

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Caverswall, Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124331

Headteacher: Mr D Beardmore

Lead inspector: Mr P B McAlpine

Dates of inspection: 4-6 May 2004

Inspection number: 257937

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: 192

School address: School Lane  
Caverswall  
Stoke-on-Trent  
Staffordshire

Postcode: ST11 9EN

Telephone number: 01782 393118

Fax number: 01782 392248

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr John Harp

Date of previous inspection: 1 June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is about the same size as other primary schools. Currently, the school has 187 full-time pupils from Reception to Year 6 organised into seven classes, all of them single aged. A further five pupils attend a pre-Reception class part-time. These pupils are of Nursery age. The pupils come from a wide geographical area. The school is rurally located but very close to the Stoke conurbation. Very few pupils are eligible for a free school meal, about five per cent; even so the social and economic circumstances of the school community cover a broadly average range. Almost all of the pupils are from white British families. Two per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds, including Caribbean and black African, but the proportions are well below average and none speak English as an additional language. Only 10 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is much less than the majority of other schools, though three pupils have statements of special educational need and this is more than typically found in a school of this size. The significant learning difficulties include dyslexia; moderate learning; speech and language; and Turner's syndrome. The numbers with special educational needs have fallen since the previous inspection. Pupil mobility is low compared to other schools. Attainment on entry varies annually but is average overall. The turnover of teachers has been high over the past two years and is for reasons such as maternity leave, long-term absence through illness, and retirement.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21552	Mr P B McAlpine	Lead inspector	English Foundation Stage
11414	Mrs A Bennett	Lay inspector	
20007	Mr T Neat	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education
32608	Mr A Cook	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Geography History Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school with some very good features**. The achievement of the oldest pupils is high compared to their attainment on entry. Standards are above average. Pupils are interested in lessons and behave very well. Teaching and learning are good. The effective leadership of the headteacher has created a school with a very good ethos. The cost of educating each pupil is among the lowest in the country and so **value for money is very good**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- test results in Year 6 have been consistently in the top 25 per cent for several years;
- standards in reading are particularly high;
- pupils have very good attitudes to school, work hard and behave very well;
- the teaching in Years 5 and 6 is high quality but teaching in other year groups does not always meet the learning needs of all pupils;
- the arrangements for assessment are satisfactory overall but do not rigorously track the progress of pupils;
- the provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage to learn through physical activity outdoors is unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory overall. Test results have improved considerably since 1998. Teaching also has improved and high standards in other aspects have been sustained. Each of the issues for improvement identified at the previous inspection has been tackled effectively. A computer suite has been installed and standards in the subject have risen to average overall. Curricular planning is now satisfactory. Preparation of pupils for life in a multicultural society is satisfactory.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

The achievement of the oldest pupils is very good. Achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is generally good. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The overall standard on entry to school is average or lower, depending on the year, yet pupils in Year 6 regularly attain well above average results in the national tests. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in English and mathematics and average in science. This represents very good educational value added to the well below average standards they were attaining in 2000 when in Year 2. Current standards in Year 2 are average in reading, writing, and mathematics. Test results in English, mathematics and science have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Standards in all of the other subjects are broadly average and have improved considerably in information and communication technology compared to those attained at the time of the previous inspection. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. These pupils are mostly well supported by teaching assistants and generally make the progress of which they are capable in Years 3 to 6 but sometimes struggle with work that is too difficult in Years 1 and 2. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. **Pupils' attitudes, values, and other personal qualities are very good**. Attendance is well above average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The overall **quality of education is good**. The curriculum is good. Opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities and educational visits are very good. Teaching varies in quality through the school but is never less than satisfactory, is very good in Years 5 and 6, and is good overall. Learning is very good for all pupils in Years 5 and 6 and is satisfactory elsewhere, though the learning needs of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not consistently met because of limitations in the use of assessment. The teaching in the Foundation Stage seen during the inspection was good. Levels of care, including provision for pupils' health, safety, and welfare are good. Links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good**. The headteacher leads very effectively and has created a school with a very good ethos. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and his senior management team. Governance is satisfactory. All relevant statutory requirements are met, including those for racial equality and race relations. Management is satisfactory

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Both parents and pupils think very highly of the school. The school is popular.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve<sup>1</sup> are:

- ensure that the learning needs of all pupils Years 1 to 4 are met as effectively as they are in Years 5 and 6;
- develop effective systems for tracking the progress of all pupils and for diagnosing their learning needs;
- develop the outdoor provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage so that the curriculum for these pupils can be taught in full.

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<sup>1</sup> The school has already identified the need to track progress and improve the outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage as priorities for development.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

The achievement of the pupils in Years 6, the oldest, is very good. Achievement in Year 2 is good overall. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Test results in Year 6 have been high for three years and pupils do very well compared to their attainment on entry.
- Current standards in Year 6 are above average in English and mathematics and average in science.

#### Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to school varies annually. The majority of pupils enter the Reception year with typical attainment for their age and the overall standard in most years is average. However, the proportions with high or low attainment for their age vary widely from year to year and in some years the overall standard is below average. The standard of the present Reception class is average in each of the nationally agreed areas of learning. Their progress since admission is satisfactory and they are achieving broadly in line with their potential.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2 (16.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.1 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The achievement of pupils in Year 2 is good overall although there are a few exceptions. Current standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The attainment on entry of the present Year 2 cohort was below average overall and so most of them have done well since that time. Almost all pupils in Year 2 are achieving well in reading and science. The exceptions are in writing, where less able pupils have made only the minimum progress and could do better, and in mathematics, where some of the more able pupils are capable of higher attainment. Test results in Year 2 in 2003 were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. In 2003, about 90 per cent of the pupils attained or exceeded the nationally expected level and this was better than the majority of schools but fewer pupils exceeded expectations, particularly in mathematics, and this is why the results in Year 2 were not above average overall. In writing, although about 20 per cent exceeded expectations, which was better than many schools, about a third of the Year 2 cohort in 2003, double the average nationally, scored less well than the typical pupil elsewhere and only just managed to attain the expected level. This third of the pupils in writing, together with the more able pupils in Year 2 in mathematics, had not done as well in 2003 as predicted by their attainment on entry to the Reception year.
3. Since 2003, some teachers have changed but the issues in writing and mathematics in Year 2 remain because they are linked in part to broader curricular and assessment issues. Not enough use is made of assessment to check progress and diagnose learning needs and this is particularly affecting writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. In addition in writing, there is



an over-reliance on worksheets and exercises and not enough emphasis is placed on pupils composing and writing independently.

4. Compared to similar schools, test results over the past five years in Year 2 have been regularly less good and this shows some underachievement. The Reception year, Year 1 and Year 2 have seen a very high turnover of teachers. Recruitment has been successful but some teachers are new and still settling down. Even so, and despite the exceptions to achievement already noted, the test results in Year 2 have recently risen more quickly than the national trend, with improvements in all subjects but best in writing and reading. This reflects effective management by the headteacher, particularly through his recruitment strategies, which is helping to improve achievement and raise standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (30.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.0 (30.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.0 (31.6)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. The achievement of the pupils currently in Year 6 is very good though their overall standard is lower than their predecessors in 2003. The standard of the present Year 6 when they entered Year 3 in 2000 was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards they attained rose significantly between Year 3 and Year 6 and are currently above average. Almost all pupils now in Year 6 are working to their potential and have made the nationally expected progress over time, with almost a quarter exceeding expectations. Current standards in Year 5 are well above average, reflecting higher attainment on entry to Year 3; these pupils, too, are achieving very well. The lower standards currently in Year 6 compared to 2003 test results reflect a lower overall level of attainment on entry. Both the previous Year 6 cohort<sup>2</sup> and the present Year 6 have done equally well compared to their attainment when younger.
6. Test results in Year 6 have been high for the past three years, consistently placing the school in at least the top 25 per cent nationally in all subjects tested and in some years in the top five per cent. These consistently high results are because of sustained high quality teaching in Years 5 and 6. Annual fluctuations reflect variations in attainment on entry and not teacher effectiveness. In all subjects in 2003, more than 80 per cent of pupils tested in Year 6 attained or exceeded the nationally expected level, including about half exceeding expectations in English and mathematics and two-thirds doing so in science.
7. The proportions exceeding expectations in 2003 were significantly greater in Year 6 than the proportions the same pupils achieved four years earlier when in Year 2. Assessment records show that the proportion exceeding expectations more than doubles between Year 2 and Year 6. This happens because the teaching in Years 5 and 6 in English, mathematics and science is highly challenging, enabling all pupils but particularly the more able to give of their best. The five-year trend in test results is above the national trend. In 2003, more than 90 per cent of the pupils had made or exceeded the nationally expected amount of progress between Year 2 and Year 6 in reading and writing while nearly 90 per cent had done so in mathematics. About 33 per cent of the pupils in reading, 25 per cent in mathematics, and 20 per cent in writing made more progress than expected and this is much better than typically found in other schools.
8. The results in recent years have consistently been better in Year 6 than in similar schools. The similar school comparisons show that the progress pupils make in Years 3 to 6 is regularly very good and sometimes excellent. Boys are doing particularly well compared to boys

<sup>2</sup> Cohort refers to pupils belonging to the same year group.

nationally but also compared to girls, particularly in mathematics and science. The typical pupil is almost a year ahead of typical pupils in other schools. In 2003, boys did exceptionally well in reading.

9. In the other subjects, standards and achievement are generally satisfactory or better. Standards have improved in information and communication technology reflecting consistent teaching and good resources and are now average; achievement is satisfactory. Standards are average in geography, with good achievement. Standards are better in history, with good achievement, reflecting good teaching and a well planned and interesting curriculum, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Achievement and standards are satisfactory in art and design. Music is taught well and the broad curricular provision is good. Standards in singing and in some of the instrumental performances seen were above average. Evidence in design and technology and in physical education is too limited to make secure judgements. Religious education is inspected separately.
10. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve in line with their capacity for learning. The standards they attain vary. Their progress is often good and many of them catch up with expectations by the time they transfer to the high school. Talented pupils are given extra provision in subjects such as music but academically gifted pupils are not singled out for extra support. These pupils generally attain highly in Years 5 and 6 because the provision is challenging but not enough is done elsewhere to explore their potential and enable them to attain even higher standards.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance and punctuality are well above average. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work and behave very well throughout the day.
- The arrangements for promoting moral and social skills are very good.
- The provision for cultural development has improved.

