

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chipping Norton

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123184

Headteacher: Miss B May

Lead inspector: Mrs C Skinner

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February-2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 267055

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	177
School address:	24 London Road Chipping Norton Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX7 5AX
Telephone number:	01608 643487
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Miss Wyn Brack
Date of previous inspection:	July 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average size for primary schools. There are 177 pupils on roll. Two pupils (one per cent) are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is below average. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. There are 31 pupils (18 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is similar to the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. No pupils have statements of special educational need. The turnover of pupils is similar to that seen in most schools. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Pupils come from a wide variety of social backgrounds. The school received an Achievement Award in 2001, a Charter Mark in 2003 and a Healthy Schools Award in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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15917	Bob Cross	Team inspector	Science, geography, history, physical education.
16492	Bob Lever	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology (DT), personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), special educational needs (SEN).

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>32</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

## OVERALL EVALUATION

**Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School provides a good standard of education for its pupils.** Overall, pupils' achievement is good and they reach above average standards by the time they leave the school. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The leadership and management of the school are good and it gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in Year 6 are above average in reading, mathematics and science, but they are below average in writing, especially for more able pupils.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and promotes good progress.
- In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, but not high enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress, particularly the more able pupils.
- Leadership and governance are good, but some management procedures are not rigorous enough.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good.
- Very good provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage ensures that they make very good progress.
- The school is making some good innovations in its curriculum, but some pupils do not have full access to all it offers.
- There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- Pupils are cared for very well and have very good relationships with all adults.
- Most parents have positive views of the school and are very supportive, but the school is aware of the need to address the concerns of a minority.

The school has made a satisfactory improvement since it was inspected in 1999. Although standards in reading, mathematics and science are above average in Year 6, they were well above average in 1999. There has been insufficient improvement in standards in writing. Standards are lower than they were in Year 2 in mathematics and science. There have been good improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT), physical education (PE) and music which have resulted in higher standards. Provision for the Foundation Stage has improved. The leadership and management of the school, which were very good in 1999, are now good.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	B	C	C
mathematics	A	C	B	A
science	B	C	B	A

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

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

**Achievement is good.** In the Year 6 national tests in 2004, standards were higher in mathematics and science than in English because standards in writing are too low, especially for more able pupils. **In Reception**, children achieve very well and are on course to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year in all areas of learning. **In Year 2**, achievement is satisfactory and standards are above average in reading, and average in writing, mathematics and science. More able pupils do not reach high enough standards, especially in writing and science. Standards are average in ICT, geography and PE. **In Year 6**, achievement is good and standards are above average in reading, mathematics, science, music and PE. They are below average in writing and average in ICT and geography.

**Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is well above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and apply themselves very well to their work. Their behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. They take responsibility willingly and show initiative in undertaking tasks.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall.** Very good teaching and an imaginatively planned curriculum promote very good learning for children in Reception. The quality of teaching is higher in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2, where teachers' expectations of more able pupils are not always high enough. As a result, these pupils do not make enough progress, especially in writing and science. Teachers' expertise is used well in Years 3 to 6 to provide specialist teaching in several subjects. Assessment information is used well to plan suitable work for pupils in Years 3 to 6, but is not as effective in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is well planned and enriched by a good range of sporting activities, clubs, visits and visitors. However, some pupils miss important parts of lessons when they are withdrawn for additional literacy support. Pupils with SEN are supported very well and make good progress. Pupils have trusting relationships with adults, who ensure high levels of care for their welfare. The school generally works well with parents, but there is a minority who feel their concerns have not been given sufficient attention.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher and management team work well together with a clear focus on raising standards. There is a strong team spirit amongst staff, who share their commitment to ongoing improvement. Governors know the school well and play an important role in its development. They meet all statutory requirements. Although there are satisfactory procedures for checking on the school's effectiveness, these are not always implemented rigorously enough. The analysis of data is not sufficiently thorough to pinpoint why more able pupils do not reach the standards they should. Good financial management ensures that the school is well staffed and resourced.

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

Parents are generally positive about the school, but significant minority of parents express concerns about the quality of communication between school and home. The school has taken appropriate steps to involve parents in its work. Pupils enjoy school, and are keen to grasp opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. They enjoy the wide range of additional activities that the school offers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Continue to implement strategies to raise standards in writing for the more able pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 in order to raise pupils' achievement, especially those who are capable of higher than average attainment.
- Review the arrangements for withdrawing pupils from some lessons and assemblies for group reading and additional support in literacy.
- Sharpen the analysis and use of monitoring and assessment information in order to focus more clearly on what needs to be done to raise standards for the more able pupils.
- Continue efforts to address the concerns of a minority of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall, achievement is good. Achievement is very good in Reception, and standards are above average. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards are average. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is good. Standards are above average in mathematics and science and average in English in Year 6.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in Reception because of the high standard of teaching.
- Standards in reading are high throughout the school, but those in writing are below average in Year 6 because more able pupils do not reach sufficiently high standards.
- In Years 1 and 2, more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well because of good teaching.
- Standards in music and PE are above average in Year 6.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress because they are supported well.

### Commentary

1. Children in Reception achieve very well because the quality of teaching they receive is consistently very good and meets their needs very effectively. Overall, children's attainment on entry to the school is average. Indications are that, by the end of the Reception Year, they are on course to exceed the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning. They progress very well because the curriculum is very carefully planned and there are very good opportunities to learn through play and enquiry and to develop independence.

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (15.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.1 (14.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.1 (16.7)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In the end of Year 2 national tests in 2004, standards were above the national average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Compared with similar schools, based on the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, they were average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Standards in reading and mathematics have varied considerably over the past four years, while those in writing have been mostly at the average level. In reading, the proportion of pupils who reached above average standards (Level 3) was lower than the national average, while in writing it was well below average. In science, all pupils reached Level 2 (average) but none reached Level 3, which is much lower than the national picture. Over the past five years, the trend in the school's results was broadly in line with the national trend, and boys generally performed better than girls.

