INSPECTION REPORT

MADRESFIELD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Madresfield, Malvern

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116898

Acting Headteacher: Miss S Davies

Lead inspector: Mrs J Moore

Dates of inspection: 7th – 8th June 2004

Inspection number: 256816

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	105
School address:	40 Madresfield Village Madresfield Malvern
Postcode:	Worcestershire WR13 5AA
Telephone number: Fax number:	01684 573620
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R F Godsall
Date of previous inspection:	15 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Madresfield Church of England Primary School is smaller than other primary schools. It is situated in the village of Madresfield, near Malvern. There are 105 pupils on roll, aged between four and eleven. Almost all pupils are white British and there are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, all of whom speak English fluently. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds and their skills and understanding are broadly average when they start school. Very few pupils move into and out of the school during the academic year. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Pupils' specific needs are mostly moderate learning difficulties and there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school was granted a Schools Achievement Award in 2002 for raising academic standards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8710	Julie Moore	Lead inspector	Science
			Music
			Physical education
1329	Kevern Oliver	Lay inspector	
22805	Jo Greer	Team inspector	Foundation Stage
			Mathematics
			Art and design
			Geography
			History
28686	Liz Walker	Team inspector	Special educational needs
			English
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10204	David Vincent	Team Inspector	Information and communication technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Madresfield Church of England Primary School provides an **effective** education for its pupils, giving good value for money. The acting headteacher's leadership and management are good. Teamwork is effective, and everyone is committed to doing well. Difficulties created by long-term unplanned absences have been overcome successfully. Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good because they are well taught.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English and above average in science.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- The acting headteacher provides a clear steer to the school.
- Information and communication technology is at an early stage in supporting learning across the board. Standards are not high enough.
- The level of challenge and development of problem solving and investigation skills in mathematics are not effective enough, especially in the juniors¹.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils' skills are developed well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Subject leaders do not have a wide enough role in managing their subjects.
- The reception children receive a very good start to their education.

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in 1998. The curriculum is planned well and there are very good systems in place for assessing how well the pupils are doing. The accommodation has improved significantly and is of good quality.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the		similar schools		
end of Year 6, compared with:	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	В	С	А	A
Mathematics	С	С	С	E
Science	А	A*	А	А

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

As the above table shows, standards in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in mathematics last year were not as high as those in English and science. Standards were more evenly matched in the Year 2 national tests and were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This year, standards are well above average in English, above average in science and average in mathematics. They are below average in ICT. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average overall.

The achievement of pupils is generally **good**, although the current good achievement in ICT has not been in place long enough to be reflected in higher standards. The reception children start school with average skills and understanding. They learn well and many children will exceed their targets² by the end of the reception year. Overall, pupils build skills and knowledge well in Years 1 to 6, and this includes those pupils with special educational needs. However, pupils' overall achievement is

¹ Juniors are Years 3 to 6. Infants are Years 1 and 2. Reception is known as the Foundation Stage.

² These are known as the Early Learning Goals.

satisfactory in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. There is excellent provision for sports and very good provision for the arts, which is reflected, for example, in the very good quality of work in music.

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**. They enjoy working, they try hard and their behaviour is good. The positive ethos provides a strong starting point that enables pupils' personal development to grow and develop successfully. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **good**, as is pupils' learning. There is some very good teaching in the Foundation Stage, and this enables the children to make a very good start to their education. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the quality of education, especially in English. However, the lack of such support in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is contributing to the lower standards in the subject by the age of eleven. A small minority of lessons were too long for the older pupils, especially in mathematics. This held back pupils' progress as they were not sufficiently challenged. Assessment is used very well to challenge and extend pupils throughout the school. They have individual targets that give them a clear steer about what needs to be done to improve. Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well.

The curriculum is good. The wide range of extra-curricular activities add an additional dimension to the broad and balanced curriculum that the school offers.

The school takes good care of its pupils and procedures to ensure their health, welfare and guidance are effective. The entrance to the car park is narrow and poorly sited, and vehicles and pupils share this access, which is a hazard. The school has forged very good partnerships with parents, and there are very good links with the community and local schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the acting headteacher is **good** and the school is managed **well**. The acting headteacher takes a clear lead in driving forward improvements. Major staff changes, and their impact on finances, have been managed effectively. Governance is good and the governors support the school effectively. They are confident to challenge decisions. Subject leadership is due for review when the new headteacher takes up her post, and this is an area for development. The school fulfils its statutory obligations.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are unanimous in identifying the small size of the school, along with its ethos, good quality education and above average standards, as its main strengths. The pupils think that learning is fun and enjoyable. Overall, inspectors agree with these views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in ICT across the school and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure the level of challenge for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is consistent, especially in mathematics.
- Develop the role of the subject leaders so that they have greater input into checking how well their subjects are taught and learnt.
- Take steps to eliminate the safety hazard posed by the constricted and ill-sited access to the car park.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well above average throughout the school.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve highly.
- Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils have limited skills when solving problems in mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, like their classmates.