### **Commentary**

11. Pupils show very good attitudes towards their work. In lessons, they are very keen to answer questions, even when the questions are difficult and challenging. This willingness to try helps raise their achievement. Good positive relationships are a strong characteristic of the school and this promotes an atmosphere of care and nurture.
12. The very good behaviour reported in the last inspection continues to be a feature of school life. Pupils show respect to their teachers and to each other. They behave very well in assembly and listen very attentively to the words of the songs included. Pupils are given responsibility to manage many aspects of school life. These responsibilities generate a feeling of belonging and ownership among pupils and contribute very effectively to the ethos of the school. Pupils behave well at lunch and break times. The playground is small for the number of pupils but their consideration for others ensures that this is not a problem. Lunch is eaten together as a social event and this creates a strong family, corporate atmosphere. Pupils are confident that teachers sort out problems and will deal with any reported incidents of bullying. There have been no exclusions.
13. Older pupils very willingly undertake duties and tasks such as looking after the younger children at the end of break times. They have the confidence to challenge politely or ask the headteacher questions in assembly because of the good way the teachers encourage them to develop as individuals. Assemblies also provide opportunities for children to reflect and to consider aspects of the Christian faith. This, together with the close links with the local church,

helps the pupils' good spiritual development.

14. The school has improved the provision for cultural development of pupils and this is now satisfactory. The improvement has been achieved through a corporate approach to identifying opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures whilst also making sure that resources reflect the diverse society that the pupils live in. The school has good links with a school in Sierra Leone and more locally with a school in Stoke-on-Trent. Through these links, pupils find out about, and learn from, different cultures. The school has also had a number of activities linked to the arts to promote multicultural learning including an 'African Dance' day.
15. Attendance continues to be well above average. Unauthorised absence is similar to that found in other schools. Pupils arrive on time in the mornings. These very good features are the result of strong support from parents.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence	
School data	4.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
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**

Teaching is good overall with some very good features but also a few aspects for improvement. Learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory but also with some aspects for improvement.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6.
- Elsewhere, teaching is satisfactory, with regular examples of good teaching in all classes but also occasional lapses in meeting the different learning needs of some pupils.
- Assessment is not used enough to track pupil progress and diagnose different learning needs.
- Academically gifted pupils are not identified by the school and not enough is done to see if they could attain even more highly than they do.

**Commentary**

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	13	11	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.*

16. All of the teaching in the school is satisfactory or better in quality, with about two-thirds being good or better. The overall quality is better than the average picture nationally because no teaching is unsatisfactory and because of the amount of very good teaching. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

17. Almost all of the teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good or better in quality, with the overall quality in these year groups being very good. The teachers in Years 5 and 6 operate very effectively as a team and work to their specialist subject strengths and this is the main reason why achievement is so good. The team approach produces considerable continuity of learning for pupils in English and mathematics and leads to them experiencing consistently high quality and challenging teaching over a two-year period. All lessons in these subjects in these year groups have high expectations and demand a lot from the pupils. Good support is provided for those having difficulty with learning, helping them keep up. The high quality teaching inspires the pupils to work very hard and give of their best. It is well planned and provides a good range of work that gets increasingly harder as lessons proceed. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory when pupils' work over the year and their achievement is taken into account; it was of good quality during the inspection.
18. Teaching in Years 1, 2, 3, and 4 is satisfactory overall with some good features but also a few aspects for improvement. The teaching in these year groups is challenging and meeting many learning needs. In most lessons, the pupils learn quickly and make worthwhile gains in knowledge and understanding. The work produced by pupils in Years 1, 2, 3, and 4, however, shows an over-reliance on worksheets and exercises which are often given to all pupils. At times, these worksheets and exercises are too hard for the less able.
19. The basic procedures for assessing pupils in English, mathematics, and science are satisfactory and provide a wealth of details about pupils' attainment but are not yet sufficiently fine-tuned to measure pupils' progress. Curricular targets for pupils are set but the arrangements are not yet fully embedded in the culture of the school. Although academically gifted pupils attain highly, they are not specifically identified as gifted by the school and, because of this, not enough is done to check whether their attainment could be even higher.

## **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**. The curriculum is enriched very well. The quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory and the quality of the accommodation is satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A broad and balanced curriculum contributes to pupils' achievements.
- The enrichment of the curriculum is very good, especially through the provision of extra-curricular opportunities.
- Specialist teachers contribute well to the quality of learning opportunities.

