

INSPECTION REPORT

SUNDON PARK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109555

Headteacher: Mrs A T McCarthy

Lead inspector: Mrs C Pittman

Dates of inspection: 1st - 3rd December 2003

Inspection number: 258064

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	333
School address:	Kinross Crescent Luton
Postcode:	LU3 3JU
Telephone number:	(01582) 571 619
Fax number:	(01582) 508 508
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Martyn Fisher
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sundon Park Junior School is a larger than average community school situated in Luton. It draws most of its pupils from the immediate catchment area, which is a mixture of owner-occupied homes and social housing although a significant number of pupils also come from further afield. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. There are 333 boys and girls, aged 7-11 years. The population is mixed and although most pupils are white British the percentage of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is high. Most children when they enter the school are attaining average standards. The percentage of pupils thought to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average but the number of pupils identified as needing extra help and for whom additional money is provided is broadly in line with the national average. There are a small number of pupils with very specific special educational needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18275	Chrissie Pittman	Lead inspector	Art Religious education
9724	Brigid Quest-Ritson	Lay inspector	
22790	Jane Pinney	Team inspector	English Geography History
18703	Christine Canniff	Team inspector	Science Music
22657	Mark Madeley	Team inspector	Maths Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a fairly effective school where all pupils progress satisfactorily. Achievement is satisfactory in most subjects. Pupils want to learn and they relate appropriately to each other. Most of the teaching is satisfactory and a significant proportion is good. There is a small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. The school addresses the needs of all its pupils adequately and is inclusive. There is a sound learning ethos and pupils' personal qualities are developed well. The headteacher's leadership is good and she is quick to identify and tackle any weaknesses. Other key staff manage the school satisfactorily. The school has a good partnership with its parents and offers **satisfactory value** for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English and science have risen.
- The headteacher provides clear and purposeful direction to the school. Governance is now strong.
- Pupils are well cared for.
- Parents have good links with the school.
- The school works well with the community.
- Achievement in mathematics is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment is used insufficiently to respond to pupils' individual needs, particularly in the foundation subjects.

The weaknesses identified have been recognised by the school and are in the school improvement plan.

How the effectiveness of the school has changed since the previous inspection. The school has made satisfactory improvement given its changing circumstances since the previous inspection. Pupils' standards have improved in mathematics and science although standards in mathematics need to be improved further. The school's response to its key issues from the previous inspection has been positive. Leadership and management are more effective in that the governing body is more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Systems are now tighter and there is more of a focus on raising standards by targeting and monitoring teaching and learning. There is improved communication and better assessment in English and mathematics, although this still has some way to go in the foundation subjects. All health and safety issues have been addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2002
English	C	D	C	C
mathematics	D	D	D	D
science	C	D	C	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Most children when they enter the school are achieving average standards for their age. When they leave aged 11 pupils' achievement is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. When pupils' results are compared with those of pupils in similar schools, standards are average overall. The school met its realistic targets last year in English but just missed them in mathematics. The trend in the school's results in the last four years has been broadly in line with the national trend. Overall, there is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are developed appropriately. Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour in and out of the classroom are sound. Attendance is satisfactory and lessons start on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **satisfactory** overall. **Teaching is predominantly satisfactory** throughout the school with some examples of good and occasionally very good teaching. There is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. The best teaching is in Years 3 and 6 where it is particularly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils regardless of the subject being taught. There is a positive ethos for learning in most classrooms. Good planning produced interesting lessons where pupils' learning was good. Teaching is least effective in a few English and mathematics lessons in Year 4 where basic skills are not well taught and too much time is wasted in managing the disruptive behaviour of a few pupils.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a good range of learning opportunities which meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all pupils. There is a sufficiently strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills. Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good. They feel valued and are involved well in their learning. The school works effectively in partnership with parents, other schools and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management is good overall.** The headteacher's leadership is good. She knows what the school does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them. Senior managers are appropriately focused on improving standards and supporting all pupils. The governance of the school is good. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses, monitor the school's performance effectively and ensure that statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with almost all aspects of the school. A few parents were unhappy about the level of bullying and a small minority of pupils' behaviour. A significant minority of pupils feel that other children do not always behave well and are sometimes unkind. Inspectors found that the school dealt with any incidences of oppressive behaviour effectively.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve achievement in mathematics.
- Improve assessment in the foundation subjects and use it more effectively to respond to pupils' individual needs, so that they make better progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards, overall, are **in line with the national average** in English and science. They are just below average in mathematics. Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**, overall, when results are compared with those of similar schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and science have risen.
- Standards in mathematics are below average.

