

INSPECTION REPORT

WELLHOUSE JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Wellhouse, near Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107647

Headteacher: Mr Norman Bailey

Lead inspector: Martin Kerly

Dates of inspection: 1st - 2nd March 2004

Inspection number: 258333

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	53
School address:	Lower Wellhouse Golcar Huddersfield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	HD7 4ES
Telephone number:	(01484) 222 255
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Holland
Date of previous inspection:	9 th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wellhouse Junior and Infant School is a very small primary school with just 53 pupils on roll from ages four to 11. This is much smaller than the national average of around 240 pupils. This number is slowly declining, in line with demographic changes in the community. The school is in recently-refurbished accommodation on two floors in a building which is leased from non-conformist chapel, on a steep hillside in a semi-rural area, some four miles from the town of Huddersfield in West Yorkshire. The pupils live in the village community of Wellhouse and in neighbouring settlements along the side of the valley. The majority of them live in privately-owned homes. Around one-quarter of the pupils' parents choose to send their children to this school rather than one nearer to their homes. The pupils are organised into three mixed-age classes. Almost all the pupils are white British, with a tiny minority being Asian British. There are no asylum seekers, refugees or travellers, and no pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition and for whom English is an additional language. Around 10 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is below the national average. Some 10 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs; this is below the national average. Two per cent of the pupils have statements of special educational needs; this is in line with the national average. The school has no special status or designation. It has recently applied for the Artsmark recognition; this bid has been made together with other schools in the local 'Heights Cluster'.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12783	Martin Kerly	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education
11439	Jill Moore	Lay inspector	
28686	Liz Walker	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Religious education Personal, social and health education Foundation Stage Special educational needs English as an additional language

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	7 - 9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10 - 15
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15 - 18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	19 - 32
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Wellhouse Junior and Infant school is a **sound** school with many strengths but some significant weaknesses. It provides satisfactory value for money. The pupils enter the school with abilities broadly in line with national expectations. By the time they leave Year 6, most have reached the nationally-expected standards and some have exceeded them.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good and they all benefit from the caring and supportive ethos of this very small school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is good and pupils achieve well in these years, especially in English and mathematics.
- Standards achieved in English in Years 1 and 2 are not high enough.
- Governance is unsatisfactory despite individual governors' commitment and support.
- The effectiveness of some aspects of management is adversely affected by the 70 per cent teaching commitment of the headteacher.
- The provision for children in the Reception Year is unsatisfactory, as is their achievement.
- The school works very successfully with other schools and agencies to enrich the curriculum.
- The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is very good, and it is good for their spiritual and cultural development.

The school has made sound progress since the last inspection. The indoor accommodation has improved significantly and there is now a clear curriculum plan to ensure balance, breadth and progression over time. The key subjects of English, mathematics and information and communications technology (ICT) are well led, and the school is working hard to improve standards and provision in ICT. Two previously reported weaknesses have yet to be addressed. They are the outdoor provision and facilities for the under-fives, and the governors' strategic role within the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2 in 1999.

Figures are not included for 2001 and 2002 as in those years there were fewer than 10 pupils in Year 6.

The overall achievement by most pupils is sound during their time in the school. Standards achieved in this very small school fluctuate considerably from year to year and should be viewed with caution. Children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with national expectations, with some pupils below, and few exceeding them. Achievement during the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory, particularly in language, creative and physical development. By the end of Year 2, pupils' achievement in mathematics and science is sound but their achievement in reading and writing is not high enough. Achievement in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is good overall and by the end of Year 6, pupils of all abilities have achieved well, as indicated in the table above. Standards in music and swimming are above national expectations. Standards in ICT remain below national expectations. **Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good as is their**

moral and social development. Their spiritual and cultural development is good. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **sound education** for its pupils. The provision is stronger in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, where it is frequently good, than it is in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2, where some aspects are **unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall.** Teaching and learning in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are good, with well planned and presented stimulating activities for each year group in the mixed-age classes. Teaching and learning for the very small group of Reception-aged children are unsatisfactory, being constrained by the demands of being in a class with mainly Year 1 and 2 pupils. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is sound except in English where it is unsatisfactory, with expectations being too low so pupils do not learn at a fast enough rate.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall with a good range of experiences. The curriculum for the four-year-old children is not yet sufficiently developed in line with national guidance. The school has good resources to support learning. **Care, guidance and support of pupils are good.** The staff team is alert to pupils' needs but not all procedures are appropriately documented or training schedules up-to-date. **There is a good partnership with parents, and the very good links with other schools strengthen the overall provision.**

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are **unsatisfactory.** Leadership by the headteacher is **sound.** The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory** as are some aspects of management, constrained by the extensive teaching commitment of the headteacher. Individual governors support the school well but, collectively, the governing body does not have a clear enough view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school nor does it contribute sufficiently to strategic decision-making. Some procedures for which governors are responsible are not appropriately documented. The deputy headteacher provides very good support for the headteacher. Together they monitor the work of the school but there is a lack of rigorous evaluation of the performance of the school and of systematic actions to address issues identified. There is an over-reliance on informal discussion and decision-making within this very small team, with insufficient documentation to confirm decisions, practice or expectations.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views about the school. Almost all parents feel pleased with their children's progress and value the teaching, leadership and support given to them. The pupils feel valued and cared for and know there is always someone ready to support them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure the curricular provision meets the specific needs of the four-year-old children in the mixed-age class.
- Raise the achievement of pupils in English in Years 1 and 2.
- Establish and implement a systematic self-evaluation schedule to enable rigorous follow-up of identified weaknesses in performance across the school.
- Ensure all key policy decisions and actions are documented so that they can be followed up.
- Ensure the governing body are better informed about, and more actively involved in the work of, the school and are supported to fulfil all their statutory responsibilities.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all formal policies and documents are in place confirming the current working practices and complying fully with statutory requirements, particularly: the governors' annual report to parents, arrangements for child protection and health and safety risk assessments.
- Ensure training schedules are maintained for child protection and health and safety.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards of attainment on entry to the school fluctuate considerably from year to year, owing to the low numbers of children joining this very small school. However, over time, the majority of children enter with standards broadly in line with national expectations. Some are below national expectations and a few above expectations. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with national expectations except in English where they are below. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly in line with national expectations in all three core subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory overall, being constrained by the limited physical resources and the influence on the learning ethos of the more formal curriculum for Year 1 and 2 pupils.
- Standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 are below national expectations.
- Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 are securely in line with the national expectations.
- In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, the majority of pupils of all abilities achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- A relatively high proportion of pupils are likely to exceed national expectations in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in 2004 and 2005.
- Standards in music and in swimming are above national expectations.
- Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is improving but standards are not yet in line with national expectations.

Commentary

1. The relatively large group of Year 6 pupils who left the school in the summer of 2003 contained a larger than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The attainment of these pupils had been substantially below national expectations when they entered the school and they had attained well below national averages at the end of Year 2 in 1999. Although these pupils' attainment was below the national average for English, mathematics and science, their achievement over time was good, because they reached higher levels than might be expected nationally, given their starting points. This achievement was commendable.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.5	26.8
mathematics	26.5	26.8
science	27.5	28.6

¹ There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures for the previous year not included as the cohort size was below 10.

¹ All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age 11 is 27. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

2. All judgements on standards achieved by each of the current year groups in the school have to be viewed with extreme caution, given that the size of each group is no more than 7 pupils. The achievement of the children in the Foundation Stage, who share a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2, is good in personal and social development and in mathematical development

and is sound in knowledge and understanding of the world. It is unsatisfactory overall as children do not make sufficient progress in aspects of language, physical and creative development. Overall attainment is below national expectations as not enough children will attain standards expected by the end of the Reception Year, especially in language, creative and physical development.

3. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 in English is unsatisfactory, with the pupils making too little progress. Achievement in other subjects in Years 1 and 2 is sound except in ICT, where pupils are not yet benefiting from the good facilities offered by the new ICT suite. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in Years 1 and 2. Test results over time in reading, writing and mathematics show an overall upward trend in attainment; this is most noticeable in mathematics. However, standards in reading have declined and although standards in writing have improved, they are still below the national average. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with national expectations in mathematics, science, art and design and history. They are above national expectations in music and below national expectations in ICT.
4. Achievement in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is good overall for pupils of all abilities, especially in English and mathematics, and a higher than average proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are expected to exceed national expectations in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 and 2005. Pupils with special educational needs in these year groups respond well to the good provision by the teachers and careful support from teaching assistants and they achieve well. The school sets challenging targets for all pupils to achieve by the end of Year 6, based on valid performance data. In recent years, almost all the pupils have achieved the targets set for them. The standards in Years 5 and 6 are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science, with a proportion of the pupils performing above national expectations, particularly in English. Standards in music are above national expectations. They are below expectations in ICT.
5. Achievement in science is sound across the school as it is in other subjects of the curriculum, with the exception of ICT and aspects of physical education. In ICT, achievement has been restricted by a series of physical constraints beyond the control of the school. At the time of the inspection, pupils were beginning to make sound progress in ICT but achievement over time has been below expectations, and continues to be held back by limitations in software and teachers' confidence in the subject. However, ICT is being used well to support learning in other subjects and is contributing well to pupils' achievement in, for example, English and history in Years 3,4,5 and 6.
6. The pupils achieve well in music, singing, performing and composing to a good standard with obvious enjoyment. Achievement in swimming is also good. The substantial time given to swimming leads to standards well above national expectations in Years 4, 5 and 6. The swimming experiences are deliberately enhanced to help compensate for the limited provision for games and athletics. Standards in art and design and in history are in line with national expectations. It is not possible to provide judgements on standards achieved in geography, design and technology and religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and values are **good** overall. Boys and girls of different ages and backgrounds get along very well together.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Reception Year settle well into school routines.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and they try hard to do their best and to help one another.

- Very good standards of behaviour, and good relationships, create a positive climate for learning.
- Pupils' moral and social development is very good and they have a good awareness of spiritual and cultural issues.
- Attendance levels are above the national average and pupils are punctual.
- The school has developed good systems to support pupils' behaviour and care for each other.

Commentary

7. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities are good and, together, are a strength of the school. They are developed very successfully in this small school with its family atmosphere, support from parents and staff, and its involvement in the local community.
8. Pupils of all ages play and work together co-operatively. Relationships are good in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school. The pupils are well aware of right and wrong. Pupils have a good understanding of traditions and beliefs in their own community, as well as in cultures other than their own. The school develops the pupils' awareness of other cultures through, for example, its carefully planned programme of visits to the Sikh temple and to local galleries and museums. These also contribute well to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' personal development is very good. Older pupils have a range of responsibilities in their class and in the school, which are carried out willingly and successfully.
9. Pupils with special educational needs take their turn alongside the others. Pupils are keen to put forward their ideas about how the school is run, which they have done and, through the system of 'befrienders' to other pupils, they mediate and support their peers when struggling with social and emotional difficulties. They are aware of the needs of others and are willing to listen to each other about how life in school could be made better. They value and welcome the older members of the community who come to school and share their memories of World War Two, the current history topic, or read stories with the youngest children. The sensitively presented history work and the joy of performing in music each contribute well to the pupils' spiritual development.
10. Behaviour is very good and pupils are responding well to the school's procedures for promoting high standards of behaviour. They are confident and have many opportunities to be independent, as well as having various responsibilities that they carry out very well. Pupils are satisfied with what the school has to offer and most parents are pleased that the school helps their children to become confident young people. The school welcomes everyone, and all pupils are fully included in every aspect of its day-to-day life. No pupils have been excluded from school.
11. The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. Attendance is above the national median and is in the top 35 per cent in the country. Registers are marked and closed accurately. The parents understand their role in supporting prompt and regular attendance and reporting reasons for their children's absence. The system works well but when necessary, the school works sensitively with outside agencies to support punctual attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.0%
National data:	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.0%
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 school provides a **sound education** for its pupils. The provision is frequently good in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, but in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2, some aspects are unsatisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** overall and, as a result, the pupils' learning is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 respond positively to the imaginative teaching and learn well.
- The learning of the small group of Reception Year pupils is limited by the frequently inappropriate provision made for them in a class with older pupils.
- Teaching and learning in English in Years 1 and 2 are unsatisfactory.
- There is sometimes too little variation in expectations of pupils within the same year group in the mixed-age classes.
- Teachers manage their pupils' behaviour well and have good relationships with them.
- Teachers know their pupils well, enabling them to assess their needs successfully during lessons.
- Formal arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting need strengthening.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1	7	7	2	0	0

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

12. The quality of teaching and learning in the two junior classes is good. This maintains the good teaching reported at the time of the last inspection. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 overall is satisfactory except in English, where pupils make insufficient progress over time. All lessons are conducted in mixed age classes.
13. The infant class has three year-groups, including the Reception-age children who join the school part-way through the year. These youngest children are carefully supported and well cared for. However, the range of activities planned for them does not reflect the specific needs of four-year-olds as set out in the Foundation Stage curriculum. Too frequently these children are expected to join in with the activities planned for the six- and seven-year-olds. The absence of access to any outdoor spaces restricts the range of activities provided, and better use could be made of the facilities in the adjoining hall. There are very few times when children can explore an area and use their imagination to extend ideas or consolidate any learning they have begun through structured play.
14. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory overall, except in English where the expectations of pupils are too low and the range of learning activities is limited, failing to inspire and stimulate the pupils to want to write. The learning environment in the classroom is tidy and functional but lacks stimulus and does not provide opportunities for pupils to explore apparatus, or be enriched by displays and collections of high quality.

15. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, teaching is good and consequently pupils learn well in lessons and achieve well over time. The classrooms are imaginatively presented with stimulating and well-structured displays. Teaching in English and mathematics is consistently good, and sometimes very good, and is arranged to reflect the teachers' particular expertise and interests, with one teacher teaching mathematics to all the pupils and the other teaching English to all the pupils. Expectations are generally appropriately high with different activities planned for each year group in the mixed age classes. Teaching assistants are deployed well and make a good contribution, especially in English and mathematics, working with specific pupils who have learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties. This good support enables these pupils to learn well within the class structure. In mathematics, particularly able pupils in one year group work with pupils in the year group above to ensure they are fully challenged. However, there is only limited variation in work set for pupils within the same age group, in terms of difficulty of concept being taught and the amount of structured guidance being given, so not all the pupils are always fully challenged or extended.
16. The pupils' very positive attitudes, their very good behaviour and constructive relationships with the teacher all contribute to effective learning. Pupils sustain concentration for lengthy periods, and in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 collaborate very well together and enjoy problem-solving. Examples of this extended effort and good work ethic were seen in a mathematics session with Reception pupils comparing the weight of groceries and seeking objects of similar weight around the classroom, then comparing them on a set of balances. They were also seen in a science lesson in Years 5 and 6 where small groups were investigating the reflection of light. In a Years 3 and 4 history lesson pupils were writing most sensitively about life during the blitz in World War 2, supported by a most imaginative creation of an air-raid shelter within the classroom. In a Year 5 and 6 music lesson pupils were performing on tuned percussion instruments to a high standard. There are frequent planned opportunities for pupils of different age groups to work together to develop their investigative and problem solving skills, such as the 'Reading Buddies' scheme for Year 3 and 6 pupils, and the occasional special curriculum experience. Examples of this were when all the pupils were engaged working on science experiments led by a university lecturer, and when older pupils work together on problem solving, trying to move an egg without damaging it.
17. The small classes and mixed-age structure mean that all the pupils in all three classes are very well known by their teachers and the support staff. This contributes significantly to the effective day to day assessment of each pupil during lessons, enabling the teacher to respond and plan according to pupils' specific needs. ICT is beginning to be used effectively to support assessment. For example in a Years 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were taking it in turn to practise and demonstrate their understanding of fractions, with all their responses being systematically collated and presented for the teacher to consider with each pupil. ICT is also contributing well to learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, relatively reluctant writers in Year 4 were motivated to practise the use of apostrophes using a word-processing package in the ICT suite during an English lesson, and in history, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have effectively sought and used information from the Internet to support their learning about Tudor England. More formal assessment is established for English and mathematics, with systematic recording of progress made, and a system is being devised for ICT. In other subjects, there is no formally established whole-school system for recording assessments other than marking pupils' work and retaining informal notes. Homework is used reasonably effectively to extend and reinforce learning in the lessons. However, it is not always followed up in the classroom. In the infant years, there is a relatively loose system for pupils to take books home to be shared with parents, and an absence of ongoing written commentary on progress between parent, child and teacher. The annual reports to parents, whilst detailed in terms of experiences and pupils' attitudes to the subjects, which parents do value and appreciate, give insufficient information about how the specific pupil is achieving in relation to national expectations within the subject.

