

INSPECTION REPORT

HEADLEY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bristol

LEA area: City of Bristol

Unique reference number: 108976

Headteacher: Mrs Mavis Rayford

Lead inspector: Mr David Whatson

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th March 2004

Inspection number: 256376

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	336
School address:	Headley Lane Headley Park Bristol
Postcode:	BS13 7QB
Telephone number:	0117 903 1511
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Adrian Smith
Date of previous inspection:	4 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Headley Park Primary School is bigger than average. It is situated on the south side of Bristol, and draws its pupils from the immediate area. Although most people here own their houses, the percentage of adults with higher education is much lower than the national average. The school's catchment area also includes parts of two estates that have higher than average levels of deprivation. Overall, the economic circumstances are close to the national average: 11 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is broadly in line with the national average. There are 336 pupils on roll, which includes 60 children who attend the nursery part time. The school is not ethnically diverse. The great majority of pupils are of a white British heritage. There are no pupils who are known to have English as a second language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well below average, at seven per cent. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, at 0.8 per cent, is below the national average. Children's attainment on entry is in line with that expected, however, this varies from year to year; there have in the past been few higher-attaining pupils. The proportion of pupils that join and leave the school part way through their primary education is below average. The school is part of an Education Action Zone¹ and is involved in other initiatives such as 'Creative Partnerships'. It has also received several awards in recognition of the good work that it does in many areas.

¹ An Education Action Zone is a government funded initiative aimed at raising achievement in underachieving schools or schools in challenging circumstances.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23494	Mr David Whatson	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology English as an additional language
9146	Mr Mark Brennand	Lay inspector	
19302	Mrs Christine Perrett	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage curriculum
20846	Mr Alan Wilson	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
33207	Mrs Linda Johnson	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Personal, social and health education

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Headley Park Primary School provides a good standard of education. As a result, pupils achieve well and most develop good attitudes and standards of behaviour. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses² are:

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- The good leadership of the school provides both a clear focus and the drive for improvement.
- Assessment procedures are lacking in many subjects and teachers do not always use the information that they have to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities as well as they could.
- Out-of-class activities and links with the community greatly enrich pupils' learning.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes receive a very good start to their education.
- Very good social and moral development promotes an orderly community and mature and sensible pupils.
- The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good.

Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory. The school has maintained many aspects of the good provision noted at the time of the last inspection, including that of pupils' good achievement. Many of the issues noted in the last report, including the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural provision, have been addressed well, however, due to the school's focus on implementing the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, it was initially slow to respond to the needs of higher-attaining pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement throughout the school is good. Attainment on entry is below that expected for the children who entered nursery during this academic year. Those children currently in the reception class are making good progress in relation to their attainment on entry and are likely to achieve the expected goals in their language, mathematical, creative and physical development, as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world. They achieve very well in their personal development and are likely to exceed the expected goals in this area of learning.

All pupils, including those from different ethnic minorities, continue to make good progress from Years 1 to 6. In the national tests of 2003, taken at the end of Year 6, results were below average overall when compared to the national average, and well below average when compared with similar schools. This is because, although the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level was well above the national average; few pupils achieved above it. This reflected the prior attainment of this group of pupils and the lack of achievement of a few of the higher-attaining pupils; the majority of pupils achieved well.

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

*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*

Overall, standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics, and science were above average when compared to both the national average and the average for similar schools. Results

² The strengths and weaknesses are listed in order of significance.

were particularly good in mathematics and science. All pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils, achieved well.

Standards of attainment have fallen at the end of Year 6 in the last few years, because a succession of year groups have had lower levels of ability, however, pupils continue to achieve well. Inspection evidence and school data indicates that the improvements noted in the 2003 national test results are likely to continue. At the end of both Years 2 and 6 there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, as do those who are identified as gifted and talented.

The current standards in Year 6 are in line with those expected, as the great majority of pupils are performing at the expected level for their age; the proportion of pupils achieving above the expected level is higher than that of 2003, due to a more able year group and an improved provision for these pupils. Standards in Year 2 are currently in line with those expected and, therefore, lower than those achieved in mathematics and science in 2003. This is because the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level for their age is good, but the percentage of pupils achieving above this level is less than that of last year; there are fewer higher-attaining pupils in this year group.

Pupils do well throughout the school in personal, social, and health education, including citizenship, and standards are above those expected by the end of Year 6. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain satisfactorily in design and technology, music and religious education and achieve the levels expected for their age. In art and design, pupils in Year 2 reach expected standards. Achievement is better in Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6 attainment is above that found in most schools. In information and communication technology, and in its use in all areas of the curriculum, pupils achieve well and their knowledge, skills and understanding in all aspects of this subject are satisfactory.

No judgements have been made on standards and provision in geography, history or physical education, as these subjects were not a focus of the inspection.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, is good; their moral and social development is very good. Pupils' attitudes to the school and their behaviour are good. Attendance is unsatisfactory. A significant proportion of absence is made of holidays taken in term time; these absences have a negative impact on pupils' learning. Punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching across the school is characterised by very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils, therefore, feel secure and, in this trusting environment, make good gains in their learning. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of all the areas of learning and subjects that they teach. Because of this, lessons are planned well and build on pupils' previous learning. Good use is made of teaching assistants, who help many pupils; especially those with learning difficulties, to make good progress. Teachers cater well for all pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils, but it is only in the best lessons where teachers use assessment information well to provide tasks that are specifically adapted to meet the needs of the higher-attaining pupils; these pupils then perform their best. Assessment procedures are generally unsatisfactory.

The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of all its pupils, including those in the nursery and reception classes. Opportunities for enrichment through visits and the great number of after school clubs are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and support pupils' learning well. All pupils have equal access to a satisfactory level of support. The involvement of pupils in the school's work is satisfactory.

The school fosters good partnerships with parents and other schools, and very good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. She and other key staff have high aspirations and a sense of purpose; it is, and has been, rigorously promoting the achievement the higher-attaining pupils. Governance is very good. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very pleased with what the school provides.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Establish systems to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education to ensure that all teachers provide specific tasks for the most capable pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils start school with levels of attainment below those expected, and do well to get to the level they do. Their achievement is good and standards are currently in line with those expected in English, mathematics, and science by the end of Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- The school is working hard to raise the achievement of higher-attaining pupils.
- In relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieve well in nursery and the reception classes.
- Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well because of the good support they receive.
- Standards in art and design and personal, social and health education are above those expected.
- Gifted and talented pupils achieve well because of the good provision that is made for them.

*The Foundation Stage*³ (the nursery and reception classes)

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery fluctuates from year to year, but in each year group there are fewer low or higher-attaining children than normally seen. Attainment on entry for those currently in nursery is below that normally expected. Areas of particular weakness include children's personal and language development. In relation to their prior attainment, children in both the nursery and the reception classes achieve well because of the good teaching; much of which is focused on these particular areas of learning, good levels of supervision, and a well-planned and interesting curriculum that meets all their needs.

Area of learning	Achievement	Attainment
Personal, social and emotional development	Better than expected	Most children are likely to exceed the expected goals ⁴
Communication, language and literacy	Better than expected	Most children are likely to meet the expected goals
Mathematical development	Better than expected	Most children are likely to meet the expected goals
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Better than expected	Most children are likely to meet the expected goals
Physical development	Better than expected	Most children are likely to meet the expected goals
Creative development	Better than expected	Most children are likely to meet the expected goals

Standards by the end of Year 6 in the national tests for 2003

2. The results in the English and mathematics tests were below average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In science, they were well below average. This is because the proportion of pupils who achieved Level 5⁵ was much smaller than found nationally; this

³ Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

⁴ Early learning goals

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; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

⁵ Levels - Key Stage 2

reflects the school's characteristics. However, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected Level 4 was far greater and is a far larger group at Headley Park than normally found. In relation to their prior attainment, these pupils, including those from different ethnic minorities, achieved well. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents felt that their children achieve well.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores⁶ in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (25.8)	26.8(27.0)
Mathematics	26.2 (25.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.3 (27.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Progress over time

- When compared to the national test results of 1999, the progress made does not reflect the good achievement made by most pupils; in fact the school's overall performance appears weak. This is partly because, although the school has low levels of pupil mobility, what does take place is significant. School records show that higher-attaining pupils tend to move out of the area and lower-attaining pupils take their places. A further reason is that, relative to other schools, Headley Park has had fewer higher-attaining pupils, and a few of those at the school did not make as much progress as the could. The school has identified several reasons for their limited progress which are being tackled rigorously.

