INSPECTION REPORT

OMBERSLEY ENDOWED FIRST SCHOOL

Droitwich

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116905

Headteacher: Mrs. G. Nixon

Lead inspector: Mrs. V. Davies

Dates of inspection: 3rd - 5th November 2003

Inspection number: 259815

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 5 - 9
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 106

School address: School Bank

Droitwich Road

Ombersley Droitwich

Postcode: WR9 0DR

Telephone number: 01905 620384 Fax number: 01905 620384

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Stephen Hopkins

Date of previous inspection: 16/11/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small village school educates children between the ages of 4 and 9, the pupils transferring to a middle school at the end of Year 4. The school is not connected to the church but is endowed by a foundation. The trustees receive a modest rental income from a small house with which they make a small financial contribution to this and another school. About 60 per cent of the pupils come from outside the village and are almost all of white British heritage. Pupils come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds so free school meals eligibility is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly average. The school received an achievement award in 2001 and 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20350	Vivien Davies	Lead inspector	English, information and communication technology, art and design, music, physical education, Foundation Stage
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
21858	John Pryor	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is **a good school**, which achieves high standards in all aspects of its work. Teaching is consistently good so pupils achieve well. It has a very good ethos, is very inclusive and pupils' personal development is very good. Parents and pupils like the school very much. The headteacher offers good leadership and works well with the governing body to manage and improve the school. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards across most subjects are above average and are improving, particularly for more able pupils
- Pupils are achieving well because teaching is good and assessment well used to plan for future improvement.
- The school is very committed to inclusion and helps all pupils of whatever ability and background to do their best. However, some younger pupils need firmer rules about their conduct during discussions so they too can do their best and not interrupt others.
- The curriculum is very broad and pupils have very good opportunities to use speaking and listening
 across the curriculum. However, there is a lack of resources in information and communication
 technology that affects pupils' learning opportunities.
- Relationships within the school and with parents are very good.
- Headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by the teaching team and the governing body
- Assessment is well used to help pupils improve particularly in English and mathematics but the school does not review its year group targets annually
- The school building is cramped; in particular the hall is not big enough and has an impact on standards achieved for physical education
- Children make a very good start because teaching in the reception class is consistently good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end		similar schools		
of Year 2, compared with:	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	А	А	А	А
writing	С	В	А	В
mathematics	С	С	В	С

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Children in reception and pupils in Years 1 to 4 achieve well and reach high standards compared to the national results and those of similar schools because they are well taught and have a rich curriculum. In the reception class children are on track to reach the goals set in national guidance and some will exceed them. All children are making good progress and achieving well because of good teaching.

In Years 1 to 4 pupils achieve well and reach well above average standards in reading and above average in writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. The proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels is well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Standards reached in most other subjects including the arts and humanities are above average. However, standards in information and communication technology and physical education are average; resources and accommodation affect the quality of the provision.

All pupils have very positive attitudes to school. Their behaviour is good and they play and work very well with each other. Attendance rates are high and punctuality is very good. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good because lessons are interesting and pupils given suitable challenges so they do their best. In the Foundation Stage exciting activities and systematic teaching of basic routines help children achieve and many exceed the goals set. In Years 1 to 4 there is good teaching, and many examples of very good teaching in Years 3 and 4 particularly in the humanities and music. Reading is very well taught and inspires many children to love books. Pupils are encouraged to join in discussions in most lessons so they develop very good subject vocabulary. Teachers make accurate assessments and use the information very well to help pupils improve.

The school offers its pupils a particularly rich and interesting curriculum. School based work is enriched by local visits, visiting speakers and a very strong programme of events related to the arts. Very good links with local schools are used to support very good sports opportunities. Partnerships with parents are very good. They are kept very well informed and make very good use of opportunities to talk to teachers informally and during parents' evenings.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **headteacher provides good leadership** and promotes a very good ethos. She and the teaching team work very hard to create a dynamic curriculum so pupils enjoy their learning and develop well as people. The governors give the school good support. The school has established a clear set of priorities and manages the monitoring and evaluation of its work well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents think very well of their school and recognise the good quality of the opportunities it offers. Pupils enjoy school and their friendships. They value their teachers and feel very cared for.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Review the behaviour management policy to give more consistent support to younger pupils who find participation in discussions and sustained concentration difficult
- Seek ways to improve the building, particularly the hall, to provide better opportunities for physical education
- Improve the quantity of resources for information and communication technology

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. In the core subjects and in most other subjects standards are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- 2003 results show a marked improvement in writing and mathematics
- English standards are high throughout the school but progress is inhibited in Years 1 and 2 because of the overuse of worksheets
- Inadequate hall space has a negative impact on standards achieved in gymnastics and dance
- In ICT pupils are not reaching the above average levels they achieve in other subjects principally because of limited resources
- Standards of attainment in most subjects are above average. This is partly linked to high standards achieved in English
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and most will achieve and will exceed some of the early learning goals before starting Year 1

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.9 (18.3)	15.7 [15.8]
Writing	16.4 (15.3)	14.6 [14.4]
Mathematics	17.2 (16.4)	17.2 [16.5]

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 1. Since the last inspection the school has focused on raising standards and has been successful. Over the past two years all pupils have achieved the expected national standard in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has been successful in consistently achieving higher levels in reading. In the last year the numbers of pupils achieving higher levels for writing and mathematics are also improving so more able pupils are achieving well in these subjects. Inspection findings indicate that pupils in Year 3 and 4 are also achieving well and standards for the core subjects in these year groups are above the level expected nationally.
- 2. Pupils of different abilities are doing well in this school and achieving their potential. There are several reasons for this:
- Teaching is consistently good and classes are fairly small so pupils get lots of individual attention and personal challenge in lessons
- The curriculum is rich so there are lots of extra opportunities, including local links, to stimulate pupils and excite their interest. Subject leadership is strong so staff are knowledgeable and can adapt their teaching to meet the individual needs of their pupils.
- Partnership with parents is very good and parents help their children to do well
- Assessment information, including marking, is well used to track individual progress and set individual and group targets so pupils of all abilities do well.
- Pupils with special needs are identified early and given good support so they make good progress.