The curriculum

The curricular provision is **satisfactory** overall and includes a number of strengths. The curriculum for the youngest pupils in the Foundation Stage is not yet sufficiently developed in line with national guidance. The school is involved with a local group of schools working to implement an appropriate curriculum for these children. The school provides the rest of its pupils with a well-balanced curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The internal accommodation has improved significantly since the time of the last report and is now good.
- The provision for the Reception children is unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage.
- There is good provision for extra-curricular activities, visits and events.
- The cramped school site restricts the outdoor curriculum for all pupils.
- Good links with local schools help to enrich the range of curriculum experiences.
- There are good well-planned cross-curricular experiences.
- There is a favourable teacher-pupil ratio and the school is well resourced.

Commentary

18. The six children in the Reception Year work in a mixed-age class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. They are provided with a limited range of experiences covering the six areas of learning but this provision does not meet the national guidance for four-year-olds. There is a lack of specific independent activities to encourage them to work with each other, to initiate their own learning through play and to develop their independence. The absence of facilities for outdoor activities restricts the children from developing their physical and creative skills, and insufficient use is made of the school hall even though it is adjacent to their classroom.
19. The curriculum meets almost all the statutory requirements for pupils from Years 1 to 6, although some aspects of ICT remain limited and the games and athletics elements of physical education are impossible, given the limited space on the school site. The new ICT suite, along with the recent purchase of additional software and staff training, means that the school is now able for the first time to offer the whole ICT curriculum. There is a very good plan to ensure this is implemented during the course of this academic year. Religious education is addressed appropriately through the local education authority's agreed syllabus. The good use of the National Strategies in Literacy and Numeracy ensures the pupils' learning is improving in English and mathematics, particularly in Years 3,4, 5 and 6. The skills the pupils learn in these areas are used to good effect in other areas of the curriculum, as increasingly are their skills in ICT.
20. The school makes good use of the support that is available through the 'Heights Cluster' network of neighbouring small schools. This is helpful to members of this small staff team when they are taking into account the needs of all the pupils in every class. The pupils benefit from a good range of varied and interesting experiences through out-of-school clubs and activities, visiting local history museums and places of interest, and sharing a range of artists and writers with other schools. These experiences all help to boost pupils' learning and enrich the curriculum on offer, for example using partnerships with the University of York and a local chemical business for science investigations, which helps to provide a focus of interest and energy.
21. Curricular planning is satisfactory and has improved since the time of the last inspection. There is a whole-school curriculum plan, with two-year rolling programmes covering all the subjects of the National Curriculum, helping to ensure balance, breadth and progression in the mixed-age classes. Further attention is needed to ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are challenged by their tasks so they achieve well. Specific curriculum plans are drawn up every

year to ensure there is no repetition for any pupil. Pupils' previous knowledge and learning are taken into account.

22. Pupils work in small classes. They are grouped in a variety of ways, often in year groups but on occasions based on ability, especially for English, or according to friendship groups. Sometimes they are organised into groups of different ages to support collaborative problem-solving. The pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 work with specialist teachers for mathematics and English, enabling the teachers to use their skills and expertise effectively across the year groups.
23. The school has a very high ratio of teachers to pupils and a good number of teaching assistants, which is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when there were too few assistants. The three classes, though all of mixed ages, are much smaller than the national average. In order to maintain this ratio and avoid reducing the school to just two classes, the headteacher has given himself a very high teaching commitment. He is very aware of the needs and progress of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, especially in mathematics which he teaches daily in two of the three classes. The relatively few pupils with special educational needs receive good support towards reaching the targets identified in their individual education plans, and they make sound progress, with full access to all aspects of the curriculum.
24. There are very good links within the local partnership of primary schools; these are used to good effect in promoting a rich and varied curriculum. The use of the local sports facilities, the use of a storyteller and the good use of people in the local community to visit the school and talk about their experiences have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school contributes well to the local community, taking part in local activities, especially through its music, to extend and enhance pupils' opportunities to take part in local and national festivals. The school has recently applied for Artsmark recognition, alongside the other schools in the 'Heights Cluster'.
25. The school's learning resources are good for all subjects, given the small number of pupils in the school, with the exception of too few large wheeled toys and climbing equipment for the Reception children. There is now a good ratio of computers to pupils and they are accessible in the suite and in each classroom. The school has experienced considerable difficulties beyond its control with the provision of computers and the new ICT suite is not yet being fully used by all three classes.
26. The quality and condition of the internal accommodation is now good, following the recent extensive refurbishment. All three classrooms have been refurbished and have their own sink areas. There is a large ICT suite, a large hall and a separate dining hall, as well as several smaller rooms available for group teaching. The outdoor area is not easily accessible to the youngest children, restricting their curricular experiences. It is also inadequate for the physical education curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6. The school works hard to compensate for this limitation. All pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 attend swimming sessions in the local town every week of the school year. All pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend residential centres every year, at which they experience a rich range of outdoor adventure and physical activities such as rock-climbing, orienteering and canoeing, helping to compensate for the limited physical education facilities on the school site. During the recent enforced relocation of the school, pupils benefited from specialist teaching in a purpose-built sports centre. This arrangement has been discontinued since returning to the Lower Wellhouse site.

Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support of pupils are **good**. There is a strong level of mutual trust and respect between the staff, pupils and their families. The staff team is alert to the pupils' needs and sorts out problems quickly and effectively. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development

is good. However, statutory requirements and procedures, although met in practice, need to be formally recorded and monitored regularly, and staff need to receive appropriate training.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff team is committed to all the pupils' wellbeing.
- The school takes good care of pupils with special educational needs.
- The 'Befrienders' and 'Reading Buddies' schemes contribute well to the pupils' personal and social development.
- Pupils' views are listened to and acted upon, although there is, as yet, no school council.
- Arrangements for joining the school are good and provide a secure start for children in Reception.
- Procedures to ensure pupils' health, welfare and safety are working in practice, but relevant documentation is not all in line with current legislation, and related staff training is not up to date.