Commentary

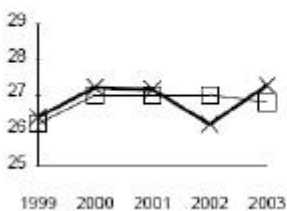
1. Most children when they enter the school are achieving average standards for their age. When they leave aged 11 pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. When pupils' results are compared with those of pupils in similar schools, standards are average overall. The school met its appropriate targets last year in English but just missed them in mathematics. The trend in the test results in the last four years has been broadly in line with the national trend. Overall, there is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

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

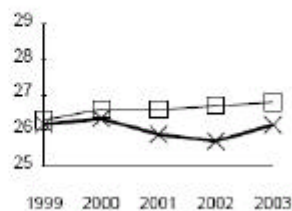
Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.3 (26.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.2 (25.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.5 (28.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 87 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

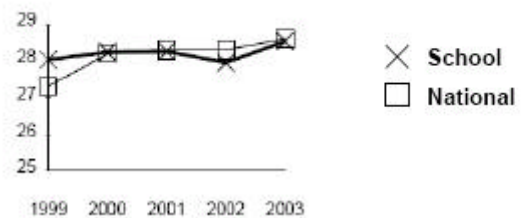
Key Stage 2: English Average NC points
School vs National



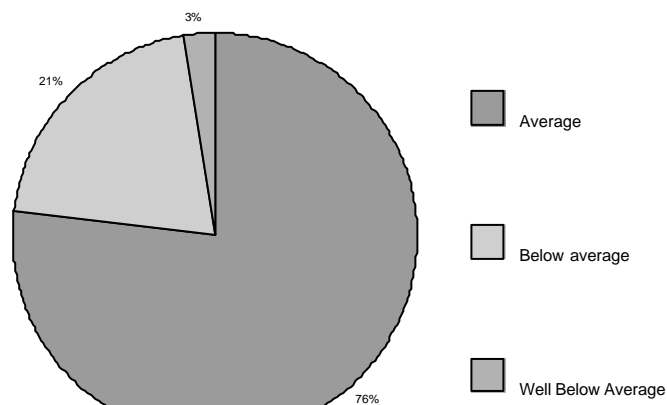
Key Stage 2: Mathematics, Average NC points
School vs National



Key Stage 2: Science, Average NC points
School vs National



Standards seen in lessons:



2. In English currently, standards for eleven-year-olds in speaking and listening, reading and writing are average. Standards in mathematics are just below average by the end of Year 6. In science, standards are average. Pupils' attainment at the higher level is above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics. Overall achievement is satisfactory.
3. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively and is making a good contribution to pupils' learning. Literacy skills are used and developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. The emphasis the school places on reading and the opportunities provided for it are reflected in the pupils' enthusiasm for books. Technical language in each subject is usually explained carefully. There are good opportunities for older pupils to develop their writing in subjects such as history; however, better use could be made of other subjects across the curriculum to develop writing skills. The National Numeracy Strategy supports teachers' planning and many features, such as the mental mathematics sessions and the discussions of strategies, are securely embedded. Numeracy skills are used in many subjects like design and technology, where pupils have to measure accurately and in drawing and interpreting graphs in science.
4. The provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Virtually all pupils reach the standards expected by the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils use their skills well in other subjects because activities are well planned.
5. Standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately and are supported effectively in lessons by both teachers and teaching assistants. A range of strategies for managing pupils with behavioural difficulties has been identified. However, in some lessons these pupils do not always receive as much support as they need to help them concentrate. Consequently some do not always make as much progress as they might.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to the school and their standards of behaviour are **satisfactory**. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is good. Pupils' cultural development is good. Their spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are given good opportunities to take part in cultural events.
- Pupils come to school and to lessons on time.
- The behaviour of a small minority of children shows a lack of consideration for others.
- Not all subjects routinely identify opportunities for pupils' personal development in their planning.

Commentary

7. Attendance levels are satisfactory and slightly better than average. Moreover, there is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good, as almost all pupils arrive promptly for school and for lessons.
8. Most pupils are interested in what they do in school and behave responsibly in lessons. They like lessons that are fun and interesting (especially if practical) and are prepared to work hard then. Lessons that involve just writing are less popular. Pupils interviewed said that they enjoyed taking part in the clubs. The school council gives pupils a sense of responsibility, which they value, whether or not they are elected to represent their class.

9. But there is a minority of pupils that is not very interested in working in lessons. Their presence is more noticeable when teaching is dull. At these times standards of behaviour fall and noise levels rise. A majority of pupils in the questionnaires did not think that other children behaved well. Pupils interviewed were clear about the rules for behaviour; they knew what was expected of them and what the consequences of bad behaviour would be. But although the school has established clear procedures for behaviour these are not always consistently applied. Pupils interviewed commented that some lessons were spoilt through the bad behaviour of a few. This same minority of pupils did not behave as well as expected at break and lunchtimes and showed a lack of consideration for others. These pupils' attitudes and behaviour are in marked contrast with the attitudes and behaviour of the vast majority of pupils, which are good. The high level of exclusions is the school's response to this problem and appears to be having a positive effect on behaviour.
10. Spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory overall. The school has looked at the curriculum to ascertain where this can be provided. But opportunities to encourage pupils' personal development are missed because it is not yet a consistent feature of curriculum and lesson planning in all subjects. The assembly programme has a good spiritual, moral and social content with different themes predominating on certain days. Some assemblies have a community focus while others celebrate achievement. There is an appropriate spiritual focus, mainly Christian, but acknowledging other cultures and faiths. This complies with the requirement to include an act of collective worship and is an improvement since the previous inspection. The house system helps to develop community values. The school council and support for charities also help to give pupils a sense of social responsibility.
11. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in cultural events. Curricular topics gain from visits to sites and museums. They gain too from visitors to the school, such as the theatre company that provided a vivid introduction to Shakespeare's Macbeth during the inspection for Year 6.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	231	7	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	3	1	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	14	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	23	3	0
Black or Black British – African	27	1	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	23	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	1	0
Other ethnic groups	8	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of education is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** and has been maintained since the previous inspection. The curriculum is sound, the pupils well cared for and links with parents and the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