3. The findings of the inspection are that standards in Year 2 are above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics and science. In ICT, geography and PE, standards are in line with national expectations. Where the evidence allows comparisons to be made, these standards are lower than they were when the school was last inspected in reading, mathematics and science. They are similar in geography and higher in ICT. The judgements of the inspection are similar to the school's results in the 2004 national tests, except in mathematics, where they are lower. This is because fewer pupils are on course to reach Level 3 than in 2004. Overall, achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. It is lower than in other year groups because more able pupils do not always receive teaching of a high enough standard to ensure that they reach the standards they are capable of.



### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (27.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.2 (27.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.6 (29.0)	28.6 (28.6)

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

4. In the national tests in 2004, standards in Year 6 were above the national average in mathematics and science. In English, they were similar to the national average. Compared with schools whose pupils performed similarly in Year 2, standards were average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Standards in English have declined steadily over the past three years because standards in writing are not high enough. In mathematics and science, they have been above average in three of the past four years. Pupils achieve well, overall, but more able pupils could do better in writing.

5. The findings of the inspection are that standards in Year 6 are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. This reflects the 2004 national test results. Pupils generally achieve well because the quality of teaching is good, but the achievement of more able pupils in writing is not high enough. Standards in Year 6 are also above average in music and PE. Standards in ICT and geography are in line with national expectations. These findings are lower than those of the previous inspection, except in ICT and music, which are higher, and geography which are similar. Standards in English are lower because the school has not kept pace with the national improvement in writing standards at the higher level. The school is in the early stages of implementing strategies to raise standards in writing. In mathematics and science, standards are lower because a different group of pupils is involved. Pupils' achievement in ICT has improved because the quality of teaching is higher, resources are better and very good leadership in the subject is driving its development. Standards in music are higher because the school is making effective use of a specialist teacher.

6. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking, listening and reading are all above average. In writing, standards are average in Year 2 but below average in Year 6 because too few pupils are on course to achieve above average standards (Level 5). Reading skills are used and developed well in other subjects but, in writing, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, both in literacy lessons and across the curriculum. Numeracy skills are developed satisfactorily in other subjects, such as science and geography, but this is not planned consistently to make the most of all opportunities.

7. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. They make good progress against specific targets and goals. They do well when receiving extra support and teaching which is appropriately matched to their needs. As a result, most reach average standards by the time they leave the school. More able pupils achieve well in reading, and in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. They also achieve well in music and PE. However, the school's systems for setting targets for these pupils to achieve in writing are not rigorous enough and teachers do not always ensure that they are given enough time or opportunities to write extended pieces of work. There are currently no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls.

8. Discussions with pupils showed that, in most cases, they felt they were required to work hard and that teachers helped them to make good progress. Parents also feel that their children make good progress and that the school has high expectations of them.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attendance is very good. Punctuality is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show very good interest in learning, concentrate well and are enthusiastic.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, assemblies and around the school.
- Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good.
- Pupils are confident and very willing to take responsibility.
- Pupils show good respect for one another's feelings and beliefs and are supportive of one another.
- The attendance rate is well above the national average.

### Commentary

9. Pupils are confident, happy and self-assured. They enjoy school and all it has to offer. Children in the Reception class settle quickly into school routines and interact very well with older pupils. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and want to do well. They are highly articulate and keen to enter into discussion. They listen very well to the views of others and co-operate well. Pupils respond very well to teachers' expectations of good behaviour. They are courteous, friendly and helpful to visitors. Pupils are keen to attend school, as the figures show:

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

10. Attendance is well above the national average and punctuality is good. Staff monitor attendance effectively and are well supported by the Educational Welfare Service. There is no unauthorised absence. There were no exclusions in the previous school year.

11. Behaviour is very good throughout the school in lessons, assemblies and at playtimes. This reflects the views of the parents who responded to the questionnaire. When work was particularly challenging, as in a Year 6 English lesson on persuasive language and in a Year 6 music lesson involving composition, pupils rose to the challenge, became engrossed and achieved very well. Very occasionally, when work is too easy in Years 1 and 2, pupils find it difficult to concentrate and chatter unnecessarily. The school has very good systems to promote good behaviour and these are appreciated by pupils. At playtimes, older and younger pupils and boys and girls play well together. No bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection. The school has very good strategies for handling it and pupils knew what to do if it should occur. Pupils with SEN form good relationships with teachers, support staff and each other. As a result of good support, they increase their confidence and self esteem.

12. The Catholic ethos underpins the work of the school and provides very well for pupils' spiritual development. They have very good opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and the beliefs of others through PSHCE and RE and during collective worship. There are opportunities throughout the day for reflection and prayer. There are close links with the church and class masses take place on occasions in the Lady Chapel. Pupils' moral and social development is also very good and results in high standards of behaviour and very good attitudes and relationships. Pupils are keen to attend school and are enterprising and respond well to the varied opportunities for taking responsibility. They have good understanding of right and wrong and are considerate of others. The school council gives opportunities for pupils to express their views and influence decisions. The

Eco Committee has taken over the running of the wild garden. Pupils are active in raising money for many charities.