Commentary

1. The above average standards that were achieved at the last inspection have been maintained, with good improvement in English. Mathematics standards dipped over previous years because of staffing difficulties. The situation has stabilised and pupils are now back on track to improve on last year's performance in mathematics, with a minority of pupils reaching higher levels. Overall, standards in mathematics are average. National test results are consistently very high for the Year 2 pupils, and they are in the highest five per cent in the country. There has been a greater variation for the Year 6 pupils. The staffing changes in recent times have created some inconsistencies in the rate of pupils' learning, however, the current group is achieving well. When compared to similar schools, standards are very high for the Year 2 pupils, well above average in English and science for the Year 6 pupils and well below average in mathematics. Year 2 pupils have made good gains in their attainment over time. Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory gains.

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.8 (26.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (27.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.2 (31.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 2. Assessment procedures are used very well to track pupils' progress and their achievement and to set targets for improvement. This means that pupils of all capabilities progress at a good rate. The only exception to this is in mathematics, where not enough has been done to improve pupils' problem solving skills. Standards could be higher. Pupils also need to make more use of their numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects.
- 3. A significant proportion of pupils achieve the higher levels in national tests, except in mathematics and this was reflected in the work seen. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils use their literacy skills very well to support work in other subjects such as history and science. Many of them read fluently, with very good levels of understanding of the ways in which authors develop different characters, as well as developing the plot. In science, pupils are knowledgeable when planning their investigations, especially when setting up a fair test. Numeracy skills are used well in science, especially the use of data to construct graphs.

- 4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and their achievement is good. There is early recognition of pupils' needs and concerns, which are carefully monitored and reviewed at frequent intervals. The good use of support in the classrooms focuses on the pupils who have needs and this good support enables them to achieve well. Tasks are well planned, particularly in numeracy and literacy, so that pupils are able to work within a larger group at their individual level. No-one is left out.
- 5. Information and communication technology was a subject that required most improvement at the last inspection. The subject has moved forward significantly, with many new and successful developments. Pupils' achievement is good, but, as yet, these improvements have had insufficient time to be reflected in higher standards throughout the school. Currently, standards are unsatisfactory. Religious education was not inspected as this is the responsibility of the Church authorities. The other subjects of the curriculum were sampled on this inspection and it was not possible to make any judgements about standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **very good**. Their attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils really like coming to their school and enjoy every aspect of school life. They are proud of their academic and sporting achievements.
- Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. As a result they achieve well and make good progress.
- A minority of Year 6 pupils have negative attitudes to learning. Their behaviour has a disruptive effect on others' learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good with the caring, community ethos underpinning every aspect of school life.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to explore and experience cultures other than their own.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.

- 6. Madresfield's pupils are really proud of their school. They feel that it is a good place in which they are well looked after and are able to learn and play with their friends. They are confident and the majority are polite to everyone. They like and trust the adults who work with them and welcome visitors into their school.
- 7. Overall the behaviour in and around the school is good. As a result the majority of lessons run smoothly. Pupils and teachers are able to concentrate on learning and teaching. Pupils respond very positively to challenges and their teachers' expectations of them. They enjoy learning and use their initiatives to solve problems and find things out. This overall very positive picture is spoilt by problems with some Year 6 pupils who have, until recently, not been sufficiently challenged. They sometimes misbehave to the point where others' learning is disrupted. Teachers are well aware of this problem and are working hard to solve it. Pupils know what to do if anyone is unkind or upset. They confirm that there is very little bullying and that when problems do arise they are quickly sorted out.
- 8. Pupils with special educational needs display similar positive and good attitudes as other pupils to their work. They work happily alongside other pupils and where extra support is needed this is delivered sensitively.
- 9. The school's caring ethos is very obvious in the way that older pupils keep a kindly eye on younger ones. Everyone contributes to the school by helping teachers to prepare for lessons and

running errands. Playtimes are happy as pupils of all ages join in a wide variety of energetic and quieter games. Some rough play was seen during the inspection but it was quickly and properly dealt with by the supervisory team.

- 10. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the very good range of clubs, out of school activities and visits which the school provides. They are proud of their successes in sporting competitions and musical events.
- 11. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. They are keen to contribute to their community and thrive on responsibility. In comparison pupils' cultural development is less well advanced, and is satisfactory, because they have limited opportunities to explore cultural traditions other than their own.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	School data	0
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 is **good.**

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. The quality and use of assessment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned and tasks are pitched at the right level.
- Teaching and learning are very good in the reception class.
- The majority of lessons move forward at a good pace and no time is wasted.
- There are very good systems for checking out how well the pupils are achieving.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not consistently challenged by their activities.
- Information and communication technology is not used enough to support pupils' learning across the board.
- Teaching assistants give good support, but their limited support in mathematics is a factor that contributes to lower standards.
- The quality of marking is very good.

Commentary

12. The good teaching that was evident at the previous inspection has been maintained. The quality of assessment has improved significantly and is now very good. Planning has also improved, and all lessons now have specific objectives that identify what the pupils are going to learn in a particular lesson.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactor y	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	8	4	0	0	0