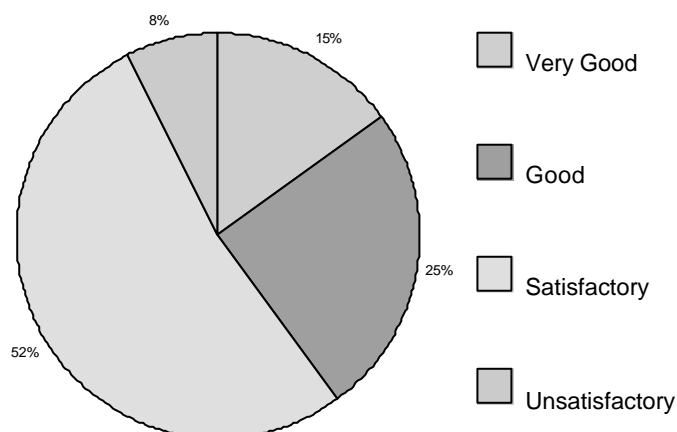
- Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and, as a result, most inspire pupils to listen and to learn.
- Pupils with SEN are well supported by both teachers and teaching assistants.
- Most lessons are carefully prepared, with clear learning objectives.
- Planning for different ability groups is not a strong feature of all lessons.
- There is an inconsistent use of assessment to guide teaching and learning in the foundation subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0.0%)	6 (15.0%)	10 (25.0%)	21 (52.5%)	3 (7.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

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



- Most lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory and teaching in four out of ten was good or better. These lessons were good or very good, both in terms of teaching and of pupils' learning. Staff performance procedures are effective in bringing about improvements in teaching. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and, as a result, most inspire pupils to listen and to learn. Most lessons are carefully prepared, with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils who have an opportunity at the end to think about how they have improved and whether they have learned successfully.
- Planning for different ability groups is not a strong feature of all lessons. In some otherwise satisfactory lessons, teachers take too little account of what pupils know, can do and understand and fail to plan work suited to the needs of all pupils. In these lessons teachers tend to plan the same task for all pupils, provide support for those with special educational needs and set extension tasks for the more for able pupils to tackle when they have completed

the same task as others. Teachers need to ensure that tasks challenge all pupils from the outset. In some lessons, pupils lost interest and became restless as the teacher spoke to, and questioned the class for too long. This left pupils with too few opportunities to discover information for themselves and to write it up in different forms. In a few unsatisfactory lessons in English and mathematics the teacher's inability to effectively control the behaviour of a few disaffected pupils meant that some pupils did not learn as well as they could have.

14. Some pupils with SEN require support in order to take part in oral parts of lessons. Pupils with SEN are well supported by both teachers and teaching assistants. They work well individually or in small groups. Teaching and special needs assistants are conscious of pupils' targets and provide good written records for the class teacher of the progress made during the lesson.
15. Overall assessment is unsatisfactory. The school assesses pupils well in English and mathematics and uses the information to group pupils and to select those who need additional support. Only recently has the school started to evaluate pupils' responses to individual questions and modify what is taught. Subjects other than English and mathematics do not have assessment procedures and so teachers find it difficult to build on what pupils already know and can do. Pupils' progress is monitored quite closely and pupils who make insufficient progress are identified and helped. Teachers mark pupils' work and offer positive comments and praise. They do not write comments that tell pupils how they might improve. There is a limited system of individual or group targets given to pupils by teachers that help them know what they can do and how they might improve further.

The curriculum

The school offers a **sound** curriculum, which is enriched by a **good** selection of visits and extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has improved the provision for collective worship.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- There are ample staff to teach the curriculum.
- The school is not adapted to facilitate full disabled access.

Commentary

16. The school teaches the National Curriculum subjects and religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus. Subject policies and schemes of work are in place and subject co-ordinators monitor lesson planning to ensure that the programme is taught. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection because the school has adapted the 'Year 2000 government guidelines' to suit the needs of its pupils.
17. Daily assemblies are timetabled for the whole school and year assemblies are held every week for every age group. Provision has improved since the last inspection because the school now provides an act of collective worship of a broadly Christian nature. A Year 3 class assembly was particularly good. The teacher used different voices to bring alive an animal story about love and friendship. She gave the class time to think about what being a friend meant before concluding with a prayer.
18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The effective support of classroom assistants, for pupils who have learning difficulties, ensures their inclusion in all activities and contributes positively to their progress. Classroom support assistants guide them through difficulties, encourage them to concentrate and deal with misunderstandings. The school's ethos of inclusion helps ensure that the needs of pupils are clearly identified. The targets in pupils' individual education plans are specific and make it clear what pupils need to work on.

