

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Whetstone

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120202

Headteacher: Mrs S Bracey

Lead inspector: Mr N Hardy

Dates of inspection: 4-6 May 2004

Inspection number: 257933

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	251
School address:	Wale Road Whetstone Leicester Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE8 6NJ
Telephone number:	0116 2775750
Fax number:	0116 2775750
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Hewitt
Date of previous inspection:	11 January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Situated in the village of Whetstone on the fringes of Leicester, the school is of similar size to many other primary schools. It has Church of England aided status. The school gained the Investors in People award in 2003 and is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools national initiative. Most of the pupils are from a white British heritage with a small number of pupils coming from different ethnic groups. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English and all are well integrated into the life of the school. There are currently no Traveller or refugee pupils on the school roll but there are six looked after pupils. A below average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are a below average number of pupils on the school's special educational needs list but a broadly average number of pupils have statements of special educational needs. Of these pupils a majority have social and behavioural problems with the others experiencing learning difficulties. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is below average. There is little evidence of the admission or transfer of pupils into and out of the school at times other than normal ones.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
29262	Mr N Hardy	Lead inspector	English English as an additional language Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs.
19320	Mrs B Attaway	Lay inspector	
23453	Mrs C Cressey	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Music
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Brookbridge & Bedford
13A Market Place
Uttoxeter
Staffordshire
ST14 8HY

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	17
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	20
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and satisfactory value for money. Children enter the Reception class with below average attainment and make steady progress. Although many children of this age achieve satisfactorily a significant minority are not provided with sufficient challenge and could do better, especially in areas where children make choices about what they are going to learn. Pupils in the infants and juniors are generally working to their potential and achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and the education provided is satisfactory overall but is not always of a consistently high quality. Pupils make more rapid progress in Year 2 and Year 6 where the standard of teaching is better. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory but with several areas where improvements are required. Many of these are closely linked to staff sickness problems.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Current standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are below average by Year 6, largely because of the above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs.
- Attendance and punctuality are promoted well and contribute positively to pupils' good attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils' spiritual and social development is good.
- The level of challenge for children of Reception age is sometimes unsatisfactory and limits their overall achievement.
- The special educational needs coordinator and learning support assistants provide well for lower ability pupils.
- The provision of activities outside the school day is good.
- The school has faced significant staff absence problems in the last two years and, as a result, planned improvements in standards have been disrupted and delayed.
- Assessment systems and procedures have been improved but now need to be consistently used by teachers in planning to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 in English, mathematics, and science, have not risen as quickly as in many schools since the last inspection. A significant factor in this has been the staffing difficulties the school has suffered over the last two years. Largely because of this, improvement has been unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Results in national tests for pupils in Year 6 rose steadily between 2000 and 2003 in English, mathematics and science. When compared with all schools nationally results in 2003 were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The Year 6 results are comparable with similar schools in mathematics and science and better in English. In 2003, an above average number of pupils achieved the more difficult Level 5 in each of the above subjects. Results for pupils at the end of Year 2 remained below national averages in 2003 but overall have risen more rapidly than in many other schools since 2000.

Standards for pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. The pupils' progress is uneven and this is because the high turnover of teaching staff has limited opportunities for subject leaders and the headteacher to rigorously monitor and improve the quality of teaching and ensure that agreed policies are consistently and effectively applied. Pupils' with special educational needs and those from different ethnic heritages make similar progress to other pupils. Standards in information and communication technology are average in Year 2 but below average by Year 6. Where judgements could be made in other subjects, standards were average. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their attendance is well above national levels.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of the education is satisfactory with some areas that are good. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although the amount of good teaching seen is below that in many schools. Teaching is often good in English and mathematics and is of better quality in classes containing Years 2 and 6 pupils than in other year groups. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection and there is now a much better balance between English and the other subjects in the curriculum. A good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors enriches the curriculum and helps to raise pupils' interest. Pupils' writing skills are beginning to be used more effectively in other subjects but there is little evidence that skills learned in information and communication technology are being used widely to support work in other subjects because of limited resources in classrooms.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory, as is the leadership of the headteacher. Considerable staffing difficulties have delayed several of the initiatives contained in the useful school improvement plan. Some essential aspects of management such as the rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and planning and the development of the role of subject leaders have not progressed sufficiently because of the heavy teaching responsibilities that the headteacher has had to undertake. The governors play an active role in the management of the school and are very supportive. Governance of the school is satisfactory. The administration of the school runs smoothly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are supportive of the school although a minority expressed concerns about bullying and the level of homework. These issues have been investigated and evidence indicates that there are some inconsistencies in the application of school policies. Most parents agree that their children enjoy attending school and most pupils say that they are happy at school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology by the end of Year 6.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching through rigorous monitoring and support.
- Increase the levels of challenge and expectation for children of Reception age to ensure that they all make good progress.
- Ensure that the improved assessment procedures are used more effectively and consistently in planning what individual pupils need to learn next to raise their attainment.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils currently in Year 6 and Year 2 achieve satisfactorily and to their potential, despite standards in English, mathematics and science being below average levels. Achievement is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage, but a number of children in the Reception year are not achieving as well as they could because the level of challenge for each child is sometimes inappropriate and expectations are not high enough. Over the previous five years, girls have usually achieved higher results than boys in national tests taken in Year 2 and Year 6, especially in reading and writing. Currently there is little difference between the attainment of girls and boys.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average for pupils currently in Year 6.
- Pupils' progress and their achievement in some classes have been adversely affected by prolonged staff absence and several changes of teacher.
- In the 2003 national tests, an above average number of pupils achieved the more difficult Level 5 in English, mathematics and science.
- Despite standards remaining below average in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 2, improvements in results have been better than those seen in most schools nationally.

