

INSPECTION REPORT

GUILSBOROUGH CofE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Guilsborough, Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122022

Headteacher: Mr P A Henretty

Lead inspector: Mr J Morris

Dates of inspection: 29th September – 2nd October 2003

Inspection number: 256300

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	190
School address:	The Green Guilsborough Northampton
Postcode:	NN6 8PT
Telephone number:	01604 740307
Fax number:	01604 740307
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Webster
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Guilsborough CofE VA primary school is a smaller than an average sized primary school. There are 190 pupils aged four to eleven. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average and the percentage with special educational needs is well below average. There are no pupils for whom English is not their first language. Attainment on entry is above average although some children in the reception class have below average language and social skills. The pupils' socio-economic circumstances are generally favourable. Major building work was carried out between Easter and October 2003, providing two new classrooms and a new staffroom. Whilst this work was being carried out two classes were based in the school hall. The school received a Healthy Schools Award in 2000, and achieved Investor in People status in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23696	Mr J Morris	Lead inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs Information and communication technology Music Physical education
13418	Mrs J D Darrington	Lay inspector	
33225	Mrs E Greensides	Team inspector	English Geography History Personal, social and health education and citizenship
14976	Mr P Dexter	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Standards are good overall, teaching and learning are good, the school ethos is good, and leadership and management are satisfactory. In relation to pupil outcomes, the quality of education provided and pupils' attainment on entry, the school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in the main with strengths in reading, mathematics, the Foundation Stage and the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Currently, pupils are not achieving as well as they should be in writing, and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is barely satisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are good overall and lessons are often of high quality. However, marking is inconsistent and the school does not make the best use of information about pupils' achievements to set individual targets.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior management team are satisfactory. However, there is some lack of vision and drive to move the school forward.
- Pupils' attitudes and values are very good and behaviour is good. The school successfully stimulates the pupils' desire for learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Improvement since the last inspection has been **satisfactory**. The school has maintained high standards. Effective action has been taken in relation to pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2, the provision for mathematics and financial planning. Satisfactory action has been taken in relation to the provision for ICT. There have been very significant improvements in the accommodation recently. This work has created considerable disruption to the school and is a major factor in the apparent decline of leadership and management by the headteacher and senior staff from good to satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	A	C
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	A	A	A	C

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

Pupils achieve **well** overall throughout the school, and perform well in all national tests. For some years, the results have been mostly well above average compared with all schools and satisfactory or better compared with similar schools. However, there was a significant dip in the results achieved by seven year olds in 2002 and there will probably be a dip for eleven year olds in English in 2003. The children in the reception class make good progress and most of them reach or exceed the goals they are expected to by the end of the year. The school has not analysed available data with sufficient rigour to try to explain why boys appear to have achieved better than girls for some years.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. They have **very good** attitudes to school, behaviour is **good**, attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **very good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** overall. Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** with **very good** provision for pupils with special educational needs, **good** inclusion and **good** support for learning outside the school day. The school has **good** links with parents and **satisfactory** links with the community. All of these factors in combination, but most significantly the teaching during lessons and extra-curricular provision, result in **good** learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are **satisfactory**. The school runs smoothly and there is a good awareness of the main areas for improvement. However, recent action taken to improve standards in writing and ICT and to address staff and parental concerns over behaviour has not been as effective as it could have been. This is because staff have not applied agreed action consistently and monitoring has not been rigorous enough. The disruption caused by the building work this year has clearly not helped. The governing body fulfils statutory requirements and governance is **good**.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school and nearly all are satisfied with the progress their children make. However, a small but significant number expressed concerns about the information they receive about their children's progress and how the school deals with poor behaviour, including bullying, and a lack of sparkle in some aspects of the school's work. Inspectors judge the information for parents to be good. There is no evidence of bullying. Pupils are mostly positive about their experiences at school but the school itself does not do enough to take the pupils' views into account.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do are:

- improve standards in writing;
- improve pupils' ICT skills;
- improve marking and target setting to give pupils a much clearer idea of what they need to do next to achieve more;
- improve leadership by the headteacher and senior management team.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall pupils achieve **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in several areas, notably reading and mathematics.
- Currently, pupils do not do as well as they should in writing, and achievement in ICT is barely satisfactory.
- Children in the reception class make good progress in all of the six areas of learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievements across the curriculum are good overall. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, and in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science, art and design and history in Key Stages 1 and 2. Achievement in writing is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but it is not as good as it should be at Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress in ICT is just satisfactory. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in physical education. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements in design and technology, geography, music and personal, social and health education and citizenship but, in all these subjects, the indicators are that pupils' achievements are satisfactory or better.
2. Children in the reception class make good progress in relation to the national learning goals in all of the six areas of learning. This is because the teaching is consistently good and the children quickly settle into school routines and develop positive attitudes to learning.
3. The school has consistently achieved good, and often very good, results in the national tests for seven and eleven year olds since 1998. This was true for both age groups in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools, between 1999 and 2001. However, there was a significant dip in the results achieved by seven year olds in 2002. Although national and similar school comparative data were not available at the time of this report, the results achieved by eleven year olds in English in 2003 do not look as good as in previous years.
4. Recent variations in standards can be explained by the following factors:
differences between the different year groups in the school;
disruption caused by major building work;
inconsistencies in pupils' achievements in writing.
5. The school has identified writing as a major focus of attention and area for improvement. This has arisen as a result of the analysis of results in the statutory tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, the optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 and examination of pupils' work across the curriculum.
6. Teachers use available data to group pupils by ability, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This inspection judgement closely matches the parents' positive views of provision for less able pupils. More able pupils, including those who are gifted and talented, also do well. This does not correspond with the view held by a few parents that more able pupils are not stretched enough. However, the school has not analysed available data with sufficient rigour to try to explain the differences in the performance of boys and girls. The data needs to be treated with some caution because of the small numbers involved and considerable gender imbalance in some year groups. Nevertheless, this has been the case for some years and warrants further investigation.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.9 (17.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.4 (16.1)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	18.0 (18.0)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 23 pupils (21 boys and 2 girls) in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (28.9)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.9 (28.9)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	29.9 (29.6)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 27 pupils (19 boys and 8 girls) in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school, they behave **well** and their personal development is **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils’ attitudes to school are very good and they behave well.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Attendance is satisfactory but too many pupils take holidays in school time. Punctuality is very good.

