

INSPECTION REPORT

**Streethouse Junior, Infant & Nursery & Resource for
Pupils with Physical Difficulties**

Featherstone

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108195

Headteacher: Mrs Barbara Murgatroyd

Lead inspector: Rob Crompton

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th November 2003

Inspection number: 261407

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:	3 -11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	137
School address:	Whinney Lane Streethouse Pontefract
Postcode:	WF7 6DJ
Telephone number:	01977 723575
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Roy Aldred
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves the village of Streethouse on the outskirts of Featherstone. Children also come from communities nearby. The school includes facilities for eight to ten (six at present) children with physical difficulties who come from further afield. There are 137 children altogether, including 23 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Very few pupils have English as an additional language. As they enter the nursery, children's social skills and levels of mathematical development are much lower than those of most three-year-olds and they have little understanding of the world outside their homes. A quarter of the children have special educational needs, which is above average. Ten children have a statement of special educational need, almost all due to physical difficulties. This is well above average. There is a high level of pupil turnover. Half of the children are eligible for free school meals, which is a very high proportion and indicates an area of low social and economic conditions. The school has achieved the Investors in People standard, the Schools Achievement Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Music
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
17907	Mike Bowers	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs, including provision for children with physical difficulties
14989	Rob Pyner	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Under the very successful leadership of the headteacher, all staff are determined to help all children, whatever their individual needs, to achieve well. Good teaching enables most children to make good progress but overall standards are below average due to other factors. Governors work hard on behalf of the school and provide good support. Children are proud of their school. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in mathematics and science are rising
- The excellent commitment to inclusion means that children with a very wide range of needs are supported very well
- Good teaching means that most children are doing as well as they can
- Good provision for personal development helps children to develop positive attitudes and behave well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has built a successful team
- Provision for nursery and reception children is very good and helps them achieve well from a very low start
- Support staff make a very significant contribution to children's learning, providing particularly effective support for children with physical difficulties
- Standards in English are below average overall, although children achieve well from a very low start
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected and children do not make enough progress
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory
- Children's attendance levels are well below average which makes it difficult for teachers to help them make progress

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards in mathematics have improved and children's handwriting and presentation are now much better. Planning has improved considerably and more able children are set suitably challenging work.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall achievement is **good**. From a very low starting point, children achieve well in all areas of learning in the nursery and reception classes, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and aspects of physical development. Although children make good progress, by the end of reception, overall standards are below those expected in all areas of learning.

In Years 1 and 2, children are achieving well, but despite good teaching, have too much ground to make up to reach average standards in reading and writing. In mathematics, children are making good progress and reaching average standards. In science, children make good progress and standards are close to average. Progress in ICT is too slow and children are not reaching the levels expected.

In years 3 to 6, the large proportion of children with special educational needs, including those with physical difficulties, means that the results in the table below can be misleading. In 2003, a quarter of the year 6 children had special educational needs and only half of the children had been at the school since year 2. This is also typical of other year groups. All groups of children are achieving well in lessons. Standards are rising, particularly in mathematics and science but children are not yet reaching the standards expected in English or ICT by the end of year 6.

Year 6 results

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

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.

E* means that results were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally.

Children have satisfactory opportunities to practise and develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Relationships are very good, particularly between children with physical difficulties and those without such problems. Children have good attitudes and behave well. Attendance is well below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Children work hard because teachers make lessons interesting and practical. Teaching children in ability groups in years 3 to 6 is successful. It enables teachers to pitch work at the right level so that all children can build on their previous learning. Teachers, working in close partnership with the skilled support staff are very successful in ensuring that all children have equal opportunities to succeed. As a result, those with special educational needs and those with physical difficulties or severe communication problems achieve well.

The curriculum offers good opportunities for children to learn according to their individual needs. They enjoy a good variety of experiences in lessons and additional activities that promote self-esteem, learning and personal development. The school works hard to develop relationships with parents and encourages them to be involved in their children's education. Children have good opportunities to offer their own suggestions through the school council and team (house) system.

The provision for children with physical difficulties is very good. They achieve very well in an excellent inclusive atmosphere.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher plays a pivotal role in ensuring the school is inclusive and provides very good leadership. Key staff provide good leadership. All share the vision and determination to help all children do as well as they can, whatever their backgrounds or individual needs. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and support the school well.

PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school. Children have very positive views and enjoy all that the school offers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and ICT
- Improve the accommodation
- Raise levels of attendance

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN

Standards achieved in areas of learning, and subjects

Children are **achieving well** in lessons and standards are improving. The results of national curriculum tests have been mostly well below average in recent years. This is due to two main factors; children's low level of attainment as they start school and an above average proportion of children with special educational needs. Although they make good progress, many do not reach average standards. Similarly, children with physical difficulties often have severe communication problems and this limits their chances of reaching average standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enter the school with very low levels of attainment but make good progress
- Children with special educational needs achieve well
- Standards in mathematics and science are rising due to good teaching
- Progress in ICT is too slow and standards are below those expected
- Standards in English are below average, although children are achieving well in lessons and progress is improving
- Children with physical difficulties achieve very well in an excellent inclusive atmosphere