19. A personal, social and health education programme is taught to all classes. The school's programmes for sex education and substance abuse are well established. They are mostly linked to science topics and make good use of outside agencies, such as the police, school nurse and video materials. Parents are given the opportunity to view sensitive materials before they are shown to their children.
20. The school is fully committed to extending pupils' learning opportunities by providing a rich and varied programme of visits, visitors and clubs. The school offers a good range of educational visits, for instance linked to history and geography topics, as well residential visits for both Year 5 and Year 6. Visiting theatre companies, musicians, authors and sports coaches have a big impact on pupils' learning. For example, after a Shakespeare theatre company visited pupils used a logo program on computers to draw complex castles rather than the simple houses intended. About half were successful with this difficult skill. Clubs are well attended. Pupils talk enthusiastically about them and are pleased that such a wide range, from gardening to drama and sports, are offered by staff and outside coaches. The Breakfast Club is also well attended and helps pupils get a good start to the day.
21. There are more teachers than classes and teachers are suitably trained to teach the curriculum. Staff expertise is used well, for instance, the literacy co-ordinator teaches all three Year 6 classes once a week and a trained swimming coach takes all the classes swimming, thus freeing colleagues for other duties. Teaching assistants, particularly those who work with pupils who have special educational needs, are well trained for their role. The accommodation is appropriate for the number of pupils and is good for physical education. However, the school is aware that considerable investment is needed to facilitate full disabled access. The school has, in the past, done everything it could to help such pupils by, for instance, changing a year group's classrooms from upstairs to downstairs.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are **good**. Provision for support, advice and guidance is **satisfactory**. Arrangements to involve pupils in the school's work are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school council provides a successful forum for consulting pupils and involving them in the work of the school.
- Arrangements for pupils entering and leaving the school are good and ensure a smooth transfer.
- Special assemblies acknowledge achievement of all kinds.
- More could be done to give pupils clearer targets on how to improve.

Commentary

22. There are good procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Child protection procedures are comprehensive, with appropriate guidance given to members of staff, whether teaching or non-teaching. The procedures to make sure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are also good. Members of staff know pupils well. The buildings and grounds are regularly checked for safety. The paving slabs in the courtyard – where unevenness was an issue in the previous inspection report – have been relaid.
23. Arrangements for pupils' support and guidance are satisfactory. The links established through the local pyramid of schools (the Lea Springs Educational Partnership) help pupils to settle in easily when they come to the school, as well as when they move on to secondary education. These include bridging projects and a transition learning mentor. Teachers and members of staff endeavour to know pupils well. Personal and academic progress is noted in 'rolling' records, which follow pupils through the school. Pupils are given targets to help them improve

although these are not always sufficiently specific. Pupils interviewed could say what they needed to improve, but were uncertain how it should be done.

24. Arrangements to involve pupils in the school's work are good. Pupils' responses in the questionnaire and in interviews indicated that they felt their views were listened to and acted upon wherever possible. The school council plays an important part in this. Time is allowed for a democratic process of putting ideas forward and reporting back to individual classes. Pupils interviewed were eager to tell inspectors about changes that they had suggested.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive much useful information about the school and how to help their children.
- The school makes effective use of resources available locally to help pupils.
- The combined prospectus and annual report is an attractive and well produced document but leaves out some information it should contain.
- Annual reports comment on effort and attainment but, apart from Year 6, do not report on levels achieved in National Curriculum subjects.

Commentary

25. The school has developed a good partnership with parents. It endeavours to ensure that teachers are readily available if parents need to contact them, as well as to provide a range of helpful information. Hardly any parents used to come to the governors' annual meeting for parents so this was replaced by a 'Meet the teachers and governors' evening. This has proved much more popular. The school issues a particularly useful series of booklets telling parents how to become involved in their children's' learning. There are demonstration evenings for parents explaining the type of work done in English and mathematics. The school has chosen to publish a combined prospectus and governors' annual report. This is a well-produced and very readable document, much appreciated by parents. Annual reports do not always give parents a clear view of progress in individual subjects. They list what pupils can do and identify targets for improvement, but omit what pupils cannot do and need to learn in order to improve in that subject. Reports do not comment on levels achieved in National Curriculum subjects.
26. There are good links with other schools through the Lea Springs Educational Partnership. As part of this, the schools in the partnership meet frequently and plan together, sharing ideas and facilities.
27. The school makes effective use of resources available locally to help pupils. There are visits to local museums and residential ones slightly further afield. Links with local services and organisations, the police for example, are effective. Some local groups, such as Rainbow Brownies and football clubs, use the school's facilities. Local manufacturers and businesses have provided sponsorship and a window onto a wider world in design and technology.
28. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of pupils' progress, which is regularly monitored against their targets and adjusted accordingly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. Governors run the school well. The headteacher's leadership is **good**. Senior managers are appropriately focused on improving standards and supporting pupils' learning through a rich and varied curriculum. The school is managed effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses; they challenge and support senior managers well.
- The headteacher's clarity of vision and sense of purpose are good.
- The school manages its finances well, ensuring it gets the best value for money when committing resources or spending school funds.
- The school's evaluation of its performance is sound. Data is used appropriately to monitor the school's performance.
- Teaching is well monitored in English and mathematics. However, the monitoring of teaching and assessment procedures in the other subjects is insufficiently developed.