Commentary

7. Pupils have a mature approach to school life and their self-esteem is high. This shows in a variety of ways in different everyday situations. For example, pupils behave well toward each other and all adults. They are polite and friendly and share resources and ideas in an open, constructive way. They ask and answer questions with enthusiasm during lessons. At other times pupils collect litter and older pupils look after younger ones and put out apparatus responsibly. Assemblies run smoothly with pupils’ help. Children in the reception class have a rich and varied beginning to school life. These new arrivals settle into school routines quickly, feel very secure and are confidently tackling new experiences. This is because of the good provision in the reception class and welcoming approach of older pupils. Consequently, there is a good atmosphere for learning in lessons; pupils work hard and make good progress.
8. Teachers and other adults provide guidance and positive rewards so that pupils know what is expected. It might be referring pupils to the ‘Golden Rules’, or simple immediate rewards for pupils, such as ‘Marbles in a jar’. They do not like to receive a warning, which might be a ‘yellow card’, so they are careful to behave within acceptable limits. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school life in general. They are keen to be on time, to learn in lessons and to be involved in clubs and societies. For example, the lunchtime ‘Maths Club’ is very well attended and the after-school dancers were a pleasure to watch as they developed their new intricate steps. Good relationships are seen as central to pupils’ personal development.

9. Pupils' social development is very good and the school has a very harmonious working atmosphere as a result. There are some minor hiccups, usually at break-times, because a very small number of pupils occasionally become difficult to control or name call. This is watched for very carefully by the supervising adults and they intervene quickly before it becomes too serious.
10. Because pupils are guided skilfully toward an understanding of the importance of very good social skills, their attitudes to community life are very law abiding. They recognise moral choices they have to make as part of everyday living. They instinctively respond in the right way. For example, in a very active science lesson, groups of pupils shared resources and ideas very maturely. The respect with which they treated each other and the equipment was a result of their own self discipline and for a large part of the time they worked as independent groups. Simply put, they know right from wrong.
11. This developing understanding of self, through each individual's social and moral growth, is guided further by the strong Christian ethos of the school. Acts of collective worship are planned well to cover different themes over time. They include 'Sharing success', 'School rules. Why do we have them?', 'Setting oneself a goal', and 'Worship – lighting a candle'. During the inspection, 'Friendship' was the theme which, in addition to developing pupils' understanding, made the inspectors feel very welcome.
12. Culturally pupils enjoy a broad experience through lessons, visits and visitors. Work arising from residential visits linked to history, or technological links with the police and industry, add vibrancy to the day. Assemblies address different faiths within society but different cultures are not as well planned for at other times.

Attendance and exclusions

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

13. Attendance is satisfactory. The rates of attendance and unauthorised absence during the last reporting year were broadly in line with the national averages. Attendance is very well monitored and recorded. Almost all pupils are punctual and this enables a prompt start to the school day. The school promotes regular and punctual attendance through clear information provided for parents. However, an increasing number of parents remove their children from school for family holidays and a few parents are constrained by factory holiday closure weeks. This is very well documented and recorded. There were no exclusions during the school year prior to this inspection and this is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** overall.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning were good or very good in two-thirds of the lessons seen. Lessons are mostly planned and delivered well.
- Teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum is generally good and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented successfully.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and too often does not help them understand what they need to do next. Classroom displays do not often reinforce and extend pupils' current learning.
- Nearly all pupils have very positive attitudes and are therefore in the main interested and involved, and behave well. Pupils who are less compliant and enthusiastic are not always managed according to the school's policy and recent staff training.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	6 (20%)	14 (47%)	8 (27%)	2 (6%)	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.