Commentary

1. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes because the provision is very good. Despite this good progress, overall standards are below those expected in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year because there is too much ground to make up. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is particularly good and enables children to make a good start in their learning.
2. The standards achieved by most children with special educational needs are well below those expected for their age. They have a range of difficulties, including speech and language problems, low levels of concentration and emotional and behavioural difficulties. These children make good progress because the staff who work with them are skilled in providing appropriate activities that challenge them, yet enable them to experience success.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	11.8 (13.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	10.0 (13.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	11.5 (13.5)	15.5 (15.5)

There were 21 children in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.8 (25.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.5 (24.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	24.3 (27.4)	25.4 (27.3)

There were 17 children in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The above average number of children with special educational needs skews national curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science. In year 2, standards in both reading and writing have improved over the last three years. A similar pattern is evident in year 6. However, results of the 2003 tests were again well below average in both reading and writing. The high level of pupil turnover also makes it difficult for year 6 children to build successfully on their achievements when in year 2. The results disguise the fact that most children try hard and do as well as they can, with those children of average general ability reaching the expected levels. This is because teachers work closely together to provide work that is interesting and challenging. Girls tend to do better than boys in years 1 and 2. However, by the end of Year 6, the boys have caught up, reflecting the school's good efforts to reduce this gap. Progress in ICT is too slow and standards are lower than they should be. This is due to a lack of suitable resources and to teachers' lack of expertise in some aspects of the subject. Standards achieved in religious education and history are in line with expectations. It was not possible to fully evaluate provision in other subjects. The very few children from minority ethnic groups do as well as other children.
4. Children with physical difficulties achieve well. All have some communication problems. Whilst some children are working at the earlier stages of the national curriculum, others are working at a much lower level.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Good provision for children's pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in good relationships. Children have good attitudes to school and behave **well**. Attendance is well below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's inclusive ethos makes a strong contribution to children's personal development
- Effective teaching means that children have positive attitudes and behave well
- A number of children are very poor attenders and many have too much time off
- Parents do not always support the school as much as they could over absence
- The school has good strategies to chase up and improve attendance

Commentary

5. Children, teachers and parents all expressed their belief that the fact that children with physical difficulties are fully integrated benefits all. The effect on children in mainstream classes is exceptional. They are caring, considerate and responsible and form lasting friendships with those with physical difficulties. They involve them in their playground games and help and support them during lunch time and during lessons. For example, one child clapped out the rhythm of a melody in front of the child with physical difficulties so she could see the movement of her hands and relate them to the pattern of the music. In all the lessons observed, these supportive

relationships were evident - a tribute to the school's success in achieving an atmosphere in which everyone is valued and respected.

6. Teachers work hard to help children to develop positive attitudes to school. Team meetings¹ are used to motivate children to contribute to school life. Children were keen to take part in an inter-team quiz and several had made a good effort to design a team logo. During a meeting of the recently formed school council, children were encouraged to contribute and their efforts on behalf of their classmates was praised. As a result of such initiatives, most children are positive and express loyalty to the school. Assemblies provide good opportunities for spiritual development and for children to reflect on moral issues but religious education could be used more to encourage children to reflect on their own beliefs and what they most value in their own lives. Teachers promote good behaviour successfully in lessons. In some classes, rules are negotiated with the children who then sign an agreement to follow them. Behaviour outside is good, despite the fact that the play areas are rather bleak and there is not much to do. During a very windy day, children played boisterously but not aggressively and clearly understood what was acceptable.
7. Attendance has been consistently below or well below the national figures since the last inspection despite the constant efforts of the school. This is because too many parents do not always ensure that they get their children to school regularly or they take them out of school for holidays during term-time. The school has to spend a lot of time chasing up attendance, as many parents are not in the habit of informing the school of reasons for their children's absence.
8. There are very close links with the education welfare service, and many good initiatives for improving attendance, including first day calls, class competitions, certificates, regular mentions in newsletters, computerisation of records and the breakfast club. Children say that they no longer take days off for their birthday, for example, as the school gives them cards and gifts. Despite these strategies, many children still miss too much school time, and this limits their achievement.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.5
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	2.0
National data:	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Black or Black British – Caribbean

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
137	1	0
3	0	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

¹ The school is divided into four teams – or houses – with children from every year group in each team.

The quality of education is **good**. Good teaching means that children learn well and make good progress. The curriculum is carefully planned to meet children's wide-ranging needs and there are good opportunities for children to take part in extra activities. Children are well cared for, guided and supported. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and this hinders teaching and learning.

Teaching and learning

Good teaching and learning are the main reasons that children make good progress from a very low starting point. The good quality of assessment of children's work enables the needs of individuals and groups to be met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good team work between teachers and classroom assistants means that all children are supported well
- Practical activities help children to learn through direct experience but teachers' confidence in the use of ICT is limited
- Very good teaching in the nursery helps children to progress well from a very low starting point
- Teachers match work to children's varying needs so all are appropriately challenged
- Teachers manage behaviour well but children are often distracted by noise from other classrooms