## **Commentary**

20. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and for children in the Foundation Stage is broad and balanced and helps pupils to achieve well. The range of learning experiences is enriched very effectively by the many additional opportunities provided. These include residential trips and productions in which the majority of pupils take part. There is a very good range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, such as maypole dancing, art, French, knitting and ecology clubs. Music is a particularly strong feature with a very successful choir and recorder group. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are learning to play the recorder and a large number are receiving tuition for a range of musical instruments. There are abundant sports opportunities for both boys and girls. Football, netball, rounders, athletics, cricket and aerobics are all provided. Overall, the accommodation and the provision of learning resources allow the curriculum for Years 1 to 6 to be taught effectively. Accommodation and resources for children in the Foundation Stage is good indoors but poor outdoors. The outdoors provision is too small for the numbers of pupils and there is insufficient equipment, apparatus and material outdoors for the nationally agreed curriculum for this age group to be taught in full. This is a constraint to achievement that the teachers can do nothing about.

21. The quality of the curriculum has been maintained since the last inspection. The key issue about reviewing long term planning and recording the development of pupils' skills has been addressed. Planning now ensures progression in pupils' learning. An appropriate programme of work has been put in place for information and communication technology; this is a good improvement. Teachers with particular specialisms help to add breadth and depth to the pupils' work. For example, the music coordinator teaches most of the lessons for that subject. The science and information and communication technology coordinators teach Years 5 and 6 their respective subjects. This provision effectively helps to raise standards.
22. The school has good systems for the early identification of children with special educational needs and these are being managed well by the special educational needs coordinator. Once children have been identified, the school uses a number of different strategies to support their learning including working with the speech and language service. Good use is made of teaching assistants; for example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, the teaching assistant was able to work with one child on individually planned work which enabled that child to learn and understand work on fractions. The school has begun to track the progress of these children through standardised tests and more work now needs to be done on making sure that work is appropriately matched to the pupils' specific needs.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school makes good provision for its pupils' care and welfare but aspects of health and safety need a higher priority. Provision for support, advice and guidance are generally good but with a few aspects for improvement. The arrangements for involving pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The small size of the school means that every pupil is very well known and has the opportunity to contribute to school life; however, there is no school council.
- Pupils are supported informally but do not always have individual targets.
- Health and safety procedures need greater attention by governors, particularly separating cars and people on the playground at arrival and departure times.
- There are very good arrangements when pupils start school.

### **Commentary**

23. The strengths identified in this aspect at the time of the last inspection have been sustained. All pupils are well known by teachers. All members of staff offer a good level of care and support. Pupils who are injured or unwell at school are well cared for. Child protection procedures are consistent with requirements and there is good liaison with relevant authorities. Arrangements for receiving new pupils are very effective and help them settle quickly. Parents are provided with good newsletters keeping them well informed during the early weeks.
24. Pupils receive good, informal support and guidance but because of the limitations of assessment, they have few specific individual targets to work towards. Pupils think very highly of their school and have very good relationships with teachers and other members of staff. They are confident young people, able to say what they think. They could take on more responsibilities and learn more about decision-making through a school council; this is planned and will build on the success of the eco-council which was established to involve pupils in developing and caring for the school environment.
25. Governors have just agreed a new health and safety policy. Whilst members of the school staff regularly undertake tick-list checks against a local authority pro-forma, an external perspective, for example from a governor, would help in considering potential hazards. In particular, there is a need to separate traffic and pedestrians on the playground.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parental support is strong.
- Links with the church and the community are close.
- Pupils are well prepared for secondary school.

### **Commentary**

26. There was a very good response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and this raised only one concern and no significant issues. Parents are very positive about almost all areas of the school's work. They think very highly of the school and value what it achieves.
27. Information provided for parents is good and there is open communication between them and teachers. All relevant statutory requirements in relation to the provision of information are met. Parents are confident about raising any issues or concerns. Consultation meetings to talk over children's progress are regularly held and records show that a good proportion of parents attend. However, curricular information and the end of year reports lack detail. Thirteen per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire did not feel well enough informed about how their child was getting on. Reports are a sensible length but do not clearly tell parents how well their child is doing in relation to National Curriculum expectations for their age. This was an area for improvement at the last inspection and needs re-visiting.
28. The school and the church are central to this very close-knit community and they are mutually supportive. The strong commitment of visitors to the school, noted in the last report, continues. Links with the church have been strengthened further with the arrival of the new vicar and have been mutually beneficial. The school is valued within its community, shown by the parish council's willingness to lease land for a Foundation Stage play area. Preparation for secondary school is good and includes social aspects, starting in Year 5, and relevant information is transferred.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is highly effective. The leadership of the deputy headteacher and the senior management team is good. The overall effectiveness of management is satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has created a very good ethos in which pupils are happy and eager to learn.

### **Commentary**

29. The very good leadership of the headteacher is creating an effective school in which the pupils enjoy learning and achieve very well. The climate for learning is strong, with high expectations and procedures that promote self-esteem and confidence. Teamwork is very well developed and morale among all of the teachers is high. The headteacher is well supported by his deputy and by the senior management team. Governors are helping to shape the direction of the school and hold the school to account for the standards achieved. All relevant statutory requirements are met, including racial equality and anti-racist policies.
30. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school that is fully supported by governors and members of staff. A good sense of purpose permeates all aspects and all members of staff have a satisfactory or better understanding of their role and responsibilities. The recent high

turnover of teachers has been well managed. Temporary members of staff have been appropriately briefed on their role and on school procedures. Disruption to teaching and learning arising from the turnover has been kept to a minimum. Recruitment and appointment procedures are effective.