14. Teaching and learning are good overall. There are no significant differences between key stages and classes. The positive characteristics of teaching seen in lessons are supported by discussions with pupils and examination of pupils' work. There are high expectations that all pupils will enjoy learning and make good progress. Teachers generally have good knowledge of the National Curriculum and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented successfully. This is evident in teachers' planning, the teaching of new facts and skills in lessons, and the range of work seen in pupils' books.
15. Assessment is an important element of teaching and is satisfactory overall. Pupils are grouped effectively by ability, particularly for literacy and numeracy, based on the analysis of pupils' past performance. Teachers plan well for these different groups of pupils. For example, in very good literacy lessons in Year 2 and Year 3, all pupils were stimulated and challenged by activities at their level. This was also true during two mathematics sessions in reception, and numeracy lessons in Year 1 and Year 3. Support staff are used well and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress, particularly that made by those with special educational needs.
16. Examination of pupils' books shows that the teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Sometimes work is marked, praise is given for new learning, effort and presentation and useful comments are made to help pupils understand where they have gone wrong or what they need to do next. But too often this good practice is missing and work is not marked at all or marking consists of little more than ticks. Teachers do not use the available information systematically to set pupils individual targets, evaluate progress towards them and, once achieved, set new ones. When these targets are set they are often not sharp enough. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in this process and do not have a clear enough idea of what they need to do to improve.
17. Because the teaching is generally good and lessons are stimulating, conducted at a good pace and include a variety of activities, pupils want to learn. They are involved and interested in lessons and other activities. In such a situation, it would be expected that behaviour would be good and it is! Inspectors did not record any poor behaviour during the inspection. In some classes in a few lessons, some pupils were less compliant to teacher's requests to listen in a whole-class discussion or to get on with an individual task. In some cases this disruptive behaviour was largely due to the fact that some pupils have behavioural difficulties. In others it was in part due to a lack of energy and enthusiasm in the teaching, leading to small numbers of

pupils losing interest. The school has introduced a new policy on the management of behaviour in the last year arising from staff and parent concerns, mostly about some incidents outside the classrooms. During the inspection, teachers did not always apply rewards and sanctions in accord with the school's policy and recent staff training. This does not give pupils a clear message about what is expected of them.

18. Most classrooms feature attractive displays of teaching materials and pupils' work. However, it is significant that these displays often lack support materials for current learning in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Teachers do not, as a rule, use classroom display on a day-to-day basis to reinforce and extend pupils' learning by, for example, making use of key words as prompts. All inspectors noted the absence of this teaching technique in literacy, numeracy and science lessons early in the inspection.

The curriculum

The curriculum **satisfactorily** meets the needs of the children at Guilsborough, meets statutory requirements, and is enriched by a programme of very good extra-curricular activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Planned activities and events successfully enrich the basic curriculum.
- The approach to further curriculum innovation and development is not cohesive.

Commentary

19. The curriculum ensures that all children have full access to learning and it meets statutory requirements. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school provides a good level of support from teaching assistants, and the special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that all children have a suitably adapted curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans which contain targets that are referred to in teachers' lesson plans. This leads to good learning.
20. The school provides a very good programme of extra-curricular activities, which enriches the basic school curriculum. For example, all year groups in Key Stage 2 go on residential field visits linked to geography and history, and personal and social development is built into this. The school has developed links with industry, winning a regional prize for one scientific investigation, and has links on the Internet with schools in Canada and Australia for weather watching. Established links with local high schools are developing well. At lunch-time and after school, teachers run a variety of clubs for sports and the arts. Coaches from the local football club come into school on a regular basis. All these activities have a positive impact on pupils' academic achievements and personal development.
21. The new building extension is a very significant improvement to the accommodation. Pupils benefit from the school having a wildlife area and swimming pool.
22. The curriculum is monitored on a two-yearly basis but it is not evaluated in a rigorous and systematic way. Although long-term plans are now in place for all subjects, the curriculum has not developed or been adapted to take account of new initiatives or research, such as different learning styles. There is no clear whole-school approach to improving the curriculum through

new initiatives. The effectiveness and impact of curriculum improvement largely depend on the individual leadership skills of each subject co-ordinator, rather than a cohesive approach throughout the school.



Care, guidance and support

The school provides a **satisfactory** level of care, welfare and safety for its pupils with **good** provision in the Foundation Stage. **Adequate** support, advice and guidance are provided for pupils. They are involved in the school's work and development but there are insufficient opportunities for them to express their views formally.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good, empathetic relationships with class teachers and learning support assistants.
- Pupils are known very well by their class teachers through informal monitoring and assessment procedures, and adequate support is provided.
- Induction procedures are good and the arrangements for transfer to secondary school are effective.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to be involved in the school's work and development, through seeking and valuing their views.
- Monitoring, assessment and recording arrangements are not consistent across the school. Recording of incidents is not consistently in line with school policy.