Commentary

9. The most striking feature of the teaching is the way that teachers and support assistants work in close partnership. Teachers ensure that all involved are aware of what children should learn in each lesson. Consequently, all adults, including volunteer parents, are able to provide specific help by asking appropriate questions and drawing on what children already know in order to move them forward. Teachers tell children what they are to learn during a lesson and then review how they have done at the end. This means that children are increasingly aware of what they need to do to improve. All staff who work with the children with special educational needs have a very good understanding of their needs and provide challenging learning activities. These children successfully learn alongside their classmates. Teachers are good at checking their levels of understanding and helping them to extend their thinking. Skilled and enthusiastic learning assistants continually engage and effectively support children, keeping them on task and giving further explanations to clarify their understanding. A well-organised programme of individual support away from the classrooms makes a very good contribution to children's acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding.
10. A strong emphasis on practical activities compensates to a large extent for children's weak literacy skills. Teachers use resources well to illustrate ideas. Much of the work in mathematics and science in years 1 and 2 is highly practical and appealing; in a year 1 lesson for example, the teacher used a toy frog and lily pad very imaginatively to introduce children to subtraction. As a result, children were very well motivated and eager to learn. Children in years 5 and 6 showed a good level of understanding following their investigation of wind resistance using spinners. Although teachers are confident in teaching aspects of ICT, such as word-processing, they have limited expertise in control technology and the use of computer sensors.
11. The teachers, nursery nurse and support assistants make a very successful team in the nursery and reception classes. Relationships are very good and help children to feel secure and develop confidence. Children benefit from the good adult/pupil ratio, which enables each child to receive much individual attention. The stimulating classroom and outdoor areas contain a very good range of activities that appeal to young children. Each one is carefully planned to provide experiences in specific areas and staff make detailed notes as they interact with the children. Progress is reviewed daily, which enables new targets to be set for the next session.

12. Teachers take full advantage of the setting of children by ability in the junior classes. This enables them to provide work at the right level. Children respond well to the opportunity to work alongside those of similar ability. Higher attaining children are suitably challenged and less confident children experience success.
13. Children with physical difficulties follow an individual learning programme with much of the teaching taking place in classrooms alongside mainstream classmates. Because the learning is meaningful, children show very high levels of interest and achieve well. For instance, one child was learning about the scientific idea of pushing and pulling as forces. She worked on a mat alternately pushing her arms legs and shoulders against the floor to roll, then holding the teacher's hand and pulling herself along. She excitedly said "push" or "pull" when she achieved this, indicating that she fully understand what the lesson was about.
14. Most teachers use a variety of strategies to motivate children to work hard and behave well. Once they have settled down, most children concentrate and sustain their attention. Children with emotional and behaviour difficulties are supported well and only occasionally disturb the rest of the class. Because junior children are taught in sets drawn from three classes, they move around the school quite frequently. The cramped conditions makes this difficult, especially for those children with physical difficulties. The open nature of the building means that the sound from other classrooms disturbs children's concentration. Sometimes, this is not helped as teachers raise their own voices to unnecessarily loud levels in order to compensate.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (16%)	13 (52%)	8 (32%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**, catering well for the needs and interests of the children, and is enriched by a good range of extra curricular activities. All children have every opportunity to benefit from all that the school offers. Resources are satisfactory but accommodation is unsatisfactory and hinders the development of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The match of the support staff to the needs of the curriculum and particularly the needs of children with physical difficulties is very good
- Provision for the foundation stage is very good
- The breadth of curriculum is good and is further enhanced by extra curricular activities
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects
- Limitations in the accommodation hinders practical work and makes movement around the school difficult
- The building poses serious limitations for the use of wheel chairs and storage of specialist equipment
- Limited ICT equipment and resources for sensory development hinder children's achievement

Commentary

15. The school is fully inclusive, welcoming pupils with a range of individual needs. This is due to the determination of the headteacher and governors, and the high quality teamwork between teachers and support staff. The curriculum is very well organised to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and with physical difficulties. Careful consideration is paid to the grouping of these children and the availability of support staff. This ensures that adults can intervene easily to give extra support when a child is experiencing difficulties. Specially designed tasks relate directly to children's individual targets and the frequent dialogue between all staff means that best use is made of time and opportunities. Consequently, children sustain their concentration and attention.
16. Insufficient use is made of ICT in other subjects. Opportunities to enhance the teaching of science by using computer sensors and to link work in design and technology to control technology are missed. Computer programs, however, are used successfully to support the learning of children with special educational needs. Children with physical difficulties use computers effectively to develop their communication skills using suitable programs and word processing systems. However, in some circumstances the font size is too small to enable children to recognise the individual words.
17. Planning is much improved since the last inspection. Guidelines now help teachers to ensure that the level of challenge in each subject is increased from year to year. Learning is enhanced by a good range of extra curricular activities which take place after school, or for younger children, during lunchtimes. Provision for reception children has improved considerably since the last inspection. Excellent organisation and very good teamwork contribute to the very good provision.
18. The level of resources across the school over the last three years has improved significantly. However, the accommodation is unsatisfactory. Teachers and children work cheek by jowl. The open spaces between rooms mean that the voices of teachers and children in the junior classes permeate the whole area and disturb teaching and learning. Practical work is difficult to organise and this hinders the range of activities that can be undertaken and restricts work involving investigation and first hand experiences.
19. Cramped conditions make movement very difficult for children using wheelchairs. Computers with specific software have to be situated away from where the children usually are taught, causing further disruption. Good use is made of compact lap top machines situated around the school but the availability of only one touch screen results in children having to wait their turn and valuable time is lost preventing them from further developing their hand/eye co-ordination skills. The central room for children with physical difficulties is used efficiently for some occupational and physiotherapy sessions, however, it is too small to store standing frames when they are not in use. The only option left to the school is to store these items in the toilet area, which is unsatisfactory. The school does not possess specialist facilities for multi-sensory development, thereby preventing these children from benefiting from this experience. Considering the limitations of the accommodation, it is remarkable that such a broad range of curriculum activities is sustained for all children.

