seen during the inspection in the coordinator's class. However, they are not yet consistently taught or have a sufficiently high profile to ensure that the pupils develop knowledge and understanding systematically. Teachers rarely require them to record investigations in ways other than writing, and much is copied, which led one pupil to comment in a group discussion that "science is boring".
81. The subject is not well led. The coordinator is not proactive enough in leading a drive to raise standards. For example, not enough use has been made of analysed performance data to help overcome identified weaknesses. The action plan lacks rigour because there are no timescales or success criteria to give it focus. There has been no recent audit of resources to ensure that all teachers know what is available. Coordination is not effective because it does not include the monitoring of teaching and learning or of pupils' work in order to identify what needs doing.
82. Pupils' literacy skills are starting to develop as teachers give more emphasis to encouraging pupils to complete their own records of investigations carried out. However, this is at an early stage of development. Pupils rarely have opportunities to develop ICT and numeracy skills in science at present.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national levels at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The new computer suite is not yet being used to best effect to benefit pupils.
- There are areas of the curriculum, which are not given enough emphasis.
- There are not enough links with other subjects to help develop important skills.

Commentary

83. Standards are below national levels. This is a worse picture than at the time of the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with national requirements. This is because there are unacceptably varied levels of teacher expertise, work is not matched to pupils' precise needs, there are still shortages of software, and the new computer suite has yet to make an impact to help improve teaching and learning.
84. All classes now have regular access to the computer suite. This gives all pupils good opportunities to develop key skills. Some teachers are beginning to use available technology in the computer suite to reinforce and extend learning. However, some groups are too large to enable pupils to derive maximum benefit. This is because the teacher cannot support pupils effectively, especially when no additional help is available. As a result, pupils spend time waiting for help when they could be developing their skills.
85. Teachers use national guidelines to help them teach what is required. However, some areas are not given enough attention. Despite the availability of resources, control technology is still neglected, as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils do not yet share ideas and information using e-mail. They rarely use tables, images and sound in their ICT work. However, some pupils now use the digital camera effectively.
86. Leadership by the headteacher, in the absence of the permanent post holder, is sound. She has compiled a rigorous action plan of proposed developments with clear time scales for their completion. However, some of these needed priorities will be 'on hold' until the coordinator returns.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

87. Pupils do not use their ICT skills enough. There is limited evidence of their use in other subjects. Pupils are starting to use the Internet to research information, such as when older pupils find out about the origins of salt in science. However, older pupils do not use spreadsheets or tables to extend work in mathematics and science. There are few examples of ICT work on display or recorded in pupils' books. Classroom computers are not used enough to support learning in other subjects because of a lack of teacher expertise, and software shortages. The school recognises that the use of ICT to assist teaching and learning requires further development, but now needs to identify in planning more opportunities to develop and use these skills.

HUMANITIES

88. Work provided for pupils in **geography** and **history** meets statutory requirements. These subjects were not specific areas of focus for the inspection, and only a very limited range of evidence was sampled. As a consequence, there is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on the quality of the provision.
89. Due to the structure of the school timetable it was not possible to observe any lessons in geography. Scrutiny of pupils' work in books and in classrooms, however, showed that in the earlier stages, there is an appropriate focus on developing an understanding of the locality, routes to school and the nature of the environment. This is built on well in Year 3, where the study of Measham is then compared with a village in Kenya. The notion of writing a letter to a 'pen friend in Kenya' enabled pupils to summarise their knowledge of the village with a sense of purpose and audience. This study effectively supports pupils' growing awareness of localities beyond their own. For example, Year 4 pupils had investigated a 'day in the life' of a child in the Kenyan village and the kind of foodstuff s/he would be buying.

90. As classes in Year 3 and 4 are mixed-age, it is appropriate to follow a similar theme, but there is sometimes little difference in the nature of the work expected of the older pupils. Occasionally, it is evident that more able pupils extend work further through more elaborate writing. Greater consideration could be given to the structuring of activities so that higher attaining pupils have the opportunity to pursue a particular aspect of a study in greater detail. By Year 6, pupils show a sound understanding of maps and of how to use them to locate information. They have incorporated world events in their studies of extreme weather conditions and made an interesting examination of earthquake events in California. Most pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of European capitals. The school uses national schemes appropriately. Overall, standards seen from pupils' work are broadly in line with those expected for their age.
91. Two history lessons were observed. They were both based on pupils developing a sense of the past and distinguishing between old and new. The use of a visitor who shared a collection of her childhood toys with the children created an effective focus for the children's attention and involvement. Year 1 pupils were able, with a little support, to frame simple questions to ask the visitor. The pupils in Year 2 also had the opportunity to question the visitor and their interests showed appropriate progress in understanding and curiosity from the younger children. Their inquisitiveness included an interest in the materials from which the toys were made and a fascination with those fashioned from tinplate. They were also able to distinguish between real objects from the past and the notion of 'replicas'. In both lessons there was a good emphasis on language development, and particularly speaking and listening skills.
92. Scrutiny of the work of older pupils showed a similar effective connection between literacy skills and historical study skills. By Year 6, for example, in a study of World War Two, pupils had written in the style of Anne Frank. Studying the Victorian period, pupils had written effectively in role of a maid, describing her daily duties and moments of leisure. Year 5 pupils had investigated occupations of the past in Measham and showed a range of insights into Victorian life. The studies included an appropriate use of ICT for displaying data. Overall, standards seen in lessons and from pupils' work are broadly in line with those expected for their age in both key stages. Pupils achieve well.