Current standards in Year 6 and trends in performance over time

- Over the last few years, trends in pupils' performance at the end of Year 6 have been below the national trend. This is because the results have reflected a significant proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in these year groups, a small but significant level of pupil mobility and fewer more able pupils at the school than is normally seen. In 2003 there was an improvement in the national test results, most notably in English and mathematics, with an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving both Level 4 and Level 5. This reflected not only a more able year group but also the results of the school's effort to improve learning and raise achievement through the 'Critical Skills Programme'⁷ and the 'Aim High'⁸ initiative. These have been instrumental in improving the achievement of higher-attaining pupils between Years 3 and 6. However, science results did not improve as well, due to insufficient time being available for the subject co-ordinator to lead or manage the subject effectively.
- Inspection evidence indicates that, as a result of the school's efforts, standards in English, mathematics, and science are now in line with the expected level. In all three subjects there are many pupils working at the appropriate level for their age and there are also more pupils working at the higher level than in 2003.

Standards by the end of Year 2 in 2003

- Overall, results were above the national average and above those of similar schools. They were average in reading and writing, but above average in mathematics, and well above

The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Year 6, when pupils are age 11, expected to reach Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁶ **Average Point Scores.** The average point scores table compares the school's performance with the national results. The calculations are arrived at by using the total of all test scores gained by pupils, and dividing the total by the number of pupils with a test result. This calculation is carried out for each subject tested.

⁷ **The Critical Skills Programme.** This is aimed at providing a high quality learning environment, with active and collaborative learning experiences that involve pupils in their learning, and encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their work and involve them in the assessment process.

⁸ **'Aim High' Initiative.** This is aimed at providing opportunities for potential high-attaining pupils to widen the range and scope of their aspirations. Gifted and talented pupils are partnered with adult mentors.

average in science. All pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils, and those from different ethnic minorities, achieved well, especially in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.9 (15.9)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	14.9 (14.5)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.9 (16.9)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Progress over time and current standards in Year 2

- The overall trend in the school's results over the last few years has been below that of the national rate of improvement. However, there are significant differences between subjects. Performance in writing has remained close to the national trend, but the improvement in mathematics has been better than in most other schools. Pupils' performance in reading, however, has declined significantly in the last few years. The school has acknowledged this and is successfully reversing the trend with a number of effective strategies.
- Current standards in reading in Year 2 are close to the expected level for the majority of pupils, as they are in writing, mathematics, and science. This year group is less able than that of last year and although all pupils achieve well there are fewer higher-attaining pupils than last year.

Standards and achievement in other subjects

Subject	Year 2		Year 6	
	Achievement	Attainment	Achievement	Attainment
Art and design	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level	Good	Above the expected level
Design and technology	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level
Music	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level
Religious education	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level	Satisfactory	Close to the expected level
Personal, social and health education (including Citizenship)	Good	Above the expected level	Good	Above the expected level

- No judgements were made on provision or standards in geography, history, and physical education as these subjects were not a focus of the inspection.
- The national test results indicate that the difference in attainment between boys and girls is similar to that found nationally. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because of the quality of the help they receive from both teachers and support staff. Gifted and talented pupils achieve well because the school has several initiatives that support their academic needs as well as their personal development through the 'Aim High' initiative.

Pupils' attitudes, values, and other personal qualities

Despite good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, the overall level is unsatisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their personal development is good. Their moral and social development is very good and their spiritual and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between pupils and staff are very good.
- The very strong moral and social code has a positive influence on attitudes and behaviour.
- Levels of attendance are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

11. Pupils speak positively of their school, and parental returns in the questionnaire indicate that their children enjoy coming to school. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school life, including out of class activities. There is a very high level of participation in many of the after school clubs that the school provides.
12. Pupils are courteous and polite. Good manners are second nature to all pupils. This reflects the school's desire to instil a very strong moral code with high expectations of behaviour and well-established routines. The school is, therefore, calm and orderly. The industrious atmosphere encourages pupils to be productive. Relationships at all levels throughout the school are very good. Pupils respect their teachers who listen to their ideas and provide the necessary help when required; this supports pupils' achievements well. Pupils, irrespective of age, gender, or ability are friendly to one another. In the nursery and reception classes the environment is warm and supportive fostering an atmosphere in which children are happy to learn.
13. Pupils' social development is very good. They are involved in setting their own class rules and as a result gain a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. As pupils move through the school, the 'Critical Skills Programme' fosters life skills, such as independence and a sense of responsibility through much practical, paired and group work. For example, in science lessons teachers plan activities that encourage pupils to work together to undertake research and practical activities.
14. The good behaviour and attitudes have been maintained since the last inspection. They are supported by the school's strong stance against any form of harassment. Both pupils and parents state that on the rare occasion that it happens, the school deals with it well. The school complies fully with its race equality policy, and this helps promote a racially harmonious school. There was only one exclusion in the last reporting year.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – African

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
263	1	
1		
1		
2		
1		
1		

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

15. Since the last inspection the school has improved spiritual provision so that it is now good. Acts of collective worship now meet statutory requirements, with good opportunities for reflection, singing, and exposure to music and to uplifting tales. There were also some good examples of spirituality in lessons, particularly in the reception class, where children were asked to comment on how they felt when listening to evocative pieces of music. There has also been a good improvement in pupils' cultural development since the last inspection. There are now plenty of interesting opportunities for them to develop a knowledge of their own

heritage, for example through studying the Bristol slave trade and different faiths and cultures through geography, religious education, and information and communication technology. There are weekly video links to schools in Sweden and Portugal.

16. Attendance is slightly below the national average and, as such, is unsatisfactory. There are good systems in place for monitoring and improving attendance, with a home-school worker who monitors attendance daily and works closely with those families who have attendance problems. As a result of this attendance has been improving, however, a significant proportion of absence is made up of holidays taken in term time. In order to offset the effects of the time lost, the school now asks pupils to write a daily journal of their time away, but these absences continue to have a negative impact on the overall attendance level and pupils' learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and support pupils' learning well. All pupils have access to reasonable levels of support, advice and guidance that are based on satisfactory monitoring. Links with parents are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- An emphasis on improving pupils' ability to learn is raising standards.
- A few pupils are not always provided with a task that challenges them sufficiently.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
- Good use is made of the support staff, who help many pupils, especially those with learning difficulties, to make good progress.

Commentary

17. The overall quality of teaching, including that in nursery and the reception classes, is good. Good teaching was observed in every year group and parental comments indicate a belief that teaching is often good. Over three-quarters of the teaching observed in English and mathematics was good and, as a consequence, pupils achieve well. The percentage of good teaching in science was not as great, but, overall, pupils still achieve well. Over 90 per cent of lessons in the Foundation Stage were good or better and this accounts for the good and sometimes very good progress children make, especially in their personal and language development.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	5 (10%)	32 (65%)	11 (23%)	1 (2%)	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.

