

INSPECTION REPORT

CONGERSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Congerstone, Nuneaton

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119949

Headteacher: Mrs A J Watson

Lead inspector: Mrs S E Hall
21750

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th April 2004

Inspection number: 255874

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	111 + 6 part-time
School address:	Congerstone Nuneaton Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV13 6NH
Telephone number:	01827 880243
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs H Davies
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small school is in an attractive rural area in Leicestershire that is above average in most socio-economic aspects. Four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is very low. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and no pupils speak English as an additional language. Eight pupils, mainly with moderate learning difficulties are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below average. No pupils have a statement of special education need. A large proportion of additional pupils has joined the school in the last six years from outside the immediate area. The attainment of children on entry to the school is above average. The school was awarded a School Achievement Award in 2002 and an Eco Schools award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21750	Mrs S E Hall	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science Citizenship Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage
9958	Mr T Page	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
32702	Mrs A Sawa	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Geography History Music Special educational needs
228311	Mr C Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	3
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	5
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	9
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	11
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, where pupils are happy and relationships are very good. Standards are above national averages for the age of the pupils and with aspects of some subjects well above average. They achieve well and a significant proportion throughout the school achieves very well. Teaching and learning are good. Leadership is good and has helped to create a strong committed staff team. Management is efficient and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good ethos which values all pupils and staff for their talents and achievements.
- The high quality teamwork and very good relationships between staff and pupils.
- Links with parents are very effective and they support the pupils' learning very well.
- Standards are above national averages overall and the pupils achieve well.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school lacks rigour in identifying areas for further improvement.
- The quality of teaching is good, with the very effective specialist teaching of older pupils enabling high attaining pupils to do very well.
- Extra-curricular activities and opportunities to enrich the curriculum are very good.

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. The school made a positive response to the issues raised in the previous inspection report. There has been good improvement in provision for children in the Foundation Stage and in the production of schemes of work for all year groups which identify what pupils are expected to learn. There has been satisfactory improvement in assessment routines. There has been satisfactory improvement in school development planning, although plans lack clarity and precision in identifying the specific steps to be taken to bring about further improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very good; 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 good overall. There are some small year groups of pupils in the school so caution needs to be applied when making comparisons between groups and with national test results. Children enter the Reception class, with skills that are above average in most areas of their early development. In the Reception class, children achieve well and almost all enter Year 1 exceeding the national targets for their age especially in their personal and social development. In Year 2, pupils achieve well and generally exceed the national expectations for their ages in reading, writing and mathematics, although standards are not quite as high as some previous year groups due to the natural abilities of the small group of pupils. By Year 6, pupils attain above average standards and a significant proportion of pupils achieves very well and reaches high standards particularly in English, mathematics and science. The attainment of the older pupils is higher than last year because of the larger proportion of more able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets identified for them.

Pupil's personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. Behaviour and relationships are very good. Attendance is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching in the Reception class is good. Staff meet the needs of the youngest children well. This enables them to settle to school quickly and achieve well in all areas of their learning. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good and the specialist teaching of the older pupils, especially in science and English, is often very good. Support staff give high quality assistance to pupils' learning. Assessment is satisfactory. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress have been introduced in all subjects, although these are at an early stage of development in several subjects. The curriculum is good. Staff ensure the work meets the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. Good use is made of national guidance and planning is undertaken very conscientiously. Opportunities for enriching the curriculum are very good especially in sport. The school invites a wide number of visitors into school to share their talents and experiences. The quality of accommodation is good, although the school hall is small. The care, guidance and support of pupils are also good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. A strong feature of school provision is that all members of the small teaching and support team work very closely together to help pupils learn as much as possible. Subject co-ordinators fulfil what is expected of them well. However, there are few opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in areas for which they hold responsibility. The overall monitoring of the work of the school is largely descriptive and lacks the evaluative rigour necessary to identify further areas for improvement. Governance of the school is good and the work of the governing body complies with statutory requirements. The chair is very effective in leading the governing body.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased about the quality of education offered to their children. They especially appreciate that pupils are well supported and provided with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Several parents help in school and many support their children well. Pupils enjoy school and the wide range of activities they undertake, especially in sport.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Improve the rigour with which all of the school's work is monitored and evaluated so that aspects for improvement are clearly identified and acted upon.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of pupils throughout the school is **good**. In the Foundation Stage and at the age of seven and eleven standards are above national expectations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enter school with skills that are above those expected for their age and achieve well in each phase of their education.
- Pupils have very good speaking and listening skills, which help their learning in all subjects.
- Pupils have good skills in carrying out experimental activities and in solving problems.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Reception class with wide ranging early learning skills, which overall are above average. Their personal and social development is often well above average. Children are keen to come to school and are confident and secure in their abilities and relationships. Children's communication, language and literacy skills, their mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them are above the national goals. Their physical and creative skills are largely average. During their time in the Reception class, children make good progress because the quality of teaching is consistently good. By the time they enter Year 1, pupils exceed the goals for their learning.

