

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. ANDREW'S CE VC JUNIOR SCHOOL

Congresbury

Bristol

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109216

Headteacher: Richard Baker

Reporting inspector: Stuart Russell
21292

Dates of inspection: 29th February – 2nd March 2000

Inspection number: 189970

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Station Road Congresbury Bristol
Postcode:	BS49 5DX
Telephone number:	01934 832505
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Jon Spencer
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a very small, Church of England, voluntary controlled, junior school. There are 159 pupils on roll comprising 75 boys and 84 girls. All the pupils are of white ethnic origin and none speak English as an additional language. The roll includes a very small group of Traveller children, only two of whom were present in the school at the time of the inspection. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There is a very wide range of attainment on entry but overall, attainment on entry is average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well above average though the number who have statements of special educational needs is in line with the national picture. The school is similar in character to the time of its last inspection. It identifies as one of its aims raising even higher standards of writing; even though they are already above the national average. It is setting about doing this by seeking to reduce the percentage of pupils reaching level 3 in writing by age 11.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a happy school. In this school we find all the best features that characterise very good schools and unique features of its own. Principal among these is the care that the school feels for all its pupils. All its strengths flow from this; unity of purpose, enthusiasm, effective schooling and rapid progress across all abilities and social groups. This is a very effective school. The school is excellently led. Parents rate particularly highly the leadership of the headteacher to whom they give the credit for the ethos of the school that makes it what it is. They also praise the quality of the teaching. Parents of pupils with special educational needs speak particularly highly of the provision that the school makes for their children; remarking that the school works with 'the children as individuals rather than as merely parts of a class'. This is a characteristic of the teaching of all pupils in the school whatever their abilities. Overall, the pupils' results in English, mathematics and science by 11, are above both national standards and the standards being achieved by pupils in schools similar to St. Andrew's. The percentage of pupils reaching level 5 in English and mathematics is well above average and one pupil achieved level 6 in mathematics. The national literacy and numeracy initiatives have been adopted by the school to very good purpose. This has been enhanced by most effective setting of the pupils by ability for English and mathematics lessons from the age of seven. Parents consider that this has been beneficial for all pupils including the able and those with special educational needs, not only academically but in helping them to grow in confidence. It has proved to be a very effective way of delivering the curriculum to each year group while creating an opportunity to support all ability groups. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent with their being excellently taught in whole-class lessons. The Additional Literacy Strategy is being excellently implemented; through whole-class lessons. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school cares for its pupils outstandingly well. It has a very good grasp and concern for individual needs. It teaches different ability and social groups very effectively. These include the able, those who find learning hard and Travellers' children. Consequently the pupils make very good progress both academically and in their personal development.
- The school fosters initiative and independence; with the result that all its pupils are confident that their ideas are worth consideration.
- The excellent leadership provided by the headteacher results in unity of purpose between staff, governors, parents and pupils.

What could be improved

- The percentage of pupils reaching level 5 or above in science.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1996.

- Standards are even higher in English, mathematics and science than at the time of the last inspection. Overall the trend in the school's results is upward in line with the national trend even though the school started from a higher than average point in 1996. They are consistently above average.
- The standard of teaching is higher than at the time of the last inspection. The school regards this to be the result of more effective staff appointment procedures; setting the pupils for English and mathematics from seven; and as a result of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Specific criticisms of particular lessons in the last report have been effectively addressed. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is now very good across all subjects and effective use is made during lessons of sharing the learning objectives of lessons with the pupils. This enables the pupils to understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve.
- Exclusions have fallen from eight in 1995/96 to none last school year.
- All subjects of the curriculum now receive appropriate lesson time.
- Items to do with the health, safety and security of the pupils raised by the last inspection have been fully addressed.
- The courtyard in the centre of the school is a more attractive aspect of the accommodation and increasingly useful. The school has developed the school grounds to widen their academic and social potential. Plans are afoot to do more both in the courtyard and in the school grounds.
- The 'Key Issues' that were left with the school at the time of the last inspection, have been appropriately addressed.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	B	B	A	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	B	B	B	
Science	A	A	B	B	