Commentary

27. All the staff and pupils know each other well and together they share a strong team commitment in a relaxed family atmosphere. Pupils trust the staff and are happy to confide in them. The members of staff respond sensitively and flexibly to pupils' individual needs, working with families and other agencies where appropriate. Time restrictions have contributed to the fact that statutory documentation such as health and safety risk assessments is not all in place. Training has not always been completed in a systematic way to ensure that all current legislation is complied with, and many policies are not up-to-date.
28. The staff team manages pupils' behaviour well. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. This helps pupils to develop self-discipline; by valuing others' feelings and modifying their behaviour, they gain self-esteem. Pupils enjoy the rewards system and see that the sanctions are fair. All achievements are celebrated and pupils are keen to share in each other's successes. A broad variety of visits, trips and activities, often shared with other schools, is available for pupils to widen their experience of life. All the pupils are given the opportunity to go on educational visits, including an annual residential visit for the older pupils. These are often activity-based, which helps to compensate for the school's lack of sporting facilities and outdoor space. Many pupils learn to play musical instruments and play in assemblies, local orchestras and concerts.
29. The school is alert to the needs of all of its pupils and takes effective steps to support their wellbeing. Formal assessment and recording systems are available to support teachers in providing advice and guidance, but teachers frequently use their detailed first-hand knowledge of each pupil, given the small classes, when providing advice and guidance.
30. Pupils learn about citizenship by using, or contributing to the running of, the Befrienders' scheme. Volunteers from Year 6 act as counsellors, helping pupils to resolve worries and deal with inappropriate behaviour. The school ensures that the 'Befrienders' receive appropriate training, and work within strict rules of confidentiality. Pupils throughout the school value the scheme. They understand how it works to improve behaviour, and how it helps them to form good relationships by understanding each other's feelings, views and motivations.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are positive.
- The school values the support of all parents and acts swiftly to resolve their concerns.
- The very good links with other schools are used well to inform the curriculum, policies and staff training. Expertise and resources are shared.
- Parents make good contributions to their children's education at school and at home.
- There is an active Friends' Association for fundraising and social events.
- The school is committed to keeping parents informed in a variety of effective ways; however, the pupils' individual annual written reports do not always provide clear judgements about attainment and progress.
- Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed that a few parents were not satisfied with the behaviour of pupils in school.
- There are many opportunities for the pupils to see outside groups in school and they benefit from a wide range of opportunities and initiatives.

Commentary

31. The school provides much good information to parents. The monthly newsletters are colourful, well set out and informative, as are the regular letters home. It is clear that the school values the contribution made by parents to their children's education and encourages them to be involved. Individual pupils' progress reports are often too wordy, however, and do not provide clear judgements about attainment. The poor quality annual governors' report to parents has many statutory items missing. Formal parents' evenings take place in the spring term, but parents are encouraged and welcome to make alternative arrangements to see staff if necessary. There are no parents actively involved in lessons at the moment but many help with visits and trips. Concerts and social events are well supported. There is an active Friends' Association, which provides valuable social activities as well as raising much-needed funds for the school. Members of staff chat informally to parents before and after school and any concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively.
32. The school is developing very good links with other local schools that support curricular planning, staff training and policy planning. The school participates fully within the 'Heights Cluster' and 'Small School Support Network', working with educationalists locally, sharing resources, information, methods and expertise. Through work with the local community, trips and visits, and shared group activities, pupils experience varied and interesting insights into the world around them. This helps to compensate for the limited opportunities that such a small school can offer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are **unsatisfactory**. The leadership by the headteacher is **sound**. The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory** as are significant aspects of management.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads well by his example in the classroom, and is strongly committed to ensuring all pupils are valued and supported, resulting in a caring and harmonious ethos for all pupils and staff.
- The deputy head provides good leadership and a very good role-model for colleagues.
- Leadership in English, mathematics and ICT is good.
- The governors do not have sufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, so are unable to fulfil their role as 'critical friend' or ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met.

- The headteacher's 70 per cent teaching commitment means that some important management functions are not fully carried out.
- The school operates smoothly with well-established day-to-day procedures.
- The recent forced move to temporary accommodation was well managed by the headteacher.
- There is a lack of rigorous self-evaluation of the performance of the school and consequent systematic actions to address issues identified.
- There is an over-reliance on informal discussion and decision-making within this very small team, with insufficient documentation to confirm decisions, practice or expectations.

Commentary

33. The experienced headteacher of this very small school has a 70 per cent timetabled teaching commitment, which is very high. He uses this to lead by example in terms of his good teaching and the stimulating learning environment within his classroom. His teaching brings him into daily contact with two thirds of the pupils in the school. He demonstrates a commitment to valuing all pupils and members of the school staff team and this ensures a fully inclusive, caring and harmonious ethos. Together with the very effective deputy headteacher, he has developed a clear strategic development plan which has had to be adapted to reflect very significant disruptions caused by the temporary relocation of the school to premises some miles away from the school for much of the last school year. The head and deputy head between them lead effectively the key subjects of English, mathematics and ICT. Within this very small staff team, no other subjects have formally-designated leaders; however, from time to time there is whole-staff discussion related to specific subject developments, all overseen by the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
34. The deputy headteacher provides a very good role-model for colleagues and takes a lead in curriculum development. He has developed a very good strategic plan to improve ICT within the school, and he takes a lead on curriculum enrichment and English, and on behaviour management across the school. The school has identified the need to strengthen the leadership of the Foundation Stage curriculum and is actively involved in a local cluster initiative looking at ways to provide effectively for the youngest children within mixed-age classes. The headteacher and deputy headteacher fully recognise the limitations of such a small team and have been instrumental in looking outwards to bring in additional expertise and innovation. The school is making very good use of its links with neighbouring schools, being actively involved in two distinct cluster initiatives: the 'Heights Cluster' and the Local Education Authority 'Small School Network'. The school has also sought external curriculum expertise and arranges frequent special events enriching the experiences for the pupils and contributing to the professional development of the staff team.
35. There is an all-pervading commitment to inclusion within the school. All the pupils are equally valued, and good strategies such as the 'Befrienders Club' ensure pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported effectively and are able to play a full part in the life of the school. The enriched curriculum includes a good range of performing arts opportunities and these enable all the pupils to participate, successfully enhancing their self-esteem. Talented pupils are encouraged in music, art and drama and perform in a variety of settings locally and as far afield as The Royal Albert Hall in London, sometimes with the related costs being met by the school to ensure no pupils are excluded.
36. Governance in the school is unsatisfactory. The chair of governors and certain of the other governors, particularly the parent governors, are frequent visitors to the school. Individual governors and the governing body as a whole are committed and supportive of the work of the school. However, there are only three formal meetings a year of the full governing body and no documented routine committee meetings in between. The formally-produced reports received from the headteacher and others are limited and consequently the governors do not have the detailed knowledge of the school's strengths, weaknesses and ways of operating that are required, nor the facility to enable them to hold the school to account in the role of

'critical friend'. There is no structured way by which the governors monitor the budget. The minutes of meetings indicate that the headteacher's verbal reports do cover additional important items. From time to time, as the need is perceived, decisions are taken informally by small groups of governors including the chair, but neither the decision-making process nor the outcomes are documented for future checking and accountability. Some of the governors' official documentation fails to meet statutory requirements. For example, the annual report to parents is very shallow in its content and does not include sufficient detail about the workings of the governors and the effectiveness of the school. The financial statement is very vague and incomplete. A number of other documents, formal procedures and statutory policies are incomplete, or out of date, for example the school prospectus, child protection and health and safety procedures, and related staff training.

37. Much of the school is well managed on a day-to-day basis, and it operates smoothly with everyone being clear about expected routines and practices. However, there are some significant aspects of management which are unsatisfactory, partly as a result of the headteacher's 70 per cent teaching commitment. The most notable of these are the lack of rigorous and systematic evaluation of the performance of the school and the absence of formal documentation clarifying policy and outcomes of discussions or monitoring. There are almost daily discussions between the small staff team about practice, pupils' attainment and needs, curriculum issues and routine procedures. However, very little of this is formally documented, making it very difficult to follow up. There is no systematic monitoring of teaching and learning with written feedback and agreement about ways to improve identified weaknesses nor regular or systematic monitoring of curriculum planning and pupils' work. Annual reports to parents are not checked to ensure they accurately reflect and correspond to individual pupils.
38. There are effective procedures for tracking individual pupils' attainment over time, and this data is used well in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 to help set individual and year group targets for the end of Year 6. Targets set in recent years have been largely met, recognising the high percentage attributed to each pupil in such a small school. The targets set for the current Year 5 and 6 pupils are appropriately challenging and yet realistic, and reflect continued expectations for rising standards at the end of Year 6.
39. The headteacher managed the unscheduled enforced move to temporary accommodation very well. He worked closely with the governors, Local Education Authority (LEA) school staff and other schools to ensure that disruptions to teaching and learning were kept to a minimum whilst the school was housed in offices in the local town hall. The headteacher skilfully maintained morale and reassured the parents about the impact on their children. At the same time, he, along with the chair and other governors, worked closely to ensure that the fundamental refurbishment of the school was completed in a way that guaranteed best possible accommodation thereafter, and addressed previously identified concerns about health and safety.
40. There is an appropriate performance management policy but there has been considerable slippage in its implementation which has not been reported to the governors. Financial planning is led by the headteacher and appropriately reflects the school's strategic priorities. The quality of day-to-day administration of the budget has recently improved from that reported in an LEA independent financial audit last year. The recently-appointed school administrative officer, together with the headteacher, has been addressing the minor recommendations within the LEA report, but these have yet to be reported to the governing body. This new officer is also working to use ICT more effectively in the administration and management of the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	232,089	Balance from previous year	22,100
Total expenditure	223,564	Balance carried forward to the next	30,625
Expenditure per pupil	3,493		