Care, guidance and support

Care and support for children is **good**, and they are involved well in school improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel happy and secure at school
- The school council provides a good channel of communication for them

Commentary

20. Children enjoy being at school, confident in the knowledge that there is always a member of staff to whom they can turn and who will sort out their problems in class or in the playground. They think that rewards and punishments are fair and that they are well looked after if they are ill or hurt themselves playing. All staff know the children and their home backgrounds well and try to give them the support that they need as individuals. In addition, the school tries to help the families, through initiatives such as the breakfast club and the wraparound care² scheme, in order to enable the children to achieve better. Children with physical difficulties are cared for extremely sensitively by all staff and children. They are treated with great respect and they know they are valued members of the school community. They work conscientiously with therapists who ensure that they are developing their expertise in manoeuvring their powered wheel chairs or that they use a range of exercises to strengthen their muscles and maximise their physical movement.
21. Staff take children's views seriously and listen to what they have to say every day on an informal basis. In addition, the school council provides good opportunities for children throughout the school to express their opinions on particular topics which are important and relevant to them - for example, improvements to the playground facilities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is supportive and helpful to parents and regularly seeks their views
- There are good communication systems between the school and parents of children with special educational needs
- Some information to parents is very good, but some needs improvement

Commentary

22. The school does what it can to involve parents as partners in their children's education. Staff are readily accessible at the beginning and end of the day to discuss any concerns. The school runs courses in literacy and numeracy if there is sufficient demand, so that parents can help their children at home. Although most parents appreciate the school's efforts, many say that they have not got the time or the skills to play a full part in their children's education. Parents' evenings are poorly attended and support for reading and other work at home is limited. This in turn has an impact on children's achievement. The school tries to promote involvement by using questionnaires to try and find out what they want, but there is often little feedback.
23. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their children's progress. They are invited to all reviews of the children's education plans. The parents of children with physical difficulties regularly attend; consequently, they are fully involved in the education of their children. However, parents of other children with special educational needs do not always take up these opportunities and the link between the home and the school is less secure.
24. The school's weekly newsletters are very good. They are bright, eye-catching, and easy to scan for information. The school has plans to revamp its prospectus and governors' annual report along the same lines. Reports to parents on their children's progress are satisfactory. They are written in everyday language but the judgements in them about children's progress are not clearly explained. This means that parents do not get a realistic picture of how well their children are doing for their age.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

² The school provides facilities in the afternoon for children in nursery who attend on a part-time basis.

The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. The leadership by key members of staff and the management of the school is **good**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's commitment to inclusion is excellent and means that all children have opportunities to achieve well
- The clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations by the headteacher is central to the success of the school
- Provision for children with special educational needs is very well managed
- Subjects are led and managed well due to the close teamwork among curriculum leaders
- Strategic planning ensures that everyone works towards the school's priorities

Commentary

25. Since the last inspection, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, chair of governors and members of the governing body have changed. This change in leadership has been instrumental in the development of the school.
26. The headteacher is a very strong leader. Her commitment to meeting the needs of all children and extending opportunities to the wider community has a powerful impact on the school's work. She provides a crystal clear vision for development, including how an inclusive approach can improve both the academic and social development of all children. The community around the school is not an easy one in which to work. Low expectations can hinder self-esteem and progress by children. Despite this, the headteacher has been instrumental in transforming the ethos of the school so that children are well behaved and enthusiastic learners. Teachers find pleasure and satisfaction in their own hard work. She inspires loyalty from staff and children. Under her leadership, the school is making good progress in the key areas of teaching and learning and standards are steadily improving.
27. The special educational needs co-ordinator has an excellent vision of the inclusive education that children require to become active members of their community. She has worked hard with the headteacher and senior staff to provide the educational opportunities where children with special educational needs are taught alongside others and fully involved in both learning and social activities. Careful selection, followed by appropriate training of specialist support staff, underpins this inclusive environment very effectively. Children with special educational needs studying in mainstream classes receive support from enthusiastic caring and well-deployed staff. The minimum levels of staffing provided by the local authority are used very effectively. Excellent relationships exist between the school and psychologists, therapists and the special educational needs support service. These experts actively support the school through regular assessments of children's needs and the training of all staff in new ideas or techniques that are considered relevant to the needs of specific children.
28. Curriculum leaders ensure that work planned in years 1 to 6 builds directly on children's experiences in the nursery and reception classes. For example, the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world in the nursery and reception classes, supports subsequent work in history, geography and science. Because they plan together, subject leaders have a good understanding of what is taught in each year group and this helps to ensure that the level of challenge is increased systematically as children move through the school.
29. Governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have constructed a development plan that provides a clear agenda for improving teaching, learning and standards. The effectiveness of the school's strategic approach is evident in the successful management of finances that helped to turn a £27,000 budget deficit into a balanced budget. A self-critical

approach is evident from the carefully considered decisions taken by governors, the headteacher and staff members.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	370,588	Balance from previous year	19,156
Total expenditure	353,756	Balance carried forward to the next	17,994
Expenditure per pupil	2,508		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the nursery and those of reception age in the mixed reception/year 1 class is very well managed. The teachers work in close partnership with support staff to provide a very stimulating environment. The organisation is excellent. Every inch of space in the classrooms and the outdoor area is used to good effect. Teachers use their considerable flair for display to set up activities which engage children's interest. Well-established routines have been established so no time is wasted from the moment children enter in the morning. All activities are carefully designed to promote specific aspects of learning. Key points for development are displayed alongside each activity and provide an excellent prompt for adults as they engage children in conversations about what they are doing. Because the things children are to learn are carefully spelt out, it makes the assessment of how far they have progressed easier. Adults make frequent notes about achievements during each session and this feeds into a comprehensive profile of progress.