Commentary

23. Teachers and support staff know their pupils very well. Class teachers sensitively provide a very good standard of general pupil care. There is sound support from classroom assistants, and mid-day and administrative staff. As a result almost all pupils are inspired to work hard and enjoy their learning. The 'buddies' system of Year 6 pupils, with their yellow jackets, supporting younger pupils during break-times is very effective. There are good arrangements in place with regard to child protection and all staff are regularly advised of procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. Good liaison with welfare, education and health services contributes well to pupils' welfare.
24. There are adequate systems and procedures in place for the regular monitoring and maintenance of many general health and safety requirements. Most equipment is routinely tested and well maintained and pupils are instructed in its safe use. Staff do not comply consistently with whole- school policy and arrangements for monitoring and recording. This places an unduly heavy reliance on the individual's approach to the quality of the current arrangements. This is also evident in the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development throughout the school. In the reception class positive procedures are in place to monitor and support children's personal development.
25. Induction arrangements are detailed and take full account of the information provided by parents when their children start the school. The arrangements for pupils' transfer to secondary school are very sound.
26. Pupils have limited opportunities to be involved in the school's work and development. There are very few formal arrangements through which the school seeks, values and acts upon pupils' views. However, there are many informal opportunities when pupils' views are taken into account in decision making. Pupils are not consistently involved in the assessment of their work and in the setting of personal and learning targets. They do not contribute to their annual pupil reports. Currently there is no formal mechanism by which pupils can make their voice or opinion heard. During the last academic year, pupils in Year 3 were involved in drawing up a survey to find out about pupils' opinions on a proposed new play area. The planned introduction of a school council during this academic year should provide a forum through which all pupils may have a voice. Pupils with special educational needs are involved in their annual reviews.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and carers and **satisfactory** links with its community. There are **effective** connections with other schools and pre-school providers.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents have positive views of the school.
- Parents are regularly provided with detailed information about the work of the school and about pupils' progress.
- The strong partnership with parents contributes to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- There are good induction procedures. Effective transfer arrangements and links with the local secondary school ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of education.

Commentary

27. Parents have positive views of the school and are very happy with the amount and quality of written information that they receive, including reports about their children's progress. These reports are detailed and specific to each pupil and contain targets for each pupil to work towards. There are regular, detailed letters and newsletters, written in a friendly and accessible style, advising and informing parents about all aspects of school life. Parents of children in the reception class have easy access to their children's teacher at the beginning and end of each school day. Parents' views are occasionally sought and parents are generally satisfied with how they are consulted and the response of the school.
28. An active Parent Teacher Association raises considerable amounts of money each year through a range of social and fund-raising events. These funds are used to enhance and extend the school's range of resources. A number of parents help regularly in the school. Parents are able to approach the school with ease about any queries or concerns and the school responds swiftly.
29. The school has sound links with its community overall, providing accommodation for the local Brownie group, and an effective partnership with the parish church. A recent partnership with the local police force resulted in 'Operation Super Highway', a project which effectively enhanced and extended pupils' learning in ICT.
30. Induction procedures in the Foundation Stage are very thorough and there are effective links with pre-school providers. The siting of a local playgroup in adjacent property enhances these opportunities, which reception class staff make good use of for a seamless progression. Likewise, upon transfer to secondary school, pupils will have already attended many social events and productions at the local secondary school. The transfer of information is well planned and the school works closely with the secondary school to ensure a smooth and effective transition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are **satisfactory**. Governors are a strong, **effective** force in continuing to raise the standards of achievement for all pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors have a shared, strategic view of the school, with a good grasp of its strengths and weaknesses. They are well organised and well led by the chair of governors.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior managers have built a warm learning environment with a clear intention to constantly raise standards.

- The headteacher has been diverted from his central role by building improvements and excessive responsibility for too many subjects. Response to change is often cautious and sometimes not sufficiently structured.

Commentary

31. The chair of governors makes sure all the governors share all information by e-mail, so they remain up to date and informed. Committees scrutinise policies, test results and financial details to make sure the budget reflects their priorities to maintain the strengths of the school and improve its weaknesses. Finance is managed well and the principles of good value are always to the fore. Governors have successfully improved the accommodation after a long sustained campaign. Now they are looking ahead to further improvements. They are actively considering government initiatives for 'Workforce Re-modelling' to make the best use of all who work at the school. Their initiative in developing the school website has been successful. After an initial reluctance from the school, reflecting its more cautious approach, this is in place. Governors are a strong, effective force in continuing to raise the standards of achievement for all pupils. For example, they challenged the school to raise standards for the higher attaining pupils, which resulted in a substantial improvement.
32. The headteacher and senior management team share with the governors a commitment to raise academic standards. This team approach is reflected in the planning and the school improvement plan, which arises through subject action plans. Those who work at the school are always looking for ways to improve, and to tackle problems as they arise but at the same time to make sure they are thoughtful and considerate in their approach, so everyone feels respected and included. This team approach, guided skilfully by the headteacher, has ensured satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in teaching and learning. However, the headteacher and senior management team are somewhat cautious. They are not sufficiently challenging or innovative in recognising or tackling change.
33. The team approach, which includes the governors, focuses on the best way to translate the school's vision into action in the classroom. It is at the heart of everyday management. There is a good self-evaluation process which recognises most of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Factual evidence is the basis of this. For example, much of the extensive data available is analysed to see how much progress pupils make and how this compares with other schools. This feeds into decisions about resource allocation, staff training, who takes responsibility for targeted improvements and how the results will be monitored and judged. Teachers and support staff are seen as the engine of success. However, some of the processes are not followed through enough or action is delayed. For example, although boys outperformed girls in English, mathematics and science over several years, this has not been picked up, analysed and pursued. Some subject co-ordinators are not driving their subject forward by using a rigorous analysis of information to set targets for improvements and raise standards.
34. Because successfully motivated adults are seen as vital to the school's progress, great care is taken to make sure staff feel valued, that they are given every opportunity to remain up to date and that new members are given the training and advice to settle quickly and confidently. The headteacher seeks to make sure that everyone's workload is realistic so that morale and commitment remains high. In so doing he has taken on too many subject responsibilities himself, spent a great deal of energy chasing the building improvements and has become diverted, sometimes into minutiae. Another example is the monitoring that is done by the headteacher and other senior staff. Different formats are used and the language is comfortable rather than challenging. Improvements take longer as a result. Thus the school is a warm, comfortable place to learn without that extra excitement that innovation and change bring.