Commentary

1. The results achieved in 2003 by pupils in Year 6 show that standards have continued a steady rise since 2000. Improvements were particularly significant between 2002 and 2003 in mathematics and science where standards rose sharply. In English, girls have achieved higher results than boys in each year since 2000 but in mathematics and science there are no significant differences in performance. Results from 2003 show that a well above average number of pupils achieved the more difficult Level 5 in English and above average numbers achieved Level 5 in mathematics and science. However, more than twenty per cent of pupils did not achieve the average Level 4 in the subjects tested. This has been recognised by the school through its analysis of data and raising the attainment of these pupils has been a focus of attention during this year.
2. Results attained by pupils in Year 2 have shown improvements in both reading and writing since 2000. Although results have remained below average, in almost all cases it has been the below and well below average performance of boys in both reading and writing that has dictated the overall school results. Action has been taken by the school to remedy the problem and evidence from the current inspection using the school's improved assessment procedures indicates that the standards achieved by lower ability pupils are rising. Overall, the trend of improvements in standards in Year 2 has been better than the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (27.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.0 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Evidence from the observation of lessons and a scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that standards attained by pupils currently in Year 6 have fallen and are below average, largely because an above average number of pupils in the year group have special educational needs. Overall, however, these pupils have achieved satisfactorily and are working at appropriate levels given their ability. Pupils' progress has been adversely affected by the regular changes to teaching staff, particularly over the previous two years. Standards in Year 2 remain below average, despite some good teaching in both classes containing Year 2 pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage make steady progress although many children fall short of the levels expected for their age. Although many of these children achieve satisfactorily, a significant minority do not make as much progress as they should because of low levels of challenge in some activities. Overall, achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but with room for improvement.
4. Levels of attainment in English in Year 2 and Year 6 span a wide range but are below average overall. More able pupils are eager to provide answers and are confident and articulate speakers. Despite considerable encouragement and opportunities, many others have difficulty in recalling the appropriate technical vocabulary when giving answers and contributions to discussions are limited. Reading skills are taught appropriately and higher attaining pupils read with confidence and expression. However, many pupils still read hesitantly and with limited understanding of the text, resulting in overall standards that are below average. Good levels of support are provided for less able pupils through additional classroom support and, where necessary, through being taught in small groups. Opportunities to develop writing skills are provided through science, history and geography and although standards are below average pupils achieve satisfactorily. Spelling skills are appropriately taught enabling many pupils to attain satisfactory standards. The presentation of work is often good.
5. Standards in mathematics in both Year 2 and Year 6 are below average levels. More able pupils in Year 2 are able to complete accurate mental calculations; many of the other pupils still rely on practical apparatus to aid this. By Year 6, mental calculation skills have improved and pupils are able to use quick mental recall skills. Many pupils of all age groups have difficulty in solving real life problems. Standards in science also remain below average and many pupils find investigational science difficult and many do not have a secure understanding of ideas like conducting a fair test. Although standards in information and communication technology in Year 2 are at expected levels, with pupils able to program and control a robot to follow a set route, older pupils have previously had more limited opportunities to experience computer technology and have gaps in their knowledge. This is resulting in below expected standards by Year 6. In other subjects where judgements could be made, for example, in history, geography and physical education, standards are at expected levels by Years 2 and 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' **very good** attendance and punctuality reflect their enjoyment of school. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**, and have remained at these levels since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is well above the national average; unauthorised absence is below the national average.
- Pupils' spiritual and social development is good.

Commentary

6. In most lessons, behaviour is good. However, in a few lessons when teaching lacks pace and focus, the behaviour of a minority of pupils deteriorates as they lose concentration and this affects their learning. There have been no exclusions over the last year. Pupils from the

different ethnic minorities are well integrated into the school and make similar progress to their peers.

7. Prior to the inspection, pupils and parents expressed concern about bullying. Conversations with pupils in all years show they understand what constitutes bullying but report that incidents are dealt with promptly. However, there are indications that there is some inconsistency in dealing with the problem, partly because of the high numbers of supply staff.
8. Pupils' spiritual and social development is good; moral and cultural development is satisfactory. The Christian ethos is evident throughout the school. Good links with three local churches contribute to pupils' good spiritual development, as do the opportunities to provide music for local events. Time for reflection helps them to review their actions. Christian values are evident in the good quality of relationships throughout the school. For example, in the *Lighting the candle* book, nominations show friendship is important and valued – *always cheers me up by making me laugh* and *when I came here she made me welcome*. The reward systems acknowledge success and this raises self-esteem.
9. Pupils' eagerness to participate in extra curricular activities makes an effective contribution to their good social development. Year 6 pupils organise events through the Children's Committee, developing their social skills and business acumen. They enjoy raising money for local charities such as the refurbishment of the bells at St Peter's Whetstone. Responsibilities throughout the school, such as setting up for assembly, are done sensibly and, together with electing members of the Children's Committee, make an important input to social, personal and citizenship development.
10. Pupils' moral and cultural development continues to be satisfactory. Their moral development is encouraged through devising their own class rules and ethical discussions such as the introduction of identity cards. The demonstrations of Indian dancing, the visit to a Leicester Temple, and display work such as books for Africa week, have contributed to their satisfactory cultural development. Their study of festivals in other faiths helps them to understand others may have valid beliefs that are different to their own. The school has recognised the limited opportunities for pupils to be exposed to different cultures and is seeking ways to remedy this.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
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.