Children achieve well in all areas of learning because the quality of teaching is consistently good. They make good progress from a very low start, but overall attainment is below that generally expected in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. One or two children each year start school with higher than average levels of development. These children progress well and reach or exceed the standards expected.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff establish warm relationships with children, and successfully encourage independence
- Staff help children to learn how mix with others and gain confidence
- The indoor and outdoor areas are used well to help children feel secure, valued and confident

Commentary

30. All children are greeted warmly and staff take every opportunity to develop children's self-esteem. Many activities have a 'feel good' factor as adults celebrate children's achievements, for example, by showing other children what they have done or by displaying their efforts attractively for others to see. There is always something that children find interesting; they become absorbed and increasingly persevere until a task is complete.

31. Although most children tend to play alongside others at first, staff create situations where they need to work co-operatively. For example, when working at the computer, children learn to take turns and when using construction kits they are encouraged to work on joint projects. The role-play area provides very good opportunities for children to practise social skills. As they dress up and talk on the 'telephone' and act out different scenarios, they interact with one another more intensely than usual. Outside, children use the model kitchen to 'cook' and 'serve' meals for one another; they play happily together, learning to take turns in using the good range of apparatus.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults successfully promote children's speaking skills by talking to them a lot
- A good range of activities promotes early reading and writing skills
- Children's progress is carefully tracked so that staff can build successfully on earlier learning

Commentary

32. Part of each day is spent talking to children in large groups. Staff take turns to lead these sessions so that children gain confidence in talking to different adults. Dolls and puppets are used frequently to encourage children to speak and express their thoughts and ideas. As children work on individual tasks, adults take every opportunity to engage them in conversations. They extend their vocabulary and re-phrase questions in order to help children attempt an answer, however tentative they may be at first. During the daily milk and fruit time, adults promote social language very well and encourage children to talk to one another. A recent arrival, who has English as an additional language, is very well supported.
33. Children frequently gravitate to the cosy reading area. Books are displayed attractively, some with an accompanying puppet character from the story. Children are eager to 'read' books because adults read to them expressively and generate enthusiasm for stories. They encourage children to recognise and join in with their favourite phrases, such as 'I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!' Later, children learn the names and sounds of letters using the good range of resources specifically designed for this purpose, such as the 'letter bus'. Table-top displays reinforce letter sounds - for example, a toy penguin, Pooh Bear, a pineapple and pencils supported children's learning of the 'letter of the week'. Children enjoy 'pretend writing' using the materials that are always readily available, for example, their own 'menus' were displayed alongside printed examples in the 'Kids' Café'. Early writing skills are taught systematically, to encourage children to form letters in the correct way so it is easier for them to use joined handwriting later.
34. Staff keep very detailed records of progress noting, for example, when children can recognise initial letter sounds in words so these can be built up progressively. This detailed assessment helps children to achieve well, although the general level of language development by the end of reception is still low.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical activities help children to develop their understanding of shape and space
 - Early numeracy is promoted well through daily routines and many opportunities to sort and count
35. The nursery classroom has a good range of construction toys. Using large wooden blocks, magnetic and interlocking shapes, children learn about the differences and similarities of shapes, which will roll, how many corners they have and so on. In arranging shapes in different patterns, they find out which will fit together – a good foundation for future learning in mathematics.
36. Frequent references to numbers in daily routines reinforce children's understanding very effectively. Adults often seek children's 'help' in counting everyday objects or the number present and absent. When children are sure what numbers represent, they are taught systematically how to write them. Games are used very effectively to support children's understanding of number. For example, children were learning to recognise the numbers 1 to 6 by throwing dice and matching the number of dots with written numbers. Outdoors, a skittles game was very popular, with adults helping children to count their scores, developing early notions of addition and subtraction.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is very good and ensures that the children have a wide variety of experiences

Commentary

37. Work in this area successfully promotes children's curiosity and supports their early investigative and problem-solving skills. Children are set the challenge of making boats when playing with the water tray. In experimenting with different kinds of sails, they learn that wind provides power. Cooking, such as making gingerbread men, helps children to understand how things change when heated. Seasonal activities, such as looking closely at autumn leaves, extend children's understanding of the natural world. Sorting games introduce children to categorising things using specific criteria, such as colour, shape and size. They develop an awareness of ICT and learn early computer skills because they have frequent opportunities to explore programs and to practise using the keyboard and mouse. Although children's knowledge and understanding of the world are still limited by the end of the reception year, the good provision in this area of learning provides a sound basis for future work in subjects such as science, geography and history.

PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical and creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area provides good opportunities for physical development
- Practical activities in the classroom support children's creative development well

Commentary

38. Staff set up different activities each day in the outdoor area to encourage children to climb and balance on apparatus and to pedal and steer wheeled toys. Encouraged and supported by adults, children gain increasing confidence and extend their range of movements. Staff motivate children to have a go, even when they are a little uncertain and most children respond well. By the end of reception, children move with reasonable confidence, most meeting the goals expected in this aspect of physical development.

39. Progress in the finer manipulative skills is slower, as many children have very little experience of using pencils, brushes and scissors before they start school. Recognising this, staff provide a very good range of stimulating activities. Children were fully absorbed when using brightly coloured paper, sequins and other materials to create 'sticky models'. Another group enjoyed making faces from cardboard plates and a range of gummed paper, coloured shapes and wool. Their skills in cutting and sticking were below those typical of the age group, but their self-esteem was clearly raised as staff praised their efforts and displayed the finished items for all to see.

40. Children's creativity is encouraged successfully. The role-play areas in the classroom and outdoors are popular and staff often join in with children's imaginative play, prompting suggestions and encouraging children to create their own dialogue. A good range of art and craft materials is always available and children spend part of most days expressing their ideas through paint and other media. The class 'art gallery' is used well to provide ideas and to promote further efforts. Music is used effectively as a stimulus for creative movement.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are improving and year 6 children's reading is reaching national averages
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well
- The gap between the performances of girls and boys is closed by year 6
- The quality of book displays and the library are restricted by the lack of space
- The quality of children's handwriting has improved

Commentary

41. Standards in English are rising because of the school's focus on improvement. Children achieve well throughout the school because the teaching is good. The emphasis on children developing their literacy skills through purposeful and enjoyable activities enables them to achieve well overall. However, there is still much ground to be made up in writing, where standards are below average. There are signs of progress. For example, year 6 children, worked well to analyse the conventions of play writing and developed their understanding of direct speech. Children with special educational needs are particularly well supported and every effort is made to raise their attainment through carefully planned work and good support and encouragement. In all year groups, there is a wide span of ability.
42. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are below average in years 1 and 2 and generally average in years 3 to 6. Most children speak confidently and make themselves understood. Staff work hard to help children extend their vocabulary, engaging with the children in regular discussions and encouraging them to verbalise their thoughts. Good use is made of talking partners³ to develop children's conversational skills.
43. Children achieve well in reading. They increasingly enjoy books as they gain confidence and reach average standards by year 6. There are good opportunities during the school day for children to engage in group, paired and silent reading. The school has worked hard to encourage parents and carers to listen to their children read at home. However, few have taken up the opportunities to be involved in the 'Reading Raid' initiative introduced to help them. Children are clear about the strategies they need to use to work out how to read new words and sentences. The younger children are developing a useful visual memory of key words and use picture to gain meaning. However, their knowledge of letter sounds is not yet sufficiently developed. The oldest children make suitable choices of books and show clear understanding of the plot within the story. The more able children make judgements about the characters of the people in the story and can talk about aspects of the books that have particularly interested them. Older children understand how to use referencing skills. Whilst the book areas are soundly organised, the displays are not sufficient to capture children's interest. The library is not large enough for more than a small group of children to work in at any one time. Teachers work hard to minimize the effects of small teaching areas and excessive noise from adjacent classrooms.
44. The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of where further development is required and works well with staff in a constant search to find what methods work best. Staff are working hard and successfully to drive up standards in writing and, although they are below average overall,

³ Pairs of children who are frequently asked to discuss their ideas before responding to a question or starting a piece of work.

children achieve well because of good teaching. Factors that have been instrumental in raising standards are:

- Introduction of setting arrangements enabling children of similar ability to be taught together.
- Incisive questioning that ensures children understand new vocabulary and helps teachers to assess their progress.
- Involvement of enthusiastic and skilled learning support assistants who ensure that children sustain their concentration and efforts.
- Careful planning to provide appropriate work for the extensive ability range of all the children.
- The development of writing in other subjects, particularly in history and science.
- Effective use of specific ICT programs to help children with physical difficulties complete their tasks.

45. Much work has been completed to improve children's handwriting, which is now generally legible. Work is positively marked with areas for improvement made clear so that children know what they have to do to improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Children use their language and literacy skills in history and science and are developing their mathematical vocabulary well. However, children's weak literacy skills hinder their progress in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen at a faster rate than in other schools over the last three years
- Work is appropriately challenging and means that achievement is improving
- Setting by ability in years 3 to 6 is having a positive effect on raising achievement
- The subject is managed well but the analysis of results needs to be shared more widely

Commentary

47. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards in mathematics are rising as a result of good teaching and setting by ability in years 3 to 6. Despite the wide range of levels of attainment and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, standards of work seen during the inspection were broadly average. Achievement is good throughout the school because children are taught well. They respond well to appropriately challenging work. For example, the youngest children in the most able set rose to the challenge of solving problems involving the 24-hour clock – work which would usually be tackled later in years 3 to 6. In a lesson on division with the middle ability group, year 3 children were working above expectations due to their good level of knowledge of number facts and tables. Children with special needs achieve well because they are set appropriate work and they are supported very well by teaching assistants.