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

- 13. Children have a very good start to their education when they join the reception class. This aspect of the school's work was not especially strong at the time of the previous inspection and there have been significant improvements. Teaching is very good. Tasks are challenging for the children, they hold their attention successfully, making sure that children enjoy learning. Children's achievements are assessed right from the time they start school. This enables staff to identify any gaps in learning so they are well placed to provide suitable activities that help the children to progress. Boys and girls with special educational needs receive the right kind of support that enables them to achieve well, like their classmates. There is a good balance between those activities initiated by the children themselves and those directed by the teacher. This makes the children's learning a meaningful experience. Very good use is made of all the accommodation, both indoors and outdoors, to promote a very effective learning environment for the children.
- 14. Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6. Where it is strongest the pupils build on their existing knowledge, as in a Year 3/4 English lesson where they were obtaining information about apartheid in South Africa. Pupils successfully drew on their existing knowledge to find out more information from their texts, demonstrating a growing empathy for the people who were experiencing such injustice in their daily lives. In this lesson boys and girls of all capabilities made good gains in their learning.
- 15. In the lessons where teaching was satisfactory, mostly in the juniors, a number of pupils lacked the motivation to try hard and to succeed. When this happened their learning slowed, despite their teacher's best efforts to motivate them. On occasions, the higher attaining pupils in mathematics had to spend too long working through tasks that were at the same level as other pupils, and this did not leave enough time for them to be really challenged. This class have experienced disruption because of long-term absence. These issues have been dealt with successfully and learning is moving forward at a good pace for the vast majority of pupils.
- 16. A real strength to the teaching is the very good systems that are in place to track pupils' progress and achievement. Teachers make very good use of individual targets to move learning forward. Pupils know what they are expected to achieve and this drives learning forward at a good pace. The quality of marking is very good. It drives up standards very well, as pupils are clear about what they have to do in order to improve the standard and quality of their work. Teaching assistants play a key role in promoting learning, which they do well. However, financial constraints mean that little support is available for mathematics and this is one of the reasons that standards are lower in this subject. Throughout the school, homework is used well to support pupils' learning in class, to reinforce or extend current learning.
- 17. The very good assessment processes that are in place throughout the school are inclusive of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This group is encouraged to do their best and to achieve well through the very good use of individual targets. These are carefully monitored at frequent intervals so that staff have accurate information about how well the pupils are doing. Gaps are speedily identified and tackled well. The good standard of marking also enables these pupils to engage in their own learning successfully.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. There is excellent provision for sports and very good provision for the arts which is reflected in the very good quality of work in music.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for the reception class is very good.
- The limitations of the school's ICT resources restrict the development of pupils' skills and opportunities for independent learning.
- The internal accommodation has improved significantly since the time of the last report and is now good.
- There is excellent provision for a comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities, visits and events.
- Literacy skills are well developed in other subjects.

- 18. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good. The classroom and outdoor areas are carefully set up to make all learning a real and relevant experience. All activities are carefully thought through so that all the areas of learning have clear links with each other.
- 19. Teachers' planning is good; there is considerable detail in short-term plans which are repeated both in mid-term and individual lesson plans. The activities are carefully matched to pupils' needs in most lessons, and this helps learning to be productive for pupils of all capabilities. This is especially so in literacy and science lessons. There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils with special educational needs follow an appropriate curriculum that is well matched to their needs. Everyone is fully included in every aspect of the curriculum at Madresfield, no-one is left out.
- 20. Teaching assistants are well trained and directed to support teaching effectively in both the infant and junior classes. The lack of a trained support assistant in reception is met in part by the good support provided by voluntary parent helpers. Limited support for mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is one of the reasons that standards are not so high.
- 21. The additional classrooms and computer suite are welcome additions to the building since the time of the last report. Interesting and innovative use of the classroom for the reception class is extended into the good outdoor provision. The accommodation is good. The school presents a lively stimulating environment for the pupils, their work is well displayed and they are enthusiastic about sharing it with others.
- 22. The school is working hard to ensure that the curriculum for ICT develops in line with the resources the school has now made available in the new suite. Progress has been hindered by some technical difficulties but these are now in the process of being resolved so that the school can move forward in this area.
- 23. The curriculum is enriched very well by an excellent range of visits to places linked to the pupils' topic work. The interest the visits generate, whether locally or further afield, is used very well and develops the particular skills to good effect. Pupils record these experiences in a variety of interesting ways. The recent visit of an author produced some exciting and interesting prose and poetry; in addition a range of book covers to illustrate their favourite books and characters assisted both pupils' design and literacy skills. There is excellent provision for sporting activities and very good provision for the arts, all of which enhance the quality of education that the school provides. Pupils are well prepared for the later stages of their education. The number of clubs and other interests pupils can access at lunchtime and after school is very good. The wide range

of visitors to the school provides pupils with an excellent range of experiences and activities to generate their interest in learning across the whole curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school has **good** arrangements for looking after pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. Its monitoring of pupils' achievements and personal development is **good**. There are **good** arrangements for involving pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good child protection procedures and good arrangements for ensuring everyone's health and safety.
- The shared vehicle/pedestrian use of the single entrance to the school's premises is a high risk hazard which threatens pupils' safety at the beginning and the end of the school day.
- Systems for tracking pupils' progress and achievements are good and enable teachers to plan well.
- The school pays great attention to pupils' pastoral needs.
- There is no school council and therefore no formal and routine means of collecting all pupils' ideas on how to make the school a better place for them to learn and play.