11. The weekly monitoring of attendance is rigorous and it makes an important contribution to the high levels of attendance and the low levels of unauthorised absence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is of satisfactory quality overall and improves in those classes containing pupils from Year 2 and Year 6. Some of the teaching, especially of the youngest children is not sufficiently challenging to ensure that they progress as much as possible. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection and pupils have a wide range of opportunities to extend their learning through extra-curricular activities and educational visits. Despite considerable staffing problems a positive learning ethos has been maintained in the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. The quality of assessment is now satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient good teaching, particularly of younger junior pupils, to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Teaching is predominantly good in classes containing Year 2 and Year 6 pupils.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively.
- Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection but are not used consistently to raise standards.
- Expectations are not high enough in the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactor y	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (12%)	10 (30%)	17 (51%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Satisfactory teaching enables the majority of pupils to make satisfactory gains in their learning. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection. The teaching is not as good as the national picture and many pupils could do better. Less than half the teaching seen was good or better and two unsatisfactory lessons were also seen. Most of the challenging and effective teaching was seen in classes containing pupils from Year 2 and Year 6. Frequent changes in staff and long-term absences have played a significant part in the lack of good teaching. The headteacher's heavy teaching commitment means there is insufficient time to rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and provide sufficient guidance and support to weaker teachers. Because the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school, pupils' progress is varied and the good teaching seen in some classes is not sufficient to enable pupils to make consistent progress and achieve average standards by Year 6.
13. Some of the teaching seen was uninspiring and as a result pupils did not work as hard as they could and achieve higher standards. Teachers explain new ideas clearly and provide appropriate demonstrations and examples to enable pupils to have a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn. During lessons most pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding but independent tasks for average and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenging and many pupils do not reach the levels they are capable of. In some classes regular recent changes in teacher disrupt pupils' learning, resulting in inconsistent progress.
14. Where teaching is good or better, pupils work to capacity and often make rapid strides in their learning. In Year 2 and Year 6, teaching is enthusiastic and challenging. There is an expectation that pupils will work consistently hard and produce their best and work is carefully matched to pupils' abilities. Questions are very focused on checking pupils' level of understanding and extending their knowledge. In independent tasks, effective and well-targeted adult support is on hand to provide suitable prompts and encouragement to less confident pupils, while additional more challenging tasks are provide for those pupils who work at a faster rate. Pupils rise to the challenge and are eager and confident learners. As a result the majority make rapid gains in their learning and achieve well.

15. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and those who learn at a slower rate. Their help ensures that these pupils are included sufficiently in the lessons and are able to make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets.
16. Assessment arrangements have improved since the last inspection and there are now a wide range of tests and systems in place to monitor, record and track pupils' progress. However, the systems are often cumbersome and are not always easily interpreted to provide clear and detailed information about how well pupils are progressing through the national curriculum levels. Not all teachers are using the information sufficiently well to plan work for individuals and groups of pupils and this limits its usefulness in driving up standards. Where assessment is used well, for example in Year 2 classes, pupils' strengths and weaknesses are quickly identified, work is matched to their needs and the result is that most pupils make rapid strides in their learning.
17. In the Foundation Stage, teaching overall is satisfactory but is not sufficiently challenging to enable all children to achieve as well as they are able. Although they make satisfactory progress, an insufficient number of children reach the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception year. Assessment information is not being used effectively in helping the teacher plan what individual children should learn next to ensure that they progress well.

The curriculum

The school offers a **satisfactory** curriculum, providing a broad range of worthwhile learning opportunities. The curriculum affords a satisfactory preparation for secondary school. The accommodation is adequate and there are sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The balance of the curriculum, together with long term planning for all subjects, has improved since the previous inspection.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- The need for high numbers of supply teachers has led to a disrupted education for some pupils.

Commentary

18. The curriculum is broad and is more balanced than during the previous inspection. Although there is an emphasis on the teaching of literacy and mathematics, sufficient time is now devoted to other subjects. Long term planning has improved since the previous inspection. Clear schemes of work are now in place for all subjects. These are soundly based on the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and on other national guidelines, supplemented by commercial schemes of work. In subjects other than English and mathematics, work is planned on a two-year rolling programme, to ensure that the needs of pupils in mixed age group classes are met. In Years 3 to 6, mathematics is taught in ability sets, so that work can be matched more closely to pupils' varying needs. Although provision for the majority of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, some more able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is because the activities provided do not fully use and extend the skills children have learned in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology. The school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship. The school is aware that total weekly teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is below nationally recommended levels.

19. The school tries to develop and improve the curriculum whenever possible. A new scheme of work in music, for example, has recently been introduced. However, implementing change in the curriculum has not been helped by high staff turnover.
20. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provides the pupils with opportunities to pursue their interests outside lessons. Parents appreciate this provision. Apart from clubs for football, netball, 'sporting dreams', and gymnastics, there are clubs for recorders, chess and information and communication technology. There is a choir, which performs at De Montford Hall and at local churches, and a 'newspaper club'. The school participates in football and basketball competitions, with reasonable success. The curriculum is enriched further by a wide range of visitors and school visits to places such as Birmingham, Coventry and Bradgate Park. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to participate in residential visits to Norfolk and the Peak District.
21. A high turnover of staff, together with staff absences, has hindered the progress of some pupils. During the inspection, the headteacher was teaching full time, as a result of difficulties in recruiting temporary staff to cover absences. There are an adequate number of teaching assistants, who support pupils effectively in lessons. Members of the administrative staff make a valuable contribution to the daily running of the school, as do premises and cleaning staff. The accommodation is adequate, though access to parts of the school would be difficult for pupils with severe mobility problems. Strengths include the information and communication technology suite and an easily accessible library, which holds a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Outside, there are adequate hard play areas, with plenty of benches and picnic tables, and a large field. There are sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects. Greatly improved resources for information and communication technology resulting from the computer suite have been a significant factor in rising standards in this subject. However, classroom based resources for information and communication technology are limited and this restricts application of the technology in other subjects..

Care, guidance and support

Pupil care, health and safety are **satisfactory**. Provision of support, advice and guidance are also **satisfactory** as is the involvement of pupils in decision making in the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection arrangements and the support of children in public care are good.
- Induction¹ for Reception pupils is very good.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff have enabled trusting relationships to be maintained even though staff turnover has been high.

Commentary

22. Child protection training is good and all members of staff are presently receiving training and this provides effective support for all pupils. The school is well aware of the individual needs of children in public care and works closely with external agencies. This gives good encouragement to these children and promotes their self-esteem. Good links with the playgroup and the quality of induction arrangements enable the youngest pupils to settle in confidently. The good quality of relationships with adults has been maintained since the last inspection despite the high staff turnover.

¹ Induction refers to the arrangements the school makes for receiving new pupils into the school and helping them to settle and make friends.