- 3. In the Foundation Stage children attain the early learning goals set in national guidance. Children are achieving well in all areas and particularly well in literacy. The very good levels achieved in reading in the school are nurtured here. Children are excited by reading from the start. They have access to very exciting story sacks filled with books and related toys which they are introduced to in school. Children are encouraged to take the sacks home, so parents are important partners in the development of reading skills. The development of speaking and listening skills is an important part of every activity. Teachers model language well and help children with speech delay to articulate clearly. Children develop well in the reception class. They learn to concentrate on tasks and co-operate well with each other.
- 4. Pupils in the rest of the school are committed readers who achieve very well. As they move through the school their speaking and listening skills, particularly their vocabulary, improve very well. Pupils' reading is well above average. In writing and mathematics results at the higher levels are improved, with about a quarter more pupils achieving level 3. They are confident writers who begin to absorb and use an extended vocabulary as they mature. The gap between reading and writing is narrowing because pupils have regular opportunities for extended writing and for using their skills across the curriculum. The abilities are well used across all subjects and contribute to the above average standards achieved in most subjects. In mathematics an increased emphasis on developing thinking skills has contributed to the raising of standards and achievements for the more able. In science, pupils are given good opportunities to investigate and their skills develop well. In the arts and associated subjects, pupils' high attainment arises from an enriched curriculum and good, enthusiastic and informed teaching.
- 5. Standards in information technology are average, so not as high as those achieved in other subjects. Subject development is more recent, so pupils have not built up their skills over time. However, teachers are developing good opportunities for pupils to use computer skills to enhance their learning across the curriculum. Accommodation and resources for the subject are not as good as they should be.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' good attitudes to school and behaviour and very good attendance levels have a positive impact on their achievement. They mature very well during their time in school due to the very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good personal development helps pupils to mature and develop confidence and a thirst for learning, which is very well developed by Year 4.
- Attendance levels are well above average.
- Pupils like school and are well mannered and happy.
- Behaviour in the playground is very good; there have been no exclusions over the last two years.
- There is no evidence of bullying, sexist or racist attitudes.
- Attitudes and behaviour in most lessons are very good except in a few lessons where immature responses by a few younger pupils are not consistently managed
- Relationships are very good and pupils feel a sense of belonging to the school and the local community.

Commentary

6. When children join the reception class their attitudes to school, their personal development and their behaviour are about those expected of four-year-olds. The school, by placing a very strong emphasis on all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, successfully develops pupils' confidence and improves their behaviour and attitudes towards learning as they move through the school. The emphasis on the arts and the good provision in religious education makes a strong contribution to their spiritual education.

- 7. Behaviour is mostly very good. The school emphasises the importance of dealing with moral questions and pupils are encouraged to reflect on matters of right and wrong, particularly during assembly. However, sometimes, particularly during discussion, a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 find concentration difficult and standards of behaviour dip. Teachers use a range of strategies to deal with these pupils but these are not always immediately successful due to some inconsistencies in approach. By the time they reach Year 4, pupils have matured very well. In all lessons observed they were keen to work hard, were self-motivated and very enthusiastic about what they are doing. In history they are very excited about their topic on the lives of people in Tudor times.
- 8. Pupils are encouraged to read and this results in an increasing love of books for all pupils. Art, music, and sport are also given a high profile during and after school. These opportunities for pupils to broaden their interests are taken with great relish and, as a consequence, many clubs are oversubscribed.
- 9. Pupils are very proud of their school and their village. Participation in a wide range of local events, and the value put on their local heritage, such as the celebration of Founders Day, helps build this sense of community. Pupils, governors, members of staff and parents all work very hard together and this has a significant impact on pupils' achievements and personal development. Pupils' cultural education is enriched by the emphasis on the arts and includes visits by musicians from Africa and visits to local places of worship. A visit to a place of worship of a faith other than Christianity is planned.
- 10. Older pupils enthusiastically carry out a wide range of duties, especially helping younger ones, for example, acting as reading partners. Pupils co-operate very well with each other in pairs and groups, helping them develop their social skills very well. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully included in all aspects of school life, due both to staff's astute awareness of the needs of all pupils in the community and to the kind and caring nature of the pupils who are friendly to all. Parents and pupils themselves say they enjoy school, and this is evident in the very high attendance levels.
- 11. Standards have been maintained and, in relation to attendance and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, improved since the previous inspection.