Commentary

- 24. The school provides pupils with a very happy and caring environment which helps them to learn and mature. The acting headteacher is in charge of the very good child protection arrangements which include links with all the relevant local agencies and up to date training for all staff. Changes in procedures, arising from very new requirements, are well under way.
- 25. Health and safety arrangements are good overall but there are problems arising from the shared vehicle/pedestrian access to the premises. The school is well aware of the risk which this poses to pupils' safety and is working with the local community and authorities to solve the problem. There are regular safety inspections of the whole site. A good risk assessment system, which covers both trips and in-school activities, is in place. First aid provision is very good because a number of staff has up-to-date training. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day. Their health and general well-being is promoted through the personal, social and health education programme.
- 26. All members of staff know their pupils and their families well. They are sensitive to their pupils' needs and provide good support and guidance. They deal sensitively with pupils' problems. Formal and informal arrangements for tracking pupils' progress are good and therefore help teachers decide what they need to do next in order to help individuals and groups of pupils learn. Pupils who have special educational needs are monitored closely and given the support they need in order to make good progress.
- 27. The school values pupils' ideas and the contribution which they make to school life. It relies on the good day-to-day relationships between staff and pupils and feedback from Year 6's monitors to gather information and ideas. The system works because pupils feel valued but there is no formal elected school council to represent everyone's ideas and concerns.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, other schools and the community are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very well informed about the school and their children's standards and progress.
- Parents are very actively involved in the life and work of the school and have a major, positive impact on the quality of their children's learning.
- The school's very good links with the local community enrich the curriculum.
- Pupils' education benefits from the high quality and wide range of the school's links with local schools and colleges.

Commentary

- 28. Parents are impressed and delighted with the ways that the school teaches their children and helps them to grow up. They are kept very well informed about the school through the prospectus, curriculum leaflets and weekly newsletters. They hear about their children's progress through consultation evenings and a very good end of year report. Parents of children who have special educational needs are kept well informed and are closely involved in planning the way that the school tackles their children's problems.
- 29. The school has an "open door" and relationships between parents and all the staff are excellent. There are plenty of informal opportunities, such as the beginning and end of the day, to deal with worries and issues as and when they arise. Parents make an excellent contribution to school life and their children's education. Their ideas and views are really valued and, where appropriate, acted upon. Virtually all encourage their children to work hard and do their homework. An impressively large number of volunteers regularly helps in lessons and clubs and helps to look after pupils on school trips. Major celebrations, such as the Christmas pantomime, are a complete sell-out. There is a very active parents' association which organises social events and raises large sums of money for the school.
- 30. The church, charities and a wide range of cultural and sporting activities enrich the pupils' education because they provide opportunities for them both to benefit and contribute to the local and wider communities. The school organises and hosts sporting competitions for small schools and is a leading member of the local sports association.
- 31. The very good links with colleges and schools have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers collaborate with their high school colleagues and tutors from University College Worcester. Senior staff are active members of the various local schools' networks. Good liaison with high schools ensures that Year 6 pupils are ready for transfer. Trainees, both teachers and support staff, and also work experience students are a regular and welcome feature of school life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The acting headteacher provides **good** leadership. The role of the subject leaders is ready for further development when the new headteacher takes up her post. The school is managed well and the governance is **good**. The financial administration of the school is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher and her team are effective in their drive to improve standards and the quality of education at Madresfield.
- There is a clear vision of the way forward and teamwork is good.
- Governors play an important role in shaping policies and make a significant contribution to its ethos and success.

- Criteria by which the effectiveness and success of spending decisions are judged are formulated but not always sufficiently precise.
- There is a very good level of awareness of the longer-term implications of spending decisions.
- The school has dealt extremely diligently with the financial problems associated with recent longterm absence of staff.

- 32. The acting headteacher is a good leader. She has the ability to motivate and inspire staff so that everyone is willing to do their best for the school. Staff are involved in making decisions about the way forward, making sure that everyone shares in the process of school development. Staff feel committed and valued, and pupils are at the centre of the drive for pushing up standards. Pupils are well supported, they try hard and they want to learn. Parents are very supportive of the school and they are pleased about their children's learning and what the school provides for their children.
- 33. Management is good. The school has effective procedures for all aspects of its work. Arrangements for performance management are in place, new staff are supported very well and the school takes good care of its staff and pupils. There are very good systems for assessing how well the pupils are doing. Standards, teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated so that gaps are identified straight away and can be tackled. Strengths and weaknesses are known to everyone, and staff and governors are fully involved in putting initiatives in place to address the issues that have arisen as a result of monitoring. The main area for development is to sharpen up the roles and responsibilities of the subject leaders in moving their subjects forward.
- 34. The governance of the school is good. Governors are fully involved in strategic planning and play an important role in determining the ethos and direction of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors question constructively whilst seeking the clarification and information they require to ensure that decisions are fully justified and are based on sound financial and curricular guidance. Governors keep in close touch with the school through regular visits and reports from senior staff. There are individual governors associated with literacy and numeracy as well as for special educational needs provision. Governors work with the school to a very good degree and bring an informed and constructive approach to their deliberations.
- 35. There is a good understanding of the needs of all pupils with special educational needs by teachers and support assistants. They are well directed through teachers' planning and the use of well structured programmes which appeal to these pupils. Their progress is monitored and reviewed by the schools co-ordinator for special educational needs, who is aware of their individual progress. Discussions with practitioners are well managed; the regular liaison with other agencies and parents enables the correct support is given to individual pupils.
- 36. The school undertakes thoughtful analysis of the assessment data available to it to decide priorities with good monitoring to ensure that decided priorities are properly implemented and shortcomings constructively addressed. The School Development Plan includes details of the financial implications of each agreed priority. Measures for evaluating the cost effectiveness of major spending decisions are not always sufficiently precise. The significant investment in laptop computers, for example, was not associated with sharply-defined, objective measures by which the impact of this initiative could be judged.
- 37. Governors and senior staff demonstrate very good awareness of the financial implications of their decisions. Budgets are set carefully and longer-term trends and implications considered. Governors have dealt thoughtfully and prudently with the serious funding issues that have arisen through the exceptional financial implications resulting from the recent long-term illness of staff. They have sought to minimise the impact upon educational provision and governors continue to work assiduously as they seek to put the budget back on an even keel. Day-to-day financial