23. Monitoring of pupils' behaviour and personal development is satisfactory. The school ensures that all pupils receive at least one award each year; this is good practice and raises pupils' self esteem.
24. Health and safety issues are monitored regularly and this is good procedure. First aid training is of a good standard as is the safe keeping of medicines administered in school. The biennial health and safety week and the use of specialist agencies, highlight specific safety issues such as *stranger danger*. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, reinforced by the limitation on the type of food allowed in school and the organisation of events such as a sponsored walk.
25. The incident book frequently has multiple daily entries, due in part to the rigour with which entries are recorded; it also suggests that lunchtime play may be regularly too active. The book is monitored well, but analysis of why these incidents occur may provide guidance in making lunchtime play safer for all pupils and respond to pupils and parents' concern about bullying.
26. The school takes an appropriate part in the countywide pupil survey, enabling all pupils to express their views on school life; the outcome of which is shared in assembly. Members of the Children's Committee are drawn from Year 6 only and this limits opportunities for younger pupils to develop skills and to make a more direct impact on how money is raised and spent.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **satisfactory**, although parents consider them to be good but with some reservations. At the last inspection this aspect was very good. Links with the community are satisfactory and with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Newsletters are informative and this supports all parents.
- The homework diary is a good two-way communication tool for parents of younger children.
- Good links with other schools have been established.
- Homework is not consistently set and monitored by all teachers.
- Pupils' annual reports are not sufficiently informative and do not always provide targets for improving standards.

Commentary

27. Parents of younger children receive good advice on how to help their children at home. The sharing of curriculum information with all parents each term is useful, although they would appreciate knowing when different aspects will be taught. Parents are appreciative of the guidance they receive to help their children prior to the national tests. However, parents of older children want to be involved to a greater extent in their children's learning and establish a stronger home-school partnership. Parents' negative responses to events such as drug awareness have resulted in cancellation.
28. Inconsistency in the setting of homework in some years does not regularly reinforce pupils' learning. Homework is not consistently monitored for quality or appropriateness. Parents do not always know when homework is expected or how much time should be spent completing the work. Parents say they would feel better informed about their children's progress if they were able to see marked homework more frequently than at the two consultation evenings.
29. The head teacher is available daily after school and many parents make good use of this opportunity when the need arises. A small number of parents responding to the questionnaire felt uncomfortable in visiting the school with problems. The school does seek parents' views, such as the type of bus for swimming and on changing the structure of the school year.

30. Pupils' annual reports are informative in English, mathematics and science and give ways in which pupils work can improve. In other subjects such as information and communication technology and history, many of the comments are the same for all pupils and reports do not reflect the progress made by individual children. Reports do not consistently contain targets for improvement in all the different subject areas.
31. Whetstone Association of St Peter's School (WASPS) is an active association, raising substantial funds for the school each year. Pupils have benefited from their support of a kitchen refurbishment where they can experience cooking activities and stereo equipment for the hall. Funds are presently being raised to improve the junior playground.
32. Through the family of schools, good links have been created with the local high school. The establishment of curriculum links in some subjects, including English and mathematics, aids the smooth transition for pupils moving to secondary school. Links are strengthened further by the joint geography trip and secondary pupils' concerts at the primary school. Good local playgroup links contribute to Reception pupils' confidence in starting school. The school promotes itself well through local newspapers such as the *Leicester Mercury* and the *Duckpaddle News*.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school by the headteacher and leading teachers is **satisfactory** overall although several of the improvements identified in the school improvement plan have been delayed because of staffing difficulties. The management of the school is efficient and enables the school to run smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The contribution of the governing body is **satisfactory** overall and they are able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the main issues faced by the school to ensure continued improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staffing difficulties experienced over the last two years have delayed several important developments.
- The school development plan is a useful document that sets out clearly the strengths and weaknesses that the school needs to tackle.
- Most issues raised in the previous inspection report have been addressed but some aspects of the role of subject leaders have yet to be resolved.
- Significant improvements have been made to the assessment systems used by the school but have not been in place long enough to impact on results.
- The schools senior management and the governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value.

Commentary

33. The governors play an important supportive role in the management of the school. There is an appropriate committee system and members meet regularly to decide policy and monitor progress. Governors play an important role in the development of the school's improvement plan, helping them to develop a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Individual governors liaise with subject leaders when possible to monitor progress in the development of particular subjects and report their findings back to the full governing body. Regular training is undertaken to improve their skills.
34. The school managers have faced difficulties, particularly over the last two years, because of prolonged staff absences. Illness, maternity leave and promotion have hit the school hard. Although the good quality school improvement plan sets out very clearly what needs to be done to improve standards across the school, in many instances suitable permanent staff have not been available to carry this out. There is, for example, no mathematics subject leader to oversee the development of the subject. This role is now being undertaken by senior staff,

along with their other duties. Because of the staffing difficulties, the headteacher has had to undertake a heavy teaching responsibility with a Year 6 class at this important stage in their education. This has reduced her opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and standards of pupils work, check on the coverage of the curriculum and ensure that agreed policies are being applied consistently by all staff. However several areas have shown strong improvement and areas identified as strengths in the previous report have remained strong. Led by the effective deputy headteacher, the school has improved its assessment procedures considerably, collecting and analysing a wide range of data on pupils' progress. However, it has been recognised that the systems require some modification to make them easier to use. Monitoring to ensure that the systems are consistently applied and used by all teachers to help in planning to meet pupils' individual needs is not yet fully in place. The school has succeeded in maintaining pupils' positive attitudes towards learning and relationships between pupils and adults have remained good. Much time and effort has been spent ensuring that pupils are able to join in with all activities and lessons.