Commentary

29. The governors are knowledgeable and committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. With the help of regular reports from the headteacher they monitor the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met and effectively challenge the senior management team to account for weaknesses and plan for success. The headteacher provides good leadership. She knows what the school does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them and has established an ethos of striving to improve.
30. The staff work well together. They believe that they are well supported by senior colleagues in their efforts to raise standards. Monitoring reports show that the school is self-critical and evaluative of its practices. Each year there is an analysis of performance data including SAT's and other non-statutory tests where co-ordinators are held accountable for examination results in their subjects. In areas where there have been relatively less successful results, such as standards in mathematics, the school is quick to take action.
31. The SEN department is well managed. Special needs assistants and teaching assistants are suitably trained and deployed. All teaching staff have been trained in the use of the current code of practice and keep careful track of the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Records are regularly updated by the special needs co-ordinator and are readily accessible and used by support staff. The special needs programme is well supported by good resources.
32. The school's self-evaluation and its use in improving standards is appropriate. This has given clear educational direction to the work of the school. Curriculum co-ordinators evaluate their subjects satisfactorily and areas for development are included in the school's improvement and management plan, so that priorities can be established over the long and short term. Effective monitoring is clearly defined by the headteacher and governors. It is aimed at helping the school to be clear about how well the teachers teach and how well the pupils are learning. However, although co-ordinators monitor teaching well in English and mathematics, this has only just started to be extended to science and the non-core subjects. Monitoring has not picked up the lack of ongoing assessment in the foundation subjects. There is a good balance of expertise amongst the staff. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is sound. Pupils benefit from the good training given to the midday assistants.
33. Financial planning is good and the budget is used well. The strategic use of resources is good.
34. The leadership and management have been successful in establishing a productive climate for learning and promoting inclusion. The school is fairly effective and provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	825,686
Total expenditure	810,228
Expenditure per pupil	2,369

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	41,381
Balance carried forward to the next	56,839

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

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection even though there are now more pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision of resources, which are used well.
- In Years 3 and 6 the quality of teaching is good, with many strengths.
- Where teaching is good, pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons.
- In some Years 4 and 5 classes, pupils' achievement is hampered because pupils are not always well managed and assessments are not used well to plan work to pupils' individual needs.

Commentary

35. Standards in national tests at age 11 are in line with national averages and with those of similar schools. Pupils enter the school with average levels of attainment and make sound progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and achieve well. Pupils' achievement is best in Years 3 and 6, where the quality of teaching is consistently good or better.
36. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are as expected. Opportunities for role-play and debate have been improved since the previous inspection and across the curriculum teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to express themselves. They regularly introduce and reinforce vocabulary specifically relating to the subject, explaining the meaning of unfamiliar words when necessary. They have appropriate questioning techniques and listen carefully, clarifying what pupils intend to say so that they are sure pupils understand. As a result, pupils are confident in speaking about things that interest them. For instance, in a geography lesson, pupils in Year 4 articulately expressed their reasons for and against drilling for oil in Alaska. Listening skills are variable. A significant minority of pupils are unable to maintain their concentration or to take turns in class and group discussions, interrupting indiscriminately. However, most pupils listen carefully to adults and to the views of each other in class, groups and when working with a partner. As at the time of the last inspection, speaking and listening skills are effectively enhanced through extra-curricular activities and visits from theatre groups.
37. Standards in reading are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily, regardless of special educational needs, ethnic background or gender. Standards are similar to those at the previous inspection. In Year 6, most pupils read confidently from a range of books and are familiar with different authors. They know that books can be used to find out information and a small number are regular users of the local library. Pupils' reading skills are enhanced through regular timetabled sessions to visit the school library, which is well stocked and attractive. The school has identified that a significant minority of pupils are not supported in their reading at home and a useful booklet has been produced to encourage parents to hear their children read. Extra guided reading sessions have been introduced, but the achievement during these sessions is variable. The teacher directed group achieves well because of a clear focus on specific skills to be developed but pupils who are reading independently are not given any planned structures for improving their skills.