48. Setting by ability in years 3 to 6 enables teachers to ensure that the work set closely matches children's levels of understanding. Teachers plan together to help children build on their earlier learning. Increasingly, they make sure that children know what they are to learn during each lesson and help them to review their own progress at the end. Group and individual targets are often displayed in the classrooms and this motivates children to achieve them.

49. The subject is led and managed well. Standards are carefully monitored through a clear programme of assessment. However, the information gained is shared in an informal way and needs to be more systematic so that all staff know where there are strengths and gaps in children's learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. The opportunities for children to practise and consolidate their mathematical skills in other subjects are satisfactory. Some links were observed in science with children making Newton meters and using decimal notation to calibrate their models. Spreadsheets were evident in work on forces. In geography, children learn about co-ordinates and some art work using repeated printed shapes is linked to mathematics. Such links are incidental rather than planned systematically however, which means opportunities vary across the classes.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on practical work helps children to achieve well
- Resources are used well to illustrate scientific ideas
- Careful tracking of progress enables teachers to build on previous learning

Commentary

51. Good teaching enables all children to achieve well. Teaching and learning are supported by effective leadership and management. Clear guidance for teachers places emphasis on practical work. This means that children's learning is not hindered by their weak literacy skills. This was illustrated during a lesson on 'rocket science'. As part of their work on forces and friction, children worked well in small groups to design balloon rockets. Through trial and error, they made fine adjustments and successfully completed the task. Children's understanding of the scientific ideas was not constrained because they were learning by doing. This was also evident in a reception/year 1 lesson where children's understanding of push and pull forces was skilfully developed by the use of everyday objects, such as tricycles, wheel barrows, prams and toy trains. Children were able to complete the follow-up work because the writing involved was kept to a minimum. Practical activities are particularly effective in enabling children with special educational needs and those with physical difficulties to be fully included in lessons and to achieve well. Children who do have good literacy skills are set appropriately challenging tasks; they record their investigations clearly, increasingly using the correct scientific vocabulary.

52. Teachers assess children's progress carefully. As they mark work, they make notes about the levels children are achieving and include helpful comments, which help children to know how they can improve. For example, following an investigation into measuring forces using self-made 'Newton meters', the teacher suggested that children should measure the stretch of elastic bands more accurately. Teachers' records and the scrutiny of children's work indicate that levels of attainment vary considerably due to the wide range of ability in each year group. However, most children achieve well, whatever their starting point, a good improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident in using computers
- Lack of appropriate resources means that children cannot progress as they should
- Teachers are confident in using ICT themselves but lack expertise in teaching some aspects of the curriculum

Commentary

53. Children in all year groups have good general computer skills. They use word-processing programs confidently, selecting fonts, changing colours and editing mistakes. Examples of their work using paint programs indicate a good level of confidence in using paint, fill and spray tools to create specific effects. All children, including those in the youngest classes, can save their work and retrieve it later. Most older children are familiar with the Internet and use it occasionally for their own research.
54. There are an adequate number of computers and the school benefits having a technician on site but the range of software is insufficient. This means that children do not have enough experience of using databases or in recording changes in light, temperature and sound using sensors attached to a computer. Earlier work on control technology is not developed in the older classes. Consequently, children in year 6 cannot reach the standards expected.
55. Teachers use ICT when planning and recording, and many classrooms contain attractive displays and visual resources made using computers. Teachers are confident in teaching word-processing and the use of paint programs; they regularly set children tasks using ICT as part of literacy and numeracy lessons. However, they have not had enough training in other areas, particularly in database work and using sensors. As a result, although the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory, the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory and children are not learning enough. A new co-ordinator has recently taken on the leadership of the subject. She is aware of its strengths and weaknesses and has made plans to address them. Leadership and management are now satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. Much of children's work in ICT is related to current studies; for example, good use was made of a music program to help children identify orchestral instruments and the sound they make. Children often word-process their work in literacy and they practise mathematical skills using specially designed programs. However, opportunities to practise and develop ICT skills in other subjects are mostly incidental rather than planned. This means that children miss out on using computers to enhance and extend their knowledge and understanding, particularly in science. Overall, the use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Inspectors did not see any lessons in geography. They looked at the work children had already done in this subject and talked to some of them about it. The curriculum includes all aspects of the subject, but the evidence was too limited to judge overall provision or the standards achieved.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Older children develop good skills of historical enquiry
- Effective planning helps to ensure that the level of challenge matches children's needs
- Artefacts and photographs are used well to bring the subject to life
- Inadequate levels of sound proofing, and insufficient space restrict teaching and learning

Commentary

57. Only two lessons were observed, however analysis of work and talking to children indicates that their achievement is sound overall and that they are reaching the standards expected.
58. Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, it is good in the class where the oldest children are taught. Lessons are planned carefully and good use is made of whole class discussion where the children are able to focus their ideas. For example, children gained good insights into what it was like to live in the United Kingdom after the Second World War. There is an appropriate balance between the collection of historical facts and the development of enquiry skills. Children are beginning to think about different sources of evidence about the past – for example, accounts by a senior citizen painting a 'rosy glow' of life in the 1940s and factual historical writing in reference documents. Consequently, these children achieve well.
59. The curriculum is planned carefully for the whole school to investigate an historical topic with different levels of complexity to ensure that children in all year groups are suitably challenged. Very good planning ensures that all children with special educational needs learn alongside their classmates through the creation of specific tasks and support from skilled, enthusiastic and effectively deployed learning support assistants. The organisation of visits and the use of appropriate artefacts, photographs and displays enrich the curriculum and help children to enhance their skills of historical enquiry.
60. The unsatisfactory nature of the acoustics and the limited teaching spaces results in high noise levels that hinder teaching and learning. Lack of space also restricts the extent to which displays can be used to support children's knowledge and to present their research findings.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children increase their knowledge of Christianity and gain introductory insights into other world religions well
- Children with physical difficulties take an active part in the drama activities