Parents acknowledge the headteacher's determination and relentless endeavour to improve the accommodation

35. There are signs that the headteacher is taking a fresh look at the school now the new building is in place. He is reflecting on 'taking hold of the curriculum' by looking at ways of enriching the pupils' experiences without losing the central thrust of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The governors have the same strategic vision. It would appear the school is just beginning to look for new ways ahead.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	443,470
Total expenditure	367,863
Expenditure per pupil	1,988

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	33,350
Balance carried forward to the next	75,607

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**.

36. Children's attainment on entry to the school is above average overall, but there is considerable variation with some children having below average language and social skills. Nearly all children do better than expected in relation to national expectations in all of the six areas of learning by the time they start the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1. Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons often start with whole-class teaching and move on to structured individual activities. This helps children understand life at school and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. These more formal sessions are appropriately [JM1] short in duration and there are very good opportunities for children to learn through imaginative and exploratory play. The different areas of the accommodation are well organised and resourced. The staff work together effectively to deliver the nationally recommended curriculum at this stage.
37. Leadership and management are good. The more experienced teacher provides a good lead to the work in the reception class and the quality of planning and ongoing assessment is effective in meeting all the children's needs. There are good links with the pre-school playgroup next to the school and good arrangements and information for parents when their children start at school. Teachers make very good use of the children's staggered entry to school to make detailed initial assessments of what the children know, understand and can do. The children are grouped by ability for language and mathematics activities from early in the autumn term, which contributes to their good progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.

Commentary

38. Children in the reception class are quick to understand school rules and routines. They understand what is expected of them in structured whole-class activities, table-based activities and at other times. They play well together both inside and outside and from an early age show a good sense of responsibility when helping to put away equipment in the right place. Most of the children are confident and are very friendly towards visitors.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses



- Children achieve well in speaking and listening and make good progress in the acquisition of early reading and writing skills.
- Teaching and learning are good. Children of differing abilities are provided with a different level of challenge, matched well to their needs, very soon after starting school.

Commentary

39. Children listen attentively to adults and are keen to answer questions and participate in discussions. Many of them use well-formed and often long and complex sentences to explain what they are doing or recall what they have done before. Because children are provided with stimulating activities on a daily basis, they acquire early reading and writing skills at a good rate. Good use is made of resources such as big books, flip-charts and actual objects during teaching sessions. Some children write their own name and a few simple words very early in the school year. They copy or try to write themselves with interest and enthusiasm. All children recognise that text and images have meaning and give meaning to their own pencil marks and simple drawings. Children enjoy hearing stories and many already anticipate or predict what will happen next. Many children turn pages correctly and carefully when looking at books.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in a range of mathematical activities including numbers, shapes and measures, and sorting and matching.
- Teaching and learning are very good in both structured whole-class and individual activities and opportunities for learning through exploration.

Commentary

40. Two sessions with a mathematical focus were observed and in both cases the teaching and learning were very good. Children count confidently in different ways, such as forwards and backwards. All children count to 20 as part of a group but some are hesitant if asked to count to 10 on their own. They know about simple shapes, such as triangles, squares and rectangles, and colours. Children are beginning to use comparative language such as 'tall', 'short', 'long', 'heavy' and 'light'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.

Commentary

41. Children learn quickly about natural phenomena such as the seasons of the year because they are observant and explain what they see clearly. For example, they recognise that leaves change colour and fall off the trees in the autumn. One child says, "Leaves are falling" and

another follows with, "because it's autumn, then winter". Another notices that some leaves are prickly.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good. There is a good range of opportunities for physical development through daily activities outdoors and sessions in the school hall.

Commentary

42. Children make good progress in all aspects of physical development. They learn how to grip pencils and brushes correctly and how to handle equipment such as a computer mouse and the pieces of a construction kit. Children have good opportunities daily to play outside with large equipment, including wheeled toys and activities that involve skills such as jumping and climbing steps.
43. More formal sessions take place in the school hall. During the inspection children made good gains in moving in different ways, such as big and small steps, and expressing feelings with their body, such as feeling cold. Children were having fun and although it was early in the school year showed a good awareness of space and careful avoidance of others when moving around.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.