Religious education

93. Provision for religious education is satisfactory. Pupils are confident in discussing stories from different religions and in relating them to their own lives. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the 1997 locally agreed syllabus for the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils gain knowledge about similarities and differences amongst religions and are gaining a more detailed understanding of Christianity. They can retell some stories from the Old and New Testaments and draw significant messages from them. They are able to relate abstract concepts such as 'forgiveness', 'justice' and 'compassion' to their own experiences. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning about different faiths and are confident in answering questions and offering ideas.
94. The subject contributes appropriately to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It draws positively on their own family and religious backgrounds and teaches them to respect differences. It also contributes well to the development of pupils' literacy skills.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

95. Too few lessons were seen in these subjects to report provision.
96. Standards in **art and design**, which were judged as sound in the last inspection, have been maintained. The work on display shows that pupils have opportunities to work with a wide range of two- and three- dimensional media. They are familiar with using sketchbooks to plan and practise their ideas. Pupils like art and design and talk enthusiastically about the subject. In

Years 3 and 4 the work on exploring sculptures is systematically recorded and well evaluated by pupils. Drawing skills, however, are not well developed throughout school. Techniques of shading and blending, such as those on the Victorian display, are not used to add depth to the pictures.

97. In a Year 3 lesson, taught by the coordinator, pupils responded well. The lesson was well structured and good focused questioning built up pupils' understanding in a step-by-step way. ICT was effectively used to enhance learning and involved a multicultural aspect. Very good relationships and class management contributed to the good progress made by all pupils in this lesson.
98. The coordinator is new to subject leadership; she has a clear view of areas for improvement and the subject knowledge and skills to provide an effective lead.
99. Evidence from the inspection indicates that **design and technology** is given more attention in Years 3 and 4 than in other classes. For example, pupils use a pneumatic system to make moving monsters from their simple designs, and, in a good link with literacy, write instructions of how to make them. They plan a healthy lunch box and design a safe night-light. They use their sewing skills to create colourful hand puppets and wallets from labelled designs to standards, which are close to national expectations. However, the subject was not prominent in the timetable during the inspection and there was insufficient evidence of work available on which to assess quality.
100. One lesson was observed in **music** during the inspection but information provided by staff, discussion with pupils and performance during assembly show that pupils perform confidently and are working at least in line with expectations in composing and in their knowledge and understanding of music. Year 5 pupils discussed traditional songs and football chants confidently, showing good understanding of rhyme and rhythm structures.
101. The coordinator has provided appropriate resources to ensure that pupils make progress in all aspects of the music. She also works closely with staff who have less confidence in the teaching of the subject. The recruitment of a visiting specialist to take additional lunchtime sessions with the older children has resulted in a good standard of performance from the pupils involved. Enjoyment and appreciation of music are enhanced by the opportunities that the school provides for them to perform to an audience. The whole school listened very attentively to a voice and percussion performance provided by Year 5 and 6 pupils to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.
102. Two lessons of **physical education** were observed. There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements on provision, or on the general quality of teaching and standards reached. However, the planning and structure for the two lessons seen, were good. The lessons had a clear overall shape that included appropriate warm-up and warm-down activities. Pupils are appropriately dressed for physical education and are aware of the procedures and expectations of working in the school hall and using small apparatus.
103. In a dance lesson in Year 4, the teacher's enthusiasm fired the imagination of the pupils who responded well to the story theme and interpreted emotions in the music skilfully. The pupils could draw on a range of movement and cooperate effectively to create dance sequences. The teacher constantly encouraged pupils and used demonstration by pairs of pupils to model key teaching points. Where the teacher made interventions, they were purposeful, precise and helped pupils to improve their performance.
104. A Year 2 gymnastics lesson was also well structured and had a well-focused key skills' section, which was sandwiched between useful warm-up and cool-down sequences. Pupils worked individually, balancing a ball on top of a small bat, and then repeating the activity but on the move. This demanded skill and persistence and pupils worked hard at the task.

105. There is also evidence of a range of games' activities, especially in Key Stage 2. There is strong emphasis on competitive team sport with football, netball, badminton and athletics all featuring in the school programme. Matches are played against local school teams and Measham has a reputation for good levels of skill. The school has also enriched the physical education curriculum through the involvement of local sports providers, such as Leicester Tigers, for 'tag rugby' and Leicester Cricket Club for 'quick cricket'. The coordinator for physical education is an enthusiast for the subject, leads well and supports colleagues effectively.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

106. Too few lessons were seen to judge overall provision. A reasonable range of opportunities is available for pupils. It is mainly taught through planned lessons which often involve the use of circle time. There is no evidence to indicate how other subjects can contribute to personal, social and health education and citizenship.
107. As yet, there is no representative school council to consider the views of all pupils, although the older pupils are now involved in decision making. As a response to their request for an alternative lunchtime arrangement, these pupils have supervised lunch in their classrooms.
108. During a Year 5/6 personal, social and health education lesson observed pupils explored the issue of smoking. They explained their views clearly and confidently and listened politely to each other's ideas.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	5
Attendance	4
Attitudes	5
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	5
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
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	5
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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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