41. The relatively large carry-forward figure is in part an outcome of the forced move to temporary accommodation for most of the last academic year. Some planned expenditure had to be postponed which contributed to this large carry-forward. There was also a deliberate strategy to retain funding at a time of anticipated falling rolls in order to maintain staffing levels during the current financial year. The projection for the end of the current financial year is considerably lower.
42. The good teaching and learning in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, along with the very good relationships and pupils' attitudes, are the main aids to raising achievement. The greatest barriers are the inadequate provision for the Reception children, low expectations in English in Years 1 and 2, and the absence of formalised rigorous self-evaluation of the school's performance by the headteacher who has a 70 per cent teaching commitment.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**. This represents unsatisfactory progress since the last report.

The small number of children who enter the Reception group by January are taught in one class with Years 1 and 2 pupils. The organisation of the curriculum for this Reception group is not in line with the national requirements for the Foundation Stage curriculum. Although some of the teaching is satisfactory, there is too little good teaching and learning addressing the particular needs of four-year-olds, resulting in unsatisfactory overall teaching and learning. The school is working in collaboration with other local schools to develop a specific curriculum for the Foundation Stage. This has not yet been fully implemented because of the recent upheavals in school and the limitations of the classroom. There are very few times when children can explore an area and use their imaginations to extend ideas and consolidate any learning they have begun in a lesson. The children's experiences are not enhanced by sufficient equipment, structured play activities, or imaginative stimulus, limiting overall opportunities for them to build and develop their knowledge and their creative and physical skills. Overall leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well overall in personal and social development.
- They respond well to the routines of the classroom.
- Relationships between staff and children are good.
- The children are not given enough opportunities to develop their independence.

Commentary

43. Overall, the children achieve well in this aspect of their learning and development within the class of older pupils. Their behaviour is good. The children are ready to comply and listen carefully within group lessons. They are eager to respond to any adult who works with them in a small group. A limited number of activities are provided so that they can learn to explore and play alongside each other. They are very willing to listen to and work alongside each other in groups; these positive attitudes contribute to their good achievement. Achievement could be further promoted, however, by providing increased opportunities for pupils to develop more independence and initiative. Pupils' ideas are acknowledged and valued by staff, leading to good self-esteem, but expectations for pupils to make appropriate choices are limited by the lack of interesting and different tasks. The children respond well to the calm and happy atmosphere. They are introduced to school well. The class teacher makes visits to them at home which help to encourage them to start school. The staff team introduces them carefully to other members of the class and accommodates their needs so they are confident about the school life. All children are likely to reach the expectations for their age group in this area of learning by the end of the school year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is unsatisfactory; children are not challenged sufficiently to develop their language skills through all the areas of learning.
- The children's overall achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Children listen carefully and respond well to stories.
- Children enjoy using words and talk with confidence.

Commentary

44. The children enjoy looking at books but the range of books to which they have ready access is limited, being mainly the reading scheme which runs throughout the class for the older pupils. The children are making good progress in recognising letter sounds and enjoy the rhymes and verses which help them to remember. Teaching is unsatisfactory; sessions are too long and children are not extended or motivated by other activities and experiences to consolidate and use their new skills. The lack of opportunities to use the knowledge is unsatisfactory. Worksheets are limiting children's enthusiasm and restricting the opportunities to use their skills in other contexts. As a result, the progress children make overall is unsatisfactory.
45. The school is well resourced with a range of early reading books. However, limited access to this good range of books, from the earliest stages, is not enough to enrich the children's reading experiences. The children select story books with parents and read them at home; this enthusiasm is not shared in school and opportunities to share a good story are missed.
46. Most children attain the standards expected for their age in speaking and listening, and show no reluctance to talk either as individuals or in group sessions. Opportunities for promoting pupils' talk, in small groups and play contexts, need to be extended in order to increase the participation of all pupils. The way that activities are presented does not fully develop children's learning. The lack of planned reinforcement activities does not provide continuity or stimulus for children to develop both their oral and reading skills.
47. A number of children are recent entrants to school and are at the early stages of mark-making. The earlier entrants can write their name and are beginning to use patterns to form letters well. There are too few opportunities for children to use a variety of writing and mark-making tools and so they do not make sufficient progress in this area of learning.
48. Assessments show reading, writing and language skills are developing and children are making progress. However, this is not enough to ensure they reach the expectations for their age group in this area of learning by the end of the school year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with well presented activities.
- Children are learning to count well.

Commentary

49. Children show a keen interest in their mathematical activities and are in line to reach the expectations for their age group by the end of the school year. Teaching is good. Children respond positively to balancing different weights and using mathematical words to describe 'heavier' or 'lighter' or 'about the same' when weighing items from the shopping bag. Mathematical activities are well organised and children are interested and involved in the lesson. The children achieve well. They are able to identify simple two-dimensional shapes and are beginning to count and recognise numbers to ten. There are a limited number of good activities to consolidate their earlier learning, such as matching numbers and threading beads. Good use is made throughout the school day for counting the numbers of children in the group or class. Reception children are fully involved in all class activities; they work well alongside older pupils. The classroom teaching assistant works hard to ensure they are able to make progress at their level within the class.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have access to a range of resources to build and construct objects.
- Children have a good awareness of the past.
- Outdoor provision is not accessible from the classroom.

Commentary

50. Overall, the children's achievements are sound. The satisfactory teaching ensures they are likely to reach the national expectations in this area by the end of the school year. A range of activities is provided so that the children in the Reception Year can work alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2 to explore a theme based around Florence Nightingale. They use a number of role-play sessions to be injured soldiers and learn how to apply bandages and administer simple first aid to each other. They use the very limited facilities to play at hospitals. These opportunities are not extended by staff as well as they could be through creating a variety of areas and using interventions aimed at developing the children's thinking and understanding. Good provision is made so that children can make artefacts to support the theme. They use cutting gluing and joining skills well to make beds for the injured soldiers and re-create a model hospital ward.
51. The opportunity to extend children's learning using the facilities outside the classroom are unsatisfactory because of the poor access to outdoor areas. Large play equipment is used indoors but these times are limited and not set up with a clear purpose in order that children can learn from the experience. They do not have sufficient time to explore the outside world or to develop their imaginations in a variety of role-play situations.
52. The children share in celebrating religious festivals and experience a range of well-told stories from the Bible. They are aware of other festivals, for example Divali, and how people throughout the world celebrate religious festivals.

CREATIVE AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for these two areas is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outdoor play provision is poor so opportunities for physical development are limited.

- The large hall is not used to best advantage to support learning in these areas.
- Creative development is not sufficiently adapted from that planned for the Years 1 and 2 pupils to meet the needs of the four-year-olds.
- Children are not given enough opportunities to explore a range of experiences in these areas.