2. The results of national tests have to be interpreted cautiously because the number of pupils is small in each year group. Consequently, the results of a few individual pupils can have a significant impact on the school's overall results. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, pupils achieved standards that were well above the national averages for all and similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics and were in the top five per cent when compared to all schools in reading and mathematics. Over the last four years, attainment has generally been well above national averages. The current small group of pupils in Year 2 is not such a high attaining group, but standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.5 (18.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.0 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.6 (17.1)	16.2 (16.4)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, when compared to all schools, attainment in science was well above average, that in mathematics was average, but that in English was below average. When compared to schools based on prior attainment, standards in science were again well above average, in mathematics were average, but those in English were well below average. School records show that this relatively small group of pupils contained a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards at the age of eleven have been more variable than at the age of seven. Over the last five years, a considerable number of pupils have transferred to Congerstone from other schools. Assessment information indicates that the attainment of these pupils is often initially below that of those who have attended for a longer period, but many make rapid progress when settled in the school. Because last year's Year 6

group contained 10 or fewer pupils, no table is included in this report of the standards achieved. Standards in Year 6 are currently above average in English, mathematics and science. This group of pupils contains a significant proportion of high attaining pupils who are on course to do well in national tests, especially in science.

5. Pupils achieve well in English throughout the school. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Most pupils are confident and willing communicators. Many have a mature vocabulary for their age and develop subject specific vocabulary well as in science, so that they are confidently able to explain what they think and have found out. Pupils listen well and are thoughtful in their responses. Almost all pupils read well. Parents actively support their children and pupils enjoy reading. Writing skills, whilst average, are not at such a high level as other skills in English. The school has recognised this, is focusing upon the development of skills and pupils' writing standards are improving.

6. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in mathematics because they have positive attitudes to the subject. Most have a good understanding of number operations and can use these confidently in problem solving activities. Pupils also achieve well in science and a significant proportion of pupils in Year 6 achieve very well. Pupils have good factual knowledge of science and become increasingly confident in carrying out investigative and experimental activities where staff set challenging tasks that interest pupils.

7. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average. Pupils enjoy using classroom computers and especially the bank of laptops, which are used well to support learning in other subjects. Standards in religious education are above average with pupils having good knowledge of a range of different faiths.

8. The key skills of speaking, listening and reading together with an enthusiasm to tackle problems serve the pupils well in their learning. Because they are keen to do well pupils achieve well across the school. Most groups of pupils, including those of lower, average and higher ability, achieve well. Pupils recognised as gifted and talented and those with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets identified for them. Whilst boys have sometimes done better than girls in national tests, this reflects the abilities of the pupils and there is no difference in the achievement of any group.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is very good, and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very positive commitment to all that the school has to offer.
- Very good relationships, which underpin a strong sense of community.
- Pupils' high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- The very good provision for pupils' social development.

Commentary

9. Strengths in school provision in this area have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils have an enthusiasm for learning that is stimulated by good teaching and support. They behave very well in class and around the school; there have been no recent exclusions. Pupils are keen to take part in numerous and varied extra-curricular activities, which involve visits and visitors, a large number of residential visits, clubs and sports. Relationships, between pupils and with adults, are strong and support their development in all areas of their personal development.

10. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility and this has a positive impact on their confidence and self-esteem. Whilst there is an ethos of high expectation and a competitive spirit, which inspires pupils to achieve as well as they can, there is also an understanding that they have a duty of care towards one another. Pupils speak highly of their liking for school and particularly stress the absence of oppressive behaviour of any kind. Great care is taken to promote a sense of community.

11. Pupils' spiritual development is good. They celebrate all that they have around them. Year 5/6 pupils write expressively about concepts of strength, loyalty, friendship, honour and betrayal, having been stimulated by a talk from a local vicar and artist. Their moral development is good, pupils are trusted and trustworthy, and they understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils have a social conscience; their care for the environment has led to an award for recycling waste materials. An appreciation of the situation of others has engaged pupils in identifying and supporting children's charities. Social development is very good; it reflects the family atmosphere in the school, the integration of all age groups at play and in school activities, and the maturity of the pupils. Cultural development is good. Whilst the school recognises the limitations of its rural location, it seeks to provide pupils with some experience of other cultures through religious education and visits to places of worship of other faiths.

12. Attendance is very good; there is good monitoring of attendance and very good support from most parents. Even so, there is a significant minority of parents who withdraw their children for holidays during term time. Punctuality is good, overall, but some time is wasted when younger pupils are changing for physical education.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2002/2003

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is good. The provision for pupils' care, welfare and health is good. Links with parents are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** in each part of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist teaching of the older pupils is effective in meeting the needs of the wide range of ability and particularly the high attaining pupils.
- Support staff make a valuable contribution in helping groups of pupils to learn well.
- Assessment routines and the use of assessment information to inform planning is satisfactory overall, but at an early stage in some subjects.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5	11	3	0	0	0

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

Commentary

13. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good and have considerably improved since the previous inspection when temporary teachers covered long-term staff absence. The appointment of new staff led to a complete overhaul of planning and teaching which is now securely based upon the nationally recognised Early Learning Goals for children of this age.

14. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good and has improved since the previous inspection. There are some very good features to teaching. Teachers plan conscientiously to ensure they offer a good level of challenge to groups of pupils with different abilities. Staff try to ensure that more able pupils are offered a high level of challenge and this is often very successful in the specialist teaching of English, mathematics and science in Years 4 to 6. This has a positive impact on learning and the standards achieved. Such teaching is most effective in science where pupils are provided with a high level of challenge in a range of practical learning activities. However, across the range of subjects the sample of work shows that sometimes pupils are provided with worksheets to record their findings when they could profitably develop their own recording styles. Occasionally throughout the school, staff talk for too long and pupils spend too much time listening at the expense of being actively involved in their learning.

15. Support staff make a very effective contribution to the quality of teaching and learning especially for the highest and lowest attaining pupils. All staff work closely together and support staff have a most secure grasp of what is expected of them. They provide a good level of challenge and closely support pupils, which builds their confidence well and helps them learn new ideas and skills. This is particularly seen in the Reception class and in science teaching for the older pupils. Relationships between all staff and pupils are strong and this encourages pupils to try hard and so they get much work done during lessons.

16. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Clear targets are set on individual educational plans (IEPs), which are reviewed and amended regularly. Teachers organise groups well to enable pupils with special educational needs to work with pupils of a similar ability and in mixed ability groupings. In a Year 5/6 English lesson, the teaching assistant very effectively supported pupils with special educational needs, through specific questioning and by writing pupils' suggestions on a whiteboard, thus providing prompts for them when they come to their individual tasks.

17. Assessment routines are good in the Foundation Stage, in English, mathematics and ICT and satisfactory overall. Procedures have been extended during this academic year to cover all subjects. Staff are careful in the recording of what the pupils have done, but there is room to refine such procedures in order to better track the progress that individual pupils make and use this information to provide the best level of challenge.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is good. There are very good opportunities for curriculum enrichment. Accommodation and resources to support the curriculum are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned to meet the wide-ranging needs of the pupils.
- The school provides pupils with a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Information and communication technology links are developing, but are not yet formalised across all subjects.
- The accommodation is attractive and is used well.

Commentary

18. Curriculum planning is good and staff ensure that the rolling programme of work meets the needs of pupils from different years in the mixed age classes. There has been a good improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection. Planning for all subjects is based on national guidelines and focuses on skills as well as knowledge. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum, the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education, and the provision for sex education and the drug awareness programme. Curriculum planning makes good use of support staff who make an effective contribution.

19. There is a very good programme of after-school activities including cricket, girls' football, football, gymnastics, running, ICT, art, drama, recorder clubs and choir. Pupils have opportunities to participate in local and area competitions, such as the two swimming galas. A good range of visits and visitors provide pupils with interesting first-hand experiences. These include visits to a local castle for Years 4, 5 and 6 and to a doll museum for Reception and Year 1. The residential visits have a very positive impact on pupils' relationships, self-esteem and confidence as well as providing good opportunities for historical and geographical learning.

20. The school is taking part in a national laptop initiative in order to develop ICT links within each subject. This has proved a good spur to further developing cross-curricular links. The staff have plans to further formalise the use of ICT across the curriculum in order to build on pupils' learning in other subjects.

21. Accommodation is well maintained, clean, attractive and is used well. The headteacher is submitting further bids to expand the school hall to provide further opportunities for physical education and school performances. The outdoor area has been improved for the Foundation Stage and the school has a pond area, a wildlife area and a bird hide to support studies in science. The school has been awarded the Eco School Status and has also been involved in a recycling project in which they won a school computer. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books in classes and in the library. Parents have played an important role in developing 'Story Sack' resources in order to bring stories to life for younger pupils. All of these aspects support curriculum development well.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides well for pupils' health welfare and safety. Support, advice and guidance are good. The school is good at involving pupils and listening to their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective policies and procedures for health and safety, including child protection, but there is an accommodation issue surrounding the provision of first aid.
- Strong pastoral support, and effective advice and guidance for pupils of all abilities
- Involvement of pupils through the 'Eco committee'.
- Very good induction of Foundation Stage children.

Commentary

22. The good provision in this area has been maintained since the previous inspection. The school's health and safety procedures ensure that there are regular site inspections and risk assessments. First aid provision is well managed, but the base, which is situated in the staff lavatory area, is unsatisfactory. Child protection arrangements are secure. Pupils quickly establish good and trusting relationships amongst themselves and with adults who work in the school. This is helped by the relatively small size of the school and the teaching organisation whereby a wider spread of specialist teachers are in contact with particular groups of children than is usual in other primary schools. Consequently, pupils have more adults to turn to for advice.

23. Pastoral care is strong. Pupils of all abilities benefit from very good advice. Pupils with special educational needs have clearly focused IEPs, whilst those pupils identified as being gifted and talented are appropriately challenged. The celebration of pupils' success in the school's 'Pat-on-the-head' assemblies, and the associated recording of their achievements, is an effective mechanism for monitoring pupils' personal development. Although there is no school council, the 'Eco committee' replicates many of its functions. Class representatives are elected by their peers; the committee takes responsibility for organising charity fundraising and is consulted on a range of issues concerned with improving the school.