administration is very good. The school secretary exercises her responsibilities efficiently and with considerable diligence. Additional money allocated to the school for specific purposes is properly directed. Grants to improve provision for ICT and funding to improve standards exemplify such application.

Income and expenditur	e (£)	Balances (£)	
Total income	297,178.54	Balance from previous year	10290
Total expenditure	302,177.28	Balance carried forward to the next	-3422
Expenditure per pupil	2,933.76		

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

38. Governors are keenly aware of the need to ensure that the money allocated to the school is spent carefully and consult widely as part of this process, although they are mindful that the cheapest price does not always represent the best value. The school is very good at constantly challenging itself to provide better value.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the foundation stage is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good so children make very good progress.
- Children's achievement is good.
- Almost all children achieve the early learning goals by the end of reception year³ and many exceed them.
- There is no classroom assistant for the reception class.

Commentary

- 39. All children join the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. When they join the reception class their skills and understanding are broadly average for their age. The accommodation, whilst not large, is well equipped and very well organised so that it is welcoming and stimulating for children. The recently developed outdoor area provides attractive hard and grassed surfaces with space for wheeled toys and opportunities for studying plants and 'minibeasts'. It is used well as an outdoor classroom when the weather permits. There is no covered area outdoors, so its use is limited during inclement weather and mornings on very sunny days. There is good tree shade in the afternoons. Children have access to the hall, large playground and field for physical development.
- 40. Teaching is very good so children learn effectively through topics, which are planned to develop skills in the six areas of learning in an integrated way. Their achievement is good. Children are assessed carefully through ongoing informal observation, so that tasks are planned well to match their individual stage of development in each area. Students on work experience and volunteer parents are used well to supervise small groups of children engaged in specific activities under the direction of the teacher.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop their independence right away. They have many opportunities to plan their activities and to co-operate with each other.
- Very good teaching ensures that interesting activities promote children's personal, social and emotional development very well.

Commentary

41. The very good induction arrangements ensure that the teacher is familiar with what children know and can do when they first begin school. Children enjoy coming to school. They are inquisitive and keen to learn and engage eagerly in all the opportunities provided for them. Children make very good progress in developing independence and self-confidence. They settle into school and quickly learn the routines, how to share and take turns. They listen well to the teacher and other adults. Most are eager to contribute their own ideas and answer questions.

³ The reception year is known as the Foundation Stage.

Children behave very well. They take care of their own hygiene needs. Children concentrate well and persevere with tasks for a good length of time. Children play very well together, co-operating on joint activities, such as creating group pictures. They play well even when not directly supervised, such as a small group engaged in role play in the outdoor 'café'. Children take very good care of materials and equipment, using them properly. They tidy away willingly and quickly.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is very good because they are taught very well.
- Very good systems for tracking how well the children are doing mean that any gaps in learning are speedily identified and tackled.

Commentary

- 42. Children begin reception with good speaking skills. Many children have a good vocabulary, speak clearly and use extended phrases and sentences to talk about themselves and their experiences. There are very good opportunities to extend these speaking skills through role play and when talking about the activities they are engaged in. Children develop good listening skills through learning to take turns in whole class discussions, small group work and through listening to stories. Care is taken to ensure that shy and quiet children have equal opportunities to talk to adults and other children during discussions.
- 43. Children are introduced to a wide range of story and information books to support their topics. Care is taken when reading stories to ensure that children understand new words, such as 'drought' in a story from another country. Children are introduced to phonics as part of learning to read and write. They make very good progress. Almost all children are reading simple books by the end of reception. About a third read fluently, recall what they have read and use the picture and phonic clues to decode unfamiliar words. Many of these children also begin to write simple sentences unaided. They leave spaces between individual words and form most letters correctly. Spelling is phonically reasonable.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Tasks are exciting and challenging making sure that children want to learn.
- Teaching is very good, as is achievement.

Commentary

44. Oral work is planned imaginatively so children enjoy playing games with numbers when learning to recognise and order numbers to 20. They enjoy counting forwards and backwards and recognising the missing number. Symmetry is introduced through learning about the life-cycle of a butterfly. Children enjoy cutting and sticking shapes to decorate a butterfly outline. They are very precise in checking that the finished pattern is exactly symmetrical and enjoy saying the word 'symmetry'. Children also use the computer to create other symmetrical patterns. Teaching is well planned to cover all aspects of number, pattern, size, shape and comparison. Children make very good progress in all aspects of mathematics so that almost all achieve the early learning goals and many exceed them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for developing knowledge and understanding of the world is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

• Children have a very good range of first hand experiences, enabling their learning to be meaningful.