Ethnic background of pupils

No of pupils on roll 97 1

4

Number of fixed period	Number of permanent
exclusions	exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
n	Λ

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	
White – British	
White – any other background	
Mixed- White and Black Caribbean	
Mixed- any other background	

12. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Procedures to record and monitor attendance are very good and parents are very good in following them, ensuring that there are no cases of unauthorised absence. The high profile given by the school and parents to regular prompt attendance reinforces pupils' very positive attitude towards school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence				
School data 4.2				
National data	5.4			

Unauthorised absence			
School data 0.0			
National data	0.5		

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good and its work in partnership with parents, other schools and the community is very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good and pupils learn well. The quality of the assessment of pupils' work is very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are knowledgeable, work very well together, plan interesting work and use visits and links very well. However, there is some over reliance on published worksheets for younger pupils in English, which inhibits progress.
- Teaching in Year 3 and 4 is consistently strong and pupils are developing very mature attitudes.
- Lessons are interactive and teachers value contributions from their pupils during class discussions so pupils become confident learners.
- Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 require more consistent behaviour management from their teachers to help them contribute more appropriately.
- Teachers make very effective use of assessment information to plan work, set targets and inform parental discussions. They also provide a good level of informative written feedback to pupils when they mark their books
- Children in the reception class make a very good start because every aspect of teaching is good

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in [number] lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactor y	Poor	Very Poor
	9 (24 %)	22 (58%)	7 (18%)			

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages

- 13. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and children are provided with a good balance of interesting and appropriate activities. Their teachers work very well together and have very good understanding of the needs of their pupils and of the areas of learning for the under fives. They receive a good level of direct teaching through sessions that include phonics and physical education in the hall. Alongside this are opportunities to make choices from a wide range of interesting activities including role-play. Teachers make accurate assessments of their pupils and use the information to plan work to meet individual needs. They act swiftly if pupils require extra help with their learning.
- 14. In Years 1 and 2 effective and thorough teaching helps pupils to achieve well. Teachers are very knowledgeable about the curriculum particularly the teaching of reading. Although the teaching is good overall some lack of consistency in adhering to consistent ground rules during group

discussions sometimes slows learning. In Years 3 and 4 teaching is imaginative and expectations are very high so pupils are expected to do their very best in all aspects of their work and conduct.

15. Teachers make very good use of the school's regular assessment programme to judge pupils' progress and diagnose their strengths and weaknesses. The information is used to set targets, amend teaching strategies and inform discussion with parents. Marking and oral discussion is well used to give pupils the information and strategies they need to help them improve. There is good quality specialist teaching of music, religious education and physical education.

The curriculum

The well planned and imaginatively delivered curriculum provides all pupils with good opportunities for learning and developing. It is enriched by a very wide range of sporting, musical and artistic opportunities outside the school and after school hours. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject planning by enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinators is carefully based on national guidelines adapted to the needs of this school and all of its pupils.
- Good quality monitoring of the curriculum, and the readiness of all staff to undertake and share in-service training, ensure that the quality of the provision remains high and improves.
- The breadth of the curriculum strongly motivates pupils to learn and include the development of speaking and listening.
 Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Commentary

- 16. The shared ethos of the school, which emphasises a well-rounded education for each child, is very effectively promoted by the curriculum. The pupils respond well to the breadth of learning that they are given. The pupils participate significantly in the life of the community, for example, through music and art and design. There is very good support for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development from a range of subjects.
- 17. There are positive effective links with other schools in the area, especially the local Sports College that provides coaching in games and other activities such as judo. There is good and effective contact with the middle school to which the pupils transfer. The school makes good use of its own grassed and hard-play areas for the junior pupils though there is limited opportunity for the youngest children to choose their own time to play outside. The school is well resourced for the wide range of subjects taught, but the cramped accommodation affects the quality of indoor physical education, information and curriculum technology provision and some aspects of early years education. The current phase of the building programme will address some of these issues, but not all.
- 18. The school involves the parents in their pupils' learning well. A current programme involves the creation by parents, supported by the school, of "story sacks", which are bags containing articles and pictures to support a storybook. It is planned to have enough sacks for each child to be able to borrow one for use at home with the parents.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes good steps to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Very good support, advice and guidance are provided to each pupil. The school listens to pupils' views and they feel part of the process of development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very strong ethos of care.
- Pupils are helped to feel involved in the school and valued.
- Induction arrangements are good.
- Child protection procedures and awareness are good.

Commentary

19. All members of staff know the pupils very well. The strong family caring ethos ensures every pupil feels valued and cared for. Close attention to health and safety, child protection, fire precautions and first aid procedures ensures pupils work in a safe and healthy environment. Parents agree that the school takes very good care of their children. Good induction arrangements and continuing care and support ensures the youngest pupils quickly settle into school and make good progress. Very good assessment of personal and educational development and teachers' knowledge of every pupil, backed up by very good record keeping, ensures pupils are given very good support and guidance. Pupils in Year 4 are very confident about their move to middle school and speak with praise of the help given by the school. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are very effective and support children's learning very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school uses and encourages parental support very well.
- The school plays a strong part in the local community.
- There are very effective links with other local schools.
- Reports to parents are very informative and helpful.