Overall the pupils' results are consistently above average even though over 30 per cent of its pupils have special educational needs. Results in English in 1999 were well above the standard being reached in similar schools. By 1999 the Literacy Hour was well adopted by the school and both staff and parents regard this initiative as contributing very well to raising standards. The pupils are setted according to prior attainment across Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 for English and mathematics from the age of seven. The staff and parents think that this too contributes very positively towards all pupils' very good progress in these subjects. Inspection findings conclude that both the school's implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the setting initiative, are very effective in promoting high achievement in English and mathematics across all abilities. The school has thoroughly evaluated the effectiveness of its setting policy and as a result of positive conclusions, is soon to extend the age-range of sets so that the most able younger pupils

may work with older pupils at higher curricular levels. This will enable these pupils to cover work up to level 6. The percentage of pupils in 1999 who reached level 5 in English and mathematics was well above average and one pupil reached level 6 in mathematics. The percentage of pupils who reached level 4 or above in science was well above average though those who reached level 5 was only marginally so; 29 per cent compared to 27 per cent nationally. Reading standards are very high with 54 per cent of the pupils reaching level 5 compared to 32 per cent nationally. The school has very high aspirations. Although the percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 in writing was well above the national average at 22 per cent compared to 14 per cent nationally, the school has never the less targeted writing for improvement because it does not match its very high standards in reading. The trend in the school's results since 1996 has been upwards. Even though the school started in 1996 at a higher level than most schools, it has maintained its rate of improvement at a similar pace to schools nationally. The school sets appropriately challenging attainment-targets based on accurate assessment of the pupils' potential and it achieves these targets. It has a very clear picture of each pupil's capability and enables him or her to achieve this. The girls' results have been constantly above national averages since comparisons became possible in 1996. The results of the boys, however, have improved remarkably from below average in 1996 to well above average in 1999. This coincides with improved standards of behaviour in the school since then. All members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are fully involved in developing and implementing the school's behaviour policy. This results that there is consistency of expectation, behaviour-management and security for the pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Parents say that their children like coming to school very much. They are very keen to learn and to take a full part in all aspects of school life; including its extra-curricular activities that they help to run. They respond very well to the very good teaching; going along with the teacher and doing their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils get on very well both when supervised and when working unsupervised; pursuing lunchtime activities, for instance, such as using the computers or relaxing in the central courtyard.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils show very high levels of initiative and independence. They organise themselves efficiently and have high self-esteem. They make very good progress in this respect as they move through the school just as they make very good progress academically.
Attendance	The attendance rate at the school in the academic year 1998/99 was below the national average by 1.2%.

The personal development of the pupils is a strength of the school. At their meeting with the Registered Inspector, the parents praised the school for the way it shows trust in its pupils and gives them opportunities to take responsibility. For instance, not only in taking part in concerts but also advertising them, designing tickets for them and issuing the tickets. The above average absence rate is reasonably explained by the long-term absences of a few pupils; including long-term sickness.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	N/a	N/a	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Teaching is very good throughout the school and across the curriculum. The best teaching was

seen in English and mathematics lessons where literacy and numeracy were taught excellently. The individual needs of all pupils are very well met. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. All groups of pupils learn very well and make very good progress. This very good progress refers not only to the pupils' academic achievements but also to their personal development. Setting the pupils by prior attainment for English and mathematics adds to their effectiveness for all abilities because the range of ability is narrowed and group work is sharply focused. Of the lessons seen, 12 per cent were satisfactory; 48 per cent, good; 20 per cent, very good; and 20 per cent, excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The Additional Literacy Strategy is singularly and outstandingly well organised and delivered in the school in the context of whole-class lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works very effectively with other agencies involved with pupils. She particularly appreciates the support that she receives from the Local Education Authority's Educational Psychological Service. Parents particularly praised the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and the way in which the setting policy of the school for English and mathematics, enables pupils who find learning hard to make progress at their own pace, experience success and grow in confidence and keenness to learn.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for the pupils' social development is excellent. This provision enhances their spiritual, moral and cultural development by giving them the opportunity to put into practice what they learn in the other three areas of personal development. For instance, the pupils are aware of social issues and set about helping others. They take the initiative in supporting a range of local, national and international charities; organising the fund-raising event themselves.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent. The school's care for the individual needs of all its pupils is the driving force behind its success. The school monitors the academic and personal development of the pupils so very thoroughly that it is able to pitch lessons and social expectations sharply; resulting in appropriate and achievable challenge. The result is enthusiasm to learn. One mother said that her difficulty was getting her daughter to come home from school!

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is effectively organised so that above average standards are achieved in the English, mathematics and science while still providing the pupils with a rich and varied primary education.