31. School self-evaluation is good overall but with a few aspects for improvement. The basic systems are well developed and leading to the right aspects for improvement being identified. Teaching is regularly monitored but the systems for sharing good practice through demonstration and support have been constrained by changes in subject leadership caused by the turnover of teaching staff and are not as rigorous as they could be. The members of the senior management team are aware of the school's main strengths and weaknesses, and are taking appropriate action. Arrangements for school development planning are satisfactory. Subject managers and teachers are properly involved. The action planning, however, is not always based on detailed diagnosis of the weaknesses and so is sometimes broad-brush in nature and lacking in measurable outcomes.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	413,735	Balance from previous year	11,110
Total expenditure	413,147	Balance carried forward to the next	11,698
Expenditure per pupil	2,107		

32. Financial management is good. The cost of educating each pupil is among the lowest in the country and the budget is constantly tight. The school lives carefully within its budget by following best value principles rigorously.

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

33. The provision for the Foundation Stage is in Reception class and a pre-Reception class. The teaching in the present school year has been affected by a change in teacher prompted by maternity leave. The teacher present during the inspection had returned to work the day the inspection started. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good, including that seen in the pre-Reception class. Assessment is detailed and helps provide a clear picture of progress. Progress since entry to the Reception year is satisfactory and broadly compatible with the children's capacity for learning. The provision is effective overall and consistent with the nationally agreed curriculum for the Foundation Stage except in physical development where very limited outdoor accommodation and resources constrain the curriculum. Improvement here is a priority identified by the school, with action already well advanced to remedy the shortcoming. The accommodation outdoors is currently an enclosed hard surface area that is too small for more than a few children. Resources are minimal. Teachers make the best use they can of this outdoor area. Nevertheless, it is impossible for them to teach in full the nationally agreed curriculum for the Foundation Stage.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**. Achievement is good and standards are above average. Teaching and subject leadership are effective. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are well adjusted to school life and enjoy learning.

#### Commentary

34. The children in the pre-Reception and the main Reception are settled into school life and typically self-confident for their age, becoming fully involved in lessons and activities. Almost all of them are on course to attain or exceed the relevant national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year, with a large number likely to exceed them. This reflects the very good partnership with parents and the strong support they provide. It also reflects the effective management of learning in this area by the teachers and adults working in the Foundation Stage. In the pre-Reception class, the children readily make choices about the activities they want to engage with and remain absorbed by them for long periods. They are effectively learning to share and resolve disputes with other children because of the skilled management of behaviour by the adults. In the main Reception class, nearly all the children are able to sustain interest and concentration for lengthy periods and listen attentively. Behaviour is very good and the children are developing a good sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others.
35. Teaching is effective and demonstrates good adherence to school policy and expectations. This leads to both behaviour and relationship problems being consistently managed in a manner that helps children learn relevant values. The curriculum appropriately reflects national guidelines.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Teaching and subject leadership are effective. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.



## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good emphasis on early literacy skills.

## Commentary

36. The substantial majority of children are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for early learning, with about a third on course to exceed them. In the pre-Reception class, most children talk and listen at the level expected for their age. One or two still use short, immature sentence forms, which is to be expected, while most children clearly communicate basic wants and needs verbally. Very few children in the main Reception class lack the confidence to talk about their activities, explain what they are doing, or answer the teacher's questions. The majority talk using short statements. The more able give lengthy responses and include additional details to explain what they want or has happened. Almost all have developed the expected early literacy skills for their age, with about a third able to read or write a few familiar words, and this is ahead of expectations.
37. The teaching is effective. In the pre-Reception class, good emphasis is placed on promoting skills of speaking and listening. This is helping children to learn to speak at greater length and widen their vocabulary. In the main Reception class, the teaching is systematic with some sessions closely reflecting the National Literacy Strategy. In the main class, children are developing their knowledge of letters and sounds and learning to recognise familiar words by sight. Resources are good and helping to provide a stimulating environment that helps children recognise the relevance of text and its relationship with speaking and listening.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**. Achievement is satisfactory. Standards are above average reflecting higher attainment on entry. Teaching in the main Reception class, and subject leadership, are effective. Evidence in the pre-Reception class is limited. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are developing good knowledge of number.

## Commentary

38. More than 80 per cent of the children in the Reception class are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for early learning in mathematics by the end of the school year, with 20-30 per cent likely to exceed this level and this is better than in the typical school. All of the children are developing appropriate counting skills for their age; for example, the vast majority can count forwards and backwards using numbers to 20, understand "more than" and "less than", and the most able solve addition problems using numerals to 9 and the correct signs for addition and equals. In an effective lesson, the children quickly extended their knowledge and by the end they were beginning to count in twos. The expectations of the teacher were high and the children rose confidently to the challenge, showing willingness to answer questions and attempt the tasks even though they needed considerable mental agility to complete them.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

39. The children are developing a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, the pre-Reception class went on a visit to a nearby railway station and experienced a short train journey to the next station. They were highly motivated by this experience and chose to play with trains both before and after the visit, which effectively consolidated their knowledge and understanding. In the main Reception class, children are using computers and learning relevant basic skills.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