24. There are very good induction arrangements for children entering the school in the foundation stage. These include pre-school 'Playmate' activities, liaison with local nurseries and pre-school groups and a sensitive part-time introduction to activities, including school assemblies and lunchtime play. The induction of new primary school pupils is good and is helped by the open and friendly nature of the whole-school community.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS, AND THE COMMUNITY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents and pupils have positive opinions of the school.
- There is very good information for parents.
- There are effective partnerships with other schools and colleges.

Commentary

25. Parents' views of the school are very positive and have been maintained since the previous inspection. All agree that their children behave well, that teaching is good, that expectations are high, that pupils are treated fairly, that the school is well managed, and that induction arrangements are good. A very small minority of parents do not feel comfortable about approaching the school if they have a problem or complaint. All the positive comments are endorsed by the inspection.

26. Pupils' opinions are equally positive apart from the views of around one-third of pupils who said that there was not an adult they would go to if they were worried in school. This was investigated through conversations with pupils and staff and appears to represent pupils' independence and self-confidence in handling issues for themselves, rather than any problems of approachability.

27. Information provided for parents about pupils' attainment and progress is very good. Pupils' annual reports contain targets for improvement and attainment levels relative to expectations for their ages. The school provides comprehensive curriculum outlines each term that enable parents to support their children's education at home. Well-organised parents' consultation evenings are held during the year. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the reviews of their IEPs. There is a good flow of general news about school matters that is particularly effective in keeping parents informed in a far-flung catchment area.

28. Links with the community are very good. The local area is used as an educational resource. For example, visitors talk to pupils about science topics, and local sports clubs provide coaching and arrange tournaments. There are strong links with the local church. The school organises activities for pre-school children as a community service. Slightly further afield, visits are made to local places of interest including places of worship.

29. Parents also play an important part in supporting the school. The Friends Association not only raises significant funds for the school but also acts as a sounding board for parents' concerns at their regular half termly meetings. Links with other schools and colleges are good. The school works well with others to manage and organise staff training and exchange ideas. Pupils benefit from the secondary school's sports college accreditation insofar that extra sports provision is made available.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of governance is good. The headteacher provides good leadership and other key staff make a good contribution to the school's goals and values. The effectiveness of management overall is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong team element and commitment of the whole-school staff to inclusion and equality and concern for the needs of individuals.
- The clear sense of purpose and high aspirations of the headteacher and staff.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is ineffective.
- Governance of the school is good.

Commentary

30. There is a strong team ethos in the school and all staff work very effectively together in a mutually supportive environment. The headteacher provides good leadership for the school. She has a clear sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school and, in the period since the last inspection, has been very successful in creating a new and effective team who inspire, motivate and support fellow staff and pupils. The leadership and commitment of some subject leaders is very good, although leadership of other curriculum areas is at an earlier stage of development. The senior management team constantly monitors performance data; reviews emerging patterns and takes effective action including the organisation of specialist teaching.

31. The headteacher and all staff have a very clear commitment to inclusion and equal opportunity for all pupils, and they provide very good role models. Systems for the monitoring of individual pupils' achievement are well established and policies for behaviour, planning and assessment are implemented clearly and consistently across the work of the whole school. The school's performance management systems are appropriate and have been effective in providing support for staff and in bringing about improvement. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school lacks rigour and is ineffective in helping to establish the small action steps necessary to bring about further improvement. Whilst there is a programme for the monitoring of teaching and learning, this is largely descriptive rather than evaluative. Subject co-ordinators are keen to have further opportunities to monitor the quality of provision in areas for which they hold responsibility.

32. Co-ordination of the foundation subjects is generally not as well developed as that for the core subjects. However, subject co-ordinators have begun to develop portfolios of work undertaken and, together, have been developing a consistent approach to assessment in subjects for which they hold responsibility. Teachers are now assessing individual pupils' attainment formally against attainment descriptors and these assessments are intended to form part of a bank of monitoring evidence for co-ordinators and to provide them with a more detailed overview of standards throughout the school.

33. Overall planning for school development has improved since the last inspection and all school personnel were closely involved in writing the last school improvement plan. However, although appropriate issues are identified in the plan, some areas are very descriptive rather than evaluative and there is room for more detailed formal consideration about exactly how to bring about the improvements identified.

34. Inspection findings confirm that essential management functions are covered well and are not unduly bureaucratic, allowing teachers to get on with their job of teaching the pupils. Very well organised and well monitored accounting systems, supported effectively by the school bursar, help the school achieve their key educational priorities. The governing body applies 'best value' principles consistently to inform its decision-making when planning for improvement. The school had a relatively large carry forward in March 2003, which was spent on providing a fifth class teacher. The school gives good value for money.

