# **INSPECTION REPORT**

# **GARSINGTON C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123123

Headteacher: Mr K Brassington

Lead inspector: Mr J Earish

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 256195

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

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# **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll: 162

School address: Wheatley Road

Garsington

Postcode: OX44 9EW

Telephone number: 01865 361263

Fax number: 01865 361263

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Frazer

Date of previous inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> June 1998

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Garsington C.E. Primary School is situated in the village of Garsington, close to the City of Oxford. It is smaller than most primary schools. There are 162 boys and girls on roll, aged 4 to 11 years. The school is popular with parents, with a large number of pupils attending from outside the catchment area. Pupils come from a wide range of settings, including both rural villages and city suburbs. Some live in owner-occupied accommodation, but there are many in privately rented houses and council housing estates. Unemployment in the area is low. Twenty per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This proportion is above the national average. The range of pupils' needs includes speech or communication difficulties and moderate learning disabilities. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs, at 0.6 per cent, is below national figures. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 8.5 per cent, is below the national average. Very few pupils come from ethnic minorities, and all pupils have English as their first language. Attainment on entry to the school is below average.

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# **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23216	J Earish	Lead inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Physical education; Special educational needs.
9052	H Barter	Lay inspector	
19542	S Lee	Team inspector	Mathematics; Geography; History; Music; Religious education.
23262	P Martin	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Curriculum; English; Art; Design and technology.

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

#### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

This is an effective school that gives good value for money. Children enter Reception with standards that are below average overall but cover the full range of attainment. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are above average. The quality of teaching is good and all pupils achieve well. The school is well led and managed, and the headteacher and staff continually seeks ways of raising standards still further.

# The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT) by the age of 11 years.
- Standards in reading and writing are below average by the age of seven years.
- Children in the Foundation Stage are well supported and achieve well.
- The headteacher and governors provide very good leadership, and all work very effectively as a team.
- Teaching is good overall, with eight out of ten lessons good or better.
- Teachers use assessment information very well to help pupils learn.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve, because they are set individual targets which they can refer to when working.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good. All the key issues have been successfully addressed. The management of the school has improved, and there is now a good quality development plan. The quality of teaching and learning has improved, and there is more very good teaching. A good scheme of work for ICT has been introduced and is helping pupils to achieve well and to attain good standards by the end of Year 6. There has been significant improvement in provision for ICT and for the Foundation Stage, which was previously unsatisfactory and is now good.

#### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests		similar schools		
at the end of Year 6, compared with:	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	Е	D	С	С
Mathematics	Е	D	С	С
Science	D	D	Α	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

A\* means that results were in the top 5 per cent in the country.

**Achievement** is **good** overall. Standards have risen steadily since 2001, and results in 2003 continue this upward trend. Standards in the current Year 6 are now above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. Standards in ICT are also good. In the current Year 2, standards are above average in science, average in mathematics, but below average in reading and writing. All groups of pupils are achieving well.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral and social development**, are **good**. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are good, and this has a positive effect on both the quality of their education and the standards of work they achieve. Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve, particularly in English and mathematics, because they have their own clear targets to work towards. Attendance is good.

#### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

**Teaching** and learning are **good** overall. In the best lessons, teachers manage their pupils very well, with the result that pupils can work very well together independently. Teaching assistants give good support and pupils try hard to succeed. Teachers are very clear about what they expect pupils to learn, and they ensure that tasks are both interesting and challenging. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. A particularly good feature of teaching is the very good assessment of what pupils can do and the constructive help they receive to help them improve.

The curriculum is broad, balanced, and of good quality. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage has improved considerably and is now good. There is a strong commitment to educational inclusion. Boys and girls of all backgrounds and abilities are provided with well planned activities that are well matched to their previous learning. This helps them make good progress and achieve well. There is a very good range of activities for enrichment.

The school maintains good links with partner schools to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The school also enjoys strong relationships with Community groups, such as the Garsington Opera Company, and with individuals such as local film producers. This ensures that there are good opportunities for pupils to experience a wide variety of creative activities within a professional setting.

Care, welfare and support are good. The school cares for its pupils well in a warm and friendly environment. Provision to support pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and governors give very good leadership. Other key staff provide good leadership and have a good understanding of developments in their subjects. Management is also good. Progress is well tracked, and teaching is monitored effectively. The governors are very effective in their role and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. All members of the school community work extremely well as a team, and are committed to school improvement. Statutory requirements are fully met.

# PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express very positive views about all aspects of the school. They particularly like the way the school is led and managed, the quality of teaching, and the good range of activities. They believe that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible and that they enjoy coming to school. The inspection team fully agrees with them.

Pupils say they enjoy their lessons, and feel safe and secure. They feel reassured that adults quickly sort out any misbehaviour or bullying.

# **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

### The most important thing the school should do is:

Improve pupils' standards in reading and writing by the age of seven by regularly evaluating the very detailed strategies identified within the school's development plan, so that teachers can share what

works well in their classrooms. This will enable all pupils to benefit from new ideas, resources and technology.

# PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

#### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

## Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards have risen steadily since 2001, and results in 2003 continue this upward trend. Standards in the current Year 6 are now above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. Standards in ICT are also good. In the current Year 2, standards are above average in science, average in mathematics, but below average in reading and writing. Children in the Foundation Stage are well supported and achieve well.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well.
- Standards in mathematics, science and ICT are above average by the time the pupils reach the age of 11.
- Standards in reading and writing are below average by age seven.

## Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the school spans a wide range but is below average overall. Children are well supported and achieve well because of the good quality of education. However, by the time they start Year 1 most do not reach the Early Learning Goals¹ in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. This is because they do not have enough time to reach higher standards. The local education authority's admission arrangements mean that children join the Reception class for morning sessions in the term in which they become five years of age. The result is that a significant number have little time in the Reception class, and nearly half of last year's intake had only one half-term's schooling before starting in Year 1. From September 2004, children will be able to start school earlier in the school year. This will ensure that they have enough time to gain full benefit from the school's good provision. However, by the end of the Reception Year, children do attain the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development, because of good teaching and guidance.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (26.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.2(26.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.1 (27.7)	28.6 (28.3)

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

2. Standards attained in the national tests in 2003 for pupils aged 11 were average in English and mathematics and were well above the national average in science. When compared with those of similar schools, with about the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards remain broadly similar. Standards have risen steadily since 2001, and results in 2003 continue this upward trend. Standards in ICT are also good. All groups of pupils are achieving well.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning. In language and literacy, for example, pupils should be able to write their own names and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

- 3. The cohort of pupils in Year 2 contains a significant number of pupils whose attainment on entry to the school was well below what is expected for their age. Realistic yet challenging targets have been set for these pupils, on the basis of the school's very good assessment system. They have made good progress and are achieving standards that are just below average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. The current Year 1 has a different attainment profile, and significant numbers of pupils are already attaining average standards in these subjects.
- 4. Pupils do better in national tests than they did at the time of the last inspection. The school is justifiably proud that more pupils than previously are now achieving at the expected level or at a level above that normally expected for their age. There are several reasons for these improvements. The school provides a good curriculum that stimulates the pupils, the quality of teaching is good, and very good assessment of individuals ensures that tasks are well matched to their individual needs. In mathematics, good emphasis is placed on numeracy skills, and pupils learn through first-hand investigations in science. Pupils achieve well in ICT because their skills are developed well in other subjects. In order to achieve an even greater rate of progress, the school is considering ways in which teachers can share what works well in their classrooms, so that all pupils can benefit from new ideas, resources and technology.

# Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school, and their behaviour, are **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Attendance is **good**.

# Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' attitudes to school and to their work are good.
- There is good behaviour as a result of pupils' good relationships with staff and with one another.
- Pupils' moral and social development is good.
- Attendance by the majority of pupils is good, though some families take holidays during the school term.

- 5. Pupils come to school happy and confident. They settle quickly to their lessons, and eagerly involve themselves in the activities. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are keen to learn. Many take part in extra activities such as badminton and football clubs. Pupils say that the school is a friendly place where teachers make learning fun. Parents are happy that their children like school, know how to behave well, and respond well to encouragement to grow up in a mature way.
- 6. The atmosphere in the school is calm and orderly. In lessons, pupils behave well because they have good relationships with their teachers and want to work hard for them. The ethos of the school is good, and staff are consistent in their expectations of pupils' good behaviour. Parents are pleased with this feature of the school's work, which they say has greatly improved in the past few years. Pupils say they feel safe in school. Most feel that bullying is dealt with well because adults are friendly and helpful when pupils have concerns. However, a few are not sure that adults always listen as well as they might when pupils fall out with their friends. Pupils are very positive about the ways in which the school helps individuals to improve their behaviour.
- 7. Overall, pupils are making good progress in their personal development and are taking responsibility for their own learning as they become older. Pupils in Year 6, for example, understand how they have made improvement against their personal targets. Pupils' moral and social development is good, because they know and understand what is expected of them through the school's code of conduct. They are able to listen carefully to the views of others and respect

each other's opinions. Pupils show good understanding that rules are necessary for an orderly society, whether at school or in the wider world, and value the opportunity to decide their class rules. They know that the views they express through the school council are considered and valued by all the adults in the school.

8. Attendance is good for the majority of pupils. The school is carefully monitoring a small increase in holidays taken during the school term, and some regular absences by some of the oldest pupils. Punctuality is satisfactory. There have been no recent exclusions.

## Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3

Authorised absence		Unauthorised a	bsence	
	School data	5.5	School data	
	National data	5.4	National data	

School data	0.3			
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 quality of education is **good**. Good teaching enables all pupils to make significant gains in their learning and **achieve well**. There is a clear understanding of the purpose and use of assessment across the school.

# **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is **good** overall, and pupils learn well. Procedures for the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work are very good.

# Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Procedures for the monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic performance are very
- Teachers plan lessons well and ensure that work is well matched to pupils' differing needs.
- The teaching assistants play a valuable role in giving pupils appropriate help and support.
- Teachers manage their pupils well and, as a result, pupils work well both independently and collaboratively.