Commentary

53. Overall achievement in creative and physical development is unsatisfactory and the children will not achieve the expectations for their age group in these areas by the end of the school year.
54. The lack of outdoor facilities limits the scope of any imaginative play in the children's physical development. There is a very limited range of equipment which is available for use in the hall. These facilities are not readily accessible to the children and they do not use them as independent learning experiences in order to extend their imagination or physical development.
55. The same is applicable to the range of creative activities for the children. The lessons are planned for the whole class and whilst the children are supported well in the task, they are limited by the specific requirements and do not have any opportunity to use different media, texture, tools or colour as an independent activity or experience. They are unaware of the range of materials and are therefore limited to the guidance they are given during a lesson.
56. In a class physical education lesson, they join in enthusiastically with the pupils in Years 1 and 2 but the nature of the equipment and the enthusiasm of the older pupils limits the learning of the four-year-olds.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** but is not consistent over the school as a whole.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- Standards in reading and writing in Year 2 are well below the national average.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.
- Tasks are challenging, matching the needs and abilities of the higher-attaining junior pupils.
- Marking is good and gives clear guidance to the pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- There are good quality resources supporting the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

Commentary

57. By the end of Year 2, pupils are not sufficiently challenged in either their reading or writing tasks and their achievements are unsatisfactory. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations but standards in reading and writing are well below the national average. The overuse of worksheets does not enthuse or stimulate the pupils to work independently or to use a wider range of writing skills. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' learning is good in all aspects of English and their achievement is good. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Inspection evidence and the school's performance data and targets set for 2004 and 2005 all indicate that most pupils will attain around the national average, with a significant proportion of them

exceeding it. The pupils who left the school last summer achieved well in English in relation to pupils in other schools with similar attainment in 1999.

58. Although the quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory overall, it varies from very good to unsatisfactory across the school. There are significant variations in the way the daily guided reading session is used throughout the school. The good resources which are available in Years 1 and 2 are not used to good effect to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm to read and write independently. Spelling and handwriting are well taught and pupils use these skills to good effect in their work in other areas of the curriculum. In the Year 5/6 class, pupils respond well to the imaginative and challenging teaching. For example, pupils listened with eager anticipation to a poem about the Spanish Armada. They made good connections with their Tudor history topic. The teacher used the text very well to extend the pupils' use of language. They displayed a mature understanding about the style of the poem, suggesting vocabulary had been chosen to give it a Spanish flavour. They contrasted the previous poem, 'The Highwayman', as one which "made me feel creepy". They used expression and pace to good effect when reading both poems. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged well and pupils understand what they need to achieve in order to make good progress.
59. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, planning is good and lessons are well focused on the needs of individuals and groups within the class. Pupils rise to the high expectations the teacher has of them and they make good progress. Standards of written work in some pupils' books are above average. English targets for pupils are clear and explicit and their work is marked so they recognise how to improve.
60. Teaching assistants work well with teachers and there is good communication between them. Provision for the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good and they are well supported and encouraged to take a full part in the lesson. They are encouraged to work independently and to seek advice along with the rest of the group. They are fully included in all activities. This challenges them and they make good progress in most lessons.
61. The Year 1 pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class make insufficient progress as the additional support in that class is largely devoted to pupils in the Reception group. They work as a group, using copies of the same books and worksheets. Planning does not take into account the different needs and abilities of the pupils.
62. The subject is well led. The subject leader has good knowledge of the subject, is aware of the strengths and weaknesses across the school and provides a very good role-model for teaching and learning. He has introduced a series of interesting initiatives to raise standards in reading. These are making an impact and pupils are responding well to the new focus. Older pupils share books with younger pupils and older members of the community share story books with the youngest pupils. However, there are missed opportunities in Years 1 and 2. The absence of a reading diary which could be shared with parents means that pupils' progress is not measured or recorded each day. All pupils benefit from the use of the good school library. This has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

63. Language and literacy skills are used well across the curriculum. The focus on literacy skills permeates all areas of the curriculum as pupils progress through the school. Pupils make satisfactory use of key skills to report their science experiments or record their notes for their history projects, and they develop their writing skills within extended pieces of writing. The subject leader recognises this is an area for further improvement. He is working to ensure that pupils have a range of writing experiences in all subjects and the use of ICT to improve the quality of their work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good achievement reported in the last inspection has been maintained.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and the pupils enjoy their lessons.
- Greater differentiation within year groups and more focused marking of work are needed to raise achievement further.
- Pupils do not have short-term targets and are unclear about how to improve their mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- There are good resources for mathematics which are well deployed to aid learning.

Commentary

64. Standards in mathematics by the ends of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations, with a relatively high proportion of Year 5 and 6 pupils expected to exceed the national average in 2004 and 2005. In the national tests in 2003, standards at the end of Year 2 were above the national average but at the end of Year 6, they were below the national average. This variation between year groups is a direct consequence of the very small number of pupils in each year group in this school and not related to any change in the quality of provision over time. Despite the below average standards, achievement by the Year 6 pupils last year was good overall as a large proportion of them had special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) continue to achieve well over their time in the school. The good achievement reported at the time of the last inspection is being maintained for the majority of pupils. Given the fluctuations year on year, pupils' attainment in mathematics on entry to the school is broadly in line with national expectations; a number are below but few are above these expectations.
65. By Year 2, pupils' achievement in mathematics is sound. They have a secure understanding of the number system and are beginning to appreciate place value. They can count and record accurately, add and subtract single and two-digit numbers, understand the principles of multiplication and division and use standard units to measure time, length and weight. By Year 6, pupils have covered most of the mathematical concepts identified in the National Numeracy Strategy. They have a secure understanding of numbers, place value and the number system, the four rules of number, fractions and decimal fraction notation, and of the beginnings of algebra. They calculate using formal written methods for two- and three-digit numbers, including long multiplication. They are also developing a good understanding of such concepts as the 24-hour clock, international time zones and the properties of shapes, including perimeter and area. They can solve problems and interpret data.
66. The pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6. They talk positively about the subject and respond well in lessons. Behaviour is good in all year groups, and the older pupils in particular enjoy a very positive relationship with their mathematics teacher.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is sound in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The stronger teaching in the junior years is characterised by good subject knowledge, clearly presented expositions in which the teacher uses his good subject knowledge well to explain the new concepts, a sense of fun, good pace and very clear organisation. Teaching and learning is supported well by the use of good quality mathematics resources, an example being the set of small clock faces used by a class of Year 5 and 6 pupils during an introductory session, which required all the pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, to participate actively. The use of these clock faces also enabled the teacher to assess all pupils' understanding of the concept being taught. Effective use is

made of ICT in the junior years to support learning in mathematics, with pupils using, in rotation, the two computers in the classroom. Their responses on the computer are recorded and the teacher has a comprehensive record of each pupil's attainment within any particular mathematics concept addressed by the software. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not confident in their use of ICT.

68. All mathematics lessons are taught in mixed-age classes. The four junior years are taught by the same teacher in two separate classes. The teachers carefully plan their lessons to provide different activities for each year group yet within the same overall mathematical concept. In the junior years, this is supported by whole-class teaching sessions, with some variation in demand and questioning between the older and younger age group. In the infant years, lessons are often more specifically targeted at a specific year group, leaving the other year group to work with little or no adult intervention for extensive periods at relatively low level tasks. Whilst different activities and expectations are set for different year groups, there is insufficient variation across the school within year groups to take account of pupils' different levels of understanding. In the junior classes, the most able pupils in the younger age group frequently work with the older group, which helps to ensure they are appropriately challenged.
69. The teachers in all year groups know their pupils very well. They are able to mentally assess individual pupils' understanding and respond according to need during lessons, and they mark work alongside the pupils. However, evidence from pupils' workbooks shows that marking frequently omits clear guidance about what pupils need to do to improve. Pupils do not have short-term mathematics targets and are unclear what they need to work at to raise further their attainment. The annual reports to parents include a detailed account of mathematics covered but insufficient clear judgement about standards reached. In some year groups, particularly in Years 1 and 2, there is little variation in the comments written about the above average and below average pupils. The school has data showing pupils' progress in mathematics over time. This data, based on optional tests used widely across the country, is used well to set targets for the end of Year 6. Current data confirms the standards in Years 5 and 6 are in line with national averages, with a higher than average proportion of the pupils expected to exceed the national average by 2005.
70. Mathematics is well led. The subject leader has good knowledge of the subject and provides a good role-model for teaching, ensuring a high profile for the subject across the school. Despite this overall good leadership, there is insufficient formal monitoring of provision in the infant years where the mathematics learning environment is under-developed. The mathematics learning environment in the classroom used to teach all the junior years is very good. The school gives an appropriate amount of time to mathematics and the subject is well resourced.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Sound numeracy skills support pupils satisfactorily in their work across the curriculum. Whilst the National Numeracy Strategy principles are largely adopted by the school, there is no systematic planned approach to using mathematics across the curriculum. Some evidence was seen of mathematics supporting learning in other curriculum areas; for example, pupils were able to interpret a timeline in history and relate it to chronology and in a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, pupils were able to use their mathematical knowledge of angles and rotation to support their thinking about reflection of light.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good use of expertise from outside agencies to lead hands-on whole-school scientific experiences.
- Imaginative visits successfully enhance pupils' awareness of science in the workplace.
- The pupils have positive attitudes to science and enjoyment of the practical nature of the lessons.