18. The school has maintained the good teaching noted at the time of the last inspection, and reduced the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. This has been achieved by the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and rigorous monitoring that has been well supported by professional development. Pupils have, therefore, continued to achieve well over the last few years and many attain the expected level for their age.
19. Through rigorous monitoring and the analysis of data the leadership of the school perceived that a barrier to raising attainment was pupils' lack of skills in knowing how to learn. To overcome this, the school introduced the 'Critical Skills Programme'. Staff then undertook training on what makes a successful learner. These two strategies were evident in most of the lessons observed during the inspection, especially those judged to be very good. In using this programme and maintaining a focus on how pupils learn, teachers not only meet the needs of the higher-attaining pupils, but are also improving standards.
20. Teachers have good subject knowledge and professional expertise in the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science and in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. Lessons are planned thoroughly, with careful attention paid to ensuring that pupils build on their prior learning. Instructions and explanations are clear so that pupils make good gains in their knowledge, understanding, and skills.
21. In the very best lessons, the teachers employ a good range of strategies and instil a sense of curiosity and enthusiasm. The lively pace evident in these lessons is often complemented by a good range of questions aimed at pupils of different abilities, a heavy reliance on practical work, and good classroom organisation. Pupils often work in pairs or groups. The strongest features of the very good English and mathematics lessons were, not only the fact that teachers had prepared activities for pupils of different abilities, as most of teachers regularly do, but also because they used their assessment of the higher-attaining pupils to provide tasks that were carefully and accurately matched to these pupils capabilities. This ensured that these pupils were challenged particularly well and made good gains in their learning.
22. In the good and very good lessons teachers incorporate aspects of the 'Critical Skills Programme' and the 'successful learner' initiative well, especially in English and mathematics. At the start of the lesson the teacher clearly shares the lesson's learning intentions with the pupils, and then returns to these at the end of the lesson. Through questioning, pupils are encouraged to assess their own learning, or that of their classmates. They are, therefore, closely involved in their own learning. However, only in the very good lessons do teachers take this opportunity to extend pupils' learning by discussing what they need to do next to improve.
23. In many of the good lessons, teachers introduce the subject matter in a lively and engaging manner and start the main activity quickly. They follow clearly established structures and routines. Time is, therefore, used well and pupils maintain their interest. These routines have helped pupils know what is expected of them, and they are, therefore, productive in their work. Good use is made of teaching assistants who, although few in number, are well qualified and experienced. They, together with the nursery nurses, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants liaise well with teachers when supporting pupils with learning difficulties. They plan activities that are related to these pupils' short-term targets in individual education plans, thus ensuring their good progress. The role models provided by all staff and particularly the very good teamwork of staff in the Foundation Stage, promote pupils' learning well. A good and common practice noted across the whole school is the setting of homework. This is consistently done, and builds well on the learning that takes place in school. The school has, therefore, clearly addressed an area of weakness noted in the last report.

24. In the good lessons teachers know their pupils well, use what assessment information they have, and provide an appropriate level of challenge for them. Thus, many achieve the expected level for their age and achieve well. This is made easier in English, mathematics, and science, where pupils are taught in groups based on their prior attainment. However, in many lessons, including those in some English and mathematics sets, pupils are given broadly the same type of work. The only concession to pupils of different abilities was in the amount of work that they were expected to complete. As there was a lack of separate tasks for the higher-attaining pupils, they did not always do as well as they could.
25. The few lessons where teaching was no better than satisfactory were due to the prescribed nature of the tasks given to pupils. Pupils were not encouraged to be involved in their learning, as teachers did not ask enough questions, or give them the responsibility of choosing materials or equipment. The pace of learning, therefore, slowed and, occasionally, pupils became restless and inattentive. In this situation too much time was spent maintaining discipline and pupils did not learn as much as they could have.
26. Some aspects of assessment are good but it is unsatisfactory overall and does not complement the school's 'Critical Skills Programme', or its 'successful learners' initiative. Pupils with learning difficulties are assessed well. Their needs are carefully identified and regularly reviewed. Thus pupils' individual education plans are relevant to their changing needs. These pupils, therefore, make good progress, with many achieving the expected level for their age. In the Foundation Stage, good initial assessments of children, coupled with the detailed recording of ongoing observations, provide a wealth of information that teachers and support staff use well to meet the needs of individual children.
27. In the rest of the school there are some good assessment procedures in English and mathematics. Pupils' progress is accurately tracked. Those pupils who are underachieving are identified and appropriate support is given. In recent years, this has helped to raise standards, but the national test results in Years 2 and 6 are not regularly analysed and curriculum co-ordinators are not always fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. Teachers, however, use the information on pupils' attainment well to help when grouping pupils in class, and sets. They also use this information appropriately to inform their planning and setting expectations for pupils of different abilities. However, only in the very best teachers use this assessment carefully to set activities for the most capable pupils that accurately match their needs and provide a good level of challenge. The good practice of involving pupils in their own learning, by providing them with targets and discussing with them at the end of a lesson, or through marking their work with comments about how they can improve, is not undertaken consistently throughout the school.
28. In many other subjects, such as information and communication technology, religious education, and science, there are no procedures used across the school to assess pupils' learning or to monitor their progress.

The curriculum

The school's good curriculum meets all statutory requirements in Years 1 to 6 and in the nursery and reception classes. There is very good provision of out of class activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The 'Critical Skills Programme' and other creative partnerships are being effectively used to raise standards.
- The needs of the few higher-attaining pupils are not always met as well as they could be.
- There is very good enrichment of the curriculum through extra curricular provision.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils is good.
- Outdoor accommodation is good.

Commentary

29. The curriculum meets statutory requirements including provision for religious education. This is an improvement on the last inspection when the school was not complying with statutory requirements. The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes is good, providing young children with a firm base on which to build.
30. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented effectively, enabling pupils to achieve well in these two subjects. The curriculum is planned well; pupils are set by ability in English, mathematics, and science, in order that the needs of pupils of different abilities can be better met. The school has adapted much of the guidance on how to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum. This ensures that pupils build well on their previous learning. Significant improvements have been made to the provision for design and technology, music, and art and design since the last inspection. The 'Critical Skills Programme', that enables pupils to have responsibility for their own learning and evaluate what they are doing in order to move forward, has been incorporated well into most subjects and is being effective in raising standards.
31. Provision for personal, social and health education, including citizenship, is good and is supported by regularly reviewed policies for sex education and drugs awareness. Visits to the 'life skills centre', visitors from the emergency services, and good links with subjects, such as religious education, reinforce pupils' learning well. The school's council and the emphasis on working as a team in lessons, central to the 'Critical Skills Programme' also effectively promote the concept of citizenship and the skills and attitudes necessary for it to work.
32. The school provides well for nearly all pupils; there is good equality and access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good. The good support provided by teaching assistants enables them to have full access to the curriculum and to develop the basic skills that underpin their good progress. The school also provides well for gifted and talented pupils, through specialist teaching, and for higher-attaining pupils by teaching them in ability groups. However, within these ability groups teachers often lack information on pupils' attainment and progress. They, therefore, challenge these pupils by increasing the volume of work required, rather than by providing a more challenging task. This limits the opportunity to extend pupils' learning.
33. The curriculum is much enriched. Parents are pleased with the amount of out of class activities provided by the school. Very good use is made of outside providers, particularly in sport. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a range of activities outside school and this adds to their personal and academic development. As of March 2003, 65 per cent of the pupils attend at least one activity outside of normal lessons. Good use is made of visitors to the school, for example in music and dance. Participation in the arts has improved since the last inspection thanks to opportunities for performance provided by school and outside providers, such as the 'Creative Partnership' with local community groups.
34. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, with good accommodation outdoors both for sporting activity and outdoor play. Outdoor play provision for the youngest children is also good. Internal accommodation is satisfactory overall with some good features, such as the computer suite. Other areas, such as the library, are too small but this is due to be remedied with the start of an extensive building programme in May. Resources are satisfactory overall with a good range of musical and physical education resources. The number of teachers is adequate, and their skills and expertise are deployed well to meet the needs of the curriculum and the pupils. There is a significant level of specialist teaching that benefits pupils' learning. The number of classroom assistants is limited, due to budgetary restraints, but those who are employed are trained and deployed well in supporting pupils' achievements.