Commentary

45. Teacher's planning and photographic records show that children are introduced to a very wide range of topics. Many children have enjoyed good experiences of the world beyond their homes before starting school. Staff build effectively on these experiences by taking children on further visits, such as to a local environmental centre, inviting visitors into school, such as medical professionals and providing good resources for children to explore the world through first-hand experiences. Children observe and record growing plants from seed. They use magnifiers to examine natural objects in detail. They learn to manipulate computer programs independently.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

46. No teaching was seen in this area of learning during the inspection so a secure judgement cannot be made. Children have good opportunities to develop fine motor schools through using scissors, glue and malleable materials. They are encouraged to hold pencils and other markers correctly. There is a good supply of jigsaws and construction materials to encourage good manipulative control. Children have access to large equipment in the hall and outdoors to develop climbing, balancing and jumping.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

47. No teaching was seen in this area of learning during the inspection so no judgement can be made. Work displayed in the classroom and the hall shows that children have good opportunities to explore different media to produce artwork, such as handprint reproductions of Van Gogh's sunflowers. Children have regular opportunities for developing their imagination through role play in different settings such as the café and a vet's surgery.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards are well above average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Very good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils are set clear targets in order to improve their work.

- 48. The overall attainment of pupils is very good. At the time of the last inspection pupils' standards in English were judged to be above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are now well above the national average at the end of both these years. Pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve well.
- 49. The quality of teaching is good; lessons are well planned and are carefully focused on pupils' needs. Teachers use a good variety of strategies to promote learning and engage pupils in lively discussions which promote their speaking and listening skills to good effect. Pupils listen carefully to each other and contribute their thoughts and ideas using an extensive vocabulary to present their views. There is a lack of urgency on the part of some pupils to contribute but teachers are aware and work hard to ensure that pupils take a full and active role in the lesson. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils reflect the emotions and feelings of a refugee South African family through role playing the principle characters; they responded very thoughtfully to the well phrased questions about how they felt on their hazardous journey. The pupils used the knowledge well to write their own diary of the experience providing a detailed and emotional account of the events.
- 50. Pupils enjoy using and reading books and researching information from the well stocked and developing library. Reading is taught well; guided reading on a very regular basis is supported effectively by the teaching assistants. Pupils enjoy sharing their books both at home and school with an adult and they make very good progress. Phonic skills are taught well; pupils are applying their knowledge well to both their reading and spelling tasks. Research skills are developed carefully and used skilfully as pupils extend their understanding when they apply their knowledge to other areas of the curriculum. The good use of well planned worksheets consolidates the pupils' learning in some lessons, but staff need to be aware that too great a reliance on worksheets limits the opportunities for pupils to use their own writing to edit and redraft their work.
- 51. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress; the very good use of additional literacy work within small groups ensures these pupils gain confidence and use their skills carefully and extend their understanding through well managed discussions.
- 52. Pupils present their work well. Handwriting is taught effectively throughout the school and careful attention is given to letter formation and the use of writing tools for the youngest pupils. An interesting and varied range of spelling techniques, together with the confident use of dictionaries and spelling logs, ensures that pupils use their phonic and spelling knowledge to good effect in all their writing projects as they progress through the school. The very good use of individual and group targets ensures pupils are aware of what they need to achieve. Pupils' work is marked very methodically and is closely related to the target so that pupils recognise the progress they are making.

- 53. Pupils enjoy writing and using their skills to produce good quality pieces of prose and poetry. In a history assignment one pupil evokes the emotions of a Tudor ship boy using a good range of styles by writing a diary so that both English and historical skills are extended and developed well. 'Frances and I were sneaking about the ship.....it's my birthday tomorrow and no one knows only me, Frances might know!' The well presented work enhances the quality of the empathetic writing to evoke the lonely and hard life of a Tudor sailor boy.
- 54. Teachers have set targets for the children on how they can improve their writing. There are clear references to the targets throughout the lessons and pupils' work is marked carefully and effectively so that pupils are very aware of what they need to do in order to improve their work.
- 55. The majority of pupils respond very well and work hard. On some occasions the pace of lessons slows because pupils fail to apply themselves speedily to the task in hand. More able pupils are challenged very well to extend their ideas in discussions, writing tasks are extended so that pupils have the opportunity to develop further their ideas and develop their skills. In some lessons these pupils lack the concentration to complete the task and this negates the opportunity to make sufficient progress.
- 56. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The recent changes in the school's leadership have meant additional responsibilities for some staff but nevertheless the enthusiasm and clear co-operation between all staff means the curriculum is carefully planned and pupils are presented with a well structured approach to the subject. Lessons are monitored and the results contribute to developing strategies to improve teaching and learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend and use their reading and writing skills in other subjects. For example, pupils use their writing skills in subjects like history, science and ICT to good effect.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is very good in Years 1 and 2; it is sound in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is very good and leads to high standards by the end of Year 2.
- Standards are average at the end of Year 6 but not enough Year 6 pupils attain level 5.
- There are missed opportunities for using mathematics as a tool to solve problems or to extend pupils' numerical skills in other subjects.