Commentary

71. Standards in science in the national tests at the end of Year 2 were marginally above the national average in 2003. In Year 6, where many pupils had special educational needs, standards were marginally below the national average. These broadly average standards are being maintained this year in Years 2 and 6 and pupils continue to make sound achievement overall. The pupils' understanding of physical processes has improved from that previously reported. However, their attainment in investigative skills and scientific enquiry remains relatively weak. The pupils' knowledge, understanding and attitudes to the subject have been successfully enhanced by the very well planned and presented science day led recently by a university science lecturer. This experience involved pupils from all age groups, and was followed up by a visit by the older age groups to a local factory to see the application of science in the workplace. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been studying the solar system and light, and have a secure understanding of night and day. They have planted bulbs and are able to talk about the requirements to support living plants, including light. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have been learning about electricity. By Year 5 and 6, pupils have studied, and have a reasonable knowledge of, a broad range of scientific topics, including the solar system, life processes, materials and their properties, for example solids, liquids and gases, and physical processes, with an above-average knowledge of such things as filtration and heat exchange. Years 5 and 6 were investigating the reflection of light sources and the impact of surfaces on this. Their understanding of the processes was good but their ability to independently devise a hypothesis, plan and conduct an investigation, and draw conclusions from it was weak.
72. From the limited evidence available, teaching and learning in science are satisfactory. The only lesson observed was well taught, with a clear exposition and a good balance between teacher input and opportunities for pupils to offer their own ideas. The pupils benefited from carefully-structured activities investigating the reflection of light sources. However, there was no variation in the challenge for pupils; some pupils, particularly the more able, would have benefited from a less directed approach in terms of scientific enquiry and investigation. All the pupils enjoyed the lesson and maintained commitment throughout the afternoon, working well in small collaborative groups. One pupil with significant levels of special educational need was integrated well into a group.
73. There is no designated subject leader but staff collectively take responsibility for the subject, overseen by the headteacher. Curriculum planning is secure across the school and science is well resourced.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

74. No information and communication technology (ICT) lessons were taught during the course of the two-day inspection and it is therefore not possible to make definitive judgements on the quality of teaching and learning in this subject. Evidence was gained from the analysis of curriculum plans, discussion with the subject leader, observation of pupils using ICT to support

learning in mathematics and English in the classroom and the ICT suite, and displays in classrooms and around the school.

75. At the time of the last inspection, the ICT curriculum and standards were identified as areas in need of improvement. From the limited evidence and the school's detailed self-evaluation, standards have improved since the last inspection but are not yet in line with national expectations; similarly, curriculum provision has improved considerably but does not yet fully address all the strands of the National Curriculum in all year-groups. Pupils are able to use ICT effectively to find and use information either from CD-roms or directly from secure sites on the Internet. They then use and present this information well, for example the character studies in history of members of the Tudor royal family in Years 5 and 6. Their skills in text management are below national expectations, with many having limited keyboard skills, using just one finger and being unclear about the main function keys. This slows down their ability to create or edit text. Pupils have had limited access to control technology and the creation of multi-media presentations, and no opportunity to use e-mail; the latter is as a result of concerns over security of the provider used across the local education authority.
76. The school has worked very hard to improve the ICT provision but has been thwarted and frustrated by a series of events beyond its control, including two major burglaries of equipment and an enforced move to offices in the local town hall for most of the last academic year, during which there was very limited access to ICT equipment. The subject is being well led. There is a very good action plan which fully addresses all the weaknesses and has clear strategies for achieving its goals. The newly-created ICT suite has the potential to provide very good access for all three classes. At present, it is not being fully used, pending some installation snags and further staff training, which remains an urgent priority. A nationally recognised scheme is being used to promote curricular progression and balance within the above constraints, and the school is developing an effective model for assessing and recording pupils' attainment at the end of each unit of work. The school is fully aware of the continuing shortcomings within ICT and has all the strategies in place to address these fully during this academic year.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The use of ICT across the curriculum is sound overall. During the inspection, ICT was used well to support learning in other curriculum areas. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils were using a word-processing package to practise and develop their use of the apostrophe in the ICT suite, supported well by a teaching assistant. They were well motivated by this learning style which helped them to make good progress. A small group of lower-attaining Year 3 pupils were working with the class teacher, using a laptop on a similar activity and were engaged although they had fewer first hand opportunities to develop their own keyboard skills. Other examples included fraction work in mathematics and use of the Internet and art packages in history in Years 5 and 6 and an art package in Years 1 and 2 to support science. The digital camera is also used effectively to record activities and events and to enhance displays around the school. The school has plans to install interactive whiteboards into classrooms to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Only one lesson was seen in history, none in geography and none in religious education during the inspection. It is not possible to make judgements on provision, standards achieved or the quality of teaching and learning in geography and religious education. Evidence was gained from the analysis of curriculum plans for each subject, informal discussions with pupils, the scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work since September 2003 and displays in classrooms and around the school.

Geography

78. Geography and history are taught in alternate blocks over the course of a school year. No geography was being formally taught during the term in which the inspection took place. There is a two-year cycle of geography topics thoughtfully designed to reflect the two year-groups in each of the three classes, enabling all the strands of the geography curriculum from the National Curriculum to be covered and for there to be progression without repetition over time from Year 1 to Year 6. A study of the weather and what is going on in the news are continuous aspects of the geography curriculum and feature frequently in each class. In addition to these, pupils have studied different climates of the world and their impact on the landscape and daily life. They have also learnt about life in Switzerland as a contrasting country. Several displays around the school include maps and encourage the pupils to identify locations. Pupils frequently go on visits within the locality and further afield, enhancing their geographical skills. In Years 5 and 6, they all take part in a residential trip to a contrasting location, giving them first-hand geographical experiences.
79. There is no designated subject leader; the four teachers collectively take responsibility for the subject, overseen by the headteacher. Curriculum planning is secure across the school and geography is well resourced. Assessment procedures are being developed within a local small schools initiative. Pupils' annual reports reflect the geography skills and knowledge addressed but do not give clear judgements about standards achieved by the individual pupil.

History

80. History was being taught during the period of the inspection. Consequently, the subject had a high profile across the school, in classrooms and in the hall. Standards across the school are in line with national expectations and by the end of Year 6, pupils have made sound achievement. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have been studying life in the Crimean War, exploring feelings of soldiers and the work of Florence Nightingale. This work has been linked to art, personal, social, health and moral education and to design and technology. The pupils show sensitivity to the context of different historical periods. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils have been studying the Second World War. This work has been most imaginatively presented: an authentic-looking Anderson shelter has been built in the corner of the classroom and there are some very good displays of artefacts, including gas masks, the school log book, ration cards, medals and graphic photographs taken during the Blitz. The pupils are able to talk with confidence and interest about all of these.
81. The one history lesson seen was in Years 3 and 4. It was a good lesson in which the pupils were writing feelings about being in an Anderson shelter during an air-raid. Standards in this lesson were above national expectations, and the teaching and learning were good, drawing on the stimulating learning environment. There are good cross-curricular links within history. The pupils' study of gas masks embraced art and design with observational drawing of the masks, and design and technology with attempts to design and build different forms of gas mask.
82. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have been studying the life and times of Tudor England. They have previously studied Roman Britain. Work in folders and on display indicates standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. A well-presented display in the hall included models and artefacts, with some thoughtful questions to engage the pupils.
83. The arrangements for leadership, assessment and reporting in history are the same as for those in geography. The sensitive and imaginative ways in which the subject is presented contribute well to the pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The school has a good range of resources for history, and uses additional sources well. The pupils' experiences are enriched well; for example, they participated in a Tudor costume day in a local Tudor mansion, and lived as evacuees in school in a reconstructed World War 2 classroom.