Care, guidance and support

The care and welfare of pupils are good. The support, advice, and guidance are satisfactory, as is the way in which the school seeks and acts upon pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not always receive sufficient academic guidance and support for them to know how to improve.
- The arrangements for health and safety, child protection and pastoral care are good.
- Raising the aspirations of pupils is a major focus of the school's work.
- There are good arrangements for rewarding non-academic achievement.

Commentary

35. The arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety from nursery to the end of Year 6 are good. Child Protection procedures are secure, with good records of concerns and appropriate filing. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the parents meeting, parents stated their belief that the school is safe and secure. Staff know their pupils well, and as they have their best interests at heart, pupils trust them to provide help when needed. Pupils state that they feel teachers help them when they are stuck and in lessons. Because of the open atmosphere of support, pupils ask questions confidently, and this helps promote their good learning. The great majority of pupils state that there is an adult to go to if they are worried at school.
36. The school is providing very good support and guidance to pupils in the difficult task of raising their aspirations. This is being done through three key initiatives linked to the work of the Education Action Zone; the 'Critical Skills Programme', the 'Aim High' initiative and the focus on promoting successful learners through good teaching. The school is keeping careful track of the successes that they are having in this area. These successes are borne out by the growing number of pupils achieving above the expected level in their work.
37. The quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties is good. The individual education plans prepared for these pupils are carefully designed to meet the needs of individual pupils in relation to literacy, numeracy, and personal development. Targets are realistic and achievable, and teachers and teaching assistants use sharply focused strategies to ensure that all pupils achieve well. The school also provides well for pupils who have been identified as gifted or talented. Many of their personal needs are met through the three key initiatives mentioned above, but also by providing small focused teaching groups to present them with the appropriate challenge and stimulus, as is being done in mathematics. However, the arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and monitor their progress are unsatisfactory and pupils are not therefore always given the necessary support or guidance to improve.
38. Although there are no formal arrangements for monitoring personal development, staff intuitively monitor pupils on a daily basis and appropriate action is taken. There are good systems for rewarding non-academic achievement, through stickers, class awards, and the weekly 'Praise Assembly'. Such achievement includes success in non-academic fields, such as gymnastics. Where there are more serious concerns about a pupil's personal development a school counsellor is available. Induction procedures to the nursery and reception classes are good and, as a result, children, and their parents, soon settle happily to the school's routines.

Partnership with parents, other schools, and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Community links strengthen the curriculum.

- The good relationship between school and parents makes a positive contribution to the work of the school.
 - The close ties with the Education Action Zone are helping raise standards.
39. Headley Park has maintained the highly productive links with the community that were a feature at the time of the last inspection. Support from the local community for the management of the school is very good, with nearly all governors living locally and having direct involvement either as a parent or as a former pupil. The school constantly seeks to involve the community, and copies of school newsletters are distributed to homes in the locality. Summer and Christmas fairs are well attended by the public. There are also a number of long standing links with local organisations, such as a football club, the local church and other groups, all of which make considerable contributions to pupils' learning. The most notable of these is the 'Creative Partnership' that has done much to improve the provision for art at the school. One of the school's main priorities of recent years has been to raise pupils' aspirations, and that of their parents. As part of the 'Aim High' initiative pupils have worked with a major corporation and visited Newcastle University. Such activities are slowly making an impact on the difficult area of raising aspirations.
40. The school keeps parents well informed about what is going on and how their children are progressing. Those attending the pre-inspection parents' meeting confirmed that information, in the form of newsletters, curriculum worksheets and through regular contact with staff, is good. This is well supported by the school's good website. The vast majority of parents feel welcome in school and are encouraged to help out in classes when they can and a good number do so. To help parents support their children's learning, and to raise their aspirations, the school has run curriculum evenings that include English and mathematics as well as the 'Critical Skills Programme'. The school takes good account of parents' views, through questionnaires, and, where appropriate, implements suggestions for improvement. There are good procedures to deal with any concerns and complaints. The school is also well served by an active parents' teachers' and friends' association that is very successful at raising additional funds for the school, and by a good number of parents who regularly volunteer to help in lessons.
41. The good links with other schools, noted at the time of the last inspection, have been built on by the Education Action Zone and they are now very good. There has been much sharing of good practice between the local schools and Headley Park and these close links also include pupils; members of each school council meet regularly and there also numerous music workshops, and dance and sports clubs, all of which strengthen the school's curriculum. The Education Action Zone has often complemented the school's efforts to raise achievement of the more able and they have been very instrumental in establishing and supporting the school's key strategies in raising standards and the aspirations of both pupils and parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance of the school is very good. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is good and the management of the school is effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All members of a strong team, which includes the headteacher and key staff, have a clear vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations.
- Strategic planning is detailed, well thought out, and reflects the school's ambitions and goals.
- The headteacher leads both the curriculum and teaching very well in an attempt to improve the attainment of the most capable pupils.
- Governance of the school is very good and provides strong and critical guidance.
- The school spends its money wisely because of very good approaches to financial management.

Commentary

42. The headteacher provides a very strong, strategic lead to the work of the school and is supported by an effective senior management team, especially the deputy headteacher. Along with her staff, the headteacher has high aspirations for the pupils' academic progress and their personal development. She maintains a clear vision for the direction of the school that is currently firmly focused on raising the achievement and aspirations of potentially high attaining pupils, and addressing the disappointing results of 2003. To this end, she is being successful. A particular strength is the way in which the headteacher and senior management team have established an ethos that encourages all pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, or ability, to behave well, care for each other and achieve well. All of its policies and procedures are effective in helping the school achieve this.
43. The quality of the leadership and management of the school, although good, has fallen slightly since the last inspection for two reasons:
- Although the school is now firmly focused on raising the achievement of higher-attaining pupils, and has been for the last few years, it was slow to respond to this issue when it was raised in the last inspection.
 - There is an unequal distribution of subject responsibilities and this has adversely affected the co-ordination of science and pupils' achievement.
44. Staff work together very well, and the headteacher and senior management team, particularly the deputy headteacher, have made very good use of the opportunities provided by the Education Action Zone. Through this, both the headteacher and her deputy provide very good leadership of the curriculum and teaching, and are responsible for the success of the 'Critical Skills Programme' and the drive to develop successful learners. Many of the subjects are led well. The Foundation Stage is led particularly well, because of the co-ordinator's vision, knowledge, and her success at building an effective team. However, because of a lack of time, caused by budgetary constraints, many curriculum co-ordinators have not had sufficient time to manage their subjects by monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. New innovative approaches, such as the 'walk-through'⁹, are improving this. Staff teams are led effectively and all staff share a corporate responsibility for pupils' learning that has resulted in consistency in the quality of teaching. The headteacher promotes the development of staff well and effectively marshals the different knowledge, skills, and expertise that staff bring to the school. She complements these well, with good continuous professional development that is closely linked to the school's aims.
45. The current school development plan is good and provides a clear and detailed direction to the work of the school. Previous plans have always addressed the needs of the most capable pupils, but not as robustly as other areas of school development, such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's use of performance data is adequate, especially in English and mathematics, although a lack of assessment in many subjects hinders the school's ability to do this very effectively. However, through the good analysis of information, they look at how different groups of pupils are achieving and identify reasons for this. These procedures are coupled with other effective self-evaluation tools, such as the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, and the canvassing of the views of pupils and parents. The school thus evaluates its performance well and uses the information gathered to identify its priorities. This enables the school to identify clearly the barriers it faces in raising achievement, such as a lack of pupil and parental aspirations, as well as the need for more risk taking and independent thinking in pupils, and to, therefore, develop the most appropriate approaches needed to address them.
46. The good leadership and management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties have been maintained since the last inspection. Effective systems are in place to ensure that these pupils are identified early on, and appropriate action is taken to meet their needs.