40. One lesson of music and movement was seen taught in the hall. The overall standard in this lesson was above average and children were achieving to their potential. The Reception children followed the teacher's instructions carefully and showed good levels of coordination and control for their age. They were interested in the tasks and were enthusiastic. The teaching was effective and provided challenging work. The children have access to this type of lesson about once a week and this is insufficient for all their physical development needs.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

41. Very little evidence was available for this area of learning, which was not a focus of the inspection. The small amount available indicates satisfactory standards and achievement.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 is very good and current standards in that year group are above average. Achievement in Year 2 is good.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Test results in Year 6 have been very high for three years.
- The achievement of the oldest pupils is very good
- The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but does not always challenge the more able pupils to the full extent of their capacity.

#### Commentary

42. The achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very good, reflecting consistently effective teaching. In every lesson in the subject, all of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 make worthwhile gains in knowledge and understanding, with the average and more able pupils invariably learning quickly. Written work produced during the present school year reveals a strong trend of improvement over time. Current standards are above average and show a big improvement compared to the attainment of these pupils when they entered Year 3 in 2000, when standards for the cohort at that time were well below average overall. The pupils who have made most progress are those who attained average levels in 2000. Many of these pupils now exceed national expectations, particularly in reading. The more able pupils have also progressed as expected but the absence of provision for those who are academically gifted means that there is some uncertainty as to whether they are working to full capacity. Less able pupils are satisfactorily supported and their achievement is consistent with their potential. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls; boys are doing particularly well in reading compared to boys nationally.
43. Achievement and standards in reading are high in Years 5 and 6 and are consistently better than in writing throughout the school. Very good priority is given to reading in all year groups and the teaching methods are effective, including the work of teaching assistants. Only a handful of pupils have difficulties with reading and relatively large numbers of pupils in all classes exceed the national expectation for their age. Almost all the pupils in Year 6 are independent readers with clear preferences for type of story and author. Many pupils are able to read books of an adult level of difficulty. In writing, almost all pupils organise their writing appropriately to reflect the intended purpose. Pupils with average and above average ability are very accurate for their age in their grammar, spelling, punctuation and handwriting, showing

high expectations in the teaching. Less able pupils also organise their writing appropriately but generally experience more difficulty than the other pupils with spelling and punctuation.

44. Currently in Year 2, about 90 per cent of the pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected level in writing by the end of the school year but only a handful are likely to exceed expectations. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 does not always place sufficient emphasis on sustained independent writing and the pupils' work shows an over-reliance on worksheets and exercises that are insufficiently fine-tuned to the pupils' individual learning needs.
45. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good. The team teaching methods used in these year groups enable the expertise of teachers to be very effectively used. The teaching in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 and 4, are generally challenging and lead to all pupils making worthwhile gains in knowledge and understanding. Pupils with average ability often do well in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 and learn more quickly than expected. However, all pupils are frequently given the same task and although the quality of these tasks is satisfactory for most, they do not always extend the more able to the limit of their capacity. Although the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making progress and generally attain highly, they could do even better.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

46. The extent to which language and literacy are developed across the curriculum is typical of most schools and satisfactory overall. Opportunities arise in subjects such as history and geography to apply reading and writing skills but these are not consistently planned to develop specific literacy skills. Some of the programs in information and communication technology help improve pupils' vocabulary and phonic skills.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is good. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 is very good. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Leadership is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Current standards in Year 6 are above average and the pupils in Years 5 and 6 are learning quickly.
- There are too few opportunities for the highest attaining pupils in Year 2 to excel at mathematics.

### **Commentary**

47. The 2003 tests in Year 2 were just below average with few pupils attaining above the national expectations for their age. Current standards in Year 2 are now broadly in line with the national average and the pupils' achievement is good. Average and less able pupils in Year 2 have done well compared to their attainment on entry. However there is still not enough challenging work for more able pupils in Year 2 and so very few attain highly. In the 2003 tests in Year 6, results were well above average with the proportion attaining highly being better than many other schools. Currently standards in Year 6 are above average with a good proportion of pupils working at the higher levels, though fewer than last year. Current standards in Year 6 show very good improvement compared to the pupils' attainment when they were in Year 2 in 2000. Almost all pupils in Year 6 are working to their potential, including the more able, reflecting very effective teaching. Standards in Years 1, 3 and 4 are average and achievement is generally good. This reflects satisfactory teaching but limited opportunities for pupils to attain above expectations.
48. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good. When very good teaching takes place there are excellent relationships, high expectations and constant appropriate challenge. For example, in one lesson in Year 6 pupils were asked to identify percentages of numbers, a further challenge

was to then find the equivalent decimal and fraction. In other year groups teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching in Year 1. In these lessons the children make satisfactory progress. In some classes pupils with the potential to work at very high levels are not always provided with enough challenge when they work at their own tasks. This means that teaching sometimes falters as all pupils usually receive the same work. In their books there is, therefore, limited evidence that some are exceedingly able mathematicians.

49. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school has identified those pupils who need support in mathematics and in Year 6 additional provision is very effective.
50. Assessment is carried out in a systematic way across the school. A tracking system is in place and appropriate targets are set for pupils. The progress made against these targets is monitored and evaluated by the coordinator and the findings are informing staff training. Marking comments are often very brief and do not always help the pupil to understand what they need to do to improve.
51. Leadership and management are good. The coordinator is a good role model. There is an effective action plan which clearly identifies strengths and areas for development. The coordinator has monitored work throughout school and this has led to staff training. As yet she has not been able to improve the provision for more able children in Years 1 and 2. The coordinator has also written a policy on a whole school approach to written methods in mathematics and this is improving lessons.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

52. The application of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory and this is helping consolidate knowledge and skills acquired in mathematics lessons. The main applications are in science and information and communication technology.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils in Year 2 achieve well and in Year 6 most achieve very well.
- Good quality teaching generally results in pupils learning well.
- There is scope for more able pupils to achieve more.

#### **Commentary**

53. The statutory teacher assessments of 2003 show that towards the end of Year 2, pupils attain good standards and generally achieve well. The national test results over the last three years indicate that standards in Year 6 are well above average and collectively pupils achieve very well. The proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining higher than expected levels in the 2003 tests was much higher than found in most schools. Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining average standards. Pupils in the present Year 6 are attaining broadly average standards, which is lower than in 2003 because there is higher percentage of pupils with some form of learning difficulty. Even so, standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection.
54. The very good achievement is due largely to the good quality of teaching, which results in most pupils learning quickly. The pupils' work indicates that, overall, teachers' expectations are high. As a result, pupils in Year 2 work above the expected level in investigative work. For example, when exploring friction, they predict that the smoother the surface, the further the model car will go when.

55. Pupils in Year 6 understand the way in which scientists such as Jenner, Pasteur and Fleming worked and the contribution they made to our understanding of micro-organisms; this knowledge is consistent with national expectations. In their investigations, they work well, using scientific knowledge to draw conclusions, such as the thicker the wires the brighter the bulb. However, they do not always record experiments systematically enough. For instance, they do not always explain the methods they used. Pupils show above average ability to use abstract ideas; for example, they were able to describe how opaque objects will throw a grey shadow because some light will pass through them, and could explain why changes to materials are reversible or irreversible.
56. Too few lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of pupils' work in Year 2 indicates that aspects of teaching are good. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good. In the best practice there are clear demands for pupils to use scientific terms. In Year 5, the teacher's high expectations are evident when pupils write about complex carbohydrates and the Eustachian tube. Teachers engage the attention of pupils very well so that levels of interest and concentration are high. Pupils behave very well in lessons and work hard because teachers show clearly that they expect them to. Skilful questioning is a key strength in the teaching. In a Year 6 lesson, questions that probed how pupils would describe the characteristics of plastic helped them recall earlier learning.
57. Pupils' work shows that some teachers rely too heavily on the use of commercially produced worksheets. This reduces pupils' chances of taking responsibility for recording and setting out their work. In Years 3 and 4 especially, it restricts the opportunities pupils have to develop skills of recording their experiments.
58. Even though a high proportion of pupils attained the higher than expected level in the tests last year, more could be done to challenge those capable of the highest attainment. Too often these pupils carry out the same tasks as others. Their achievement is satisfactory but not enough is done to explore if they are capable of even higher standards.
59. The subject coordinator has only recently been appointed and it is too soon to judge the impact of her work on standards and provision. The good quality of the science curriculum, with its clear emphasis on investigative work, enhances the quality of pupils' learning. The work in science makes a strong contribution to the development of pupils' numeracy skills. Visits, for example, to a local plant nursery, and visitors such as a dentist, contribute well to the range of learning experiences. Up until a short time ago, the previous coordinator ran a science club, which contributed very effectively to the standards attained by older pupils. The school plans to restart this.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision is satisfactory but the evidence is limited. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

### **Commentary**

60. At the time of the last inspection standards in information and communication technology were unsatisfactory throughout the school and pupils made insufficient progress because resources were unsatisfactory. Since then, the school has made good progress in remedying the shortcomings. A computer room has been created. It was constructed, together with a new classroom, from the upper section of the existing building, paid for by voluntary subscription. The ratio of pupils to computers is now better than that recommended nationally. As a result of the improved provision and training for staff, standards are now average in Year 2 and Year 6

and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory throughout the school.

61. Pupils in Year 2 develop ideas and make things happen using computers. They develop word processing skills through activities such as composing text to describe pictures of animals scanned into the computer by their teacher. They have the knowledge to program instructions so that a screen turtle follows a given path and direction, which is consistent with expectations for their age. In Year 4, pupils study and make their own branching databases. Year 6 pupils use the Internet to find things out, for example, about Islam They produce spreadsheets to share information about rainfall; this, too, is consistent with expectations. Pupils also send and receive email, for instance, to thank the people who conducted a service in school. They create good quality multimedia presentations about subjects such as football which incorporate sound as well as graphics.
62. Three lessons were seen. The overall quality was satisfactory, with one lesson being good. The quality of teaching had improved significantly since the last inspection. Those staff interviewed confirmed that their confidence in teaching the subject has increased due to the training they have received. They appreciate the help of people with expertise such as the deputy headteacher and the secretary. The school has made suitable provision to provide further support from a technician who will start work in September.
63. Pupils are very keen to work with computers. This is another improvement since the last report. Other weaknesses have also been remedied effectively. A programme of work has been put in place, based securely on the national planning guidance, and appropriate attention has been given to developing skills progressively. It was not possible to interview the subject coordinator, who was absent through illness, so no judgement is made of the effectiveness of his work.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