Commentary

44. The children learn well because enjoy creative activities. They learn simple rhymes and songs quickly and recognise repeating patterns quickly. Children learn how to use brushes to paint and to apply glue. They have a good idea about how to arrange their marks on a piece of paper, whether they are drawing, painting, printing or sticking.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are currently broadly average. They are above average in reading and speaking and listening but they are only average in writing. Achievement in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory in relation to the pupils' performance at the end of Year 2.



- Assessment is not used effectively to improve standards.
- Leadership is good, however, management is not as strong because the analysis of information about pupils' achievements is not rigorous enough.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards in the tests have been consistently well above average compared with all schools and with similar schools. Standards seen during lessons vary throughout the school but are broadly in line with national averages. Achievement is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2 because pupils do not do as well in writing as they should. The quality of written work in pupils' books is inconsistent. For example, pupils may one day produce a high standard of work but on another occasion work can be poorly presented. Because marking is inconsistent pupils do not always know when they have done well or how they could have done better. The range of opportunities to write in different styles about different topics is patchy.
46. Considerable action has been taken to improve writing throughout the school during the last year but this is not yet impacting sufficiently well in Key Stage 2. The coordinator has raised the profile of writing, monitored lessons in English in each class during the last academic year and looked at children's books. But this evidence has not been rigorously evaluated to identify best practice and areas for further improvement. As a result, teachers have too little knowledge of how individual and groups of pupils are doing. Teachers' approaches to assessment are inconsistent when using information for planning. Effective use of assessment information leads to work that is well matched to pupils' needs. Planning is based around the National Literacy Strategy and many teachers have adapted the strategy for use within their own class. Some adaptations are effective and meet the needs of the pupils well because planning is more precise and what the pupils are to learn is explicit. However, pupils have individual targets but the majority of teachers do not sustain this practice and so the targets are not always followed reducing their impact on learning.
47. Standards in reading and speaking and listening remain high. Older pupils read well and without hesitancy, can explain and predict what they are reading, and have a varied diet both at home and at school. Younger pupils also read well for their age with good expression. Teachers make good use of shared reading books to develop pupils' skills in reading with expression and to learn new words. Chances for talk are good and pupils are encouraged to think carefully before answering so ensuring that their responses are apt and thoughtful.
48. Whilst classrooms are attractive more could be done to display key words that pupils use, spelling patterns and aids for writing to support learning in other subjects. Non-teaching staff, including support for pupils with special educational needs, and volunteer helpers are often used during literacy and this has a positive impact in most cases by providing well focused support and guidance.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. In subjects other than English, teachers often support pupils' writing with aids such as frameworks and worksheets. This reduces the impact of the shortcomings in their writing skills on pupils' progress in the rest of the curriculum. On occasion, teachers use other subjects as a vehicle for teaching reading and writing, but this is, as yet, in its infancy.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.



Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in national tests are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good. The numeracy strategy is working well and mental calculation is much improved. The difference in test results between girls and boys has not been rigorously analysed and the setting of individual targets is not sharp enough. Everyday resources are often underused.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.

Commentary

50. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards which are above average for their age. More pupils now achieve higher than expected levels because of better challenge in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs do well with the extra skilful support of teaching assistants.
51. There has been good progress since the last inspection because:
 - mental calculation sessions at the beginning of each lesson are now lively and sharply focused;
 - the National Numeracy Strategy has provided the clear framework which was missing before;
 - teaching has improved;
 - most assessment information is used more effectively.
52. However, there are gaps still in assessments. The school has no clear explanation why boys have continued to outperform girls by a considerable margin over several years. There is assessment and individual target setting but these are not set often enough, nor monitored sufficiently, particularly in the junior classes. However, there is good monitoring in the infant classes.
53. By the age of seven almost all pupils reach the expected level, whilst close to half of them reach the higher level 3. During the inspection, when they were just beginning Year 2, all pupils showed a very good and developing understanding of numbers. Pupils find subtraction more difficult. The Year 2 teacher builds well on the good teaching in the Year 1 class by the mathematics co-ordinator. By Year 6 pupils are confident mathematicians, evident from the continuing good results in national tests. Their work includes long multiplication, percentages, fractions and number patterns.
54. It is clear from the pupils' success that teaching and learning are productive. There is an enthusiasm for learning, shown by teacher and pupils alike. Pupils are willing to answer questions because the teacher, by a judicious mixture of praise and encouragement, includes everyone in what is happening. Relationships are warm so that pupils behave well one to another. Learning assistants talk quietly to pupils with special educational needs so that they are able to answer questions after a little extra help. A particularly good feature is the way groups are organised in all classrooms. These ability groups have work set at different levels so they build their understanding systematically and securely. The great majority of what teachers seek to do is successful. As a result, pupils like mathematics. Nevertheless, there are things the teachers could improve on. In their eagerness to move lessons on at pace teachers sometimes miss chances to use everyday resources such as number squares sufficiently to help pupils learn. Mathematical language is rarely seen in classroom displays.
55. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. She is enthusiastic about the good progress made, under her guidance, since the last inspection. This enthusiasm is conveyed to pupils in her lessons, to colleagues, and to the pupils who enjoy her lively lunch-time

mathematics club. However, her monitoring of teaching has faltered in recent times. Thus the sharp focus on further developments in teaching, which this would bring, is missing at present.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. The use of mathematics in other subjects and links made with other subjects in mathematics lessons is good. Clear links are made between mathematics and ICT through the use of mathematical computer programs and work on databases and spreadsheets. Good links are made in geography, for example in map work and when measuring distances. Numbers are often prominent in musical activities. Further links could be made to mathematics in some subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is consistently **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high. Pupils are enthusiastic learners.
- The teaching is good and investigative science is central to it. Not enough use, however, is made of displays to actively extend and reinforce learning. There has been insufficient analysis of results to find out why boys do better than girls.
- The subject co-ordinator has carried out an effective update of the curriculum.