⁹ Co-ordinators 'walk-through' the school and lessons monitoring a particular focus, for example the quality of the learning environment and then feedback to individual teachers and the senior management team.

47. The school uses its available resources very well to further its educational aims. The headteacher and governors, supported very well by the school bursar, evaluate expenditure closely, with a focus on improving provision for all pupils. This enables them to manage with a very small amount of money to carry forward. As the school's income and, therefore, its expenditure per pupil is much lower than the national average, very strong and effective financial systems have been developed to ensure that the principles of best value are rigorously employed in achieving the school's aims.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	759,035
Total expenditure	767,120
Expenditure per pupil	2,062*

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	14,000
Balance carried forward to the next	6185

*Calculated on a school roll of 377

48. Governors play a very effective role. They know the school extremely well, and have a thorough understanding of the barriers faced by the school in seeking to raise achievement. They fulfil all their statutory duties. They frequently come into school to meet staff and to observe lessons. Governors know the strengths of the school and what is being done to raise standards. They are closely involved in strategic planning and rigorously challenge the headteacher on issues such as pupils' achievement and any proposed developments that may have potential benefits for the pupils. In responding to the findings of the last inspection, the governors regularly identified the need to improve the achievement of potentially higher-attaining pupils, and regularly questioned the headteacher about what the school was doing. However, partly because both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies were introduced at this time, they were not as rigorous or as focused on this issue as they could have been.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The very good provision reported in the last report has been maintained. All children, irrespective of their ability, gender, or ethnicity, achieve well because the teaching is good, and the curriculum is planned well. This provides a wide range of interesting and relevant activities that include an appropriate balance of formal teaching, with many opportunities for purposeful play, so that children can learn from direct experience.

Children enter the nursery in the term before they are three, and then transfer to the reception classes in the September before they are five. There are good induction arrangements, which result in a smooth transition to nursery from home, and from nursery to reception. In the past, parents have expressed their unhappiness with some of the arrangements. In response to this, the school enhanced the arrangements to include home visits for children of reception age.

Overall, attainment on entry for children currently in nursery is below that expected for their age. Language development and personal development are the two weakest areas. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, although the proportion of children identified as being either higher- or lower-attaining is smaller than is normally found.

Adults monitor the children's progress carefully, by keeping rigorous assessments that are used well to plan work at the correct level for each child, including those with learning difficulties. The accommodation inside is satisfactory, although there are good facilities for outside work. The outside areas are used well to extend learning in the classroom in both nursery and reception. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good. The co-ordinator has a very good overall view of the whole stage, and constantly evaluates the curriculum to improve practice. Adults work very well as a cohesive team, ensuring that children are safe and happy.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of consistently good teaching.
- Well-established routines and good models of behaviour promote an orderly community.
- Supportive relationships encourage children to be confident and happy.

Commentary

49. The excellent teamwork of the adults in all classes provides the children with superb role models of co-operation, and a calm but rigorous approach to work. All staff have high expectations and children quickly learn the correct way to behave. Even the youngest children know the routines well and settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss. The quality of teaching is very good and permeates all areas of learning. Children are continually encouraged to feel confident about their achievements. They are friendly and take a pride in their work. As soon as children enter nursery they are encouraged to share and take turns amicably, and put up their hands when answering a question. By the time they enter the reception class, children have learned good work habits. They willingly join together co-operatively in small groups, supporting each other well, whether they are finding out about different sea creatures, or clearing up. All children achieve very well in this area of their learning and it is likely that most children will exceed the expected goals by the time they start Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well, as all adults take every opportunity to develop the children's language skills.
- A good emphasis on the learning of sounds gives children a good grounding for their reading and writing.

Commentary

50. As a result of good teaching, the majority of children make better than expected progress and are on course to meet the expected goals in this area of learning. During all activities, staff encourage the development of children's speaking and listening by asking them probing questions, and through the constant insistence that children listen to the contributions of others. For example, in the reception class, children listened well when others told them about their chosen sea creature. Very good relationships mean that children have the confidence to talk, and all adults are genuinely interested in what the children have to say. The school places great emphasis on learning to read, and, as soon as children enter nursery, they are encouraged to take books home to share with parents and carers. Children enjoy books, and listen attentively when a story is read to them. For example, the teacher read the story of the 'Elves and the Shoemaker' with such expression, that children in nursery hung on every word. This created a real spiritual atmosphere as the children experienced the wonder of books. There are many opportunities for children to look at books themselves, such as first thing in the morning. They handle them with care, and appreciate that text is read from left to right. The teaching and learning of writing is good. From an early age children are encouraged to make marks on paper. As they get older they are carefully taught how to form their letters correctly. Good emphasis on the recognition of sounds helps children to learn to read and write. Most children in the reception class can, therefore, write their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because teachers plan a wide range of mathematical activities to support learning.
- Children's mathematical development is constantly reinforced throughout the school day.

Commentary

51. A range of practical activities prepares the way well for future learning, and is very appropriate for this stage of development. This promotes children's interest well so that they concentrate well. In the nursery, adults use a variety of number rhymes and songs to help children count. In both the nursery and reception classes, teaching and learning are good with some very good features. Lessons are brisk, with appropriate activities to challenge all abilities. Questioning is used well to ensure that all children understand and to extend their learning. Most children in the reception class are working at the levels expected for their age. Children count to ten, and beyond, with confidence, and the most able say which number is one less than and one more than. Support staff are used well to provide a good level of care and guidance to small groups of children who, therefore, achieve well on most occasions. However, occasionally opportunities to correct misunderstandings are missed, for example, in correcting numbers that were written the wrong way round, and this limits the children's learning. By the time children enter Year 1 the majority will have attained the expected goals in this area.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
 - Good use is made of information and communication technology.
52. No lessons in this area of learning were seen during the inspection, but examination of planning shows that a range of activities is prepared in order to promote this area of learning. For example, children learn about religious festivals such as Christmas and Diwali. Good use is made of the local environment and children in reception note the key features on their weekly visit to the local library. Teachers plan with the school's 'Critical Skills Programme' in mind, so even from the earliest age the promotion of learning is carefully developed. For example, in their study of sea creatures, children in the reception class were encouraged to work together. Teachers make frequent use of computers to support children's learning in a wide range of activities. The majority of children in the reception class have good mouse control and can accurately click and drag icons around the screen. They are competent in using the keyboard to write their names. The majority of children are likely to meet the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the outside area to promote physical activity.
- Lessons in the hall promote physical development well.
- Children are not encouraged to change for physical activity.

Commentary

53. Only one lesson of physical development was observed. In many aspects the teaching was good. Adults took an active part in lessons, setting good role models for performance. The teacher gave clear instructions and the children were well behaved. As a consequence, children learned to move well with increasing control and became aware of the space around them. They happily explored different ways of travelling in time to some well-chosen music. However, children did not dress appropriately for the activity and this inhibited their learning. Good use is made of the outside area, where an exciting range of activities and equipment is available to further develop children's physical development. During outside activities children in reception could balance on a good range of wheeled toys, and steer them with appropriate confidence and accuracy. In many lessons there are a good number of opportunities for children to manipulate a range of tools, including brushes, pencils and glue sticks, which they do with increasing dexterity. Teachers and support staff give good direction on how to use these tools. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children will reach the expected goals in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy a wide range of well-planned experiences where teaching and learning are very good.
- Children's musical skills are developing well as a result of very good teaching.