The school in partnership with parents has been successful in freeing the school car-parks of dangerous traffic congestion before and at the end of the school day.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Parents regard the headteacher as a corner stone. At their meeting with the Registered Inspector, they said that he manages change very well so that initiatives are adopted successfully without disturbing that security in the school which is so valued by parents and their children. The leadership that he provides and the quality of his management are

	excellent. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff with leadership roles. The mathematics co-ordinator provides training in teaching numeracy on behalf of the Local Education Authority.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Fully. The governing body is a very effective team. It includes the whole school community in its work; consulting parents very well to measure levels of satisfaction with the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school can give very good account for its work.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses all its resources very efficiently.

The teaching staff has changed a lot over the last year when previous members of staff left the area. These major changes in the staffing of a very small school, have been managed very well by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors. Parents reported initial anxiety about such big changes to the staff of the school because they feared that the standards of the school might deteriorate. They say that their fears have been fully allayed. The governors' systems for appointing appropriate new members of staff are very effective. Already there is a very good collaborative spirit between the staff. An effective feature of the school's induction procedures, is that all new members of staff, whether experienced teachers or newly qualified, have mentoring support until they settle into the school.

The governors apply best value principles by working with the school in comparing its performance against that of other schools; supporting the school as it seeks to become ever better; consulting parents and seeking best value for money. The school recently received a favourable Local Authority financial audit report.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. • My child likes school. • I would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. • Behaviour in the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are fully supportive of the work of the school and whole-heartedly endorse it.

The inspection team agrees with parents' views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school cares for its pupils outstandingly well. It has a very good grasp and concern for individual needs. It teaches different ability and social groups very effectively. These include the able, those who find learning hard and Travellers' children. Consequently the pupils make very good progress both academically and in their personal development.

1 The school's very clear understanding of and care for the individual needs of all its pupils is the driving force behind its success. The school monitors the academic and personal development of the pupils so very well that it is able to pitch lessons and social expectations sharply; resulting in appropriate and achievable challenge. The result is enthusiastic pupils who are keen to take part in all the activities of the school.

2 The school has very thorough procedures for assessing the standards of its pupils; beginning with thorough testing when then the pupils come into the school. This continues as the pupils move through the school with the school's making very good use of a range of different types of tests and thorough analysis of the pupils' results for strengths and weaknesses. Very effective use is made of tests that are diagnostic. These help the school not only to fine-tune the teaching to the specific needs of its pupils but also to evaluate curricular effectiveness.

3 Parents of pupils with special educational needs speak particularly highly of the provision that the school makes for their children. They commend the school for early identification of special educational need. It is the policy of the school to include as soon as possible pupils who might have special educational needs, onto its register of special educational needs at level 1; to monitor these pupils' progress and to move them off the register or up onto higher levels as appropriate. This care for pupils with special educational needs has resulted in a heightened awareness of the individual needs of all pupils; including the able. Consequently the school has devised very effective ways of meeting these needs; including a flexible setting arrangement for teaching English and mathematics.

4 Setting the pupils by prior attainment for English and mathematics adds to the effectiveness of lessons for all abilities because the range of ability is narrowed and group work is sharply focused. It is a very effective way of delivering the curriculum to each year group while creating an opportunity to support all ability groups. The effectiveness of literacy and numeracy hours for all abilities is enhanced by the school's setting policy. Higher ability Year 6 pupils confidently discussed with the inspectors, Dickensian characters with specific reference to their detailed appreciation of the plot of 'Nicholas Nickleby'. The high levels that they reach are attainable because they read so very well.

5 The school implements the Additional Literacy Scheme excellently by incorporating the group of pupils involved in the scheme, into its setting procedures. Many of the pupils who are involved in this work are also pupils who are on the school's register of special educational needs. The consequence is that pupils with special educational needs have these needs excellently met within the context of whole-class lessons. This protects their curricular entitlement and ensures their social inclusion. It is an example of the very best educational inclusion.

6 The teaching that the pupils with special educational needs receive during these sessions, is excellent. Outstandingly good use is made of the classroom assistants and parental helpers who support small groups of pupils in this set. All helpers are not only clear about what is required of them but understand the learning objectives of the task. Consequently the quality of learning is better for the pupils. Training is given to parents by the teacher who co-ordinates the Additional Literacy Project. The school has noticed that the number of parents wanting to be involved has risen and puts this down to parents' appreciation of this training, increased confidence and enthusiasm.

7. Although there were only two Travellers' children in school during the inspection, their work and involvement in all aspects of school-life were inspected. Both pupils, a boy and a girl, were

happily and fully integrated both academically and socially, into the full life of the school. Their needs are being very well met.

The school fosters initiative and independence; with the result that all its pupils are confident that their ideas are worth pursuing.