- 20. The school recognises the very supportive approach of parents and encourages them to support their children's education. The very high satisfaction showed by parents' shows the success of the partnership. Help in the classroom is valued. Parents' help with outside activities contributes very positively towards pupils' very good attitudes to school. The school successfully involves parents at an early stage, helping pupils to settle quickly into school. Parents' participation in producing wonderful story sacks makes a major contribution in developing pupils' love of books from an early age.
- 21. Parents provide very good support to the school through the Friends of Ombersley. As well as financial help, the wide range of social events organised make a major contribution towards the family ethos of the school and the part it plays in the local community. The well-presented prospectus and regular newsletters keep parents very well informed about school life and how to help pupils with their learning at home. Reports provide very good and honest information about pupils' achievements and standards. All include targets for future development although sometimes these are not sufficiently specific. Provision has improved on that described as good in the previous inspection report.
- 22. The school has an open access policy which parents really like. Issues are addressed very well and to parents' satisfaction. The recent, open consultation on teaching arrangements in Year 1 gave parents a good understanding of the situation and its outcomes. The school strives hard to meet parents' wishes for classes with single age groups. Studies of the local area are used

extensively to support pupils' learning. Local people make valuable contributions to school life; and contribute to pupils' learning in religious education, art, sport and all areas of their personal development. This is particularly significant in pupils' involvement in village life such as participating in the Remembrance Sunday service or singing at the local residential home for the elderly. A very effective partnership with the local pyramid group of schools further enhances provision in these areas.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governors have a good knowledge of the school and help to provide strategic direction and plan for school improvement. The headteacher provides strong leadership, has a very clear sense of purpose and works effectively with her committed teaching team to raise standards and manage school improvement well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is very clear-sighted; she communicates very well so pupils, parents and teachers reach a common understanding of the schools aspirations and purpose
- Strategic planning, controlled by the school and its governing body, is effective and contributes strongly to school improvement and is based on good evaluation and interpretation of data.
- School target setting for pupils' attainment is not reviewed often enough so is not an accurate predictor of results.
- The headteacher and the teaching staff work very effectively as a team to manage the curriculum

- 23. The school's strength lies in its partnership with all those involved in its day-to-day life and its commitment to inclusion. The school has very strong shared ethos. The headteacher plays a central role in creating a harmony of purpose. Staff development, performance management and effective teamwork are all linked to a well-focused school improvement plan and the desire to raise standards in all aspects of school life. Currently the school is seeking the Arts Mark and inspirational training from the National Gallery was used to provide common understanding and fire the imagination of the teachers.
- 24. Subject leaders work closely together to develop a strong, lively curriculum. Good use is made of training opportunities to increase teachers' subject expertise. Monitoring arrangements have worked well and co-ordinators make good use of sampling pupils' work and analysing assessment information to improve standards in their subjects. Special educational needs provision is well managed. The programme for monitoring subject teaching, affected by long-term staff absence, is about to be resumed. Governors monitor the delivery of the curriculum very well and have very effective links with co-ordinators.
- 25. The governors ensure the school meets all requirements well. They are fully involved in monitoring the school's results and comparing the school's performance with national results. Governors listen to parents and try hard to solve problems. Recent long-term teacher absence in Year 1 followed by temporary teaching arrangements caused considerable anxiety to parents. Good levels of open communication kept all parties informed of the situation.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		
Total income	295 194	
Total expenditure	274 007	
Expenditure per pupil	26 345	

Balances (£)			
Balance from previous year	37 820		
Balance carried forward to the next	21 187		

Prudent financial planning and secure management and monitoring of budgets help the school to meet its targets for development and educational priorities. A budget surplus is kept at an appropriate level to meet the school's priority for keeping classes with single age groups. Decisions on spending and allocation of resources are made with a good appreciation for the principles of best value. Recent decisions on teaching arrangements in Year 1 have been based on good, open, consultation with parents and staff, and budget implications in relation to the cost of supply cover. The school secretary provides very good support, particularly as the headteacher has a considerable teaching commitment. The school uses time efficiently so each class has three substantial lessons during the morning and a lengthy reading session.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 26. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and has improved since the last inspection and is now of consistently good quality. Children enter the reception class as part time pupils at the beginning of the autumn term; after the half term holiday they attend full time. Their attainment is broadly average on entry. Many children attended the local playgroup before starting school. The children enjoy a rich curriculum with very good opportunities for language development. By the time they enter Year 1, the children's attainment is in line with the expected goals in all areas of learning including all aspects of physical development. Although children do not have free access to the outside area, they do spend a good amount of time outdoors with supervision using good equipment and achieve expected standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They also make very good use of the school's own woodland area.
- 27. Teaching is always good so children learn well. Staff have worked hard to create a vibrant working environment within very cramped accommodation. Children achieve well because their individual needs are carefully assessed and progress monitored. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that children are happy. Parents are very supportive and help with equipment including making imaginative story sacks. The setting is well led by an experienced and enthusiastic practitioner. Planning is very thorough for children of all abilities and key questions are identified. Although staff have improved their skills through training they have not benefited from attendance at joint training sessions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well; they enjoy learning because of consistently good teaching that focuses constantly on personal development and helps them to achieve the expected goals by the time they reach Year 1.
- Adults and older children provide good role models, and partnership with parents is strong which contributes to children's confidence.
- Children participate well in many activities that require high levels of co-operative play.

Commentary

28. Children are confident and willing to try all the activities on offer. They concentrate very well so work long enough on activities to make progress. They are kind and caring towards each other. Boys and girls from a variety of backgrounds play well together. Teaching is good. Teachers help children to behave and deal kindly but firmly with any small incidents including disputes in the woodland over ownership of sticks. Children are taught to take turns and share. Teachers also supervise their lunch break and reinforce good manners. After the first half term children play with older pupils. In their setting they co-operate well and follow rules when using large toys on their outside track-way. Children are able to change for physical education and teachers help them to acquire tidy habits.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good so children are very keen to acquire early reading and writing skills.
- There is very good emphasis on helping children to speak clearly and confidently and listen carefully.
- Resources for reading are very good and include very high quality story sacks that contain exciting books and toys to bring the stories alive.