## Commentary

The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report, where the quality of teaching and assessment was identified as an area for improvement. Parents indicate that they are happy with the quality of teaching in the school.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0)	6 (17.6)	22 (64.7)	5 (14.7)	1 (2.9)	0 (0)	0 (0)

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

Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils benefit from tasks that capture their attention and focus well on previous learning. Activities are well matched to their needs, and this means that all pupils are challenged and learn well. In the very best lessons, pupils benefit from a high level of direct teaching as they work, so that their thinking is exercised at all times. In the single unsatisfactory lesson, the links between the different aspects of mathematical calculation were not made clear and pupils became confused.

- 11. Teachers use their thorough assessment procedures to track progress and match tasks to the needs of the pupils. They record the National Curriculum Levels each pupil is expected to reach each year and review these regularly. Pupils also have their own small personal targets to work towards to give them an understanding of what they need to do to improve, particularly in English and mathematics. The result is that pupils have a good understanding of their own learning and what they must do to improve. This makes a major contribution to raising standards and setting appropriate work for pupils of all abilities.
- 12. The school has a good number of teaching assistants, who are valued members of the team. They play a valuable role in giving pupils help and support, for example in the computer suite or during scientific experiments. Assistants sometimes take one group of pupils into a separate learning area to ensure that their needs are met while the teacher works with another group. This arrangement was particularly well used for the youngest pupils in Year 1. Pupils with SEN are offered tasks that are well matched to their needs, and this means that all are appropriately challenged and learn well.

#### The Curriculum

The curriculum provides a **good** range of opportunities. There are **very good** opportunities for enrichment. The quality of both accommodation and resources is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The curriculum offers good opportunities for all pupils to achieve well.
- The quality of the curriculum has improved in a number of ways since the previous inspection.
- The curriculum benefits pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) well.
- All pupils have the chance to benefit from a very good range of enrichment activities.
- The accommodation for children and pupils in the Reception Year and Year 1 is good.
- 13. The school provides a well-planned, balanced and innovative curriculum. The learning opportunities meet the needs of all pupils, irrespective of their ability, background, gender or ethnicity. The school uses the curriculum well as a basis for interesting lessons that help to enthuse pupils, foster their enthusiasm and so enhance the quality of their learning.
- 14. A number of improvements have been made to the curriculum since the last inspection, including the Foundation Stage, ICT, and subject planning. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is now good, and covers all the required areas of learning. It meets the needs of children starting in the Reception class, some of whom have little previous experience of learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is also good and is an important factor in their good achievement. In particular, provision for ICT has improved and is now good. The new computer suite is used effectively. Lessons in other subjects are regularly taught in the suite, enabling pupils to learn ICT skills through a wide range of purposeful tasks. Planning for subjects is now well founded on nationally recommended guidance, and pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their education.
- 15. Learning is successfully extended through a very good range of special events, visits and activities outside normal school hours. Such experiences are used well to broaden pupils' experience and focus their learning. Pupils have opportunities to experience a wide range of sporting and artistic activities, including participation in the local Music Festivals in Year 2 and Year 6 and two annual residential trips in Year 4 and Year 6. Visitors to school include, among others, sports coaches and instrumental teachers.

- 16. The provision for pupils' PSHE, including sex education and issues to do with substance misuse, is good. This helps to ensure pupils' positive attitudes towards school, as well as helping them to understand how to keep well and understand their responsibilities towards one another.
- 17. The school takes very good care to ensure that all pupils are fully included. Pupils with SEN are provided with individual education plans of good quality. Their targets are clearly focused on their identified needs and adjusted in the light of regular assessments, so that they make the best progress as their needs change.
- 18. There are enough suitably qualified teachers to ensure that the curriculum is taught effectively. Teaching assistants generally play a good supporting role in lessons, particularly with lower attaining groups, as was observed in a Year 1 lesson. The accommodation has also improved since the last inspection, with new classrooms and the imaginative adaptation of existing teaching space. In particular, the accommodation for children and pupils in the Reception and Year 1 has improved significantly, with the generous support of the Friends of Garsington School. Provision for ICT has improved and is now good.

# Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. Pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance. There is **good** provision to seek and act on pupils' views.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school cares well for every pupil.
- There are good reward systems which effectively support pupils' personal development.
- The 'Learning to Learn' initiative is helping pupils to improve and to achieve well.
- There are good arrangements for pupils to give their views on school life, and the school acts positively on their suggestions.

- 19. The school looks after pupils well, because it has good procedures for their health, safety and welfare and is committed to supporting every pupil, including those with SEN. Parents find the school to be a caring place where their children are well supported and where they can always talk to teachers if they have any concerns. One pupil's comment that 'the teachers are kind and everything is the way it's meant to be' sums up how pupils view the care afforded to them.
- 20. The school has well-established systems to monitor pupils' academic and personal progress and to reward their achievements. Pupils understand the system of house points well and value it because it encourages them to work and behave to the best of their ability.
- 21. The 'Learning to Learn' project is having a good impact on the quality of guidance that pupils receive. Pupils appreciate the support that teachers give them with their work. They say that teachers explain things well, and that comments made in marking help them to see what they need to do next to improve. They know what their 'targets' are, and know that they have made improvements when these have been achieved. Pupils are very positive about the 'traffic light' system, which gives them a clear indication of how well they are doing.
- 22. Pupils settle in well to school, because the school is caring and adults have good relationships with them. All pupils are offered a preliminary visit to the school before starting in the Reception class.
- 23. The school council is an effective way for pupils to discuss their views on school life and to share ideas about how it can be improved. Pupils are very appreciative of the way in which they have managed to achieve improvements, including the provision of new recycling bins, playground

markings and playground equipment. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and are proud to see their names and photographs on display as important representatives of the school community.

# Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **good**. Links with the community and with other schools are **good**.

# Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Parents are satisfied with their children's education and the partnership that the school has developed with them.
- The school supplies parents with good information about what their children are learning.
- Parent governors provide an important link between the school, parents and the community.
- Good links with the community are used to make pupils' learning more interesting.
- The school has good links with other partnership schools.

- 24. Parents are pleased with the school and with the education their children receive. They feel that the school is led and managed well and that their children receive good quality teaching which helps them to make good progress. They report that teachers are approachable and that it is easy to discuss any concerns with them. In return, parents support the school and their children's learning well. Most are active in their support of reading and homework. The well-established 'Friends of Garsington School' is well supported by parents.
- 25. The school communicates well with parents through regular newsletters, parents' meetings and informal discussions. Parents are happy with the information they receive and feel that communication has improved since the last inspection. Reading record books are a useful method of communicating on a daily basis with teachers, and most parents use this opportunity well. A very good feature of the information for parents is the issue of termly curriculum booklets, which describe what pupils will be learning and how parents can support this at school and at home. Parents are very happy with the provision for SEN, and feel that their children's difficulties are soon identified and supported. They are fully involved at every stage of monitoring and review.
- 26. The governing body is well supported by its parent governors, who know the school and the community very well and are active in sharing information with parents and in gleaning their views on matters such as homework. As a result, parents know who the governors are and are happy to talk to them about the school's development.
- 27. The school has a well-established place in the local community and makes good use of it to broaden pupils' experiences outside the classroom. Pupils' participation in local activities is a notable feature. Pupils talk enthusiastically about workshops with Garsington Opera and of creating animated work on the computer with equipment provided through the school's links with Wheatley Park School. They play a full role in village life through church festivals, May Day celebrations and meeting local senior citizens.
- 28. The school has good links with its partner primary schools, and these benefit pupils and staff alike. Sports events and music festivals are regular features and are much enjoyed. Through working together on projects such as 'Learning to Learn', staff are able to share and develop their expertise well. Links with the secondary school are very well organised and productive. They enable pupils to make a smooth transition at the end of Year 6, because secondary pastoral staff and primary teachers work closely together. In return, the school regularly provides students with work experience placements.

#### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management are good overall**. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. The leadership by senior staff is good. The school is well managed. Self-evaluation is well established and embedded within the culture of the school, and it pervades the whole organisation. The governing body make a very good contribution to the leadership of the school and its success.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher is committed to continual improvement, and his leadership enables subject co-ordinators to fulfil their roles well.
- Self-evaluation is well established and is embedded within the culture of the school.
- The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and use their own expertise effectively.
- The school's strategic plan and the annual improvement plan are of good quality and clearly map out future development.

## Commentary

- 29. The headteacher provides very good leadership, which gives a strong sense of purpose and direction to the school and has enabled it to make good progress since the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators monitor performance in their subjects well and are keen to address any areas of weakness. Self-evaluation is now well established within the culture of the school and is proving to be a powerful tool for initiating change. A very good example is the way in which the school's own monitoring system revealed a weakness in the development of ICT skills. Consequently, staff have adjusted the curriculum, and have been focussing on the development of these skills across the curriculum. This is already having an impact on the standards pupils achieve by the age of 11 years.
- 30. The co-ordination of special educational needs (SENCO) is good, and the SEN register is regularly updated. The work of support staff is well integrated with that of the class teachers, and they make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with SEN.
- 31. The governing body is very supportive and successfully fulfils its role as critical friend to the school. It is very well organised and fulfils its legal responsibilities by means of an effective committee structure. Governors take a keen interest in the work of the school and contribute substantially to its effectiveness. They have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and are very active in holding the school to account for its performance and discussing ways in which standards may be improved. They ensure that statutory policies and quidelines are implemented and monitored, including those for race equality.
- 32. The school's strategic plan and the annual improvement plan are of good quality, and clearly map out future development. This provides a good analysis of the school's context and sets out precise and measurable targets for the future. The headteacher, senior staff and governors monitor performance data very well and use it to review progress and to guide future action.

#### Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		
Total income	474,520.00	
Total expenditure	454,562.00	
Expenditure per pupil	2,498.00	

Balances (£)			
Balance from previous year	29,871.00		
Balance carried forward to the next	49,829.00		

- 33. The school had a carry-forward figure of just over 10 per cent last year. However, a significant proportion included money set aside for improvements to ICT equipment and building projects. Figures for the current financial year show that the projected carry-forward will be about four per cent.
- 34. A wide range of indicators, including the quality of teaching, the quality of leadership and the good improvement made since the last inspection, show that the school is effective. When the expenditure per pupil is taken into account, the school provides good value for money.

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

#### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good.** 

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children achieve well in most of the areas of learning.
- A significant proportion of children do not spend long enough in the Reception class to reach the expected levels in communications, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development and physical development.
- There is a good balance of directed and independent activities.
- The good quality of resources and accommodation has a positive impact on provision for Reception pupils.