Commentary

54. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and all children achieve well. Children make good progress when experimenting with paint, and, even in the nursery, learn to mix colours effectively. They have learned a good range of songs, which they thoroughly enjoy singing. They handle instruments well and obey the commands of the conductor promptly. Children co-operate amicably with their classmates when engaged in role-play, in the imaginative underworld area, and staff sometimes enrich the experience by joining in the play and asking questions which develop children's learning. In the reception class, children used a range of different materials to make a sea creature, enhancing their physical development through the use of glue sticks and scissors. In this activity there were good opportunities for individual personal choice and co-operative work, enhancing personal development. Good use is made of puppets to enhance children's talking and imagination, and due to the wide range of activities and very good teaching, the majority of children will meet the expected standards in their creative development by the time they start Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers could make better use of assessment data to plan work at the right level of difficulty for individuals and groups of different abilities.
- Standards in writing in Year 6 are just below those expected.
- The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well.

Commentary

55. Results in the 2003 national tests in Year 2 were average in reading and writing when compared with all schools and those of a similar nature. At the end of Year 6, results were below the national average, and below the average in similar schools. The results of the last few years in both Years 2 and 6 show that more pupils have been achieving the expected standards than in most schools, whereas a relatively small proportion achieved the higher level. The school has broadly maintained the standards of attainment reported at the time of the last inspection, and pupils throughout the school achieve well. Current standards in Year 2 are similar to those achieved in the national tests in 2003. In Year 6, standards are now close to the expected level, although standards in writing are slightly lower. The improved standards in Year 6 are due to a more able year group, and the school's efforts to raise attainment, especially of the higher-attaining pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress and the difference in attainment between boys and girls is broadly similar to that found nationally. Those pupils from ethnic minorities also achieve well.
56. Over the last few years, the proportion of pupils attaining above the expected level in the tests at the end of Year 6 has been below the national average. This was predicted by the school and, in part, reflects the level of prior attainment of these year groups. The school provided well for most of these pupils and they achieved well. However, as the school acknowledges, it was slow to address the key issue from the last inspection, which was to raise the standards achieved by higher-attaining pupils. The findings of this inspection are that the school is now successfully addressing this issue through two main strategies: first, the decision to group pupils by ability in all years, and, second, the use of the 'Critical Skills Programme'. Teachers routinely share with pupils the learning intentions for each lesson and involve them in evaluating how successfully they and their classmates have learned. These initiatives have contributed to a gradual upturn in standards. This was evident in the results of the 2003

national tests. Lesson observations during the inspection week, and school data, indicate that standards are likely to continue to rise.

57. Teachers throughout the school have developed the good practice of planning opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills across all subjects as part of the school's 'Critical Skills Programme' and the development of successful learners. This is achieved by encouraging pupils to talk with their work partners and discuss ideas as a team. As a result of this approach, by Year 2 the capacity of pupils to listen closely to what others are saying and to express their own ideas clearly and confidently meets the expectation for their age. By Year 6, some develop mature and articulate speech which is securely above average, exemplified by the clear and articulate description of the setting for a story suggested by one pupil, who proposed, 'Flies were tearing hungrily at the old dead rat, showing no mercy'. Most other pupils offer less sophisticated, but confident responses, which securely meet expectations for their age.
58. Standards of reading are similar to those seen in most schools by Years 2 and 6. The school establishes secure reading skills in Years 1 and 2, by carefully structured teaching of the various letter sounds and blends. Regular guided reading sessions led by well-qualified and experienced support staff support this. As a result of this, pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. Most pupils in Year 2 confidently read familiar stories without help. A minority of more capable pupils achieve above the average level because they read with expression and are developing an interest in a favourite author. The decline in reading standards evident in the national test results over the last few years has been successfully corrected by dedicating additional time at the beginning of afternoon sessions for pupils to practise their reading skills. By Year 6, the vast majority of pupils have developed healthy attitudes towards reading, regularly take reading books home, and keep their journals up to date. Most are familiar with books by at least two authors and higher-attaining pupils make clear and informed comparisons between the styles of writing employed by different authors. The school has worked successfully to promote these good attitudes by inviting authors of children's stories and poetry into school, and by arranging for older and younger pupils to work together as co-authors of their own reading books.
59. Standards in writing are in line with those expected for pupils in Year 2 and are just below the expected levels in Year 6. Many pupils in Year 2 place events in their correct sequence and write them as clear, recognisable sentences with capital letters and full stops, such as when re-writing the story of 'The Frog and The Prince'. By Year 6, most pupils write stories independently, organising their work into paragraphs, and are capable of planning and editing their work with a critical eye. A minority in this group, whilst they are achieving well, are not yet consistently producing the required standard of work without regular guidance from teachers and support staff. The good achievement of gifted and talented writers is well supported through the 'Aim High Project'; pupils have mentors that support and guide their development.
60. The quality of teaching is good. A major strength of the teaching lies in the teachers' commitment to involve pupils fully in the learning process. This is part of the school's strategy to improve pupils' learning skills. In most lessons seen, teachers shared the lesson objectives with their class and supported this strategy by creating regular opportunities, during or at the end of the lesson, for pupils to evaluate the quality of their own work or to engage in critical and constructive dialogue with their classmates. This collaborative approach is creating mature and often academic attitudes to learning and also helps to develop the very good relationships that are a feature of classrooms throughout the school. Whilst the school has successfully maintained the overall quality of teaching reported in the previous inspection, there has been good improvement in this particular aspect of practice.
61. The school assesses pupils regularly as they move through the school and this information is used well to identify pupils who may be underachieving. This is paying dividends and is helping to raise standards. However, teachers do not make full use of this information. Even within the classes that are based on pupils' ability, pupils are expected to undertake the same type of work. The data that is available is not used to create specific targets or activities for pupils in these groups and, therefore, pupils achieve well rather than very well. Pupils are not consistently given targets and teachers' marking of their work does not always indicate how they could improve.

62. Leadership and management in the subject are good. The co-ordinator carries out regular monitoring of teaching and learning through direct lesson observation and regular sampling of pupils' work. With the support of fully committed teaching and non-teaching colleagues, she has established a collective sense of purpose and direction, which has brought about an upward trend in standards and created a solid platform for further improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. Due to the school's positive approach to providing a full and rich curriculum, teachers take good care to include opportunities for pupils to develop in all of the key areas of literacy through their planning for different subjects. For example, teaching in personal, social and health education provides regular opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their speaking and listening skills, and teaching in subjects such as science encourages pupils to use their own words when recording the results of investigations.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Assessment information is not used thoroughly enough to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils do not always know how to improve.
- The subject is led well.

Commentary

64. Results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were below average when compared with all schools and those of a similar nature. The great majority of pupils, including those from ethnic minorities, achieve well. Current standards are in line with those expected. The improved results are due, first, to a more able year group, and, second, to the school's efforts to raise the attainment of the most capable pupils. In 2003 the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was very low when compared to the national average, although the proportion of those who achieved the expected level was far greater than the national average. However, in the current year group the proportion of higher-attaining pupils is greater. Inspection evidence indicates that this improving trend is likely to continue.
65. Test results in 2003 at the end of Year 2 were well above the average when compared nationally and with similar schools. This particularly able year group had been taught well, and, therefore, achieved very well. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was far greater than the national average. Current standards in Year 2 are in line with those expected. These pupils are being taught by the same teacher as in Year 2 last year and are achieving well, but they are not as able as their predecessors and standards are, therefore, lower.
66. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because of good teaching. During the inspection, and in the national tests, the difference in attainment between boys and girls was similar to that found nationally. Gifted and talented mathematicians at the school make good progress because the school makes specific provision for them through the 'Aim High' initiative and the support of parent helpers.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are placed in classes according to the results of end of year assessment. This helps teachers plan for pupils of different abilities. Where the teachers' planning is good or better there is sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils and these pupils have specific activities to undertake. Teachers also employ a good range of techniques that are based on a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, as well as the school's 'Critical Skills Programme' and the drive to develop learning. Teachers'

good questioning provides opportunities to probe pupils' understanding, and there is regular encouragement for pupils to work in groups or pairs, especially in problem solving and investigative mathematics. In addition to this, pupils, especially at the end of the lesson, are encouraged to assess their own learning. In the satisfactory lessons, these elements of good practice are not as well developed. In addition, the learning of some pupils is slowed because good quality marking that informs a pupil how to improve is not consistent across the school and neither is the use of targets for improvement.

68. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and leads the subject well. He has a clear vision of what needs to be improved and is focused on raising the standards of the most capable pupils. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Teachers have been given the opportunity for professional development and there is a satisfactory amount of monitoring in terms of analysing pupils' work and teachers' planning. Information and communication technology is used appropriately in mathematics. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. There is an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects, for example, data handling in science, and timelines in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient time for the co-ordinator to undertake her role effectively.
- Because of good teaching many pupils achieve well.
- There are too few tasks provided specifically for more capable pupils.
- There is a lack of procedures to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress.

Commentary

70. The school's success in the teaching of science is evident in the percentage of pupils who gained the expected level in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 and the teachers' assessments in Year 2 in 2003. This pattern is reminiscent of test results in previous years. This also indicates the good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties. Inspection evidence and the national test results do not indicate that there is a difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
71. There is, however, a difference in the overall results between Year 2 and Year 6. In 2003, as in earlier years, few pupils in Year 6 achieved the higher Level 5. This reflects the profile of these specific year groups. Because of this, overall standards attained by pupils in Year 6 were well below the average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In Year 2, however, the overall standards attained were very high when compared to the national average and to the average in similar schools. This is because this particularly able year group had a significant number of pupils who gained the higher Level 3, due to the emphasis placed on practical science.
72. Teaching is good, overall and pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills, and understanding. The key features of many good lessons observed that also promoted pupils' productivity and co-operation were:
- Teachers' good subject knowledge.
 - The very good relationships and the high expectations teachers have of pupils' behaviour.
 - The regular use of homework to support pupils' learning.

73. Lessons are often paced well because teachers use a good range of strategies, such as oral work and practical activities. A high level of oral work ensures all pupils are involved and that pupils think for themselves. This is an important aspect of the school's 'Critical Skills Programme', but also helps develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Because of this, many pupils confidently express their own views when explaining their own predictions. For example because of good questioning by the teacher, pupils in a Year 2 science lesson, on plants and animals, quickly identified and discussed the differences between plants and animals. It was only the smaller group of higher-attaining pupils who independently suggested why there were differences between plants and animals. As such, overall standards in Year 2 are currently in line with those expected. The very good results in 2003 for pupils in Year 2 are unlikely to be repeated as the current Year 2 is not as able as the previous year.
74. A good range of activities in many lessons promotes pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. Pupils in Year 2 are regularly encouraged to be observant and record their findings in a variety of ways. Most of them have a reasonable understanding of what is a fair test. The emphasis on scientific enquiry is maintained throughout the school. However, although pupils in Year 6 have a reasonable knowledge of most aspects of the science curriculum, such as reversible and non-reversible materials, their knowledge of scientific enquiry is weaker and below that expected. Few pupils could discuss the different variables of an experiment or suggest why an experiment may have to be repeated. Overall, standards are currently close to being in line with those expected. The great majority of pupils are working in the expected Level 4, although school data and inspection evidence indicate that there may be more pupils achieving Level 5 than in 2003. These improved standards on the 2003 results are due, not only to a more able year group, but also to the school's efforts to address the poor results of last year. This includes the introduction of setting and a revision of the curriculum that includes a new topic-based approach to teaching.
75. There are no whole-school procedures to assess pupils' attainment or monitor their progress. As a consequence, teachers do not always know which pupils may be underachieving, nor do they have the information to plan tasks for pupils of different abilities. Currently, teachers often meet the needs of pupils of different abilities by expecting them to be more productive than other pupils. They rarely provide different and more challenging tasks for them. This limits the opportunity for greater learning.
76. Information and communication technology is used appropriately. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills; for example, when writing up their own investigations. Opportunities for them to use their mathematical skills are good. Pupils often record their measurements in a tabular form or in graphs.
77. The leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator, who is a part time teacher, and who also has two other subject responsibilities, does not have enough time to fulfil her responsibilities and this has adversely affected the provision for science. It is not as good as English or mathematics. Since the last inspection, although pupils continue to achieve well because of good teaching, the quality of provision has deteriorated.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and good resources.
- Good leadership has been instrumental in bringing about improvements in provision.
- There is limited assessment or tracking of pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is planned well and this promotes pupils' learning well.

Commentary

78. The many good improvements in the provision since the time of the last inspection have been due to the good leadership of the co-ordinator. As resources are much improved, pupils now

have regular access to computers to practise and use their skills. There is a new information and communication technology room and all the equipment, including that in the classrooms, is of a high specification. Gaps noted in the curriculum at the time of the last inspection have been filled using resources at local colleges. Whereas pupils had weaknesses in a few areas of information and communication technology at the time of the last inspection, their skills are now more evenly developed across all strands of the curriculum.

79. The teaching of information and communication technology is good and pupils achieve well. The frequent use of specialist teachers supports the better than expected progress that most pupils make. These teachers are supported well by the good management of the co-ordinator. He is a good practitioner and, therefore, an inspiring role model. He has supported staff well through training and has adapted national guidance on the teaching of information and communication technology. There are now detailed plans for teachers to follow. Lessons are, therefore, well structured and build upon pupils' previously learnt skills. Because teachers are confident practitioners, their instructions and explanations are clear. As a result, pupils understand what is expected of them and are productive in their work.
80. Teachers use a good range of strategies to motivate and engage their pupils, and because of this they achieve well. For example, through her use of humour, the teacher caught the interest of pupils in Year 2 and ensured the good use of resources, in this case, pictures by Kandinsky. The lesson supported pupils' personal development, as they worked in pairs, but they also used a wide range of skills in terms of information and communication technology and those developed as part of the school's 'Critical Skills Programme'. Because of this much of the work they produced was not only very pleasing to the eye but also demonstrated standards that are in line with those expected. Similarly, a well-chosen activity that linked to pupils' forthcoming science work on the human body captured pupils' interest in Year 6. They demonstrated a proficient use of the skills necessary to search the World Wide Web and save their favourite web pages. Overall standards in Year 6 are in line with those expected. Throughout the school there is no difference between the attainment of boys and girls, and pupils with learning difficulties make good progress.
81. Pupils achieve well throughout the school, but not very well, because of a lack of assessment. There are no whole-school procedures to assess pupils' attainment or track their progress. Because of this lack of information, teachers do not prepare tasks for pupils of different abilities, but expect the more able pupils to produce more of the same. This limits the challenge for some pupils and, therefore, the progress that they may make.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. There are good links between information and communication technology and many other subjects, and good use is made of the subject for pupils with learning difficulties. Good use is also made of the Internet to undertake research activities, for example, the Bristol Slave and a number of out-of-class activities, such as the 'passport system', which allows pupils to use the computer suite at lunchtimes. The Computer Animation Club also broadens the curriculum and enhances pupils' learning.

THE HUMANITIES

History and **geography** were not identified as areas for focus during this inspection, therefore, no judgements have been made about the overall provision in these subjects.

83. In **geography** an appropriate scheme of work provides opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge of their immediate environment and increase their understanding of the wider world. The samples of pupils' work seen suggest that teachers are devoting sufficient time to the teaching of geography and to the development of technical skills. In their planning they include opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills and create imaginative links with other subjects. Good use is made of information and communication technology to create international links with Sweden, Portugal, and Magnetic Island in Australia.