13. Pupils also take responsibility through the buddy and monitor systems and are keen to take part in extracurricular activities. Relationships between pupils and adults and among the pupils themselves are very good and this security gives them the confidence to ask questions and put forward their ideas, as in a Year 4/5 PHSCE lesson in which pupils were encouraged to talk about trust. Pupils' cultural development is good. They learn about their own cultural heritage and take part in the arts and music. There is a choir, which has sung on the radio, and three recorder groups. The school has greatly improved opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures in multi-cultural Britain.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

14. The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, but varies significantly between different parts of the school. Pupils apply themselves well to their work and have a clear understanding of how to make their work better. Curricular provision is good overall with significant strengths in the Foundation Stage and a mixture of good features and weaknesses in Years 1 and 2. There are weaknesses in the school's provision for equality of opportunity but provision for pupils with SEN is very good. The care for pupils' welfare is very good, and the school works well in partnership with parents and the local community.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good overall. Teaching, learning and assessment are very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good teaching and assessment procedures in Reception enable children to make very good progress in all areas of learning.
- In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is not consistently high enough to enable all pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a very good capacity to work independently and collaboratively because teachers foster these aspects well.
- Specialist teaching in Years 3 to 6 makes effective use of teachers' expertise and is helping to raise standards.
- The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is good and enables them to make good progress.
- Some pupils miss important parts of some lessons because they are withdrawn for additional support in literacy.
- Although assessment procedures are used well to support learning in Years 3 to 6, they are not used as effectively in Years 1 and 2.

### **Commentary**

15. Since the previous inspection, good teaching has been maintained, overall. However, the quality of teaching and learning is now higher in the Foundation Stage and lower in Years 1 and 2. Teaching continues to be strong in Years 3 to 6. Parents express positive views about the quality of teaching, as do most pupils.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (7%)	8 (27%)	12 (40%)	7 (23%)	1 (3%)	0	0

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

16. The Reception teacher is very experienced and has a very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how young children learn. She provides the children with a varied and interesting range of experiences and achieves a successful balance between activities that are directed by adults and opportunities for children to choose and initiate their own ideas. A very strong feature is the way the teacher plans activities around a central theme which makes learning more relevant and meaningful for the children. She has very high expectations of the children while recognising the need for them to learn through play and enquiry. She is very skilled at teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills in a way which children enjoy and respond to. Very good ongoing assessments of individual children, made by the teacher and assistants, contribute to the very good planning of activities which match the children's capabilities.

17. During the inspection, all but one of the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 were satisfactory or better and a third of them were good. There were no very good lessons. The three good lessons were seen in Year 2. The work completed by pupils during the year to date is indicative of satisfactory teaching. This is mostly because teachers' expectations for the more able pupils are not high enough, especially in writing, mathematics and science. The individual targets that are set for these pupils lack sufficient challenge, given their previous attainment. Where this is being addressed, as in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teaching is good and pupils make good progress. On the other hand, where teachers do not have a clear enough idea of what is required for pupils to reach above average levels, as in science, teaching is unsatisfactory.

18. All of the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 were at least satisfactory and almost nine out of ten were good. Just over a third were very good or better, and two of these lessons were excellent. Teachers have suitably high expectations of pupils in most areas of the curriculum and seek ways to make learning interesting and fun. They make effective use of interactive whiteboards to provide a visual dimension to learning which pupils enjoy and respond to well. They plan work carefully to match pupils' differing needs and capabilities and make very effective use of teaching assistants to support groups of pupils while they are engaged in independent work or taking part in whole class sessions. Teachers are particularly good at engaging pupils' interest and encouraging them in their learning. As a result of these good features, pupils apply themselves well to their work and are productive. They work very well independently and also in pairs and groups, as when Year 6 pupils collaborated to produce musical compositions and pupils in Years 4 and 5 shared ideas and produced plans for a sculpture.

19. There is very good range of expertise in Years 3 to 6, both among teachers and teaching assistants. In a recent initiative, which is proving to be very successful, teachers' and assistants' subject strengths are being used effectively during afternoon sessions when they teach their subjects to all three classes. This is one of the reasons for the improving standards in some subjects, such as music and PE. In addition, the school makes use of visiting specialist teachers, as in a Year 6 dance lesson where pupils learned 'Street Jazz' in an excellent lesson taken by a dance professional.

20. One of the strengths of the school is the very good provision it makes for pupils with SEN. In addition, much attention is given to helping lower attaining pupils to reach average standards through the use of booster groups. Teachers use appropriate methods, which enable pupils identified with special educational needs to learn effectively. Teachers write the targets for pupils' individual education plans and match work in lessons to their needs. Teaching assistants provide effective support, which helps pupils to achieve well in learning basic skills. Some of the support is given to small groups of pupils who are withdrawn from some lessons. Although the quality of teaching they receive in these sessions is good and helps them to overcome weaknesses in reading and writing, for example, in some cases it causes pupils to miss important parts of other lessons. For example, nine Year 6 pupils missed a very good music lesson to take part in a literacy support group.

21. Good systems are in place to assess and record pupils' progress in all subjects. However, the thoroughness of assessment and the use of assessment information to respond to different pupils' needs are variable and do not always result in more able pupils being given suitably challenging work. This is particularly the case in Years 1 and 2, but also in some subjects in Years 3 to 6. Although the school gathers considerable data about the pupils' performance, this is not always used as productively as it might be to pinpoint what is actually needed in order to raise standards and address shortcomings. This is the case in writing and in science in Years 1 and 2. The setting of individual targets for pupils to achieve by the end of a year group is not rigorous enough and sometimes does not present sufficient challenge. There are good examples of marking which clearly shows pupils what they need to do to improve their work, but this is not consistent in all classes and subjects.

### **The curriculum**

Curricular provision is good overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The enrichment of the curriculum is good. Overall, the school's accommodation and resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall, curricular provision is well planned, interesting and effective.
- Provision for ICT has improved significantly since the school was last inspected.
- The strength of curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage gives them a flying start to their education.
- There are strengths and weakness in curricular provision in Years 1 and 2.
- The teachers' skills are well used, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- Very good provision for pupils with SEN underpins the good progress made by these pupils.
- There are shortcomings in the school's provision for equality of opportunity.
- Additional activities enhance the pupils' progress well.
- Learning resources have improved since the school was last inspected.
- The school's accommodation has strengths and weaknesses.