- 35. At the time of the inspection, there were seven full-time and six part-time Reception children who attend in the morning only. Their attainment when they start school is below average overall. Although children achieve well because of the good quality of education, most do not reach the Early Learning Goals² in communications, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development by the time they start Year 1. This is because they do not have enough time to reach higher standards. By the end of the Reception Year, children attain the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development because of good teaching and guidance. New arrangements come into force next September, which means that children will be able to start school earlier so they will have enough time to gain the full benefit from the school's good provision.
- 36. The good quality of provision for the Reception class represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. The leadership and management of Reception are good. This is a significant feature in the quality of the provision. There have also been substantial improvements to the quality of teaching and the curriculum. Children now have a settled start to their education and are taught by a permanent, full-time teacher, rather than by temporary staff as reported at the previous inspection. The school's procedures for gauging children's abilities have improved and are used well to plan lessons for individual pupils. Teaching is good. The teacher has good relationships with the children and gives effective support and guidance in lessons and activities, whilst also encouraging sound learning and social habits. The teacher plans and organises lessons which help children to learn well, irrespective of their stage of development. The quality of resources and accommodation has improved, largely thanks to fund-raising by the Friends of Garsington School group. As a result, the shortcomings in resources have been overcome and there is a secure outdoor play area. However, because of the constraints of the positioning of the outdoor play area, there is not an easy interchange of indoor and outdoor activities. Nonetheless, there are firm plans to rearrange the accommodation to overcome this difficulty.
- 37. Children achieve well in their personal, **social and emotional development** because of good teaching which builds well on their positive attitudes. The children work well together, for example taking turns when answering questions during whole class work, or supporting each other whilst painting. They talk to one another as they work and play, and show a good deal of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning. In language and literacy, for example, pupils should be able to write their own names and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

independence, for example when changing for physical education lessons. The teacher gives children opportunities to work independently and encourages them to do as much for themselves as they can, at the same time offering good support to those who need it. Children know the routines of the school well. The Reception children are confident and happy learners.

- 38. The children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher plans and introduces a good range of activities which help children's learning in speaking and listening, and in reading and writing activities. Children listen well to traditional tales such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and, with the help of the teacher, construct a sentence about the story. Older pupils show a good understanding of how sentences can be written, knowing, for example, that they begin with capital letters and end with full stops. A small number can recognise a few familiar words and write their own names. The majority have not yet reached this stage. Although children talk amongst each other, they find more difficulty when asked to talk about specific matters, for example during role-play.
- 39. In their mathematical **development**, the children achieve well and the quality of teaching and learning is good. The teacher uses a good variety of activities to reinforce and extend the children's understanding of number, so that most recognise numbers from their position on a number grid and some are able to state what the next number is. During one good activity, the teacher helped to develop children's mental skills by showing and hiding different numbers of clothes pegs. A few children write numbers and record simple sums. Others build up sets of objects of different numbers. Some children are successfully starting to use their number skills to record and solve simple problems.
- 40. No teaching was observed of **knowledge and understanding of the world** so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision. However, the teacher's plans show that this area is planned for well. Children use ICT to print out maps of the country, and they reflect on their own emotions, noting, with the help of the teacher, what makes them happy or sad. They use recognisable symbols to record the weather and know the names of different parts of the body.
- 41. Teaching is good in **physical development** and pupils achieve well. Children play confidently on large toys such as tricycles and scooters, and show a good level of control and coordination during physical education lessons. They have a good awareness of space, and run and dodge with very few collisions. The children show good imagination when devising different ways of moving around the hall. They show good physical skills when handling paintbrushes and pencils.
- 42. Teaching is good in **creative development**. In a lesson in which the children discussed their painting from the previous day, they achieved well because of the good teaching they received. The teacher had high expectations, encouraged pupils to evaluate their previous work, and introduced new art-related vocabulary such as 'texture' and 'scene'. This led to thoughtful work during which pupils discovered interesting facts, for example that blue and yellow makes green. Children take part in role-play, but they have difficulty in sustaining this without adult intervention.

#### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- All the children achieve well.
- The subject co-ordinator has helped to improve provision in the subject.
- Standards in English are also improving because of the school's sharp focus on writing skills.
- Teachers' planning is good.
- Teachers use assessment information very well.
- Targets for children's next steps in learning are challenging and realistic.
- Speaking and listening are not consistently developed across the curriculum.