35. The management of the school is satisfactory. Daily routines are effective and administration runs smoothly. The improved assessment procedures are aiding the setting of appropriate targets for the improvement of individual pupils work and pilot schemes are in place to record pupils' progress in several other subject areas. Systems to monitor the quality of new and temporary teachers and to ensure that they understand the policies of the school have been put in place but because of staffing difficulties are not yet sufficiently rigorous. A well-established system of teacher and support staff training is in place and is contributing to the improvements in some areas of teaching, for example, in information and communication technology.
36. The financial management of the school is efficient and budgetary controls are fully in place. Funding per child is well below the national average. Prudent financial management has meant that the school has been able to cover the high cost of recent high teacher absence. Best value principles are understood and applied by governors and managers.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	563,199
Total expenditure	561,331
Expenditure per pupil	2,118

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	45,212
Balance carried forward to the next year	46,344

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. The attainment of most children entering the Reception class is below average. Children are admitted to the Reception class either in September or January depending on when their fifth birthday is. A few older Reception children are taught in a Year 1 class. Two full-time teachers and a part-time teaching assistant support the children's learning in the Reception and mixed-age class. The lack of full-time support in the Reception class results in some missed opportunities for learning and has an impact on the achievement of the children. Teaching space is sufficient and resources are satisfactory. There has been good improvement in the provision for outdoor activities since the last inspection but the lack of support limits the times children can benefit from the provision. In all other aspects improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
38. The school provides an appropriate range of experiences to promote the early learning goals and teaching overall is satisfactory. Personal and social development is promoted well. However, teaching in some other areas, especially those where children choose activities, lacks sufficient challenge and as a result achievement in these areas is unsatisfactory and many children could do much better. Where teaching is more formal and the planning sufficiently detailed to meet the needs of individual children as in literacy and numeracy lessons, children's achievement is satisfactory. Lesson plans provide an adequate framework for learning but what children will be expected to learn from the tasks and activities provided in other areas of the curriculum are often too general and do not provide a sharp enough focus. As a result, members of staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning, particularly those that children have chosen for themselves. Although there are a range of assessment systems in place, including the nationally agreed Early Years Profile, assessment is not used as effectively to identify what children know and understand. Nor is it used well enough in areas such as creative and physical development to aid teachers planning to help them accelerate children's achievement. Records are not used as effectively as they could be to provide more challenging activities for children during the Reception year.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children achieve well.
- Children have good levels of independence and work well with each other

Commentary

39. The good teaching results in good achievement and the majority of the children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of the school year. Children enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They confidently choose their own tasks and concentrate for sustained periods of time. Members of staff encourage children to take responsibility for their classroom and this is very obvious as they diligently tidy up and put equipment away at the end of sessions. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour. As a result behaviour is usually good and children show concern and displeasure when other children occasionally do not share resources or take turns.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan appropriate tasks to develop children's speaking and listening and early reading and writing skills but these are not always sufficiently challenging to enable all children to achieve as well as they are able.
- Insufficient opportunity for children to develop and use literacy skills independently in the activities they choose for themselves limits their achievement.

Commentary

40. Achievement is satisfactory overall but with aspects for improvement. Teaching is satisfactory and the achievement of the majority of children of Reception age is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy despite many not being on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of the school year. Teaching is structured within this area of learning with clear learning intentions, such as in literacy lessons where children's achievement is satisfactory. There is a clear emphasis on encouraging children to listen carefully and speak clearly. The majority of children are articulate and confident and readily engage in conversation with each other and adults. This increases their language skills appropriately. However, in those activities which children choose for themselves, adults are not always available to interact with children and extend their learning through sensitive questioning, comments and encouragement and children do not achieve as well as they should.
41. Children have an appropriate range of activities to promote their writing skills. Members of staff systematically introduce letter names and sounds and older children are becoming confident in recognising individual and final sounds. However, these skills are often taught in isolation and seldom referred to in other activities, such as when children write or draw independently. Children are encouraged to make marks on paper as they work independently but teachers do not always ensure that children use their knowledge of sounds and letters in other activities. As a result more able children do not achieve as well as they should and their achievement in learning to read and write is slowed. Children practise writing their names and copy patterns to develop their confidence and skills in pencil control. Well-planned guided reading groups promote a love of books and higher attaining children becoming confident readers of simple texts. The reading level of the oldest children would suggest that standards are higher than teacher assessments indicate and a significant number of children are closer to achieving the early learning goals in reading than have been identified.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teacher directed tasks are satisfactory in developing children's early mathematical skills.
- Limited well planned opportunities to use and develop their mathematical skills in other areas of learning limits children's achievement.

Commentary

42. Children achieve satisfactorily. Most children make satisfactory gains in mathematical understanding but many are capable of quicker progress. Overall the teaching of mathematical ideas is satisfactory and most children learn appropriately. However the teaching is not always consistently challenging and this limits the standards that some children are reaching. Formal activities, number rhymes and games are used appropriately to develop mathematical understanding. Elements of the numeracy strategy are implemented and children respond well

to the mental and oral part of the lessons. Children are learning to count, order, and recognise numbers. They identify shapes and patterns and compare sizes through teacher directed tasks. Children are learning to add groups of objects together as they accurately work out how many pieces of food 'The Hungry Caterpillar' has consumed. Using commercial workbooks higher attaining children complete formal addition sums. However, there are too few independent tasks available to reinforce and extend all children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. This lack of challenge results in teachers missing opportunities to encourage children to explore and use number, size, shape, measures and position when playing with construction kits, small world toys and role play or when emptying and filling containers in the sand and water play.

Knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development

43. Insufficient evidence was gained to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning in these areas of learning. In the limited activities observed the following evaluations were made. Younger children are developing satisfactory scientific skills as they use magnifying glasses to observe their seeds growing. Children work independently with a suitable range of construction toys discovering how things are made and move. However there is insufficient evidence of progress in those tasks children choose for themselves and staff do not interact sufficiently to extend children's learning.
44. An appropriate range of materials are used to help children develop their skills of cutting, folding and sticking. Children are becoming competent users of information and communication technology to support their learning as they operate tape recorders and different computer programs to support their learning in mathematics and language and literacy. A range of role-play situations is provided and children enjoy taking on the roles of family members, customers and shopkeepers. However, adults sometimes miss opportunities to interact with children in these situations resulting in a lack of focus on developing and extending children's ideas and language. Sand and water are available for children to explore on a regular basis but the activities do not enhance children's learning sufficiently well. Children experience an appropriate range of activities to develop their skills in handling tools, construction toys and malleable materials but there is often a lack of focused attention on improving these skills and activities for older children.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outdoor equipment and furniture is satisfactory and whenever staffing levels allow, children use the resources appropriately as an extension to the classroom.
- Children show confident control over their bodies but could do better.