35. The governing body has developed a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is very active in helping to shape the vision and direction of the school. It ensures statutory duties are fulfilled appropriately and challenges and supports senior managers well and, where appropriate, acting effectively as a 'critical friend' to the headteacher. Several governors are new and all are keen to further develop the programme of focused visits to the school in order to further their first-hand knowledge of the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	279,951
Total expenditure	256,308
Expenditure per pupil	2,268

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20,173
Balance carried forward to the next	23,643

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Commentary

36. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class, whilst very wide ranging, is above average overall. Because teaching is good, children make good progress and achieve standards that are above average in most areas of their learning when they enter Year 1. Provision for the youngest pupils has considerably improved since the previous inspection of the school when this was unsatisfactory in some areas. Since then, long-, medium- and short-term planning has been introduced to reflect the requirements of a suitable curriculum for children of this age. Teaching and support staff now have a good understanding of the learning needs of young children. They work well together as a strong, confident and effective team.

37. Good assessment routines ensure that individual needs are recognised and catered for. Staff are very aware of parental aspirations for the children and are keen to preserve an appropriate curriculum of learning through play whilst combining this with features of the early stages of the National Curriculum. Although the classroom base is fairly cramped for the currently large group of pupils, good use is made of the new outdoor classroom, which is used well to extend the children's opportunities to make choices in their learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring ethos, supportive environment and the quality of relationships are strong.
- There are good opportunities for children to make choices in the activities they undertake.

Commentary

38. The good quality of teaching and learning and the strong emphasis on care and support ensure that children achieve well in this area. Good induction procedures enable them to settle happily and to try hard in an environment where their efforts are valued. By the time they enter Year 1, the skills of the majority of children are well above what is expected of their age. They take a lively interest in what goes on around them. The classroom environment is interesting and there are good opportunities for children to choose from a range of activities, which allows them to take responsibility for some areas of their learning. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, and this is a feature that becomes a strength of relationships throughout the school. All children are encouraged to take part in well-organised 'circle time' activities where they identify their experiences, thoughts and feelings.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a well-planned range of activities to extend skills in all areas of communication.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in formal and informal activities.

Commentary

39. Teaching is good and allows the children to make good progress in this area so that they enter Year 1 with skills that are above average for their age. The good foundations that are established for language development are a significant factor in the high standards achieved by the older pupils. There is a good emphasis on activities that develop speaking and listening skills with even the part-time children listening to quite lengthy stories with interest. Children are encouraged to make use of role-play areas, which are currently in the form of Congerstone Library where they use the resources, such as the telephone, with enjoyment. However, staff sometimes miss the opportunity for 'talking partners' where children could discuss their ideas with others.

40. Good use is made of Big Books to encourage children to develop an interest in reading, although, on occasions, stories are quite lengthy and involved for the youngest children. However, children are keen to emulate their older brothers and sisters, and are often eager to begin reading and writing. There are good opportunities to develop emergent writing skills and this approach is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of writing across the school.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and children make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

41. Standards are above average when children enter Year 1. Teaching and learning are good. Children have a well-developed understanding of numbers. Staff are very aware that this is an area where parental expectations are high and the school has worked hard to ensure there is a balance of formal and informal mathematical activities for the full- and part-time pupils and for those of different abilities. Higher attaining children are able to identify doubles. Almost all children, including those with special educational needs, recognise that when making doubles if they put one finger up on one hand they do the same on the other hand. Teachers use stories and number rhymes well and children respond very positively to the range of activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and staff use the outdoor classroom well.
- Children have plenty of opportunities for first-hand learning.

Commentary

42. Children exceed the national goals in this area when they enter Year 1. As country-based children, many have a lively interest in the outdoors and living and growing things. They can identify what has happened to the class tadpoles and how they have to look after the goldfish and caterpillars. Good use is made of the outdoor area to grow plants and bulbs. Children have regular access to class computers and the sample of work indicates that many develop good control of the mouse to produce their own pictures. In religious education children have a good understanding of aspects of different faiths and older, high attaining children enjoy the difficult task of making a lotus flower when learning about Buddhism.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of school facilities, such as the outdoor play area, to develop physical skills.

Commentary

43. Teaching is good in this area and children make good progress especially in developing their physical co-ordination. However, their overall skills are not quite as good in this area as some others, although they meet the targets for their age when they enter Year 1. Children's whole-body movements and co-ordination are generally quite good and they enjoy outdoor activities where they learn to sequence a series of movements including hopping, jumping and jogging after their partners. These activities have a positive impact on the development of taking turns, sharing and social development. However, the finer skills of controlling scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and other equipment are no more than average. Their ability to wind wool around a picture of a sheep and the ability to fit puzzles together reveal average dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of play activities that help children develop their imaginations well.

Commentary

44. Teaching in this area is mostly good. Children's skills are not quite as high in this when they enter school as in some other areas of learning, but they make good overall progress and meet the expected goals for their age when they enter Year 1. Children particularly enjoy the good range of role-play activities that are readily available both indoors and in the outdoor classroom, where they

readily assume the roles of different characters. The singing of rhymes and songs in class, and as part of whole-school activities, helps develop an early interest in music. Photographic evidence shows that children have suitable opportunities to undertake design and technology activities where they make simple moving pictures and glove puppets. In art and design, children produce attractive examples of raffia weaving. However, some classroom displays indicate too much use is made of adult produced outlines for children to fill and, during the inspection, the painting activities undertaken used uninspiring materials and included little or no indication of how to improve brush work and painting techniques.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are well above the national expectations.
- Reading is above national expectations.
- Opportunities for developing fluency in handwriting need to be improved for younger pupils and for older pupils with co-ordination difficulties.
- There is very limited formal and systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning, pupils' work and teachers' planning.