### **Commentary**

22. Throughout the school, the curriculum meets statutory requirements fully, including those for collective worship. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the school's 1999 inspection when ICT did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. In Years 1 to 6, there are weaknesses in the provision for writing, including the way this skill is used in other subjects and in the opportunities for the pupils to write at length. Curricular planning is generally based on appropriate national guidelines which have been suitably adjusted to meet the individual requirements of the school. This gives a secure basis for the pupils to make continuous progress.

23. Curricular provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Activities are very well planned to meet the children's needs and all six areas of learning are linked together very effectively through a central theme. The accommodation and resources are very good, used to the full and support learning very well. The recent Forest School initiative is a very good innovation which develops children's skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning.

24. In Years 1 and 2, the range of creative arts activities undertaken in art, DT and ICT is a particular strength. These activities are supported by teachers, teaching assistants and parents. They provide the pupils with interest and challenge and are an effective response to the national "Excellence and Enjoyment" initiative. However, there are also important weaknesses in curricular provision in Years 1 and 2. For example, in mathematics, there is an over reliance on the use of a commercial scheme to teach the subject. Additionally, in science, too much investigative work is over directed by the teacher and does not sufficiently challenge the more able pupils in particular.

25. In Years 3 to 6 especially, the teachers' skills are very well used to implement the curriculum effectively and is an important illustration of the school's innovative approach to curricular development. Teachers specialise in teaching subjects of which they have in-depth knowledge, for example, in music, ICT and science. This helps to raise standards and to prepare pupils well for the later stages of their education. When asked about this approach to their teaching, pupils responded that they found it both interesting and challenging. They said that they had to work hard but enjoyed the interesting work provided by the teachers and felt that they made good progress.

26. The curriculum provided for pupils with SEN is very good. It is appropriately organised and no pupils are disadvantaged. The teaching assistants are experienced and receive training within and outside school. The co-ordinator for SEN gives valuable support to groups and individuals experiencing difficulties. The SEN room is attractive and offers good space for group work. The proposed new building is designed to enable disabled access more easily and to provide disabled toilet facilities.

27. Groups of pupils are regularly withdrawn from collective worship for other educational activities. For example, during the inspection some pupils were absent from the assembly which celebrated pupils' good work. Additionally, some pupils regularly miss subjects, for example, music, for other work. Although it is clear that pupils benefit from the activities they undertake when not taking part in the same work as their classmates, they also miss work and experiences which most pupils benefit from. This means that these pupils are not receiving equality of opportunity, which is unsatisfactory.

28. The school provides its pupils with a wide variety of extracurricular activities. These include a good range of sports, such as tag rugby and gymnastics. In addition, other clubs include chess, choir, recorders and French. Educational visits embrace a residential trip to the Isle of Wight, and theatre, farm and museum trips. Visitors to the school include African drummers, a 'Victorian lady' and an author. An innovative aspect of the school's support for learning outside of the school day is Year 6 homework which is carried out by E mail. All of these activities make a good contribution to the pupils' progress.

29. The number of teaching and support staff is similar to that found in most schools of this size. The staff have a good range of experience and qualifications and they are well deployed to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Teaching assistants are well trained and give effective help where it is most needed. When the school was last inspected, learning resources were judged to be satisfactory. They are now judged to be good. Since 1999, there have been particular improvements in resources for DT, ICT and the library.

30. Strengths in the school's accommodation include provision for the Foundation Stage, its library provision and accommodation for pupils with SEN. In addition, it has good grounds which support the teaching of PE well and also include an environmental area – which is to be developed further – and drama/reading benches. Weaker areas are the temporary classrooms and the hall. The hall is too small for the number of pupils and is also a throughway and the temporary classrooms – which are being replaced – restrict some curricular activities.

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

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The induction arrangements for pupils in Reception are very good.
- There are very effective procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- All adults know pupils very well and provide very good levels of care.

- Arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development are effective, but there are shortcomings in the arrangements for target setting for the more able pupils.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work is good.

### **Commentary**

31. There are good arrangements for children when they start school. The arrangements include preliminary visits to the school by both children and parents. These visits enable teachers to gather information about the children and, as a result, children settle in quickly and make good progress. Parents at the meeting commented on how well their children had settled into school. Procedures for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education are thorough.

32. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN receive very good levels of care and support. Assessment arrangements are effective and records are thorough and well maintained. The school uses assessment data from teachers and from a range of tests to inform target-setting procedures in pupils' individual education plans. Assessments made on entry to school enable early identification of pupils needing extra support.

33. The school has very good health and safety procedures. Governors carry out risk assessments regularly. Additional assessments are carried out for trips and visits. Security is good. Child protection procedures are effective. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection and for pupils in public care. She has been trained recently, as have several other members of staff. Guidance is given to teachers in training. Staff are very aware of child protection issues and maintain good logs of concerns. Links with local social services and police are good. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are very good. Nearly all staff and governors have been trained in first aid and emergency procedures are thorough.

34. There is a strong bond of trust between pupils and all adults who work in the school. Adults know the pupils very well and monitor their personal development effectively through class files, the monitoring of celebration assembly awards and annual reports. Satisfactory tracking systems are used to check on pupils' progress and help teachers to set targets for them, but these are not fully effective for the more able pupils. Pupils' views are sought consistently through the School Council, circle time, assemblies and PHSCE.

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

The school's links with parents are good. Links with the community and with other schools are good.

#### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Most parents have positive views of the school.
- The school provides parents with good information.
- The school has good links with parents through homework books and parent helpers
- The school has good links with the local and wider community.
- A significant minority of parents does not feel that the school works closely enough in partnership with them.