Religious education

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the locally-agreed syllabus.
- There are no formal assessment procedures.
- Pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of other world faiths but there is too little work recorded in their books.
- Bible stories are told well.

Commentary

84. No lessons were observed in religious education (RE), therefore, it is not possible to make a judgement about overall attainment or the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' work in their books and on display, and discussions indicate they have sound knowledge and understanding about the faiths they have studied and they are on course to achieve the standards expected of them in these elements of RE within the locally-agreed syllabus by the time they reach the end of Year 6.
85. They recognise how belief makes a difference to the individual. Year 4 describe what they perceive God to be, questioning why the world is not a kind place but recognising that trust and love are important.
86. Year 5 and 6 pupils have visited local places of worship including the Sikh temple, and recognise the importance of holy books and symbols to believers. Too little work is recorded in pupils' books, but pupils have used their literacy skills well to write interesting thank you letters to the local Sikh temple, detailing the impact the visit made and what they understood. They respect different beliefs whilst showing some understanding of the common beliefs and the need to distinguish right from wrong.
87. Lessons do not take into account the different ages and abilities of pupils in the class and all tasks are the same. Pupils' knowledge of Bible stories is good because they hear a varied range of them and other stories in collective worship; these are well told and pupils are enthralled by the story. They respond well to the messages conveyed by the stories, understanding how important it is to have faith and trust.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and Design and technology

88. Two lessons were seen in art and design and none in design and technology, although there was some evidence of work in the subject. Pupils recalled well the basic skills they learnt when they made theme cakes for the Christmas party which they designed and then decorated but it is not possible to make a judgement on standards achieved in design and technology.
89. Overall standards in art and design are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is sound. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have limited experience of practising different painting techniques and using a variety of brushes. The teaching in art and design is satisfactory. It is directed towards the whole class but does not sufficiently recognise different age abilities in developing pupils' techniques and monitoring their progress. Year 2 pupils were adept at mixing colours to achieve the result they wanted but were too directed for the results to be different from each other. Their achievement in art and design is satisfactory and standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations.

90. In Year 3 and 4, as part of the design and technology lessons, pupils are making artefacts for their World War Two project. This demonstrates a good use of design and technology to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. They have used a wide range of skills to make a model of a barrage balloon, modifying their original design to make it more realistic, and using a good range of modelling techniques carefully so that the product would be authentic.
91. Teaching and learning is good in art and design in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Lessons are well managed, with carefully planned teaching to individual groups so that particular skills are matched to pupils' abilities. All pupils make good progress during the lesson.
92. The good support and teaching they receive assists the good progress they make in selecting tools and using shading techniques. Pupils' sketchbooks are good. Skills are taught progressively and then transferred into good pieces of artwork. The tools pupils make for printing their aboriginal artwork are very good. They describe the process from inception to conclusion, using a variety of materials and tools to cut the printing blocks. Art and design is well led; the resources for the subject are very good and managed efficiently.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards of singing and composition are good, being above the national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching in lessons and by visiting musicians is good.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to play to larger audiences and with other schools.

Commentary

93. Standards in music are good, being above national expectations. Pupils in all year groups achieve well in the subject. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Very good subject knowledge of the teacher contributed to the good teaching. The series of lessons is well planned so that pupils make continuous progress. The pupils' interest was provoked by the exciting introduction to the lesson. They are enthusiastic, reacting well to the challenge of a complex and difficult concept and skill. The engagement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good. Pupils evolved their own quite complex rhythms to make a composition which they performed well.
94. Pupils use musical vocabulary, correctly describing the notation in technical terms. The lesson is well matched to those pupils who do not have as much musical knowledge, ensuring that they make good progress. Pupils who have a greater knowledge were extended to produce detailed and complex performances. The good progress pupils make results in a polished performance, using tuned percussion instruments with ease and fluency.
95. There are good opportunities for pupils to widen their musical expertise. The teachers are very knowledgeable. The opportunities for pupils to learn to play a range of brass and wind instruments are good. They are taught well and make good progress. Pupils play in small groups in school and within a local cluster group and the school uses these opportunities very well to raise the profile of music both in school and in the community.
96. The pupils sing well and with alacrity; they are in tune and their diction is good. The singing makes a significant contribution to collective worship. Songs are chosen carefully both for their appeal and message, and to give pupils the opportunity to sing in two parts. The varied choice of music provides good beginnings to assemblies, the title is clearly displayed and

good information is shared about the composer and instruments. Pupils listen well and have preferences about the types of music they hear. Music is a strength of the school and contributes well to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

Physical education

97. Provision in physical education is **unsatisfactory**. This is a direct consequence of the very limited facilities on the school site.
98. Only one lesson was observed in physical education (PE) and so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards achieved and the quality of teaching and learning. However, standards in swimming are high, with 100 per cent of the pupils being able to swim one length of the pool and around 50 per cent of Year 5 and 6 pupils achieving certificates for 400 metres by the end of the last school year. Survival skills are also above the national expectations. All pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have a swimming session every week throughout the year. This is significantly more than in most schools nationally and is designed to help compensate for limited experiences in other aspects of PE.
99. The one PE lesson observed was a games lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 who were joined by the six pupils in the Reception Year. This lesson took place in the hall and was satisfactory, with pupils co-operating playing with a ball around a parachute. The learning of Year 2 pupils in particular was somewhat limited by the presence of Year 1 and Reception age pupils. No other PE was taught during the period of the inspection.
100. At the time of the last inspection, PE was identified as a weakness in terms of curriculum provision. This weakness continues through no fault of the school, and is limited to shortcomings particularly in the games and athletics aspects of the curriculum, with only a very small and sloping outdoor area and no nearby sports field. Since the last inspection, the school hall has been refurbished and the provision for gymnastics is now secure, with good equipment and sufficient space to use it. The school works hard to compensate for the limited facilities. During the forced move to different accommodation in the last academic year, the school had access to specialist sports facilities and teachers, where they were taught football, basketball and general invasion games skills. These opportunities were used well and were appreciated by the pupils and their parents. They have been discontinued since returning to the Lower Wellhouse site. Other ways in which the school helps to extend pupils' PE experiences include using an outside consultant to lead a fitness day in the school hall. Annual residential visits to an outdoor pursuits area provide all Year 5 and 6 pupils with the opportunity to develop skills in adventurous activities including orienteering, canoeing, rock-climbing and pot-holing.
101. The arrangements for subject leadership, assessment and reporting in PE are the same as for those in the other foundation subjects.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

102. Only one lesson was seen in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and so it is not possible to make judgements on provision, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning.
103. PSHE is an important priority in the school and is taught both discretely through such strategies as 'circle time' and integrally through daily practice and modelling of relevant issues. The curriculum addresses such issues as drug awareness and sex education, anti-smoking and water safety.
104. All pupils have a strong sense of what is right and wrong. Care and concern for others permeates the school ethos. The good system of 'befrienders', of both adults and children, gives pupils confidence that to talk is the best way to solve a problem. Younger children share stories and experiences with older members of the community and the range of visits and

visitors into school provides a good variety of experiences. Lessons are well constructed so that pupils can experience an assortment of emotions and learn how to work with each other to achieve good results. Citizenship is built into all areas of the curriculum so that by the end of Year 6, pupils are confident and have an understanding of how to assert their independence and recognise that rights have to be handled in a responsible manner.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	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	2

The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	5

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