- Lack of space imposes restrictions on whole class enactment activities
- Opportunities for spiritual development are limited

Commentary

61. Standards are in line with expectations as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Only two lessons were observed. Much work centres around discussion so there was limited written work to examine. However, analysis of the available work and talking to children indicates that achievement is sound throughout the school.
62. Teaching is satisfactory and children are gaining a sound understanding of Christianity, the nature of worship and Judaism. By year 6, children are beginning to assimilate a sound knowledge of festivals and beliefs in Christianity and other world faiths. They study the Buddhist philosophy of the 'Eight Fold Path' applying it to their lives by creating a simplified version for themselves to follow. Year 2 children re-enacted the events in the New Testament when Jesus chose the twelve friends who were to become his apostles. Excellent efforts were made to include children with physical difficulties in this role-play by placing them in moveable stands, thereby enabling them to be part of the drama. The minimal teaching space makes this operation particularly time consuming with many tables and chairs having to be removed to make way for specialist equipment. Adults work tirelessly to make these preparations for the lesson and the children with physical difficulties enjoy the experience. They work very effectively in concert with their classmates who are patient and highly supportive.
63. The curriculum is planned well to meet the demands of the locally agreed syllabus through the development of whole school projects. Careful consideration is given to the differing ranges of abilities in each class and appropriate activities are identified. Planning does not identify where children's spiritual development could be promoted. This means that opportunities for children to reflect on what they are learning in relation to their own developing views are incidental rather than systematic.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

64. Only one lesson was seen in art and design. Two lessons were seen in music and physical education and none in design and technology. It is not possible therefore to make a firm judgement about provision, although limited evidence indicates that it is satisfactory in all four subjects. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators, looked at children's work and discussed it with them. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Subject leaders are enthusiastic but, as they all have a number of curriculum responsibilities, their overview of whole school strengths and areas for development is limited by a lack of time for systematic monitoring and evaluation.
65. It is evident from teachers' planning and the work displayed around the school that the **art and design** curriculum is varied and interesting. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. A lively approach was certainly evident in the 'talking collage' display in the junior area on the history of mining. This incorporated a range of techniques to create pictures of mining past and present using sewing, painting with water colours and collage work. In a year 1 class, children used their printing skills well to create repeating patterns to make wallpaper as part of a project on houses. Good attention to the development of sewing skills was a feature in a lesson with a year 3/4 class, where pupils showed concentration when making a collage about a story they had read. They worked individually and in pairs using a selection of material and threads with good hand/eye co-ordination. The severely cramped classrooms prevent children from fully developing three-dimensional work or working on larger scale.
66. In **design and technology**, the work displayed around the school showed that the children are gaining experience of a range of materials and techniques and developing the expected skills through designing and making a variety of products. Younger children explained how they had

designed and created houses made of straw, for example. Older pupils had made models of a nature reserve following a visit from the warden of a local nature reserve. Throughout the school there were pop-up and zig-zag books made by the children to accompany the displays. The range of work displayed indicates that the standards reached in planning and making are broadly satisfactory which is similar to that found in the last inspection.

67. Teaching was good in the two **music** lessons observed. Year 2 children responded well to practical action songs and most clapped and marched in time with music at different speeds, indicating a sound sense of rhythm. They joined in enthusiastically with 'The March of the Kitchen Utensils' and had a good understanding of how the music was telling a story. Very good support for children with physical difficulties enabled them to take as full a part in the lesson as possible. Motivated by the teacher's enthusiasm, they quickly learned a new song, making good progress and singing more tunefully as the lesson progressed. Good team teaching in the year 3/4 class enabled children to develop their knowledge of musical instruments using a computer program and recording the sounds of instruments on cassette tape. Splitting the class into two groups meant that the two teachers could provide more individual support and children achieved well. Most completed their tasks successfully and showed a pride in their achievements.
68. In **physical education**, the quality of children's movement and the clear control of their bodies indicate satisfactory standards across the school. Children have a broad range of gymnastic movements to draw upon while they are creating sequences of movement. The clear teaching helps children of all physical abilities to modify and improve, while working sensibly and sensitively in pairs. Great effort was made to include a child with physical difficulties to take part in a lesson on stretching and curling and to demonstrate to the class what he had achieved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

69. The governors have decided that sex education should be part of the curriculum and this is taught through science lessons with an input from the school nurse. Personal development and social education is a big feature of the curriculum reflecting the 'family' nature of the school. Children are encouraged to play a full part in the community life of the school. They are trained in conflict resolution, have a newly formed school council and discuss issues regularly in class. The school has a 'buddy' system whereby older children support younger ones with reading and in the dining hall. They provide strong support for the children with physical difficulties in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. This community aspect of the school is a strong one and helps to cement the role that the school plays as an important part of the village community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Children's achievement	3
Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Children's' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well children learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets children's needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Children's care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on children's views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).