38. Standards in writing are average and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Spelling and handwriting are systematically developed as pupils go through the school and standards are satisfactory. At age 11, pupils write in many genres and make effective use of punctuation, interesting words and conventions such as personification to liven up their writing. For example, a more able pupil describes how 'The wind scattered snow across the garden like a naughty child'. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well but more capable pupils could achieve more.
39. The quality of teaching is inconsistent throughout the school and varies from very good to unsatisfactory, with the best teaching in Years 3 and 6. Where teaching is good or better teachers have good subject knowledge and provide good role models. For instance, they choose stimulating books to share with the children and continually extend their vocabulary through discussion and challenge. These teachers enjoy very good relationships with the pupils and as a result behaviour and attitudes are very good in their lessons. Pupils enjoy the praise and encouragement they are given and are keen to do their best. The subject has good assessment procedures in place and where teaching is good these assessments are used well to plan work to meet individual needs. Pupils with SEN are effectively supported so that they are fully included in lessons and achieve well. However, in some lessons pupils are given the same tasks, regardless of their individual abilities. This limits the development of skills and understanding, particularly for more capable pupils. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, too much time is wasted in the management of the disruptive behaviour of some pupils and as a result pupils make insufficient progress during the lesson. Pupils are involved in establishing their individual targets for improvement but so far target setting is not having an appreciable impact on attainment. For example, during the inspection, teachers rarely reminded pupils of targets during lessons and in conversation pupils were frequently unable to recall what their targets were.
40. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has a very secure understanding of the subject and is a very good role model. The results of statutory and non-statutory tests are analysed effectively to identify weaknesses in performance. Assessment procedures are used well to identify individual strengths and weaknesses, although not as rigorously to aid curriculum planning. Pupils' work and the quality of teaching is monitored regularly, but, partly due to staff mobility, monitoring has yet to achieve consistency of practice throughout the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

41. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively and has been appropriately adapted to support effective learning. Literacy skills are used and developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their reading skills when using books to find information. Technical language in each subject is usually explained carefully, ensuring all pupils understand. Pupils use their writing skills, for example in history when writing about child chimney sweeps in Victorian times. However better use could be made of subjects across the curriculum to develop writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

The quality of provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national expectations.
- Teaching in Years 3 and 6 is good.
- Leadership is good.

Commentary

42. Standards in Year 6 are below average with only two thirds of pupils working at the correct level. The school is aware of this and working hard to improve them by offering additional support and booster classes. These standards are similar to those in the 2003 national tests when pupils' results were below the national average when compared to both all schools and similar schools. The school just missed its target. Girls are roughly one term behind their average when compared to the boys. The school has identified this and put in place single gender booster classes to improve the situation. When compared with standards achieved by these pupils at the end of Year 2 they have not made enough progress. This is partly due to the inconsistencies in teaching across the year groups and the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in some classes. Good liaison initiatives with the feeder school have started to improve this because teachers will be better placed to build on what pupils know and can do.
43. Achievement is satisfactory. Older pupils joined the school with below average attainment and have maintained that standard. The school has put in place initiatives to improve standards but has not focused enough on monitoring and improving teaching. The teachers in Year 6 are trying, through good teaching and booster classes, to make up ground lost in earlier classes.
44. Teaching is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent across year groups. It is good in Years 3 and 6. In the best lessons teachers shared with pupils what the lesson would be about and at the end asked them if they had learned it. However, this was not a regular feature of all lessons observed and is part of the reason why pupils do not make enough progress. Mental warm ups were challenging, for instance in Year 6 pupils added and subtracted mentally numbers to thousands and worked accurately with decimals. Tasks and methods were explained clearly with sufficient demonstration so that everyone understood. Pupils went up to the board to write and explain their method. Pupils were expected to work hard and there was sufficient challenge for all abilities and support from teaching assistants for weaker pupils. Pupils were managed well, often because lessons were interesting and well presented. Teaching and learning were weaker in Years 4 and 5 where some, but not all, teachers had difficulty managing pupils' behaviour and so in those classes little learning took place. Lessons lacked challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils, because explanations were delivered slowly and the tasks were too repetitive. In all classes pupils' work is marked and praise is given. Teachers rarely indicate in books how pupils might improve or make any reference to pupils' targets.
45. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is a good role model for colleagues and uses her knowledge of the subject well to shape colleagues' planning. Performance data has been evaluated and used to select groups of pupils for additional support. Other measures, such as participating in the primary leadership strategy to raise standards, have been put in place but it is too early to see any effect. Teaching has not been monitored closely enough and regularly enough to see if recent training, such as the sharing of 'what will be learned' with pupils, is done consistently by teachers. A system of teacher targets for pupils is not yet in place and pupils do not know how they can improve because teachers' marking rarely tells them.
46. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. A committed and hardworking co-ordinator was appointed. She has improved assessment procedures because test results and individual questions are now carefully evaluated. Standards have risen slowly.

Mathematics across the curriculum

47. Planned use of mathematics skills in other subjects is satisfactory and improving. Numeracy skills are used in many subjects, like history to determine the length of Queen Victoria's reign, but these are incidental. Better is the use of measuring skills in design and technology where pupils have to measure accurately, for example to make a rectangular picture frame. Also good is the use of pupils' graph drawing skills to present results in science. Not only are pupils drawing these accurately but they are also interpreting them correctly.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching gives good emphasis to investigative skills as a means of developing pupils' understanding.
- The role of curriculum leader is underdeveloped.