84. In **history** there is a very similar picture. Planning for the subject provides enjoyable and imaginative activities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical events, ranging from reflection on their own childhood in Year 1, to a study of the Ancient Greeks in Year 6. Good advantage is clearly taken of Bristol's rich local history, and visits to its museum enable pupils to study the slave trade in some depth. Pupils' work shows at least adequate attention to the development of research skills and pupils are clearly encouraged to record findings in their own words, which makes a positive contribution to the development of extended writing skills.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education adds positively to many area of pupils' personal development.
- The curriculum is planned and monitored well.
- Pupils, irrespective of ability, are often required to do the same work.

Commentary

85. Taking full account of the lesson seen, discussions with pupils and analysis of previous work, standards of attainment and pupils' achievement are in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained the standards reported in the last inspection and the scheme of work now fully meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.
86. By Year 2, pupils are becoming aware of the similarities and differences in the beliefs embraced by, for example, Jews and Christians by comparing their festivals, celebrations, places of worship and special books. By Year 6, the vast majority of pupils discuss with reasonable confidence their notion of more abstract issues, such as how the earth began, based on the creation stories espoused by world religions. The work seen in pupils' books indicates that teachers throughout the school use an appropriate range of strategies for bringing topics and stories to life, through story telling, discussion, writing and drawing and by examining artefacts associated with particular faiths. The lesson seen was satisfactory with some strengths, chief amongst which was the teacher's story-telling ability that thoroughly engaged the interest of the whole class. The practical activity was less successful as it did not provide sufficient challenge for pupils of different abilities; all pupils undertook the same task. This weakness is also evident in the analysis of pupils' work and in teachers' planning. Teachers provide many good opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing skills in religious education lessons.
87. The co-ordinator has very recently been appointed and is providing satisfactory leadership. She has established secure systems for ensuring that all classes cover the necessary aspects of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and has begun to test ways of efficiently assessing pupils' progress. Appropriate use is made of visits to the local church and of visitors talking about their beliefs and traditions, but these do not fully reflect the cultural and religious diversity of Bristol.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Due to the focus of the inspection, no lessons were observed in **physical education** or **music**. There is, therefore, insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on the quality of the provision in these subjects.

88. In **music**, a study of pupils' work indicates that the breadth of study is appropriate and that standards are at expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' learning is supported well by a good range of musical instruments. The subject leader is very knowledgeable and has improved the profile of music across the school including the opportunities for performance.

The overall provision has improved since the last inspection, but assessment is underdeveloped, as is the monitoring role of the subject leader.

89. In **physical education** the subject leader has a high level of expertise and recognises the importance of physical activities in the development of the pupils. All elements of the curriculum are taught, with swimming occurring in Years 3 to 6. Extra-curricular provision is very good. Outside support for sport is a regular feature of school life, with 65 per cent of pupils attending some form of extra curricular activity. The very wide range of clubs, that make good use of expertise within the community, and the numerous links with other schools, through sporting fixtures, add considerably to pupils' achievement and greatly enhance the curriculum. The effectiveness of many of these activities is enhanced by the use of the school's all-weather sports area.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain good standards by the time they leave the school.
- Creative partnerships within the community greatly enhance artistic opportunities for the pupils.
- Assessment procedures are not formalised sufficiently for teachers to judge pupils' progress.

Commentary

90. Standards in Year 2 are as expected, whereas, in Year 6 standards are above expectations. The work displayed around the school shows that pupils develop their skills well, and all elements of the subject are taught. All pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, but achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. Standards in Year 6, and pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6, have improved since the last inspection, due to a more focused approach to the teaching of skills and the use of a 'Creative Partnership' programme with local community groups. This has also broadened pupils' learning opportunities.
91. On the basis of two lessons observed, and the analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, the quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen, there were considerable strengths. In one lesson, the teacher's enthusiastic approach held the pupils' interest, and ensured they were thoroughly involved in the task. The interesting scenario of creating a 'Viking Design Company' resulted in the pupils really understanding the purpose of the design process. Through the 'Creative Partnership' pupils worked as a team to produce some very pleasing large collaborative canvases that are used very well to decorate the school. This includes artwork drawn from African and Aboriginal cultures. Other pupils are at present involved in a computer animation club, enhancing information and communication technology and artistic skills.
92. The subject is led well. The co-ordinator has considerable expertise, and is promoting the subject well. The management of the subject is satisfactory, as there have been few opportunities for the subject to be closely monitored. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and teachers do not have a clear picture of the level of skills acquired by pupils.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use a well-adapted scheme of work to guide them with their planning.
- Assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory.
- The knowledgeable subject leader is providing a good direction for the subject.

Commentary

93. Standards in design and technology were below the expected level at the time of the last inspection. Through its carefully written school improvement plan and the appointment of a good subject leader, the school has very successfully improved both the standards and the quality of provision. Standards are now in line with those expected in both Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well and make good gains in their knowledge, skills, and understanding.
94. On the basis of lessons observed and an analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' work the quality of teaching is good. Teachers' planning is often detailed and builds upon pupils' previous learning. It demonstrates that teachers have a good knowledge of all aspects of the subject, including designing, making, and evaluating. To promote the development of these skills, teachers regularly plan a good range of practical activities. Through these activities pupils experience a range of materials and tools, and skills are well developed. In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils in Year 6 became familiar with the workings of a cam and how this could be used to make a crocodile's mouth snap shut. The teachers' good subject knowledge ensured that pupils were given clear instructions and explanations. These often engaged pupils' interest well so that they were eager to start the task. However, pupils' learning slowed during the making process, as the teacher often directed them to the materials and methods they should use rather than give them the opportunity to select their own. Pupils did not, therefore, learn to be independent, take a risk, or think for themselves; approaches embodied in the 'Critical Skills Programme'. Overall, therefore, pupils learnt well, but not very well. Pupils evaluated their work throughout the lesson and made adjustments to improve the working model. This self-evaluation meant that pupils were very aware of the shortcomings of their designs, which is an improvement since the last report. The additional support offered by volunteer helpers was an important factor in promoting pupils' good learning.
95. The subject leader, although part-time, is having a positive impact on the subject. She has, for example, assembled a portfolio of work to help teachers with their planning. However, assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory. Teachers do not know the standards pupils achieve and do not, therefore, always prepare tasks to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. The school has, however, identified gifted and talented 'engineers', and through the mentoring programme that is part of the 'Aim High' initiative, successfully nurtured the skills and aspirations of one budding engineer.

Personal, social, and health education and citizenship

The provision in personal, social and health education, and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of links with the community and other schools.
- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum is planned well and personal, social and health education has a high profile.
- The monitoring role of the subject leader is underdeveloped.

Commentary

96. Standards are above expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6 and all pupils achieve well. Because of the school's ethos, the very good role models provided by staff and the school's commitment to the 'Critical Skills Programme', pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Learning is also supported well by planned and sensitively led daily sessions called 'Check Ins', where pupils are encouraged to express and explain their feelings and concerns.
97. Policies are up to date and are regularly reviewed, including those for sex and relationships and drugs education. The subject leader is enthusiastic, well-informed, and innovative and is

keen that her subject should continue to develop. However, she does not have the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in other teachers' lessons.

98. The co-ordinator has successfully raised the profile of personal, social and health education throughout the school and linked it to several other subjects, for example, religious education and also science, where safety aspects are regularly reinforced. Numerous visits and visitors are successful in helping pupils to be aware that they are part of, and play a part in a wider community. This is very well illustrated by the School's Council, representatives of which meet with other members from within the Education Action Zone and by how older pupils are encouraged to care for and supervise younger pupils, for example at lunchtimes.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
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	5
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	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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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