### **Commentary**

35. In a good return to the inspection questionnaire, parents and carers expressed positive views on most aspects of the work of the school. However, a significant number who responded to the questionnaire did not feel comfortable about approaching the school. (This was not the case at the parents' meeting.) This situation appears to have arisen because of changes to the year groupings of some pupils last year. The school and governors endeavoured to resolve the situation through a series of meetings with the parents involved, but not all parents were satisfied. The school has sought parents' views over the last three years, but has not always communicated the results to parents.

36. Some parents also felt that they were not well informed about their children's progress. However, these concerns were not borne out by the findings of the inspection. Information provided for parents is good, through annual reports, newsletters and consultation meetings. Details about the work pupils are to cover are provided each term. Home/school books are used well as a means of dialogue between teachers and parents. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed of events and the headteacher and all teaching staff are always available for informal consultation at the end of the day. The school prospectus is very clearly written, informative and attractively presented. The governors' annual report is clear and informative. The home/school agreement has been signed by all parents. Homework guidelines are given to parents. Homework is used well to support learning. Consultation meetings are well attended.

37. Parents of pupils with SEN are encouraged to be involved in identifying their needs and providing support. They are well informed and speak highly of the support their children receive. The school reports good links with outside support agencies and close liaison with the secondary schools. There are very good arrangements for parents of children in the Foundation Stage, who are welcomed into class on one day each week to see how their children are progressing. Informative booklets on the parents' notice board by the Reception entrance illustrate what the children have been learning each term in each aspect of the curriculum.

38. There are good links with local secondary schools, ensuring a smooth transition for pupils: these include the involvement of trainee sports leaders as well as younger students carrying out their work experience. The school has joined with other local schools for sports and music. There are very good links with the local nurseries. A high number of teachers in training work at the school for their teaching practice.

39. Parents support the school well through the Friends Association, which runs a good range of social and fund-raising events and raises good sums to buy equipment to enhance children's education. Very large numbers of parents help in school on a regular basis.

40. The school has good links with the local community, including participation in the local newsletter. Members of the local community use the school on a regular basis. There are close links with the parish. The parish priest is a member of the governing body and visits the school regularly. Pupils sing to local elderly people on their visits to residential homes and pupils regularly take part in productions in the local theatre. There are good links with the wider community through the school's connection with a school it supports in Africa.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good; other leadership roles are fulfilled well. The management of the school is satisfactory. The school's governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All staff share the headteacher's vision for the school and there is a strong sense of teamwork and commitment to raising standards.
- Good leadership of teaching and the curriculum is helping to raise standards in some areas.
- Although there are satisfactory procedures for checking on the school's effectiveness, these are not always implemented rigorously enough.
- The analysis of data is not sufficiently thorough to pinpoint and act upon the causes of underachievement for some groups of pupils.
- Governors have a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve and make a good contribution to shaping its future direction.
- Very good leadership of the Foundation Stage ensures high quality provision for the youngest children.
- The management of SEN is very good and contributes significantly to the very good provision for the pupils.



- Good financial management ensures that the school is well resourced and able to pursue its long term aims.

## **Commentary**

41. The headteacher's aspirations for the school and the pupils underpin her effective leadership. Her own teaching provides a good role model for other members of staff, and her care and concern for their wellbeing and that of the pupils set the tone for the school's caring Christian ethos. There is a strong and effective team spirit and all members of staff share the headteacher's vision for the school and her commitment to raising standards. The two assistant headteachers work closely with the headteacher and provide good leadership in their respective roles and as part of the school's management team. They, too, provide good role models as teachers as well as being very supportive to colleagues. The pupils respond very well to the leadership of the school. They show respect for all adults, are aware of their high expectations of behaviour and respond very positively to these.

42. The role of co-ordinators, some of whom are relatively new to the role, is developing well and having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum. For example, there have been significant improvements in the provision for ICT since the last inspection as a result of very good leadership which has driven its development. The recent initiatives to introduce specialist teaching in some subjects in Years 3 to 6, and the 'Excellence and Enjoyment' afternoon in Years 1 and 2 illustrate the school's innovative approach to teaching and curriculum development. These initiatives are having a good impact on the quality of pupils' learning as they benefit from the expertise of teachers, assistants and parents in a structured way. There is a strong commitment to seeking ways to make learning more relevant and enjoyable for the pupils.

43. The headteacher and co-ordinators regularly observe lessons, check pupils' work and teachers' planning and share their perceptions of where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie. These monitoring activities help the school's leadership to identify appropriate priorities for improvement which are then incorporated in the development plan. For example, raising standards in writing is a key priority in the current plan. However, there is no specific reference to raising standards for the more able pupils, which is the main weakness, or analysis of the causes of the lower than average standards for these pupils.

44. The management team analyses the data from both national tests and internal assessments. For example, the headteacher and co-ordinators set targets for individual pupils based on the predictions of the data. However, the use and interpretation of data are not sufficiently rigorous and do not get to the root causes of underachievement where this occurs, as in writing and in science in Year 2. In some cases, targets are set too low, based on pupils' prior attainment and there is a degree of over-cautiousness in teachers' assessments of pupils and their expectations of their future performance, especially those capable of reaching higher attainment levels.

45. Governors are fully involved in checking how well the school is doing and have a good understanding of what it does well and where it needs to improve. They have a wide range of expertise which is very valuable to the school and which they use effectively in their respective roles. The chair of governors, herself a former headteacher, is very perceptive and provides very good support for the headteacher and management team. The governor who maintains an overview of ICT has visited the school regularly, discussed progress with the co-ordinator and played a key role in developing the school's website. Governors have supported school improvements by ensuring that sufficient funds are allocated to ensure initiatives can be carried out successfully. The purchase of a bank of laptops has been a very good investment in terms of its impact on raising standards in ICT. Governors fulfil their statutory obligations and are successful in their role as critical friends to the school. However, they do not fully ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

46. Where leadership and management are very good, they have a particularly noticeable impact on the quality of education provided for the pupils. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has been instrumental in bringing about significant improvements in the provision for children in the Reception

class, which have resulted in a higher quality of education and higher standards. A very good action plan sets out a clear agenda for improvement, and constant monitoring of its effectiveness ensures ongoing attention to the children's needs. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is very experienced and skilled. She keeps accurate records of pupils' progress and other required documentation in good order. She does not have a class so is able to be fully involved in the teaching and gives good support to colleagues, both in class lessons and when working with small groups of pupils who are withdrawn for additional help. Her extensive knowledge of individual pupils and their needs enables her to ensure that they receive well targeted support.