Commentary

48. Standards in national tests are average and by the end of Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge across all areas of science. This is an improvement on results of national tests, which took place at the time of the last inspection. Standards have risen slowly because the quality of teaching is variable within year groups.
49. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons have a clear focus, which is shared with pupils, but there are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of both the quality and quantity of pupils' work. This affects the progress of some pupils. However, there is a sound framework to ensure that pupils gradually develop knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. The greater emphasis on learning through investigative science underpins pupils' knowledge and is leading to a better understanding. Teaching essential skills, such as predicting and carrying out a fair test are given good emphasis, but the recording of their investigations is of variable quality and does not always give sufficient emphasis to drawing conclusion from the findings. Teachers attach importance to the use of the right scientific words, for instance when pupils are investigating micro-organisms in Year 6 and when discussing food chains in Year 5. This helps to develop pupils' use of English.
50. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and is keen to raise standards. However, the leadership of the subject is not as effective as it might be, because he has not had enough opportunity to check the quality of teaching and learning in different parts of the school. Analysis of national test results provides useful information about the strengths and areas for development. This has resulted in the greater emphasis on investigative science and aspects of the teaching of materials. Despite identifying the need for greater links with information and communication technology (ICT) this is not yet represented well enough in the curriculum, although there are improved links with the mathematical skills of data handling. Data about pupils' achievement is being gathered to check on pupils' progress. This information is used at the start of the year to set targets for individual pupils to reach by the following summer. However, pupils are not given sufficient guidance about what they need to do to improve because teachers' marking is not constructive and teachers do not always make enough use of assessment when planning lessons. In some lessons teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. This helps pupils to access the curriculum and make the same progress as other pupils in the class.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Use of computers in other subjects is well planned.
- Teachers are confident.
- Pupils are keen to use computers.
- Leadership of the subject is good.
- There are no assessment procedures.

Commentary

51. Standards in Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The achievement of all pupils is satisfactory. Pupils learn a good range of skills between Year 3 and Year 6 because the topics are well planned. Those with SEN get appropriate support from teachers, teaching assistants and their classmates.
52. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are confident when teaching in the computer suite. They use the projector well to demonstrate to pupils how a particular feature of a program works but, as the school knows, would benefit from the greater flexibility of an interactive whiteboard. Pupils are interested in working with computers. They concentrate well during explanations but occasionally give in to temptation and press the keys when asked not to. Pupils in Year 6 talk with authority about the programs they can use. Spreadsheets and 'Power Point' presentations are two topics that they enjoy and feel confident with. They like using their skills in other subjects. They are well aware of the need for safety when using the Internet and e-mail. They, and their parents, have signed a form to say that they will use these sensibly.
53. Because the school has had a computer suite for a long time pupils are confident of their ability to use programs. Year 6 pupils programmed a bug to move around a screen. The bug left a line that drew a house. This task allowed everyone to succeed at their own level of difficulty. Some pupils created the battlements of a castle, which was particularly good because it required so much concentration and skill. Topics build on previously learned skills. In Year 3 they use a blank page to create a text box and import a picture well. In Year 5 they use a similar concept to create a greetings card by modifying a template, importing a picture and creating their own text box. However, there are no assessment procedures in place and this limits the teachers' ability to build on what pupils already know and can do.
54. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge, which he shares with colleagues. Many of the teachers have considerable talents when using computers and most have and make full use of, school laptops. He monitors teachers' plans and offers helpful suggestions, which improve the quality of the lessons. He is preparing a portfolio of pupils' work which will help teachers better understand the standards required.
55. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards appear to have dropped but they have not in reality because the knowledge and skills pupils now need are much higher than at the time of the last inspection. The facilities in the computer suite have been upgraded and teachers and pupils make far greater use of computers in all areas of the curriculum.

Use of information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. Pupils use their skills well in other subjects and have well planned opportunities to do so. They use the Internet to research for history and geography topics, for instance work on natural disasters. Year 5 pupils create a newspaper for the Vikings in history whilst Year 4 pupils edit text to change a story from being 'scary' to being 'funny'. There are good links with literacy too. Some pupils paraphrase a traditional tale, like Cinderella, the challenge being to rewrite it in less than 100 words!

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education (RE) is **satisfactory**. The subject is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are in line with expectations and pupils achieve satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning appropriately includes a variety of multicultural religious experiences.
- Resources are good.
- Standards are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 3.
- There is no assessment policy and consequently assessment does not inform curriculum planning.
- There is insufficient monitoring of the teaching and learning.

Commentary

57. From the evidence available in books, discussions with pupils and the two lessons seen, it is evident that standards in religious education are average and achievement is satisfactory overall. However pupils' achievement in Year 3 is unsatisfactory. Overall, standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
58. Pupils in Year 3 are only just beginning to explore and consider their own activities and compare them with simple moral codes. Most pupils understand moral concepts, for example, of friendship and can talk generally about caring for others but very few can express their ideas in any religious sense. By Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are in line with the expectations of the county agreed syllabus for this age. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the subject is not covered consistently between classes. There is little or no written work in Year 3. The Rites of Passage in Judaism are well understood by pupils in Year 4. Some teachers particularly in Years 5 and 6 have encouraged pupils to produce some very interesting work on the Jewish, Muslim and Hindu symbols and festivals. Pupils with SEN and English as an additional language are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their capability and are making satisfactory progress.
59. Teaching and learning was satisfactory in the two lessons seen in Years 5 and 6. However, it is not possible from this limited evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
60. The management of the subject is satisfactory. However, there is no assessment policy for staff to use when assessing pupils' attainments or to ensure that lesson planning is systematic and makes progressive demands on pupils. Some teachers have insufficient knowledge of the subject to enable them to use the agreed syllabus to the pupils' best advantage and there is little in the way of monitoring of the teaching and learning.