Commentary

57. Pupils aged seven and eleven have consistently achieved above average results in national tests over several years. Over half the pupils achieve the higher than expected level 5, which is much better than most schools. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively in investigations by learning assistants and sometimes qualified volunteers. For example, in a very well organised experimental session when Year 6 pupils worked in groups of three, the four adults made sure all pupils completed their investigations accurately and recorded their results.
58. This approach to science teaching is central to the school's success. The co-ordinator has reviewed and re-organised the whole curriculum to make sure there are no gaps. Resources have been audited, replaced and extended. Teachers have been consulted and involved fully in the changes. High standards have been maintained. Although test results have been analysed well to identify areas for further development, nevertheless the co-ordinator still has no clear idea why boys continue to do better than girls in most years. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
59. Pupils in Year 1 develop an understanding of practical science using drawings and their own words. By the end of Year 2 pupils document their own experiments quite well and record results using scientific language as they carry out fair tests. This good scientific approach produces good learning and high standards.
60. In the junior classes this good science continues from year to year so that pupils begin their final year with good scientific knowledge and understanding. Year 6 pupils are confident, enthusiastic scientists.
61. Teachers, too, are confidently scientific in what they seek to do. Resources are ready in advance, of good quality and sufficient. Consequently pupils are able to handle materials and record results successfully. Explanations are clear and precise so groups of pupils know

exactly what they have to do and why. Learning assistants work skilfully with pupils with special educational needs and others in the group. There is a learning 'hum' to the room as pupils talk excitedly about what is happening. Teachers ask questions well to extend thinking or to guide pupils whilst they work. In a well-organised Year 6 lesson the teacher had an assessment chart so she was able to note how each group, or individual within a group, understood what was happening. Little is left to chance in these investigative lessons, so the learning is always good. However, what is common to most activities is that scientific language and active displays are missing from classrooms so that when the experiments are completed science almost disappears from the room. Although rooms are attractive, more could be done to use displays to support learning.

62. The co-ordinator leads the subject well because she is alert to change. For example, she is looking closely at how ICT can help in recording results. However, in recent times the opportunities for her to see how science works in other classes have been few. Her expertise is not as widely used as it could be for the benefit of more teachers and pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is just **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are barely adequate and some teachers do not make enough use of what is available. Therefore, the pupils' experience of ICT is very mixed and too many of them do not get enough opportunities to use modern technology to support their learning across a range of subjects.
- Links with public services, such as the police, and industry are used to good effect to reinforce and develop pupils' ICT skills.
- Available funding has been used well to train staff and improve resources and there is a good quality plan for future developments.

Commentary

63. Achievement is just satisfactory. Pupils have adequate skills which are developed progressively, but do not practise and develop these skills because resources are only adequate and teachers do not make full use of what is available. Pupils in the current Year 6 have good recall of a considerable range of ICT activities last year. However, many of them have very limited knowledge of the extensive use of modern technology in society other than personal computers and have had very few experiences in the first few weeks of the current term.
64. The school has taken considerable action since the last inspection to try to improve provision in ICT and this has been satisfactory. The headteacher is the subject co-ordinator and there is a clear vision for future development with improvements to the accommodation and resources being a high priority in the school improvement plan. The school has successfully adopted the national exemplar materials as the basis for its planning and this guidance has been updated July 2003. This has addressed the weakness in the previous report in terms of the quality of guidance to help teachers plan ICT work. However, not all teachers are using the materials to best effect in practice.
65. Following the recent new build, three classrooms now have electronic whiteboards, and training in the use of this equipment is planned for very soon after the date of this inspection. In a Year 5 lesson about spreadsheets the teaching and learning were good with some very good features.
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The teacher made very good use of the electronic whiteboard to teach new skills and all pupils had an opportunity to practise these skills. However, the limited resources available restricted the amount of hands-on time and the possibilities for the teacher to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. ICT was a major element of two recent exciting learning experiences for Year 6 pupils. In 'Operation Super Highway' pupils analysed the causes of a road accident using information received by e-mail. After a visit to an engineering factory pupils made two models of machinery controlled by the computer. There are some examples of good and very good links with other subjects. ICT was used to good effect in Year 5 literacy and Year 2 numeracy lessons. In a Year 6 history lesson pupils used the Internet when researching the *Mary Rose*. However, the overall picture is that the use of ICT across the curriculum is just satisfactory and that teachers are not maximising the use of modern technology in other subjects or using other subjects to reinforce and extend the pupils' basic ICT skills.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

Provision and outcomes in history are generally **good**. The indications are that the provision for geography is similar but there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In history, pupils make good progress because of good teaching. Standards achieved are above average by both seven year olds and eleven year olds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because work is set at the right level to help them learn.
- The teaching of historical facts is very effective but skills are not taught systematically.
- Learning is enriched by theme days, which add an extra dimension to the curriculum, and good links with other subjects.