- 43. Standards of attainment are below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6, and are similar to the results obtained in the most recent national tests. Standards at age seven years were judged to be good at the time of the last inspection report. However, when the current Year 2 started school, the attainment of a significant number of these pupils was well below average. These pupils have made good progress and are now achieving standards that are just below average in reading and writing. A large proportion of the current Year 6 pupils, particularly boys, have SEN, so they have also achieved well. The higher attaining pupils, mainly girls, are sufficiently challenged and they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Achievement is good because of the good teaching and high expectations of work and behaviour Teachers organise work in such a way that it closely matches individual needs. To motivate the pupils, they imaginatively use such resources as source books of arguments for and against different points of view. Girls and boys alike, regardless of their ethnicity or prior attainment, make good progress and achieve well.
- 44. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average at the end of Year 2 but meet expectations at the end of Year 6. Although many Year 2 pupils listen well, some have difficulty in concentrating and in using different speaking patterns for different listeners. The majority of pupils listen well in Year 2, but do there are not always have enough opportunities for pupils to speak in other than single words or short phrases. Older pupils, however, have satisfactory speaking and listening skills. Year 6 pupils listen carefully to other members of their group, for example when debating vivisection, and express their own opinions clearly.
- 45. Standards in reading are below average by the end of Year 2, but average in Year 6. Teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach reading. Younger pupils are taught clear strategies to help them to read and recognise word and letters. In Year 1, pupils enjoy class games which help them to learn the sounds that groups of letters make. Pupils use their understanding of how books are organised when explaining the difference between an index and a contents page. In one lesson, Year 2 pupils used ICT to develop their understanding of alphabetical order. Group reading sessions are well organised so that each group receives a good deal of attention, with the result that pupils make good progress. Consequently, pupils are interested in reading, and enjoy it. Children read regularly to adults, including reading volunteers. This helps them to consolidate their skills.
- 46. Standards in writing are below average by the age of seven years, but average by the age of 11 years. The school identified a number of weaknesses in writing and is successfully putting into practice strategies to improve standards. Pupils look at the key features of good writing and try to emulate these in their own work. For example, they analyse the features of different parts of a story and use their findings in their own work. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to write at length and

to draft and redraft their work. They write for a range of purposes and apply their skills successfully in other subjects, for example in producing information leaflets about Poole or describing life in Ancient Egypt. They use ICT to help their learning, for example when writing autobiographies. The quality of handwriting and spelling is generally satisfactory.

- 47. Teaching is good. A strong feature of the quality of teaching is lesson planning. Teachers plan lessons with clear purposes, which they share with pupils at the start of the lesson, thus helping them to understand what will be expected from them during the lesson. This aids their learning. Teachers organise work so that it closely matches individual needs, using resources imaginatively to motivate children to work hard. Learning assistants and volunteers make good contributions to pupils' learning by supporting the least able. In a lesson in Year 1, the learning assistant managed a group of lower ability pupils very well and encouraged them to work hard, asking pertinent questions which helped them to understand spelling patterns. Teachers keep good records of children's progress and use the information well to identify what needs to be done to enhance learning. Reading logs help to forge a useful link between home and school. They inform teachers of how well pupils are progressing and at the same time give pupils an opportunity to write their opinions of their books. Teachers' marking is encouraging and congratulates success, and usually offers useful guidance to pupils about how to improve their work.
- 48. The subject is led and managed well, and the work of the subject co-ordinator has had a significant impact on the improvement in standards and in helping to ensure that all pupils achieve well. A key feature of the work is the school's careful analysis of pupils' progress and of test results. The results of these analyses have been used to set realistic but challenging targets for pupils' improvement. They have also identified which pupils could benefit from extra support, and these pupils receive effective support from learning assistants and volunteer helpers. The school has usefully identified writing as an area for development, and teachers are working successfully to raise standards. An important part of the development is the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and of pupils' work. Findings from these activities are used to judge how well writing is improving and what needs to be done next.

#### LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

49. Skills in writing are used frequently and effectively across the curriculum, to extend learning in subjects such as history, design and technology, and science. As a result, pupils use their skills to write for a good range of purposes. Pupils satisfactorily use ICT, for example when writing newspaper reports or developing an understanding of alphabetical order. However, there is no consistent approach to developing speaking and listening skills in other subjects, so pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop spoken language.

#### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school is committed to raising standards for all.
- Teachers' planning is good and is based on what pupils know and understand.
- Pupil achieve well because of the good teaching and learning.
- Teachers do not have enough opportunities to discuss and try out ideas that have worked well in other classes.

- 50. Good use is made of information about pupils' progress to set targets for future learning. In the current Year 6, standards in mathematics are above the national average. This is due to consistently good teaching and very good monitoring of pupils' progress.
- 51. In the current Year 2, standards are average, with a significant number of pupils attaining above national expectations. This fluctuation in standards as compared to last year's national test results is due to a significant number of pupils whose attainment on entry to the school was well below what is expected for their age. In addition, a number of higher attaining pupils have left the year group.
- 52. Pupils do better in national tests than they did at the time of the last inspection. The school is justifiably proud that more pupils are now achieving at the expected level or at a level above that normally expected for their age. This is the outcome of good teaching and learning. Assessment processes are very good throughout the school, and teachers plan with good reference to what pupils have learnt before.
- 53. Pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum, covering all aspects of mathematics, and there is a strong emphasis on basic numeracy. Opportunities for problem-solving have increased well since the last inspection. Pupils show good understanding of how mathematics can be useful, for example when working out the best value or when using decimal fractions in measuring. These links across the mathematics curriculum are less explicit in the younger classes. In one lesson, for example, where the links between number calculation and money calculation were not made clear, pupils became confused. The good teaching in mathematics is often supported by confident, well-prepared teaching assistants. This results in pupils' attitudes to mathematics being good.
- 54. Comprehensive procedures exist for tracking and assessing pupils' progress. These lead to targets which are shared with pupils and which guide planning and teaching. A good system is in place for pupils to reflect on how well they have understood a lesson. This is more evident in the older classes, where pupils are very much encouraged to articulate their thinking and give reasons for their choice of strategy when solving a problem. In a lesson on fractions, for example, the ability of older pupils to use their mental knowledge was very well tested and clearly demonstrated. The lesson supported their learning well and enabled them to work out complex problems. The level of challenge was accurately judged and tasks consistently met the needs of all pupils. This demanded that they worked and tried hard, and resulted in a high output of good quality.
- 55. The use of ICT has improved since the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school use computer programs to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of multiplication tables, by way of practice and games. In lessons seen, good use was made of the interactive whiteboards to introduce pupils to plotting points on a simple grid and, in an older class, to plot co-ordinates in all four quadrants. All pupils were confident in using the computers and showed how they had been taught to work sensibly and independently in small groups. Younger pupils are able to construct graphs using the computer. Marking is conscientious, but it is not used consistently to demonstrate to pupils how they can improve. The presentation of written mathematics is inconsistent, particularly in the exercise books rather than on the worksheets.
- 56. Leadership and management of the subject are good, with the co-ordinator using monthly progress sheets to ensure that the planning helps all pupils. The school has already identified the need for improvement in respect of some of the points made above. Good links have been made with parents to assist in developing mathematics at home as well as at school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

#### Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Numeracy has been well developed in other subjects. Pupils use their number skills when constructing spreadsheets in ICT. They practise measuring carefully and accurately in science and in design and technology. Data handling skills are well developed in ICT and science, where pupils use tables and graphs to present information.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good.
- The school places a high emphasis on investigational and experimental science.
- Assessment procedures are very good.

- 58. The emphasis that the school places on practical and investigative activities is a key factor leading to the good standards by the age of 7 and 11 years. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when standards in Year 6 were judged to be satisfactory. The good quality of the teaching also enables all pupils to achieve well.
- 59. There have been many recent improvements in the subject. These include:
  - \* improvements to the quality of teaching, which is now good;
  - \* regular assessment to track the progress of individuals and cohorts of pupils;
  - \* analysis of the results of statutory tests and of pupils' work, to highlight strengths and weakness in order to support planning and curriculum developments.
- 60. Teaching was previously judged to be satisfactory because some pupils, especially the most able, were not being sufficiently challenged during lessons. This is not now the case. Very good assessment procedures are in place, and progress is closely monitored to ensure sufficient challenge for all pupils. This results in tasks that are well matched to pupils' individual needs. In addition, assessment information helps to identify areas of weakness in the curriculum, which in turn informs plans for developing staff skills and competencies. Pupils also have their own small targets to work towards, which gives them a better understanding of their own learning.
- 61. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities. There are good opportunities for pupils to carry out their own experiments and to plan their own investigations. In addition, teachers skilfully provide openings for pupils to discuss their experimental results, which allow them to extend and consolidate their learning. There is a strong commitment to educational inclusion, and boys and girls of all backgrounds and abilities are supported effectively in their practical work to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
- 62. Information and communication technology (ICT) was used effectively to support learning in lessons. Pupils have used the digital microscope, typed instructions for their investigations, and recorded their data by compiling and printing pie charts, block graphs and pictograms. These experiences give pupils pride in their work, and contribute to the good curriculum they enjoy.

#### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good.** 

# Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6.
- The subject is very well led, and progress is carefully monitored.
- There are good quality resources, including computers linked to the Internet.
- The subject is used to good effect across the curriculum.

# Commentary

- 63. As well as teaching ICT through weekly timetabled lessons in the computer suite, teachers identify opportunities in other subjects for pupils to develop the skills they have been taught. The success of this strategy owes much to the very good leadership and management of ICT. At the time of the last inspection, the scheme of work, resources, standards, teaching, learning and progress were unsatisfactory. Very good progress has been made. Teaching is now good overall, with a significant number of very good lessons observed in Year 3 to 6. The scheme of work is now of good quality, and this is directly linked to pupils' good achievement. Cabling for direct access to the Internet has been completed, as well as the construction of new computer suite with a good range of new computers and software. This, too, is having a positive effect on the quality of learning and the rate at which pupils make progress.
- 64. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was good overall, and pupils now show good achievement during lessons. The teachers' good knowledge of the subject enables them to lead the activities with confidence, giving clear instructions to the class and skilfully ensuring that all pupils are involved. The pupils respond very well to the teachers' high expectations of their work and behaviour. They respond react very well to challenges, answer questions enthusiastically, and concentrate very well on their tasks.

# Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Since the previous inspection there has been an effective programme of staff training, good use of support staff and the development of the computer suite. These have all made a major contribution to improvements in provision. Opportunities for ICT are now being identified in English, mathematics and science, as well as in the foundation subjects<sup>3</sup>. The range of activities offered to all pupils is now good. The school has exciting plans to extend the opportunities for control and monitoring in ICT once new equipment has been purchased.