Commentary

58. Standards are high in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are keen to learn and eager to work hard because teaching is very good. Lessons are brisk so that pupils' concentration is held well. Imaginative activities are planned so pupils are motivated to pay attention; they enjoy the lessons. The teacher carefully targets questions to individual pupils to ensure that each understands the concept being taught. This technique also enables her to assess if any pupil is having difficulty so that she can support that pupil and ensure that he or she does not lose confidence in mathematics. Work is carefully matched to individual pupil's ability, for example, two pupils used a computer program to reinforce learning about place value for two-digit numbers, while two very able pupils were given challenging tasks appropriate to their level of understanding. The classroom assistant and parent voluntary help are having a positive impact on learning.

- 59. Standards are average in Years 3 to 6. There has been a period of staffing instability in recent years, which has affected the continuity of teaching for older pupils and this has curtailed their progress in mathematics. Although almost all pupils attained the expected level 4 by the end of Year 6, too few achieved the higher level 5. There has not been enough planned challenge in mathematics for the higher attaining pupils.
- 60. Teaching in the junior classes is now good. It is well planned to meet the needs of the different ability groups within each year group. Teachers are working hard to build pupils' confidence in mathematics. The school has very recently adopted a new published scheme for use in the junior classes. As teachers become more familiar with it, it will provide good continuity from the infant work. The indications from the school's good assessment and monitoring systems are that standards are improving and more pupils are on target to achieve the higher level 5.
- 61. There is no classroom support for mathematics in the junior classes. This is having a detrimental effect on teachers' ability to support pupils who are experiencing difficulty or to challenge the higher attaining pupils as well as they might, especially in these mixed age classes. However, standards are pushing upwards, with some pupils reaching higher levels than last year. Leadership in the subject is being maintained temporarily pending the appointment of a new member of staff.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. The planned programme of work has not included sufficient opportunity for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to problem solving activities or to use it as a tool in other subjects, especially geography and design and technology. However, some good examples were seen in science, especially the use of data to construct a range of graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching is good and individual targets help to move pupils' learning forward at a good pace.
- The curriculum is well covered and there is a strong focus on science investigations.
- ICT is not used enough to support pupils' learning in science.

- 63. The above average standards reached at the previous inspection have been maintained throughout the school. What has improved is the quality of teachers' planning and assessment, which is now good. The next stage is to make greater use of ICT to support learning across the board. The school has, as a priority, focused on improving the quality of science investigations. This has improved pupils' knowledge and understanding in all aspects of their work in science. Standards are above average and achievement is good.
- 64. Lessons are stimulating and challenging, and pupils are encouraged to plan and organise aspects of their work. In one lesson, in a mixed-age Year 1 and 2 class, the pupils were starting a new topic on the variations and differences between plants and animals. The teacher's questions speedily enabled the pupils to draw on their earlier learning, and they successfully outlined the main features of plants and animals. Pupils of all capabilities followed this up in their investigation, with detailed comments and observations of snails, caterpillars and tadpoles. Higher attaining pupils structured their observations so that they looked at different ways of

animal movement, linking this to different habitats. Average and lower attaining pupils were not at this level but their learning was effective as they recorded their observations, identifying similarities and differences. Pupils made good use of their literacy and numeracy skills, and this moved everyone's learning forward at a good pace.

- 65. By Year 6, most pupils have a good knowledge of the science curriculum. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are working at the level normally expected for their age, very few are working below this level. Teachers have good systems for assessing how well pupils are doing, and this helps them to pitch work at the right levels. Pupils' work is well organised and presented. They take pride in producing work of quality, and they are adept at recording their findings. Improved use of ICT will enhance this further.
- 66. Teaching is good, and staff work as an effective team. Work is well marked, with clear guidance about what has to be done to improve. Pupils use their targets effectively to check how well they are doing. Teaching assistants give good support wherever possible, and this helps to move learning forward at a good pace.
- 67. The subject leader has a secure grasp of the subject, which is well led and managed. She provides good support for teachers and teaching assistants. Standards, achievement, teaching and learning are all monitored effectively, one of the main reasons that science is strong.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are below those found nationally.
- Achievement is currently good in Years 1 to 6.
- Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6.
- Pupils in all parts of the school have very good attitudes towards ICT.
- A co-ordinator for the subject is shortly to take up her post. Previous leadership has been good.
- A significant investment in resources, teacher training and procedures, is beginning to make a good impact upon standards.
- The school has made a good response to the shortcomings identified in the previous Ofsted report.

- 68. Standards in ICT towards the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. Pupils in Year 2 have satisfactory levels of proficiency in word processing and basic keyboard skills. The ability to save and retrieve information, with support, is sound and pupils can use 'painting' programs with appropriate skill. Pupils know how to give sequential instructions; for example, in order to control programmable devices. Other aspects of the subject are less secure. Their ability to enter and present data is somewhat limited and they have only cursory understanding of how information technology is used in the home and their environment.
- 69. Year 6 pupils' overall competence in the skills required by the National Curriculum remains below the average. Word processing skills are extended and most pupils reach satisfactory levels of competence. They can save and retrieve stored information independently. The majority are able to combine text and pictures to the expected level and can print the finished product. Achievement in other areas of the subject is less assured. Not all pupils have secure knowledge of how to establish, test, modify and store sequences of instructions to control on-screen events or have the expected knowledge in entering, sorting and classifying data and presenting the findings by means of a range of graphical representations. Pupils have little experience of

monitoring external events such as temperature and sound. Their awareness of the application of information and communication technology outside the school is somewhat limited. The school has recently installed internet access and most pupils can confidently log on and use the search facility.