Commentary

45. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, pupils achieved standards that were well above the national and similar school averages in reading and writing. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, pupils achieved standards that were below average when compared with all schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was well below average. This fairly small group of pupils had a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. There was some variation in attainment between boys and girls, but there appears no significant reason why.

46. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently well above average in speaking and listening, above average in reading and average for writing. Pupils achieve well. Standards have improved since the last inspection because of better teaching and a greater proportion of higher attaining older pupils and a closer focus on the development of writing skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well, due to clear targets, regular monitoring and evaluation, and good teaching and support.

47. Very good opportunities are planned to develop speaking and listening skills, for instance, through providing opportunities for group discussions. As a result, a significant number of pupils are very articulate and most speak with confidence. A very good example was seen during a Year 5/6 lesson when pupils discussed reasons for and against building more hotels on a tourist island. They listened to each other, offered opinions and came up with a balanced argument.

48. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills in reading. This is working well. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading at school and at home. There is a good stock of books in the library and in classes. Parents have contributed well to the development of 'Story Sacks' materials for Reception pupils to enrich their reading experiences. Parents support reading at home well. Pupils develop good research skills in history lessons in order to find out specific information about life in Ancient Egypt in Years 2/3 and life after the Second World War in Years 5/6.

49. The pupils have many opportunities to develop their writing in the context of learning a particular subject. For instance, pupils use persuasive language to argue their case for and against building more hotels on the island of St. Lucia in Years 5/6. There is an emphasis on developing basic grammatical skills and comprehension alongside developing writing in a range of forms, such as poetry, instructional writing, persuasive writing and report writing. Insufficient use is made of reading texts in order to impact further on descriptions, analysis of plots, characters, settings and style of author in pupils' creative writing. The analysis of pupils' work revealed that younger pupils and some older pupils require more opportunities to develop handwriting fluency. The work analysis shows that marking is inconsistent and is not linked to the learning intentions for each lesson. Therefore, pupils are not always clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

50. Teaching and learning are good. Where teaching is very good it is characterised by carefully staged explanations, with clear expectations and planned opportunities for pupils to rehearse ideas and opinions before writing. This has a very good impact on pupils' progress. Occasionally there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils and a loss of pace within a few lessons. Learning intentions are not shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. Consequently, pupils are not as clear as they could be about the focus of the lesson and opportunities are missed to assess pupils using the learning intention towards the end part of the lesson. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils and this impacts well on their achievement.

51. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, overall. The subject leader shows good knowledge of the subject and uses evidence from data analysis to allocate appropriate support. Individual targets are set for pupils. They are aware of these and refer to them in discussions. A weakness is the lack of a focused, systematic and formal monitoring and evaluation process for the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' work and planning. As a result, this limits the use of specific evidence to identify strengths and areas for development to feed into the school's development plan in order to build on what has already been achieved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

52. Displays across the school provide evidence of good links with other subjects. In religious education pupils write a biography about the life of Muhammad. In history, pupils produce stories about evacuees during the war and develop skills in instructional writing when writing about 'How to make a Tudor brooch'. Pupils were also seen using ICT effectively to design and amend a fairground poster. The school is further developing ICT links with English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very good leadership of the subject.
- The good attainment of the pupils.
- The very good use of assessment to modify the curriculum, to track individual pupils' progress and to set individual targets.

Commentary

53. By the age of seven, standards are above national averages. By the age of 11, standards are above national averages with a significant proportion of the Year 6 class on line to achieve the higher Level 5 in the end-of-key-stage tests. These findings largely reflect those of the previous inspection.

54. A significant feature of mathematics teaching in the school is the 'specialist' teaching of the subject by the mathematics co-ordinator which, given her high level of commitment and expertise

and very good knowledge of individual children and their abilities and needs, results in good and frequently very good progress. Another significant factor, which has a very positive effect on standards and progress, is the very good quality of relationships, between both adults and pupils and pupils and pupils. This means that teaching can progress at a good pace, along well-planned lines and appropriate attention can be given both to pupils needing extra support with their number work and to more able pupils who respond well to the challenging work set.

55. Teaching and learning are good. In a Year 2/3 lesson, the teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge and good classroom and behaviour management skills, allowing the lesson to progress at a good pace. Tasks in this mixed age, cross-phase class were matched well to pupils' ages, abilities and learning needs. Similarly, in a Year 5/6 lesson taught by the subject specialist, the teacher's very good classroom management skills led to very good behaviour and her very good subject knowledge led to well-planned activities and tasks. The lesson was also notable for the very effective support provided for a group of more able pupils by the classroom teaching assistant. Pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils are supported well and make good progress.