Commentary

29. Children are in line to achieve the expected levels before they join Year 1. A good proportion will do better. Children are very well taught and there is a very good emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills during all activities. A few children struggle to produce clear speech and their teachers are providing good help and support. There are regular fun filled sessions devoted to saying and listening to letter sounds and rhymes. Children are encouraged to learn to match letter shapes when making their name using newspaper text. Simple, enjoyable activities are used well to develop handwriting skills. Observant teachers help children to improve their skills so that awkward pencil holding does not become a habit. Story telling is an important part of the routine and children enjoy looking at books independently. Some are starting to read and are given appropriate support. Parents support their children at home well and make good use of the story sacks.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to use mathematical language correctly whenever the opportunity arises. They understand, for example, the importance of measurement because it was essential to the running of their shoe shop.
- Teaching of basic numeracy skills is thorough so children grasp counting and ordering and can use these skills to select seven colours to complete a design.

Commentary

30. Children are achieving well in this aspect and teachers plan so that all abilities are challenged. They are in line to achieve the expected goals before they join Year 1. Children are eager to learn and are confident with the counting sequence to seven and many can also count out seven objects without help. Teaching is good because it is purposeful and interesting. Throughout the day children have opportunities to apply mathematics. During registration they make a daily count of those present and rehearse the days of the week before identifying the correct day. During a woodland walk they compare stick lengths and learn about *long* and *longer*. Teachers make very good use of counting rhymes to help children remember the numbers. They make use of mathematics to score games. Teachers identify likely opportunities in role-play situations so prepare carefully. Children, therefore, have opportunities to measure shoes, to develop vocabulary associated with two and to check stock by adding and subtracting.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good access to computers and during the autumn term they use a large coloured keyboard
- Topical events and the local environment are used well to extend children's knowledge and interest

Commentary

31. Children are acquiring sound knowledge in this aspect and may well exceed expected levels by the end of the year. Teaching is good and all aspects including stories from the bible are covered. A particular strength is the regular use of the local environment to provide interesting learning opportunities. Children have regular access to the woodland area so their knowledge of natural materials and seasonal change is good. Children, walking in the wood, were able to comment on the changes in leaf fall and colour since their last visit. Teachers were alert to vocabulary and helped children to explain and describe well. They also make very good use of longer walks through the historic village to extend their understanding of change over time. Guy Fawkes Night is one of many events used to extend children's' understanding of the world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills during daily outdoor sessions and in the small school hall.
- There is no direct access to the outside so children are restricted to planned sessions and cannot choose to go outside and play.

Commentary

32. Children receive good teaching and are helped to do their best. By the time they reach Year 1 most will reach the expected levels in all aspects including the manipulation of tools. Teachers are good at helping children acquire good habits when using small tools including pencils. Children benefit from daily well planned outdoor sessions when they can choose from a variety of large wheeled toys to drive around the track way or make use of the unrestricted space in the wider area. They are helped to learn about safety and awareness of others.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given good opportunities for role play in the imaginative and well prepared play area
- Children are tuneful singers.

Commentary

33. Children are in line to reach the required levels in this aspect of the provision because they have good opportunities to develop their skills over a range of learning opportunities including many that they are free to choose. Teachers give good support in this aspect. Many activities are made fun because they are linked to art and craft including learning how to count to seven. Songs, stories and music are regular features of the week which children really enjoy. Free choice activities

include lots of opportunities to explore colour and textures including black sparkly play-dough and natural materials including leaves and twigs.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are well above average throughout the school and pupils really enjoy reading
- Teaching is consistently good and pupils are given good levels of individual attention and challenge. However, pace is sometimes lost during class sessions because they are overlong or pupils' contribution to discussion is inappropriate
- The subject is well lead and managed
- Progress in speaking and listening is very good because teachers focus on language development in all lessons and discussion is encouraged and valued
- Assessment, including marking, is well done
- Results for writing show an improvement because pupils have good, regular opportunities for extended writing and for using their skill purposefully in other subjects
- Younger pupils sometimes use worksheets when they could record independently and develop their skills
- Pupils of different abilities achieve well because they are appropriately challenged and supported

- 34. Standards in English have risen across all aspects since the last inspection. 2003 results show that reading levels are broadly at the same well above average level as in previous years. However, the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in writing has risen significantly. This is a result of a drive to improve teaching and learning and raise standards by increasing opportunities to write for a purpose. Speaking and listening are above average.
- 35. Teachers pay very good attention to the needs of individual pupils so pupils achieve well. They often ask named individuals questions during class discussions so pupils of different abilities are appropriately challenged. During group and individual work pupils are given suitable tasks that match their learning needs. As classes are small, pupils receive good levels of individual attention and misunderstandings are picked up and dealt with. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support. Classroom assistants work well with teachers to help these pupils make good progress, sometimes making use of special aids to support their learning of, say, basic sounds. Teachers make good use of assessment information to set targets for individuals and groups. Marking is informative and gives clear guidance to pupils so they know what to do to improve their work.
- 36. Standards in reading are well above average. The school offers a rich literary environment through displays of work and information about stories, poems and authors. Teachers communicate their love of books to their pupils and story telling is an important part of school life. Parents are willing partners, give good support at home and are delighted by their children's enthusiasm for books. Teaching is very systematic and all classes begin the day with a substantial guided reading session where activities are well targeted to advancing pupils' skills.
- 37. Speaking and listening skills are developed well by teachers and standards are above average. They demonstrate language well so a pupil contributing 'number order' to a discussion picks up the teacher's language and starts to use 'numerical order' instead. Teachers respect their pupils'