47. The management team and the governors ensure that expenditure is carefully planned to ensure that the school is well resourced. The experienced administrative officer works closely with the headteacher to ensure that the school's resources are managed efficiently. Spending is carefully checked on a monthly basis and good care is taken to ensure best value. The governors monitor the budget very carefully and pride themselves on good housekeeping which ensures that the school never has a deficit. Good financial management has enabled the school to save sufficient money to fund a new building programme, in order to replace old temporary buildings which are in poor condition. This is the reason for the higher than average budget surplus.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	419454
Total expenditure	397286
Expenditure per pupil	2393

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29527
Balance carried forward to the next	51695

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

48. Children are admitted to school in September in the year in which they become five. They attend part-time to begin with and are gradually integrated into full-time attendance. There are currently 28 children in the Reception class, of whom eight were still attending part-time during this inspection. Induction arrangements are very good and help children to settle quickly and easily into school routines. Overall, their attainment on entry is average. Indications are that by the end of the Reception year, they are on course to exceed the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently very good, which enables the children to achieve very well. Assessment procedures are also very good and assessment information is used very effectively to inform the teacher's planning.

49. The curriculum is planned very well to meet the diverse needs of the children. There is a very effective balance between focused teaching and opportunities for independent learning, which extend the children's experiences very well. The classroom and outside area are very well equipped and laid out and provide a stimulating environment for learning. Attractive displays of the children's work celebrate their achievement. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has a clear vision for the development of the provision, which is clearly set out in the Foundation Stage action plan. The recent Forest School initiative is a very good example of how the provision for the youngest children continues to be enhanced and improved.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

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

- Children are excited and motivated to learn because the teacher provides a wide range of activities which are imaginative and enjoyable.
- The very well planned curriculum allows plenty of opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves and to initiate their own ideas through play.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good because it takes account of children's needs and their stage of development.

#### **Commentary**

50. Achievement is very good because the teacher plans many opportunities for the children to develop independence and confidence. Children choose from and take part in an interesting and imaginative range of activities as well as learning to sit and listen quietly to the teacher when it is appropriate. Children play together enthusiastically and show respect for each other's needs and views. The planned curriculum allows plenty of scope for learning through play, together with short periods of direct teaching or adult-led activities. Children behave very well and respond positively to all adults. They form close and trusting relationships and are happy and secure in school. The teacher is particularly good at building children's confidence and self-esteem while ensuring that the more dominant children do not prevent others from sharing their thoughts and ideas. The Forest School initiative provides children with valuable opportunities to develop independence and self-esteem in an outdoor environment.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve high standards for their age.
- There is very good teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- Children learn to develop language through well planned play activities.

### Commentary

51. Children are very good at listening to the teacher and to each other when the whole class is sitting together. They respond to the teacher's questions readily and take turns to give answers or suggest ideas. Most speak clearly and audibly and explain their thoughts well using an increasing range of vocabulary. The teacher has recently introduced the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme which she presents in an imaginative and enjoyable way to the children who love taking part in the daily activities. Their knowledge of sounds is very good. Most can suggest words that begin with a given sound and almost half of the children are able to blend some sounds together. Children use their phonic knowledge to write simple words and make good attempts at more complex words. They write with confidence and enjoyment because the teacher gives writing a purpose, as when the children wrote to Baby Bear with their ideas about how to make his porridge more tasty. The teacher is developing a love of reading in the children, who enjoy listening to stories, such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, and re-enacting them. Seven of the children are already reading at a level not expected until Year 1 and several others are expected to exceed the goals set for the end of Reception. Children have many opportunities to develop language and communication skills through play, as when they act out the story of *The Three Little Pigs*.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good because mathematics is linked very effectively with other areas of learning.
- The teacher makes very good use of the interactive whiteboard to make learning fun.

### Commentary

52. Children attain high standards in this area of learning and achieve very well. Most count up to ten objects reliably and work out 'one more than' and 'one less than' a given number. More able children count and read numerals up to 50 and are beginning to record simple addition and subtraction sums. Children make very good progress because the teacher has high expectations of them and plans work effectively to make meaningful links with other areas of learning. For example, when playing in the Three Bears' playhouse, the children have to match the number and size of the dishes, cups and cutlery to the three different sized bears. Many other mathematical activities are linked to the story and include counting bears, placing them in order and adding and subtracting small groups of bears. The teacher is skilled in the use of the interactive whiteboard which helps to make learning fun by adding a further visual dimension. For example, children used the numbers displayed to work out 'two less than 15' and 'one more than 4', according to their levels of understanding. At Forest School, children follow a trail of numbered teddy bear cards which further reinforces their understanding and makes effective links with work in the classroom.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well because they learn through first-hand experience.
- The teacher provides a wide range of activities inside and outside which attract children's interest and curiosity.