56. The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership. School test results are analysed in detail and amendments to the curriculum are made in the light of what is revealed. Assessment in the subject is very good; in addition to the detailed analysis of test results and trends noted above, pupils are tracked individually as they move through the school and regular, individual mathematics targets are set. A programme to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision is in place, although this requires further development.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in subjects such as science and design and technology and appropriate use is made of ICT to support the subject.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, and support staff used very effectively to boost the achievement of the higher attaining, older pupils.
- Pupils have good levels of confidence and skills in carrying out investigative and experimental tasks.
- The subject leader does not have enough opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

58. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. This maintains the findings of the previous inspection in Year 2. The Year 6 group at that time was too small to make valid comparisons. In the last inspection, progress was satisfactory, but is now good, as is overall improvement in the subject. Pupils achieve well and a significant proportion of the oldest pupils achieve very well with a good number being on line to achieve highly in national tests. Over the last four years, the standards achieved in Year 6 have been well above national averages and even when they have not done so well in other subjects they have achieved well in science. This is largely because pupils' overall attitudes to science are good and many of the oldest pupils are very confident in their learning; they try hard and really enjoy practical activities.

59. As country-based children, most have a healthy interest in life and living processes in the world around them. Pupils have enjoyed developing specific areas of the school grounds and their

involvement in the Eco Schools Award. This is reflected well in Years 2 and 3 when pupils are keen to plant a range of seeds and establish what are the best conditions for their growth. Pupils also have good understanding of materials and their properties, and physical processes. This is well illustrated in the response of pupils in Years 5 and 6 to finding out what happens to light in a series of tasks using torches and mirrors. This so interested the pupils that the higher attainers persevered and made kaleidoscopes and periscopes to illustrate what they had found out.

60. The teaching and learning of science are good. The specialist teaching of the older pupils is particularly effective. Some staff, including the science co-ordinator, have high levels of subject knowledge and have worked hard to improve the planning of investigative activities which were relatively weak in the last inspection. A particularly effective aspect of teaching is the deployment of support staff to work with small groups of the oldest, high attaining pupils. This spurs the pupils on to make careful observations and use their previous learning to make valid conclusions. This allows the teacher to give very effective support to average and lower attaining pupils, which boosts their attainment too. Minor weaknesses in teaching are that occasionally staff talk for too long in introductory activities, which affects pupils' concentration. Sometimes, too much use is made of recording sheets that limit the opportunity for pupils to develop the skills of recording their findings and to enhance their use of mathematical vocabulary.

61. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has very conscientiously drawn together planning and resource materials and worked hard and effectively with colleagues to develop investigative activities. The co-ordinator's file is a model of the very effective organisation of information. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, and staff are keen to develop the use of assessment information even further to ensure the best level of challenge in the mixed age and mixed-ability classes. However, the subject leader does not have enough opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the school, and this limits the way in which she can identify the small steps needed to make even further improvements. Science makes good use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The improvement in provision, resources and standards since the last inspection.
- The very good co-ordination of the subject by the teacher who teaches most classes.
- Pupils' very good level of confidence in using the school's lap-top computers.
- There is a need to continue to expand and develop the cross-curricular use of ICT.

Commentary

62. Attainment by the ages of seven and 11 is above national expectations, which indicates an improvement since the last inspection. The sample of pupils' recent work confirms that teaching and learning are good and that pupils are making good progress in the different areas of the ICT curriculum. Only one ICT lesson was observed; the quality of teaching and learning in this lesson was very good. In this lesson, the teacher demonstrated very good subject knowledge, generated a very good working atmosphere with pupils working independently in pairs at laptop computers, and provided very good support for pupils of wide-ranging ability and confidence. This resulted in pupils making very good progress in opening, reading, annotating and replying to an email sent to each pupil individually by the teacher.

63. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality of provision for the subject significantly. The range and quality of resources and teachers' expertise have all improved a great deal. Leadership and management of the subject are now very good. The co-ordinator has very good ICT knowledge and skills and provides very good support for individual teachers. As the school's leading ICT teacher responsible for teaching most classes, she has a very good overview of standards in the school. Since being appointed subject co-ordinator, she has overseen the installation of a new wireless system and broadband Internet access. All pupils and staff have 'usernames' and email addresses and use these with confidence.

64. The co-ordinator is also very active in accessing additional funding for the subject and has, for example, bid successfully for membership of the 'Laptop Initiative' which has provided six further laptop computers, an interactive whiteboard and projector, and digital cameras for the school. As a result, resources for the subject are now good and are very well utilised.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. Staff make regular and well-considered use of the classroom computers and the laptops to support learning across the range of subjects.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school have good awareness of aspects of a range of different faiths.
- The subject co-ordinator has worked successfully to raise the profile of the subject across the school, but does not have enough opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

66. Standards are slightly above those expected for the age of the pupils. The school has successfully combined aspects of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education alongside national guidance for the subject. A strength in provision is the priority given to teaching aspects of the range of different religious faiths. This is seen from Reception where children learn about aspects of Buddhism, to Year 6 where pupils produce a biography of Muhammad. Pupils are interested in their work on sacred texts and those in Year 4 enjoy working with the local vicar as they investigate the different types of Bible in use and how the recording of the story of The Good Samaritan varies in the different versions.

67. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff, with the active support of the subject leader, have worked hard to make religious education lessons interesting and relevant to life in society today. Good use is made of visits and visitors to add interest to activities. This is illustrated in attractive large wooden crosses made and decorated by Year 4 pupils when working with another local vicar and identifying how people express their beliefs through art. Pupils recognise what is important to them and decorate the crosses with symbols of friendship, family and their interests. Slight weaknesses occur in overly long lessons when pupils complete their work rather slowly and the pace of teaching and learning is not maintained.

68. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory and with some good aspects. The subject leader is very enthusiastic and has been successful in raising the profile of the subject. However, there are few opportunities for the direct monitoring of planning, teaching and learning in the subject and there has been little sampling of work across the school. These features make it difficult for the subject leader to identify where further improvements should be made.

History and geography

69. These subjects were not a focus during the inspection. As few lessons were seen, a secure judgement cannot be made on provision in the subjects. It was possible to observe two lessons in history and to interview the geography and history subject leaders, analyse their subject files and displays of recent work.

70. The few **history** lessons observed were characterised by a focus on looking at sources of evidence about the periods being studied, with pupils encouraged to use these to interpret events and information in a searching way. Laptops were used well in a Year 5/6 lesson in order to analyse differences in furniture and appliances between periods in the past and now. There is a good emphasis on making learning memorable. For example, pupils put on a performance about the life of evacuees during the Second World War and photographs show pupils enjoying themselves dressed in 'Ancient Greek' costumes. Visits to places of interest, including residential visits and use of the local environment, support learning well.

71. Leadership and management in history and geography are satisfactory. Assessment of pupils' progress against national attainment levels is at an early stage of development. End-of-project assessments in these subjects were introduced in September. The subject leaders' roles in monitoring and evaluation are limited due to the lack of planned and systematic opportunities to monitor planning, pupils' work, teaching and learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Only one art and design lesson and two physical education lessons were observed during the inspection and it was not possible to observe any design and technology or music lessons. As a result, it is not possible to make secure judgements about overall provision for these subjects. In addition to observing the few lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work and scrutinised the work pupils had completed during the previous terms.

Art and design

73. The evidence indicates that standards in art and design are in line with national expectations. The work of an appropriate range of artists is studied, including Paul Klee, Georgia O'Keefe and William Morris. In the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils were learning about the materials and processes used in making sculpture. The quality of teaching and learning in this lesson was good; the teacher motivated pupils well with her own enthusiasm and the very good range of resources provided resulted in pupils being very eager to get on and persevere with their tasks. Good use was made of ICT. At the end of the lesson, pupils recorded their group's 'natural sculptures' with digital cameras and these were downloaded onto the classroom computer so that pupils could compare and contrast their work.

Design and technology

74. Standards in design and technology are in line with expectations at the age of seven and 11. Evidence from pupils' previous work and displays in classrooms and around the school demonstrates that a broad and appropriate range of design activities is undertaken in a range of techniques and materials. Older pupils have enjoyed making a suitable range of slippers that are displayed around the school. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support the subject.

Music

75. Music was not a focus during the inspection. The subject is valued within the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to enrich their musical experience through the school choir, recorder club and through taking part in school productions. Twenty-five per cent of pupils

participate in specialist music tuition such as, guitar, flute and keyboard. They also sing together in assembly; that observed was good and the pupils clearly enjoy singing. The school is developing the use of ICT to enrich the subject; pupils have used a music composition program. The school is aware of the need to further develop the use of ICT in music.

76. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Assessment of pupils' attainment against national attainment levels for music started in September. This is still at an early stage. The subject leader plans to review attainment and achievement at the end of the academic year in order to identify strengths and areas for development.

Physical education

77. In the small number of lessons observed, the younger pupils had above average skills in using small balls. From discussion with pupils, parents and staff it is apparent that there is a particularly rich curriculum in place. Many pupils identify this as their favourite subject and a large proportion achieves success in out-of-school activities and competitions. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities including tag rugby, running, swimming, cricket, basketball, tennis, football and gymnastics. Staff, including the subject co-ordinator, have high levels of interest in the subject as seen when several attend regular running club practices with the pupils. There has been very effective use of professional coaches from local clubs and teams to act as high level role models for the pupils. Whilst the school hall is small for a full class of older pupils, the school has well-advanced plans to extend the facilities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. There is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about provision in this area. However, the school gives particular emphasis to the development of the whole child, and this is very evident from all aspects of school life. This factor pleases parents who feel their children are well supported in their personal development. There is a clear emphasis on pupils accepting responsibility for their actions as seen in the success of the Eco School Award. There is a programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and all pupils from Reception upwards take part in regular 'circle time' discussions. These activities provide pupils with good opportunities for discussion about their thoughts, feelings and interests, and help pupils to develop their self-esteem.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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