64. Pupils' skills are developed appropriately in other subjects and information and communication technology is used effectively to support work across the curriculum. The boost given to the development of pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding is particularly strong. In Year 1, pupils produce pictograms to show how class members get to school. Year 3 pupils use computers to create bar charts about animals. In Year 6, spreadsheets are made which use the formula for finding the area of rectangles. Applications are used in art and design and pupils enhance English skills by creating superb word processed books in Year 5 and make fact files in Year 6 as part of geography studies.

### **HUMANITIES**

65. During the inspection, **geography** and **history** were not a main focus and judgements are based on work sampling and a small number of lesson observations in history. No lessons were seen in geography.
66. Standards in **geography** are average and have been sustained since the previous inspection. Achievement is good. In Year 2, pupils have recently started a topic on islands. As part of this, they have identified the countries in the United Kingdom, looked at modes of transport and used simple maps. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have studied various topics including settlements and environmental improvement. An appropriate range of topics is covered and pupils are developing the relevant skills. However, work is not always provided at different levels for pupils with different ability and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
67. Standards in **history** are above average. Standard have been maintained since the last inspection. Achievement overall is good. An appropriate range of topics is covered. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed was at least satisfactory. Teachers asked the pupils relevant questions to extend their knowledge and understanding. Good relationships enabled pupils to have confidence to respond and give their opinions. Work in books shows that

children develop history skills so that in Years 5 and 6 they are able to use resources such as the 1851 Caverswall census and a Bailiff Report to describe the characteristics of that time. Work is often not provided at different levels and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in this subject.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. Insufficient work was seen in **art and design** to form an overall judgement on provision. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pictures and drawings show that pupils use the work of well known artists to stimulate their own work. In Year 6, pupils have painted pictures in the style of Joan Miro. The work is well presented with attention to detail and reflects satisfactory standards. Also in Year 6, pupils have learnt from the ceramic work of Suzuki Hiroshi. In Year 3, pupils have used the style of Matisse to create collage pictures. In Year 2, children have painted cross sections of fruit. The work shows a careful study and attention to detail.
69. No judgement is made of provision or the standards pupils attain in **design and technology** because no lessons were seen and the products made by pupils had been taken home. Discussion with pupils shows that their attitudes to the subject are positive, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Year 2 pupils spoke enthusiastically about designing and making double-decker sandwiches and vehicles such as a spaceship. Pupils in Year 6 recalled annotating design drawings and working with textiles but the range of tools they had used was small.
70. Although it was not possible to evaluate provision in **music** it is clear that it is a strong feature in the life and work of the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Too few lessons were seen to be sure of the standards that pupils attain. However, the singing in assembly was of good quality and the performances of groups and individuals playing instruments were at least above average. In a class assembly, a series of performances, including clarinet, drum and piano solos, a flute quartet and a clarinet septet gave an indication of the depth and range of the pupils' accomplishments. Again, singing was of a good standard, with the class keeping time well and phrasing accurately. Although the subject coordinator was not interviewed, the lessons she taught indicate the very positive effect of her work on standards. The lessons were characterised by high expectations, very good subject knowledge and the use of engaging games and other interesting musical activities. Pupils responded very well to the teaching. A large number of pupils learn to play an instrument. Nearly all the pupils in Years 3 to 6 play the recorder and most can read music by the time they leave the school. A musical concert is held each Christmas and at the end of each summer term. The choir was invited recently to represent Staffordshire schools at the Royal Albert Hall. The recorder group plays at a recorder festival at Lichfield cathedral and at the Blythe Bridge festival. These opportunities not only enhance pupils' standards, but contribute very strongly to their personal development.
71. There is too little evidence in **physical education** to judge the quality of teaching and learning, standards or provision. Teachers' plans show that pupils experience a good range of learning opportunities which are significantly enhanced by extra-curricular activities. These comprise: football, netball, rounders, athletics, cricket and aerobics. Links with local clubs, including Stoke City football club add depth and breadth to pupils' experiences. All pupils are taught to swim. Residential trips provide opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities which have a very positive impact on pupils' personal development. On a cautionary note, the fixed gymnastics apparatus is out of date and is unsuitable for current teaching and learning requirements.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

72. The curriculum for **personal, social, health and citizenship education** is satisfactory, overall. Strong features include the involvement of local community members such as police officers and the school nurse in providing appropriate sex education and raising pupils'

awareness of the dangers of drug misuse. However, the provision is not organised systematically with regular timetabled periods for all classes and a programme of agreed work for each age group. This reduces the overall effectiveness of the school's work in this part of the curriculum. The school is taking action to improve the situation. An audit has already been carried out to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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