Commentary

45. Children achieve satisfactorily. A majority of children in the Reception year are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of the school year. A satisfactory range of large and small equipment is available on a daily basis and planned times in the school hall help to promote children's physical development. However, children could make better progress with more consistently challenging teaching. In formal lessons children are confident when moving and show control over their bodies as they run, jump, skip, hop and balance. Although the quality of teaching in this area is satisfactory, especially where children are more formerly taught, it does not always focus sufficiently on helping children improve their skills and as a result some children do not always achieve as well as they could. Children experience an appropriate range of activities to develop their skills in handling tools, construction toys and malleable materials and show dexterity when handling tools, brushes, scissors and small toys.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in both reading and writing are below average levels by Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils writing and spelling skills are beginning to impact positively on their work in other subjects.
- New assessment and pupil tracking procedures that target support for those pupils requiring additional teacher intervention are beginning to help to raise standards.
- Low levels of challenge and expectation for the youngest children result in standards that are not as high as they should be by Year 2.
- Many and frequent changes in teaching staff over recent months have undermined the quality of teaching at key times, especially in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

46. Results in reading and writing have risen steadily since 2000 in Years 1 and 2 although they are likely to remain below average in the current year. Although many pupils in this age group achieve satisfactorily, some receive too little challenge, especially those of Reception age, resulting in them not making sufficient progress. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve satisfactorily. Although the most recent national test results were above average levels, current standards in Year 6 are expected to fall because of the high percentage of pupils who have special educational needs. Improved assessment and tracking procedures are helping the school to identify those pupils who require additional help. Skilled support provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants is helping to raise the attainment of these pupils. Regular assessments measure the progress of pupils and although this information is shared with teachers, it is not always used sufficiently well to help teachers to plan an appropriate challenge for all the pupils in the class. This slows the progress being made by too many pupils.
47. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their speaking and listening skills as they progress through the school. Although many pupils use a mature vocabulary when they enter school some have poorly developed communication skills. Appropriate strategies are in place to encourage pupils to expand their technical language in subjects such as science where teachers use the correct vocabulary to describe the internal organs of the body. This knowledge is consolidated well when teachers insist on full and accurate replies when pupils answer questions. On occasions teachers miss opportunities to fully challenge pupils' ideas and thinking by failing to ask "How", "What" and "Why" requiring pupils to provide more detail in their answers.
48. The school's focus on raising pupils' attainment in both reading and writing are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. A well organised and used library encourages many pupils to be interested in and enjoy books. Regular reading sessions in many classes provide appropriate opportunities to read to adults, enabling them to develop a wide range of reading skills. The school appreciates the efforts of parents who listen to their children read at home. Less able pupils are supported well through additional help in classrooms and through withdrawal into small groups where they are being effectively taught the necessary reading skills. Standards of reading are wide with the most able pupils reading accurately, confidently and expressively. Less able pupils are given good support in the learning of reading skills and this is helping them to raise standards. Writing skills are used and developed increasingly in other subjects of the curriculum. A satisfactory range of writing styles and activities are

provided which encompass many subjects, for example, instructions on the making of models or the writing up of a science experiment. Much of the writing in geography and history, for example, is well presented with accurate spelling and punctuation.

49. The standard of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was satisfactory but with several lessons, particularly those in Year 2 and year 6, that were good. The best lessons interested pupils, contained a good level of challenge and high teacher expectations, were well planned and identified and met the needs of all pupils. Pupils achieved well in these lessons. Not all lessons reached this standard with some pupils completing large numbers of exercises that did not effectively improve standards. Marking of pupils work has in most cases been completed conscientiously with many of the comments on pupils work designed to raise standards. Targets for improvement are set and most pupils know what their own personal targets are. The support for less able pupils is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator has comprehensive records of what pupils know and can do and this helps her to plan an appropriate programme for these pupils. Learning support assistants are knowledgeable and provide good levels of support.
50. The leadership of the subject has been effective in several areas, such as the identification and support of lower attaining pupils, in the setting of targets for improvement and raising teachers' knowledge and awareness of the levels pupils are working at. However, opportunities to rigorously monitor the quality of teaching have not been fully developed because of the limited opportunities provided.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to present their work are very limited with pupils copying work previously written rather than composing text directly onto the screen. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to use and extend their writing skills in science, history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is generally good and has been helped by ability setting in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and have declined since the previous inspection.
- There is currently no subject coordinator, responsibility being temporarily shared by members of the senior management team.

Commentary

51. In both the infants and juniors the achievement of all groups of pupils is satisfactory. Standards are below average by Year 2 and Year 6, which is a decline from the previous inspection, but the pupils are generally working to potential. In the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 2, standards were below average compared with schools nationally and well below average compared with similar schools. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards were average compared with schools nationally, but below average compared with similar schools. In the current Year 2 and Year 6 cohorts, the percentage of pupils capable of reaching the higher National Curriculum levels of attainment is less than last year. The achievement of these pupils has not been helped by high staff turnover. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
52. By Year 2, basic numeracy skills of the more able pupils are satisfactory, but other pupils find quick mental recall of number facts more difficult. These pupils appropriately use practical

apparatus to add and subtract. The pupils find the total cost of items for sale and they use the fewest number of coins to pay for them. Lower attaining pupils find it difficult to calculate change. Many pupils make up accurate number stories to illustrate addition and subtraction, but this is often difficult for less able pupils. The pupils accurately recognise and name common two and three-dimensional shapes and more able pupils describe some of their properties. The pupils represent data by means of appropriately accurate graphs and diagrams.