Commentary

67. Improvement in history since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Standards have improved at Key Stage 1 and maintained at Key Stage 2. Lessons seen during the inspection were always at least satisfactory and sometimes they were good. The work seen and discussions with pupils showed good recall and understanding of historical facts. This is because effective long-term planning by the co-ordinator ensures that coverage of the units of work is thorough and progressive. The teaching of historical skills is not planned as effectively. Consequently, there is sometimes too much emphasis on teaching facts rather than using investigative skills. Nevertheless, pupils in Year 6 are beginning to use more advanced skills in their investigations.
68. The content of both the history and geography curriculum is enriched by regular theme days, such as a Roman Day, visits to local museums and residential field trips. Teachers take advantage of both the local area and the school itself as a resource in both these subjects and this enhances provision. There are good links with other subjects, including literacy, numeracy, art and design and design and technology.

Religious education

Provision for religious education was not part of this inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and Design and technology

The school makes **good** provision for these subjects. Pupils achieve well in art and design because of good teaching. Indications are that the situation in design and technology is similar but there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in art and design are above average. Pupils use colour and line well. The use of sketchbooks and the collecting together of pupils' designs need improvement.
- The curriculum for both subjects is planned well and there are good cross-curricular links in both subjects. Design and technology work is enhanced by effective links with industry.

Commentary

69. Standards in art and design are above expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have good opportunities to represent their ideas and experiences in a range of media and in a variety of ways. Their artwork is colourful and bold. Year 2 pupils' large drawings of buildings, using pastels and charcoal, involved very good use of line and smudging techniques. Pupils' skills are developed well throughout Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6 they are confident artists. It was clear from one display that the good skills seen in Year 5 observational drawings had been built on very well in the Year 6 work.
70. The one lesson seen, in Year 4, was a good example of the school's enthusiastic approach to art. Pupils have a full and rich experience of drawing, painting, three-dimensional work, printing, clay and textiles. Pupils' achievements and experiences are systematically built on by the teaching of the skills for each element of art from year to year. Because of the co-ordinator's continued influence, standards have risen and progress since the last inspection has been good. For instance, standards in Year 2 are higher and the quality of teaching is better. The use of sketchbooks, judged as good at the time of the last inspection, has declined and much more could be done to raise the quality of these.
71. Standards in design and technology were above average in the work seen but the examples available were few in number. Some Year 5 work was of very good quality. When writing about this work a good link was made with their literacy work through using imperative verbs.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards and teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Instrumental tuition is good and there is very good access to this provision.

Commentary

72. Indications are that the provision and outcomes have been maintained since the previous inspection. Two satisfactory lessons were observed, one in Year 1 and one in Year 6. There was a musical element in an observed assembly. Provision is satisfactory and it is probable that pupils' achievements are in line with national expectations. The co-ordinator did not convey any great sense of drive to improve the provision and raise standards. However, there is a music action plan contained in the school improvement plan and this includes the target, "to raise the profile of music within the school".
73. A clear strength in the provision are the good opportunities for tuition in playing brass and stringed instruments. This is available to all pupils from Year 2 on and, although in principle parents have to pay, the school successfully ensures equality of access to this provision by offering financial support in special circumstances. Brief observations and discussions with a small number of pupils indicate that this provision is high quality.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.



Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are no significant strengths or weaknesses.

Commentary

74. The previous report judged that pupils' achievements were broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6 and that better standards were achieved by pupils who participated in extra-curricular activities. This remains the case and sporting activities outside normal lesson times make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and the school's curriculum. The time allocated to physical activities has been increased and all pupils have satisfactory experiences of dance, gymnastics and games during a school year. All pupils learn to swim in accordance with national guidance. Lessons were observed in Years 2, 5 and 6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are some good features and no significant weaknesses. The co-ordinator left in July 2003 and the headteacher is 'care-taking' this role at present. There are well-thought out plans to prepare a newly qualified member of staff for this role in the future.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**. Too few lessons were observed to make a judgement on standards or teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum is comprehensive and planning has been structured well to promote personal and social development.
- The school invites and welcomes visitors from outside the school.
- An anti-bullying policy has recently been devised.

Commentary

75. Personal, social and health education and citizenship is planned following a well-constructed whole-school scheme. Teaching is through both separate specialist lessons and other subjects. For example, when planning a science study of 'My Body', teachers make good links with related areas of the health curriculum. There is a good emphasis on personal and social development within the school's work as a whole. When working with pupils on topics such as bullying, staff are often willing to share personal stories to relate the teaching points to real life. As a result, pupils are keen to participate. Visitors are invited to take part in personal, social and health education and citizenship activities and doctors, the community nurse and members of the St John Ambulance Brigade have recently made good contributions. Policies are regularly revised and parents have worked well with the school on the new anti-bullying policy.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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