- views and contributions during discussion so pupils become confident talkers. However, some younger pupils need more consistent classroom rules to help them make contributions to the discussion at the right time so that pace is maintained.
- 38. Writing has shown a recent improvement and standards are now above average. Pupils enjoy writing and happily discuss their work, pointing out pieces they are proud of and showing how they have improved. They know what they need to work on and consider that good presentation and handwriting are important. Teachers have worked hard to improve writing and provide lots of opportunities for using the skill as well as an extended regular writing time. Spelling is given very specific attention and pupils also practice at home. Younger pupils miss some opportunities to practice their independent writing because worksheets are used instead of a more independent response.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

39. The use of English across the curriculum is well developed. In all subjects seen, a notable feature was the development and modelling by the teacher of appropriate technical vocabulary for the subject, which she made sure the pupils used. Pupils use writing well to record their work particularly in the humanities.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics in the school is **good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics, particularly for the more able, have improved since the previous inspection as a result of good leadership, enthusiastic teaching and target setting.
- Pupils still do not achieve as well as they do in English.
- Improving problem solving skills in all classes was identified and achieved.
- Work is well matched to the needs of all the pupils so that all groups achieve well whatever their levels of prior attainment and educational needs.
- Pupils are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
- Introductory sessions in some lessons are slower than they need be, which leads to some inconsistency in behaviour management

- 40. Pupils arrive at the school with average levels of skill, knowledge and understanding of number. Nearly all pupils reach the expected levels at the end of Year 2 and a significant number reach the higher levels. When they leave the school after Year 4 standards are above average. The achievement of pupils of all ages is good. This is true of pupils of varied prior attainment, from different backgrounds and of both boys and girls. This is the result of the school's educational ethos that puts equal value upon each individual pupil. The good quality of teaching, small group sizes, tasks well matched to their needs and imaginative and flexible planning all contribute to this success. They learn and use correctly a good range of mathematical terms and expressions. The planning of the subject is based on national guidelines, but well adapted to the particular needs of the pupils.
- 41. There is a good balance between new learning and consolidation and practice so pupils are secure in their understanding of mathematics. They have a good grasp of number, shape, space and measure. There has been good progress in problem solving which was identified as a need in the school's planning for mathematics as a result of close analysis of test results and a scrutiny of pupils' work.

- 42. Of the lessons seen four/fifths were good or very good and none was less than satisfactory. The skilful use of questions and challenges maintains the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and interest in it. In a few classes too long was spent on introductory mental mathematics, which was carried out at too slow a pace. The pupils' interest flagged and too much of the teacher's effort had to be expended on maintaining attention. A strength of the teaching, especially of the two older classes, was the high degree of challenge given to the pupils to think and express themselves clearly. This deepens their mathematical understanding considerably. Some use is made of the computers in the classrooms to practice skills but it is not central to the lesson.
- 43. The subject is well led and the teachers, who are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and competent, readily undertake further training and happily share what they have learned with other members of staff. This enthusiasm for the subject is contagious and picked up by the pupils who generally enjoy the work and as a result learn quickly and well. Teachers' marking is conscientious, supportive and challenging to the pupils to improve. The resources for mathematics meet the demands of the subject well.
- 44. Mathematics as taught in the school contributes to the social maturity of the pupils as they cooperate together, share ideas and solve problems.

Mathematics across the curriculum

45. Pupils make use of their mathematical skills in subjects across the curriculum. In science they measure temperature and time intervals. Results are frequently displayed on a range of graphs including bar charts. Pupils experiment with shape in art and design. Incidental use is made of basic numeracy and pupils are encouraged to calculate mentally whenever the opportunity arises.

SCIENCE

The provision for science in the school is **good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been good levels of improvement in standards at both Year 2 and Year 4 in all aspects of science since the previous inspection.
- The teaching of science is good overall
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Pupils have a good grasp of scientific method and fair testing. Older pupils develop good skills in enquiry and investigation
- Oral work among some of the younger pupils in a few classes is hindered by a lack of swift response to requests or commands.

- 46. At the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 4 pupils demonstrate higher than expected standards in their knowledge and understanding of science overall. As they enter the school with average levels of understanding about the world around them this represents good achievement.
- 47. The older pupils have developed good skills for initiating their own investigations. They enter into lively discussions about the methods of investigation, using scientific terms accurately. They understand the principles of fair testing and scientific method and use them with a good degree of consistency. They understand and practise the technique of using what they already know to find out what they don't, for example when they were investigating the insulating qualities of various materials.
- 48. The younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 also manage the practical approach to science well. They discover the need for consistency in experiments in practice, working effectively in pairs or small