- 70. Achievement is currently good in lessons. Skills and knowledge are built methodically and incrementally as pupils move through the school. The full impact is not fully reflected in standards because recent improvements have yet to work through a full cycle.
- 71. The available evidence indicates teaching is good throughout the school, although this has yet to impact fully upon standards. Teachers now have enhanced expertise, satisfactory resources and are able to work in a suitably designed computer suite. Lessons contain material which interests and challenges pupils. The pace of lessons observed was purposeful and had the effect of stimulating the pupils. There is good balance between the direct, whole-class teaching of skills and opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their knowledge by working on computers. These qualities were exemplified in a Year 2 lesson in which pupils were shown how to change font, size and colour to text and to apply bullet points and were then immediately able to apply this knowledge to their own project.
- 72. Pupils display very good attitudes. They behave sensibly and sustain concentration over time. Pupils strive to achieve the desired outcome and interact well with each other and with staff. They clearly enjoy their work in relation to ICT, but the earlier lack of resources means that these positive attitudes are only now being fully harnessed.
- 73. A subject leader is shortly to take up her post. Previous leadership has been good with a twoyear plan of action sharply focused upon improving provision. Good guidance drives the subject forward at a good pace and the many difficulties that the school has encountered in developing the subject have been overcome successfully. Given the time required for the recent improvements to take full effect, pupils might confidently be expected to achieve higher standards. Overall, despite severe restrictions, the school has made a good response to the issues raised in the previous report.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The use of ICT to support the work in other subjects is satisfactory. Word processing in English and the use of the Internet to research historical topics, such as Ancient Egypt, provide examples of how information and communication technology skills can be reinforced whilst also making an important contribution to learning across the curriculum. The school continues to augment the range of software to support other subjects and, as it becomes available, intends to provide broadband access in order to promote more efficient use of the Internet.

HUMANITIES

- 75. No lessons were observed during the inspection; therefore, it is not possible to make a judgement on the provision for history and geography. From a scrutiny of the available pupils' work and teachers' planning files, it would appear that the school meets National Curriculum requirements for each subject. History is well supported through a very varied programme of visits to relevant places of interest and visitors to the school. Geography includes visits and activities to support the study of places. There was some evidence of structured mapping skills development but this could be extended so that more opportunities to use related mathematical skills are provided.
- 76. Religious education was not inspected in this church school. It is to be inspected separately by the church authorities.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 77. Very few lessons were seen in these subjects, which were sampled in this inspection. On this evidence it is not possible to make a judgement about the school's provision.
- 78. From a scrutiny of the available pupils' art-work and teachers' planning files, it would appear that the school meets National Curriculum requirements for the subject. There are good links with other subjects, such as history and design and technology. Pupils experience an appropriate range of media. Art-work is displayed well to enhance the classrooms, hall and corridors thus celebrating pupils' achievements.
- 79. There is evidence of interesting and well-presented work in design and technology throughout the school. A good and interesting variety of projects based on national guidelines are presented as the pupils progress through the school. These are linked carefully with other subjects to extend pupils' skills and knowledge in science and geography. Pupils use their skills well and good progress is made in using a variety of design and making techniques by the end of Year 6. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic but insufficient time is given throughout the school for pupils to evaluate their product and modify their original design.
- 80. Pupils recalled well the basic skills of stitching and using tools to join materials together to make puppets, and how they use their scientific knowledge to construct a circuit in their design of a fairground ride. This demonstrates a good use of using design and technology to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. Skills are taught progressively, and extended through the enrichment programme when pupils make models at home for the Eisteddfod⁴.
- 81. Music is considered to be a strength of the school, and evidence suggest that it is. Pupils experience a rich musical curriculum in which creating and playing music has a crucial role, all of which impacts positively on standards across the board. Lesson planning indicates that pupils' skills are developed well, alongside the range of instrumental tuition that pupils enjoy. Every pupil is included and no-one is left out.
- 82. Like music, physical education is judged to be an essential part of the school's curriculum, having a high profile. The school plays an active role, with many pupils participating in interschool activities at various levels. Skills are developed well and pupils are adept at using and applying their physical education skills when working independently or as part of a team. Lessons are well planned and boys and girls take part in all activities.
- 83. In most of these subjects the subject leader's role is due to be reviewed following the appointment of a new headteacher. This will enable a coherent structure for subject leadership to be put in place, with all subjects being the permanent responsibility of a member of staff.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

- 84. It is not possible to make judgements on provision, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning as no lessons were observed during the inspection. The subject is in its early stages of implementation and recent staffing changes have limited progress in its development. Teaching and learning are not yet monitored to judge the effectiveness but there is an awareness of what needs to be achieved and plans are in place to ensure progress.
- 85. All pupils have a strong sense of what is right and wrong. Care and concern for others permeates the school ethos. Pupils share with and care for each other, older ones assisting younger pupils

⁴ A whole school experience that is devoted to the aesthetic, practical and creative curricula.

86. Personal, social, health education and citizenship is taught both discretely through such strategies as 'circle time' and integrally through daily practice and modelling of relevant issues. The curriculum modelled on national guidelines includes the curriculum for citizenship and addresses such issues as drug awareness and sex education, anti-smoking and water safety. The curriculum is supported by a range of visitors who contribute to the threads of which run throughout the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).