History and geography

61. Few lessons were seen in history and geography. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. From the scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to pupils, standards are broadly in line with expectations.
62. A commercially produced scheme of work is continually reviewed and adapted to meet the particular needs of the school and teachers' planning indicates appropriate coverage of the recommended programmes of study. However, too often the same tasks are set for all pupils, which restricts the rate of progress, particularly for more able pupils. The school has identified the need to increase the use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning in the subjects. Good use is made of a range of visits and visitors to make the work interesting and relevant. In geography, for example, Year 4 pupils have visited a contrasting locality.

63. In conversation pupils have good attitudes to both subjects. They clearly enjoy them and are keen to explain what they know. The leadership and management of the subjects are satisfactory. The co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and sample pupils' work but do not monitor teaching on a regular basis. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and are not sufficiently informative to enable pupils to have a clear understanding of what aspects of historical and geographical skills they need to improve upon.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

These subjects were sampled so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. No lessons were seen in art and design, one in music, two in design and technology and three in physical education.

64. In **art and design** a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils, show that standards are in line with national expectations in Year 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
65. From the time pupils start school they are encouraged to experiment with paint and colour, to explore pattern, to work from observation and imagination and to respond to examples of art in the world around them. The topics chosen cover the National Curriculum requirements appropriately. Some Year 3 pupils have created effective paintings of squares and rectangles in the style of Mondrian using ICT. Year 4 have developed their observational skills drawing flowers into an interesting collage. Year 5 have produced some effective scenes colour mixing and matching warm and cold colours. Their pencil sketches using shade and tone and their use of watercolour show an eye for detail. Year 6 have produced very effective pictures in the style of Andy Warhol. Their extended photographs were lively and showed their enthusiasm for the project. This competence in using dry media, pencils, charcoal etc stands them in good stead when they leave for secondary school. There is good development of practical skills in some classes, although this depends largely on the subject expertise of the teacher. Pupils with SEN achieve well overall and transfer the skills they acquire to other subjects.
66. The subject co-ordinator is committed to reviewing the scheme of work and plans the art curriculum well. There is a whole-school overview to monitor pupils' progress, although assessment is still informal and does not adequately inform curriculum planning. Teaching is monitored too infrequently for the co-ordinator to improve how art skills are taught through the school.
67. In **design and technology** a review of teachers' planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator indicate that the topics chosen cover the National Curriculum requirements in a satisfactory way. Year 6 pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and explain the design, make and evaluate process soundly. They have a good recall of a Year 5 topic on 'cams' and describe in some detail the effects of different centres of rotation. They have a growing awareness of safety concerns and know that tools have to be used in a sensibly way.
68. The management of design and technology is satisfactory. Resources have been well organised to help teachers, for instance every class has a box of equipment at the beginning of a project. The co-ordinator is a knowledgeable role model for colleagues. She monitors teachers' planning and offers comments for improvement. Because her non-contact time is the same time each week she is not able to work alongside colleagues to improve their skills and knowledge. There are no assessment procedures in this subject and so pupils' previous skills and knowledge are not always built on in the next topic.
69. In **physical education** a review of teachers' planning and a discussion with the co-ordinator indicates that the school offers a good curriculum. Swimming provision is particularly strong and pupils have the opportunity to go on residential camps in Year 5 and Year 6 at which they experience outdoor activities. Staff expertise is used well. A physical education specialist takes

all the swimming sessions and some of the games lessons for her colleagues. Accommodation is good because the school has large fields, the use of a nearby swimming pool, a playground and a large hall, which is available for use all the time.

70. Records indicate that pupils' swimming ability is above the national expectation. For instance, more than half of Years 6 and 5 pupils already meet the requirement of swimming 25 metres on their front and back. Most pupils are keen on physical education lessons, enjoy swimming and the range of clubs.
71. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to review what is to be taught and has made a complete inventory of equipment since being appointed in September. She and her colleagues give freely of their time to organise a good range of sports clubs for the pupils. They also organise inter-school sports and both boys' and girls' teams meet with some success. The more able pupils are encouraged to join teams outside of school like the local swimming club and soccer team. There are no assessment procedures and this means that lessons do not always build on what pupils already know and can do.
72. In **music** pupils worked well together and enjoyed creating sounds to accompany a cartoon strip in Year 6. They have good opportunities to develop their musical skills outside the classroom. They take part in musical performances and have the opportunity to learn instruments including strings, woodwind, brass and percussion. The subject leader is new to the role and has not yet had an opportunity to check the quality of teaching and learning. However, she has identified areas for improvement within the curriculum and an action plan is in place.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

73. All pupils have access to citizenship as part of the teaching in religious education, history, geography, science and personal, social and health education. However schemes of work do not make clear how pupils' skills of participation and responsible action can be developed in some of these subjects. Much of this takes place through PSHE, which is taught as a discrete subject. This is also supplemented by work in class based assemblies. As only one PSHE lessons was seen it is not possible to make a judgement about the impact of this provision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

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

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