- groups, comparing the absorbency rates of different types of paper. At the end of the experiment as they assess their findings they are led to discover other factors that might need to be taken into account if the exercise is repeated.
- 49. The teaching of the younger pupils was generally good while that of the older ones was sometimes very good. The teachers present their pupils with a challenge to think things through, and demonstrate practically the need for accuracy in experimentation. Planning is based upon national recommendations suitably adapted for the needs of this school and its pupils. Lessons are well planned to meet the requirements of the full range of pupils' capabilities and needs in each class. This is in line with the school's focus on meeting the needs of individual pupils.
- 50. The assessment and the marking of pupils' work lead to effective target setting for groups of pupils and play a significant role in planning future work. Pupils have a good knowledge of how well they are learning. They learn new things quickly and consolidate their knowledge and skills very well as a result of the good quality teaching that they receive. Good use is made of mathematics in measurements and computations.
- 51. The resources provided for science are good and are used well. Records of experiments are produced on computers; and electronic sensors and probes are used to support investigations. For example, the electron microscope provided images for investigating fibres and the electronic probe was used for investigating heat loss.
- 52. The subject is well co-ordinated and led by an enthusiastic and very committed part time teacher who is very ready to innovate, to learn new techniques and improve the delivery of the subject. She makes good use of training opportunities and readily shares the information with colleagues. Science plays a full part in the broad education of the pupils in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 53. No lessons were seen so it is not possible to evaluate the quality of the provision. However, Information and communication technology was seen being used in other lessons and there was discussion with pupil and teachers. The school has worked hard over the last year to establish the subject effectively and raise teachers' confidence. Opportunities to use information and communication technology are planned well in other subjects. Resources are just adequate, each class has two computers and there are two laptops also available. However, the small number available to each class limits teachers' ability to demonstrate effectively and to work with all the pupils together.
- 54. Standards in information technology are average, so not as high as those achieved in other subjects. Subject development is more recent, so pupils have not built up their skills over time. Pupils enjoy the subject. Accommodation and resources for the subject are not as good as in many higher achieving schools. Leadership is very good and the subject is monitored well, so it is an improving subject. The school is working hard to improve with the limited resources at its disposal.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. The recently implemented teaching approach includes good opportunities for pupils to use their information and communication technology skills in English and art and design. They make good use of research skills in the humanities. In science, control technology was demonstrated effectively to measure temperature over time. They also have good access to skill-based programmes in mathematics and older pupils are beginning to use spreadsheets.

HUMANITIES

- 56. In the humanities work was sampled in **geography**, as there was no opportunity to see any lessons in the subject. From discussions with pupils and with staff, and the scrutiny of available work in books and on display, it is clear that standards are higher than those usually expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 4. The pupils achieve well since they arrive in school with only average levels of knowledge and understanding of the world. It is clear from the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and the good quality of their learning that teaching is stimulating. The leadership and management of the subject are good, as is the planning, which is based on national guidelines adapted for the school.
- 57. The pupils enjoy the work they have done and retain what they have learned about the world beyond the village, as well as about the village itself. They speak knowledgeably about what they have studied. Much of the work in geography is undertaken in topics that also involve history, such as seaside holidays in the past and today. The older pupils are beginning to assess environmental features and factors with increasing understanding. They are familiar with maps and can find significant places, such as the British Isles, on world maps. Good use is made of visits to the village and to neighbouring places of educational and geographical interest, and of visitors.
- 58. Since the last inspection standards in religious education and geography have been maintained and standards in history improved.

History

The provision for **history** is **good with some very good features**; it is a strength of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- History teaching is imaginative and soundly based on the development of historical skills of investigation and training in the use of evidence.
- It encourages the development of good quality independent thinking and the clear expression of opinions.

- 59. Pupils come into the school with average levels of knowledge and understanding of the world. By the time they leave Year 4 they have higher than average levels of historical understanding and skills. They have become "historical detectives" and their achievement is good. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject because of the contagious enthusiasm of the teachers.
- 60. The subject is well planned, based on national guidelines and very well adapted to the school's own circumstances and its past as well as the history of the village. There is a good collection of historical artefacts to support the teaching. These provide the pupils with a wide range of different types of historical evidence with which to develop their investigative skills. The teaching is good, challenging the pupils to think for themselves and to be able to explain the reasoning behind their judgements. They are encouraged to use what they know to find out what they do not, that is, using learning to promote further learning.
- 61. The teaching pays good attention to the needs of all the pupils whatever their background or capabilities or whether they are boys or girls. Due weight is given to their own experience. The pupils learn to think about events and characters from the past, and to make judgements about their behaviour, for example, the older pupils write character sketches of historical figures. This contributes to their understanding of what is right and what is wrong and plays a significant role in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 62. The resources provided for history are sufficient in quantity and of good enough quality to encourage independent research. As well as artefacts they include a good range of books and

- discs. There is a regular use of computers in the subject. The older pupils demonstrated a good level of note taking in their research on Celts and Romans.
- 63. The assessment of history at the end of each topic is used to plan future developments; the teachers' marking encourages the pupils to be thoughtful in response to what they learn.
- 64. As part of the teaching of history, pupils are made aware of the schools own history, making the subject come alive for them. A traditional "Founder's Day" has been established, and the oldest pupils engage in a traditional rite of passage when they leave the school. This involves climbing the church tower. Small but significant features like this make history come alive for the pupils.