53. By Year 6, many pupils effectively use quick mental recall of number facts and accurately use a variety of written methods to calculate multiplication and division. Whilst understanding of fractions is satisfactory, most pupils are much weaker in using decimals and percentages. Lower attaining pupils also have difficulty in rounding numbers to the nearest 100 or 1000. The pupils appropriately calculate the area and perimeter of simple shapes, but find it difficult to use scale accurately in measuring length. They represent data by means of accurate graphs, sometimes using computers to generate these. The pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the language of probability. Many pupils find it difficult to use their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems. They do not always recognise what information is being provided and what exactly they have to find out, particularly if the problem involves more than one step.
54. Much of the teaching is good and by Year 6, this is helping pupils who attained well below average standards at the age of seven to achieve satisfactorily. The teachers plan their lessons well and share the learning objectives with the pupils. They ensure that all pupils are fully included in learning and the pupils respond by having positive attitudes to work. The teachers use a variety of effective strategies, in order to develop the pupils' quick mental recall of number facts. These include clapping games, counting sticks, dartboards and follow-on cards. Setting the pupils by ability in Years 3 to 6 enables teachers to match work more closely to pupils' varying needs. In the best lessons, the teachers provide a real challenge for the pupils, setting tasks that make them think carefully. In a Year 6 lesson for higher attaining pupils, for example, this helped them to understand percentages and discounts, as they attempted to solve a real life problem, costing a school visit. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide effective support for individuals and groups. The teachers encourage the pupils to use correct mathematical terms and they use resources effectively. In a Year 3 lesson for lower attaining pupils, the use of practical apparatus helped the pupils in counting on and back in various steps from selected numbers. The teachers encourage the pupils to explain their strategies and this consolidates understanding. At times, the reasons for wrong answers are not fully explored. There is regular homework for the older pupils, although high staff turnover has resulted in inconsistencies in this provision and in the marking of pupils' work. Where marking is best, useful guidance is given as to how improvements might be made.
55. There is currently no subject coordinator. Members of the senior management team are managing the subject but have to do so alongside their other duties. This has reduced the effectiveness of the development of the subject. Satisfactory procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have been introduced recently, but have not yet had time to contribute to the raising of standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. The pupils make good use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils in Year 2 draw sound block graphs of their favourite foods and pupils in Year 6 measure the distances travelled by objects along different kinds of surfaces. In geography, pupils in Year 2 draw accurate block graphs to record daily weather and they use simple grid references to locate features on maps. Pupils in Year 6 use computers to generate accurate bar graphs of use of water in the school over a three-day period.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average and have declined since the previous inspection.
- Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress have improved.

Commentary

57. In both the infants and the juniors the achievement of all groups of pupils is satisfactory. Standards are below average by Year 2 and Year 6, which is a decline since the previous inspection but pupils are generally achieving in line with their capacity for learning. Results in last year's national tests for Year 6 were at average levels compared with schools nationally, but below average compared with those seen in similar schools. In the current Year 2 and Year 6 cohorts, fewer pupils are on track to reach the higher National Curriculum level of attainment. Boys and girls attain equally.
58. By Year 2, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the conditions necessary for healthy plant growth and observe how the seeds they have planted grow. They show a satisfactory understanding of why a balanced diet is an important factor in a healthy lifestyle for humans. Higher attaining pupils use their literacy skills to write satisfactory descriptions of animal habitats. Pupils know some basic facts about the life cycles of butterflies and frogs and are able to describe these. They investigate the effect of friction on the movement of toy vehicles along different surfaces and are able to appropriately describe how to build a simple electrical circuit to light up a bulb. Weak literacy skills of lower attaining pupils hinder accurate recording.
59. By Year 6, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the life cycle of a flowering plant. They accurately name the plant's major organs and more able pupils describe the functions of these organs. Pupils effectively investigate the effect of gravity and friction as forces and are able to show that they understand the ways in which sound is produced. They know how light travels and how it can be reflected. Higher attaining pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the skills of prediction and fair testing, but many other pupils are much weaker at this. Lower attaining pupils in Year 6 failed to achieve accuracy in their investigation into differing rates of dissolving sugar in water. Many pupils find it difficult to distinguish between natural and man-made materials and to understand the uses of some materials.
60. Teaching overall is satisfactory. There are examples of good teaching. The teachers plan their lessons well and they ensure that resources are well prepared. All groups of pupils are fully included in learning. There is a satisfactory focus on developing the pupils' skills of practical scientific enquiry. Due attention is paid to health and safety during these activities. Good questioning encourages the pupils to expand on their answers and to develop ideas. "*Why do the roots spread out?*" asked the teacher in a Year 1/ 2 lesson and this helped the pupils to understand how roots search for water and minerals. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher asked "*Why do you think scientists write down what they have done?*", and this helped the pupils to understand the need to record their work carefully and accurately. There is a strong emphasis on developing correct scientific terms. In a Year 6 lesson, this impacted well on the pupils' learning from first-hand experience about an animal's digestive tract. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers are well deployed and they provide valuable support. Where teaching is less effective, class control is insecure, with the result that too many interruptions slow the pace of learning. At times, the pupils spend too long sitting listening during whole class introductions, with the result that attention and concentration wane. Work is not always matched sufficiently to pupils' varying needs, so that higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged.
61. Planning and the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress have improved since the previous inspection. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. It could however be improved

if greater opportunities were provided to check on the quality of provision such as teaching, planning and the recording of individual pupils progress. The coordinator has developed a useful collection of pupils' work at agreed National Curriculum levels of attainment, which is helping to improve the accuracy and consistency of teachers' assessments. It is however, too early to judge the overall effectiveness of these developments in helping to raise standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection.
- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the skills needing to be taught have been improved through good levels of training and support.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and extend their skills in other subjects because of limited resources in classrooms.
- A good start has been made on developing systems to measure and record pupils' knowledge and skills in information and communication technology.