### **Commentary**

53. The teacher provides many opportunities for children to explore, investigate, solve problems, and to make predictions and observations. In one very well planned lesson, the children made porridge, having first predicted what might happen when water was added to the oats. They tasted the porridge and then added salt, jam or chocolate sauce and recorded their preferences. This information was then transferred on to different types of graph which the teacher used very effectively to question the children about what they found out. The quality of teaching and learning is very good because the teacher plans imaginative and enjoyable activities which develop children's knowledge and understanding and heighten their sense of curiosity. Children sort objects into groups based on the material they are made of. They create a 'History of Me' from photographs of themselves, use the Internet to find out about dinosaurs, plan a route around the school grounds and build structures from construction kits. Children greatly enjoyed the opportunity to shovel snow and mould it into a snowman. At Forest School, children learn the importance of safety and how to follow a trail. The Reception outdoor play area and the school grounds are used to maximum effect to promote learning through exploration and play.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are many activities which develop children's manual dexterity.
- Very effective use of the outdoor area, school grounds and Forest School facilities promote the development of good physical skills.

### **Commentary**

54. Children achieve high standards in this area of learning because the very good teaching provides valuable opportunities for them to improve and extend all aspects of their physical development. They handle a wide range of tools and objects, including construction equipment, moulding materials, pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and computers. They learn to handle them safely and with increasing control, as when they roll out playdough and use pastry cutters to cut out shapes. Outside, children ride on wheeled toys and enjoy clambering on apparatus. In the hall, they learn to move with control and co-ordination when they learn a bears' 'waking up' dance and climb on apparatus. By extending experiences beyond the immediate play area into the school grounds and Forest School, the teacher enables children to become increasingly adventurous and confident in their physical development.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Opportunities for role play are very well planned and built into everyday play activities.
- There is a wide range of opportunities for children to use their imagination in art, music and dance.

### **Commentary**

55. Achievement is very good because of the high quality of the teaching, which helps children to express their ideas, explore and appreciate music and use different media and techniques. Role play is a prominent feature of children's daily experiences and is very well planned to link with other areas of learning. For example, after hearing some traditional stories, the children created a display which they use regularly to act out the stories using model animals and people. Outside, children act out the story of the *Three Little Pigs* in their houses of straw, wood and bricks. They learn to sing the *Three Bears Rap*, pretend that the playhouse is the three bears' house, act out the story and draw or paint pictures of the bears. They have made dinosaurs from clay and snowmen from sugar paste as well as learning to print with sponges and potatoes.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in reading are high but are below average in writing.
- Standards in speaking and listening are above average across all subjects.
- Teachers manage lessons well and pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- There are missed opportunities for pupils to extend their writing in other subjects.
- Assessment data are not used rigorously enough to determine how to move pupils to higher levels in writing.

### **Commentary**

56. In Year 2, standards in reading are above average, while those in writing are average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) remains below that found nationally. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection and last year's national assessments. Standards in Year 6 are average, overall, in English and this is broadly in line with last year's test results. In Year 6, standards in reading are well above average, but those in writing are below. All pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and in reading. Those with special educational needs also achieve well and most reach average standards. Pupils who are capable of higher attainment achieve less well in writing and do not reach the standards they attain in other aspects of the subject.

57. Across the school, standards in speaking and listening remain above average and all pupils are achieving well. Pupils listen well and are confident speakers in a range of settings across all subjects. Teachers give good opportunities for speaking and use a range of strategies. Paired discussion is encouraged in all classes and pupils are given good opportunities to extend their vocabulary and speak for a variety of purposes. For example in a very successful PSHCE lesson, taught by the co-ordinator, pupils freely discussed how everyone is unique and special.

58. Reading standards are high by the time pupils leave the school. There are regular opportunities for reading and all pupils are expected to read at home. Regular practice leads to good progress and achievement. Pupils are introduced to a good range of literature and by Year 6 more than half are exceeding the national expectation. This was more than evident in the excellent Year 6 lesson observed. Here pupils explored how language and structure can be used to influence the reader. The tasks were extremely well matched to the differing ability groups, with all being highly challenged. Pupils skimmed and scanned the text and obtained specific information through detailed reading. They distinguished between fact and opinion and considered arguments critically.

59. Standards in writing are below those of reading because few pupils exceed the national expectation in both Year 2 and Year 6. This was a key issue in the previous report and remains one in this inspection. Pupils capable of higher attainment are not sufficiently challenged to extend their writing beyond the average level and this brings the overall standards down. In both English and other subjects there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length and in some classes there is an over reliance on worksheets.

60. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers manage lessons well and insist on good behaviour. Pupils are attentive and concentrate well on their tasks. They enjoy their work and behave well. The teaching for pupils with SEN is also good. Work is well matched to their individual education plans and they are well supported by the SEN co-ordinator in booster classes. Teaching assistants also provide effective support, which helps pupils to achieve in line with their peers in learning basic skills.

61. The subject is soundly managed by a recently appointed co-ordinator. She monitors planning and pupils' work and watches lessons and gives feedback to teachers. The use of computers is developing well. There are examples of word-processed work and multimedia presentations and the laptops and interactive white boards are used effectively to support learning. There is a wealth of data from assessments but they are not analysed rigorously or used specifically enough to determine what pupils need to do to reach the higher levels in writing.

### **Language and Literacy across the curriculum**

62. There are appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. Good opportunities to develop speaking and listening are evident in most subjects. Teachers give time for talking to partners and group discussions. Pupils extend their technical vocabulary in science and ICT. In PE they listen carefully and follow instructions sensibly. In science, children write up their findings from investigations clearly but opportunities are missed to fully extend their writing in this and other subjects, such as history and geography. Pupils listen well in music and are good at appraising the work and performance of others.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and reach above average standards by the time they leave the school.
- Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but more able pupils do not always reach the standards they are capable of.
- There is an over-reliance on commercial workbooks in Years 1 and 2 which do not always provide enough challenge for pupils.
- Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboard technology to enhance learning.
- There is a good emphasis on problem solving and investigation.