Religious education

The provision for **religious education** is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards attained, the interest shown and the achievements of the pupils are better than average.
- The subject is well led and managed, and the teaching is good
- Religious education plays a very significant part in the very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments of the pupils
- Teachers have a high, but realistic, expectations of how the pupils will learn and respond to the work

Commentary

- 65. The high quality of the school's planning for religious education was recognised in an award from the local education authority's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education and the Saltley Educational Trust. The school adapted the local "Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education" to meet the particular needs of this school most effectively. The high quality planning contributes to the good teaching found in the school. This is based on a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and how pupils both learn about and learn from the religious education they receive. The pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, using skills also developed in other subjects such as history, geography and science. The good teaching successfully encourages learning about new areas and carefully consolidates what the pupils have already learnt. This provides the good basis of knowledge upon which the older pupils are able to build and develop new insights.
- 66. The programme of study develops the pupils' understanding of Christianity, the religion that is most familiar to them; they are also introduced to the study of Hinduism as practically as is possible in a village with few members of other faiths. The teaching is sensitive to the needs of different groups of pupils and invites learning rather than proposing belief. The resources made available are appropriate to the school's and the pupils' needs. The addition of visits to the local church for Christian studies, and visits from people willing to talk about aspects of their faith, provides the pupils with realistic and practical insights.
- 67. The improvement in religious education since the previous inspection is the result of improved teaching and planning better matched to the different needs of groups of pupils. The care and attention paid to the provision of religious education, as well as the other subjects in the arts and humanities, is a practical working out of the school's educational ethos, to provide a broad education to enrich the experience and insights of the pupils as widely as possible.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 68. At least one lesson from each key stage was seen in music, physical education and design and technology. No art and design lessons were seen as the subject rotates with design and technology. Co-ordinators and pupils discussed their work and work on display was examined. The richness of the schools curricular provision is apparent in all four subjects as are the opportunities afforded by local links. There are lots of opportunities to perform, to compete and to take part in local exhibitions. There is an annual design award at the local gardening club for example. Co-ordinators work hard to promote their subjects and make good use of training opportunities. Recently all staff took part and were inspired by a session at the National Gallery. Art and design has improved and music has retained its good standards since the last inspection. Physical education and design and technology were not given a judgement during that inspection.
- 69. In art and design good use is made of the work of established and visiting artists to extend pupils' understanding of the subject. Art from a wide range of cultures is very well promoted and that helps the subject to make a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As no lessons were seen during the inspection it was not possible to form a judgement about teaching or achievement. However, plentiful evidence from displays, which included three dimensional figures as well as work based on designs inspired by artists, indicated that pupils are achieving above expected levels. The staff have very secure subject knowledge and plan thoroughly and imaginatively. Computers are used very well to enable pupils to experiment with a wide range of techniques and to combine manual and technological methods. The school creates a rich environment through its effective display of many of the pupils' artwork.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

 Pupils enjoy the subject and build up their skills and technical language because teaching is good and lessons are well-planned and interesting

Commentary

70. One lesson in each key stage was observed. In both cases the lesson introduced a longer topic. Standards observed were in line with those expected nationally. Pupils in Year 2 could demonstrate some understanding of the concept of design. They could discuss differences in the designs of a range of puppets and begin to classify them according to the mode of construction. They followed instructions and used appropriate techniques to make a stick puppet. Older pupils in Year 4 discussed the strengths and weaknesses in a range of designs for purses and speculated on the purpose and intended user. Good teaching helps pupils to acquire and use appropriate technical vocabulary and also offers appropriate challenge during questioning to pupils of differing ability so pupils achieve well. Lessons are well planned and follow the guidance of a well-designed scheme of work so pupils make good progress in their learning. The school has improved standards since the last inspection

Music

Provision in music is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching Year 3 and 4 is consistently good, enabling pupils to make good progress in all aspects
 of the subject.
- Pupils in these year groups use musical vocabulary accurately when talking about their work and
 in answering questions posed by their teachers.

• Pupils sing with accuracy, expression, articulation and enthusiasm as they learn and rehearse challenging songs, many sometimes in two parts

Commentary

71. Most of the work seen was in Years 3 and 4 and standards were above national expectations. Pupils can improvise using percussion instruments. They are able to discuss, evaluate and improve their performance. These pupils received good teaching from a specialist and worked very hard in their lessons and strove to do their best. During singing sessions pupils showed good control of pitch, rhythm and mood. All pupils have very good access to a recorder club

Physical education

Provision in physical education is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line overall because the school supplements its provision with regular swimming lessons for pupils in Year 3 and 4.
- The sports programmes are good and most pupils, including the younger ones, participate and this has a positive effect on standards.
- Hall provision for physical education is very cramped and inhibits opportunities for pupils to develop skills in gymnastics and dance.

Commentary

- 72. One dance lesson and a Year 3 and 4 swimming session were seen The evidence was supplemented by talking to pupils, teachers and parents and considering reception lessons. Teaching, particularly the teaching of swimming, is good overall.
- 73. The school provides pupils with regular planned opportunities for physical education. There are good outdoor spaces available. The regular swimming lessons enable Year 3 and 4 pupils to reach high standards. The local secondary school is a sports academy and the school receives coaching sessions from its teachers helping children to acquire skills in a variety of subjects. For example, judo is planned for the spring term. After school clubs are very well attended and provide opportunities for football and other team games. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and working well within the constraints imposed by the building. The school has received the Football association Charter Mark.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74. No lessons were seen. However, the school is committed to the personal development of its pupils and achievements are very good. Teachers' attention to their pupils' personal development was a striking part of many lessons. The school has regular personal and social education lessons and there is a good programme. The school is currently seeking to re-vitalise its healthy eating programme. Pupils' involvement in village life facilitates a growing understanding of the benefits and responsibilities of belonging to a community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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