Commentary

62. By Year 2, the standards attained by pupils are average. Their achievement is good. Current achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, but there are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Standards for pupils in Year 6 remain below average, largely because opportunities for them to use and develop their information and communication technology skills in other subjects have been limited by a lack of suitable classroom resources. This represents, however, an improvement since the previous inspection. Overall improvement since the last inspection in information and communication technology has been good. The school have identified areas where pupils' skills and knowledge need to improve and have made a concerted effort to increase resources and provide suitable training for staff to increase their skills. The schools information and communication technology suite is a useful addition to the opportunities provided to add to pupils' skills and a range of programs have been identified by the effective subject leader to improve provision in many subject areas.
63. The information and communication technology suite is now well established, with timetabled opportunities for pupils to use the facilities. Classroom resources are much more limited with few computers being available for pupils to extend and use their skills. This is reflected in the limited evidence of pupils work in other subjects.
64. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good. The teachers seen were well prepared and knowledgeable and delivered the lessons with confidence. This resulted in pupils who were interested and eager to learn. The management of the subject has seen several changes during the last three years. A knowledgeable and effective subject leader has recently been appointed, resulting in the further development of the subject and coordination is now good. A pilot scheme has been implemented to record the extent of pupils' knowledge and the skills they have acquired and this is proving useful in identifying and remedying the gaps in older pupils' knowledge. The school has recognised the need to make a concerted effort to build on the range of materials suitable to extend pupils learning through information and communication technology in other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Information and communication technology is not used extensively across the curriculum. Currently, information and communication technology is not playing a significant part in most teachers' planning and there was little evidence of teachers using information and communication technology to extend pupils learning in lessons in other subjects. Some use was made of information and communication technology in mathematics through the analyses of data to create graphs. In other classes pupils increased their word processing skills in English but this often involved copying up work rather than composing their writing directly onto the screen. Opportunities to use the internet are provided during lessons in the computer suite. The school has in place the necessary screening systems to appropriately censor pupils' access to the internet.

HUMANITIES

66. **History** and **geography** were sampled during the inspection. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching or on overall provision for these subjects. An analysis of pupils' work and discussions with some pupils indicate that achievement is broadly satisfactory. Standards are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
67. By Year 2 in **history**, the pupils are beginning to understand the significance of a historical time line. They appreciate that things change over time when they compare modern and old toys. They appreciate how famous personalities, such as Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole and Elizabeth Fry, made a difference to peoples' lives. Satisfactory use is made of their literacy skills to write a letter in the role of Florence Nightingale, informing her parents of her decision to become a nurse. The pupils understand the significance of Poppy Day and of Whetstone's War Memorial. In geography, the pupils are beginning to demonstrate an appropriate understanding of a map as a view from above and they draw simple plans of their classroom and the school playground. They know how daily weather is recorded by means of symbols. They compare life in Whetstone with that on a Scottish island. They know some basic facts about Mexico and they follow on a world map the travels of their teacher's son.
68. By Year 6, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of aspects of life in Tudor England and of Henry V111's break with Rome. They make satisfactory use of their literacy skills to describe Tudor houses and to write a letter in the role of Cardinal Wolsey, urging the Pope to accept Henry's divorce. They have a satisfactory understanding of aspects of life in wartime Britain, including the Blitz and rationing and understand the changes in post-War society, such as the dominant role of television. In geography, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the changing nature of a river and its valley from source to mouth. They know that many rivers, such as the Rhine, suffer from industrial pollution. The pupils investigate traffic levels in Whetstone and they make good use of their information and communication technology skills to produce effective multi-media presentations about the village. They make satisfactory use of their literacy skills in comparing life in Whetstone with that in a rural village in southern India.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. Because of timetable constraints, no lessons were seen in **design and technology** and only one lesson was seen in **art and design** and **music**. It is not possible therefore to make a judgement about provision.
70. The school provides pupils with a wide range of experiences in **art and design** to systematically develop their skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding. Work displayed around the school and in the one lesson seen in the lower juniors effectively demonstrates this. Pupils' observational skills are particularly well developed. By Year 6, pupils produce work that is of a high standard. Visits, artefacts and natural materials are used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest in art and design and to provide a focus for their work.

71. In **music** in assemblies, pupils sing well and the playing of music by pupils provides a suitable atmosphere for worship. The school has a well-attended and enthusiastic choir who perform at a range of school and local events. The subject leader has introduced a useful scheme of work that is effective in raising the confidence of non-specialist staff in teaching the subject.

Physical Education

Provision in Physical Education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of physical education opportunities are on offer through the school's extra-curricular activities programme.

Commentary

72. Standards in physical education are average overall. The range of ability is wide however, with some pupils demonstrating above expected levels of ability. Physical education is an integral part of the schools timetable and all aspects of the subject are covered during pupils' time in school although experience of dance is more limited for older pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and skills in swimming and few pupils leave the school without achieving the national minimum requirement to swim 25 metres. Older pupils experience a good range of outdoor adventurous activities such as canoeing, orienteering and mountain biking when they attend the schools residential visits and this suitably widens their experience of sporting activity.
73. The quality of teaching is usually satisfactory with an appropriate focus on the development of the necessary skills for each activity, for example, in accurate throwing and catching. Where teaching is less effective the development of these skills is neglected and pupils' performance does not improve sufficiently resulting in pupils attention wandering. In most lessons pupils are interested and active and this ensures their good behaviour. Appropriate links are made with other subjects, for example, mathematics when pupils use their measuring skills to accurately time a run or when measuring the distance of their jumps.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74. Provision is **satisfactory**, with opportunities for the pupils to discuss relevant issues, such as the need for rules, choices, road safety, respect for property and working together. The pupils are taught the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and they are made aware of the dangers of drugs misuse. A worthwhile health and safety week takes place every other year. There is formal sex education for pupils in Year 6 during their final term in the school. The school nurse helps with this part of the curriculum. The school provides adequate opportunities for the pupils to think of others less fortunate than themselves, for example by supporting charities such as Books for Africa.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
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	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	4

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