## **HUMANITIES**

- 66. Work was sampled in **history and geography**, but as a result of timetabling arrangements during the inspection period no geography lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects.
- 67. In the small number of history lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was good. In one good lesson, the teacher's high expectations and good use of resources motivated pupils to find out about life in Ancient Greece and how the Olympic Games have changed over time. Year 3 pupils made good links with literacy when they marked a text in different colours to help them to organise their writing, for example on how Viking ships were made and how they were used. Higher attaining pupils selected Viking pictures from a website before importing them into Microsoft Word and adding text.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> These are subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

- 68. In geography, pupils have compared Poole with Garsington. Higher attaining pupils have produced colourful brochures of Poole, using text, clipart and digital photographs. Good use is now made of the Internet for research, and pupils used to good effect a range of secondary sources to develop their research skills and deepen their knowledge and understanding. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils were given few opportunities to use facts and information to help them form opinions.
- 69. In both subjects it is clear from pupils' written work that a good range of visits and visitors plays an important part in making the work interesting and relevant.

# **Religious Education**

Provision in the subject is **satisfactory**.

# Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are encouraged to apply what they have learned in religious education to their everyday lives.
- The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- There is no monitoring of teaching and learning.

- 70. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection remain in line with expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Only two lessons were observed. Much of the work covered in religious education lessons centres upon discussions, so there was limited written work to examine. However, analysis of the available work and talking to pupils indicate that pupils' achievement is sound throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to relate what they learn to their everyday lives.
- 71. As so few lessons were observed, it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, in one very good lesson, pupils gained a good understanding of how sacred Islamic and Christian texts give guidance to people on how they should live their lives. Pupils saw that the guidance was very similar, and considered ways in which they would seek help if faced with a dilemma. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 showed an understanding and respect for religious rituals, such as washing hands before opening the Qur'an. This indicates that pupils are being given opportunities to discover the meaning behind religions as well as learning facts.
- 72. Younger pupils gain understanding as well as knowledge by the good teaching, which encourages them to contrast the lives of people in biblical times with their own. A younger pupil, for example, when learning about Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, compared this journey with their 'trip into Oxford' by bus.
- 73. The co-ordinator is currently carrying out a very effective review of the way the religious education curriculum is planned. For example, she regularly examines teachers' planning to ensure that the topics complement one another. However, she does not have the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in order to identify the good teaching, and to share examples of good practice with colleagues.

# CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 74. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors talked to teachers about their work, spoke to pupils about what they had learned, and examined pupils' work.
- 75. It is evident from a scrutiny of work on display, discussion with pupils, and an examination of completed work that pupils experience an interesting **art and design** curriculum. Teachers plan effectively, using the nationally recommended guidelines, and make good links with other subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils have linked their artwork to history, producing colourful portraits of Florence Nightingale at different stages of her life. Teachers encourage the use of ICT, for example in the production of repeating patterns and symmetrical designs. In the only lesson seen, the teacher gave pupils detailed instructions about how to draw a motif from a Viking coin before printing and stencilling an image. The pupils listened carefully and tried hard to use the techniques they had seen. Pupils' experiences in lessons are enriched by the opportunity to join a very good range of activities outside school hours.
- 76. In **design and technology**, teachers' planning is of good quality. It takes watchful account of the learning needs of different groups of pupils and ensures that links are made with other subjects. Pupils follow the design process carefully, considering and recording how existing artefacts, such as photograph frames, are suitable for their purposes. They draw up their own designs, keeping the intended user well in mind, and use a good wide range of materials, such as fabrics, card and foodstuffs. Pupils evaluate their finished products thoughtfully, comparing what they have done with what they intended to do, and consider how they might approach a similar brief in the future. In the only lesson seen, Year 5 pupils revealed a clear understanding of how to judge the quality of the biscuits they made.
- 77. Pupils experience a varied **physical education** curriculum, including aspects of movement, gymnastics, dance, athletics, swimming and team games. The standards in swimming by Year 6 are good, and pupils benefit from weekly sessions in the school's pool during the summer term. The quality of teaching and learning in the two physical education lessons seen was good. Pupils are enthusiastic about physical activity, and dress appropriately for lessons. They enjoy performing with a partner, using gymnastics apparatus, and can appraise the work of others with sensitivity. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with SEN, who are well supported.
- 78. The teaching of music was observed only in Year 4, although all the school was heard singing in assemblies. In the only lesson seen, the pupils enjoyed listening to a recording of African instruments and clicked rhythmically in time to the tune. All pupils played their instruments using a pentatonic scale (five notes) and varied the volume and clarity of their playing. In addition, all pupils benefit greatly from their involvement with the Garsington Opera Company, who give them opportunities to rehearse and perform alongside professional opera singers. Pupils are also able to take part in the Oxfordshire Music Festival and have participated in a cantata in partnership with local schools. Music makes a good contribution to links with the community. The continuing development of music initiatives and additional external funding has ensured that pupils experience a wide variety of music.

# PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for PSHE and citizenship is **good**.

# Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are learning to play an active role as citizens.
- Pupils' views are valued.

# Commentary

79. The programme for PSHE is good and includes work on diet, sex and relationships, drugs, and safety. Pupils are successfully learning to play an active role as citizens. They are well informed about the need for rules in school and the community. They are able to make decisions and discuss their ideas on issues relevant to their own lives. The school council has been involved in improving the school playgrounds. Pupils have a good grasp of the consequences of anti-social behaviour and understand they must set a good example to others. They are also aware of a variety of religious and ethnic groups and the need for tolerance.

# PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).