8. The personal development of the pupils is a strength of the school. The pupils make very good progress in their achievements socially as well as academically. At their meeting with the Registered Inspector, the parents praised the school for the way it shows trust in its pupils and gives them opportunities to take responsibility. This occurs, for instance, in the school's approach to homework. Parents fully support the school's homework policy and say that one of the reasons for its success is that the pupils are given a measure of independence to organise their time and complete tasks by a set date. The result is that the pupils willingly put in the required time and effort for homework but are able to pursue personal interests as well.

9. In lessons the pupils often make suggestions about how they might approach their work. This feeds in well to the investigative and experimental aspects of their learning. Investigative mathematics is strong in the school; as is the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons across the curriculum. Pupils readily turn to ICT; for instance, during a geography lesson they used the Internet to find out what the weather was like that day in other parts of the world.

10 The pupils are allowed to choose charities to support and to organise fund-raising event in favour of them. When the school holds concerts the pupils are involved in the full event. This includes such responsible tasks as designing and producing tickets using ICT and issuing the tickets.

11 There are many activities for the pupils to be involved in outside lessons. At lunchtime pupils may use the library, for example. At the same time the pupils are not constrained and have the opportunity to play. They play team games of their own making and the school is constantly developing the grounds of the school, as finances permit, to extend the facilities and open up more scope for imaginative play and creativity. The moving factor is that where the pupils are engaged in an organised activity or free-play, they have opportunity to make decisions and be responsible.

12 The school's policy of setting the pupils by ability across year groups for English and mathematics while teaching other subjects in registration groups that are in the main year-groups means that the pupils have access to more potential friends during lessons than if they were always taught in year-groups. This addresses very well the potential weakness of small schools to provide its pupils with a wide spectrum of similarly minded classmates. If not addressed this can lead to loneliness. There is no apparent social exclusion at this school but rather much collaboration and companionship. Similarly the policy of setting, gives the pupils access to a wider range of teacher-expertise. Although the school's effective appointments procedures results in a like-minded staff that provides continuity of practice for the pupils, the teachers provide the school with a wide range of skills and interests. The way the teaching is organised, opens up this resource to the pupils as they spend part of their day with one teacher and then another part with another. Yet because a large part of the day and the curriculum is provided in the registration-group, the pupils have a teacher to identify as their own. This provides a secure base from which they can confidently go out to settled groups.

The excellent leadership provided by the headteacher results in unity of purpose between staff, governors, parents and pupils.

13. Parents hold the headteacher in high regard. One parent referred to him as a 'corner stone'. They particularly appreciate how efficiently he manages change; achieving this by taking the whole community of the school along with him, informing them fully about the circumstances surrounding the need for change, consulting them about options, taking decisions that are comprehensible and maintaining the character of the school. This does not only occur when changes are to be made that affect the academic life of the school but in all its work. For instance, when he tackled safety risks to do with traffic in the school grounds and restricted this area from

cars. This was not immediately popular with everybody but because of the way it was managed, it received support.

14 The headteacher is fully supported by members of staff with leadership and management responsibility, administrative staff and by the governing body. The school has adopted very well national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy hours; making them their own and building into them much opportunity for creativity. In mathematics, for example, the lower attaining 11 year old confidently use ICT to model and investigate data.

15 The result of this excellent leadership is a school where everybody pulls together – staff, governors, parents and pupils – to the ultimate benefit of all pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The percentage of pupils reaching level 5 or above in science.

16 The percentage of pupils in 1999 who reached level 5 in English and mathematics was well above average and one pupil reached level 6 in mathematics. The percentage of pupils who reached level 4 or above in science was well above average though those who reached level 5 was only marginally so; 29 per cent compared to 27 nationally.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

17 Governors, headteacher and staff should;

- Raise standards in science to those being achieved in English and mathematics. (see paragraph 16)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	6

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
20	20	48	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		159
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	19	22	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	19
	Girls	17	16	19
	Total	32	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (69)	73 (70)	93 (78)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	15	18
	Girls	17	16	18
	Total	33	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (67)	76 (75)	88 (78)
	National	68 (60)	69 (60)	75 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	159
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.6:1
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	

Total number of education support staff	
Total aggregate hours worked per week	

Number of pupils per FTE adult	
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	296 170
Total expenditure	309 936
Expenditure per pupil	1949
Balance brought forward from previous year	23 992
Balance carried forward to next year	10 226

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	159
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	54	2		
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	6	2	
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	56	2	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	60	9	2	
The teaching is good.	45	53			2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	54	13		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	37	4		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	46	2		4
The school works closely with parents.	35	54	7		4
The school is well led and managed.	63	35			2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	50	4		2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	56	9	2	4