### **Commentary**

63. In Year 6, standards are above average, which is lower than at the time of the last inspection but in line with the results of the 2004 national tests. Achievement is good, and most pupils have made good progress since Year 2, including those pupils with special educational needs. Pupils in Year 6 use a good range of strategies for problem solving. They have a good understanding of number, including fractions, decimals and co-ordinates. Pupils estimate and calculate length, distance, capacity and weight with accuracy and work out the perimeter and area of different shapes. In a good lesson seen during the inspection, pupils calculated answers to problems by extracting information from pie charts, tables and graphs and using their knowledge of number operations and percentages.

64. In Year 2, standards are average which is lower than at the time of the previous inspection and lower than the results of the 2004 national tests. This represents satisfactory achievement. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is not as high as in Years 3 to 6 because there is insufficient challenge in some of the work, particularly for the more able pupils. Most pupils sequence numbers to 100 and use their knowledge of numbers to add, subtract and multiply. They estimate and measure lengths in centimetres and recognise and name two and three-dimensional shapes. There was little evidence of work at a higher level for the more able pupils, although more recently, pupils in Year 2 have been given more challenging work which involved solving more complex mathematical problems with less reliance on the commercial workbooks.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, teachers have high expectations of the pupils and plan work that both challenges and interests them. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment information support teaching and learning well for these pupils. In Years 1 and 2, there has been an over-reliance on a commercial mathematics scheme, which does not always provide more able pupils with sufficient challenge. However, there is evidence of some good teaching in Year 2 in the current term. For example, in a lesson seen during the inspection, more able pupils were beginning to sort cubes, cuboids, spheres and cones according to the number of faces and corners they have, which shows that they are now being given work that extends their thinking. In the lesson seen in Year 1, some of the more able pupils found the work set too easy and finished it quickly.

66. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards when introducing a topic to the pupils, and in the mental starter session at the beginning of each lesson. In the Year 6 lesson, the teacher used the whiteboard well to involve pupils in interpreting data in the form of tables, graphs and pie charts. Demanding questions suitable to the range of abilities in the class extended pupils' mathematical skills: "What conclusions could you draw from this?" challenged the more able pupils to apply their existing knowledge to the problem. The pupils responded with enthusiasm and concentrated well on the task. In the main part of the lesson, pupils were challenged to explain and develop their reasoning, which they did with evident enjoyment.

67. Pupils' work shows that they are given good opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding in order to solve problems. In Year 2, pupils had to identify two-dimensional shapes from a description of their properties, while Year 6 pupils used their knowledge of angles to help them calculate the proportions within a pie chart.

68. The subject co-ordinator had only been in post for half a term at the time of this inspection, but has already made a good start in identifying where improvement is needed. For example, she has provided help and guidance for the Year 2 teacher which has resulted in raising the level of challenge in some of the work for those pupils. She is also aware of the limitations of the commercial scheme that is in use and has identified this as another area for improvement. Assessment procedures are good and are used well to inform teachers' planning in Years 3 to 6. This is less effective in Years 1 and 2 where the setting of targets based on pupils' prior attainment is not rigorous enough. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**



69. There is some evidence of the use of mathematics in other subjects. For example, pupils measure lengths and quantities in DT and science and use co-ordinates in geography. However, the use of the subject in other areas of learning is not fully planned. Consequently, some opportunities for pupils to apply these skills productively in other subjects are missed.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils do well in this subject by the end of Year 6.
- Assessment arrangements, homework and revision procedures enhance the pupils' standards in Years 3 to 6.
- Aspects of investigative science are capable of even further development in Year 6.
- More able Year 2 pupils do not do well enough.
- Shared management and specialisation in teaching science generally work well.
- Curricular planning and provision are comprehensive.
- The use of ICT in science is developing well and there are good links with some other subjects.

### **Commentary**

70. Standards in science in Year 6 are above average. This represents good achievement for pupils of all needs and abilities. This judgement represents the same standards as those achieved by the school's pupils in the 2004 national end of Year 6 tests. In the school's 1999 inspection, standards in Year 6 were judged to be well above average. This difference is explained by the fact that a different group of pupils is involved. In addition, in the 2005 year group, significant numbers of more able pupils have left the school because their families have moved away from the area. Furthermore, the current pupils are making good progress and are on track to reach even higher standards when they are tested later in the year. Pupils in Year 6 have a good grasp of all aspects of the subject. For example, they can describe the main functions of the most important human and plant organs, understand the process of evaporation and can explain what is meant by a balance of forces using scientific vocabulary well.

71. Overall, teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are good although there are instances of very good practice. Strengths of the teaching include the pace, enthusiasm and knowledge of the teacher. In addition, work is challenging and varied with the teacher making good use of well planned resources, including ICT, to promote the pupils' learning. As a result, the pupils are engrossed in their work, behave very well and co-operate very effectively. Regular quizzes and well planned revision of their work help the pupils to progress. The pupils say that these assessment and reinforcement procedures make them well aware of what they have to do to improve. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils' understanding of science is consolidated and extended by well targeted homework which is directly related to their work in class. However, in conversation with pupils, and from the observation of lessons and the analysis of pupils' work, it is evident that much of the investigative work is too directed by the teacher. As a result, although standards are high in this aspect of science, pupils, particularly the more able, are not fully challenged in this feature of their work.

72. Standards in Year 2 are average and achievement is satisfactory. Most pupils reach average levels which means that pupils with SEN do well. However, just as in the school's 1999 inspection, and in the 2004 end of year assessments by teachers, few pupils reach above average standards. This means that achievement for more able pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils have a sound grasp of all aspects of the subject at average levels. This is because most of the work is set at this level. There are instances of above average work and understanding but these are not sufficient to allow pupils to reach above average standards overall.

73. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 2 is satisfactory which means that it is a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. Strengths of the teaching include planning, revision of earlier work which is then built on to extend the pupils' understanding, development of subject specific vocabulary, the use of resources and relationships. The most important shortcomings in the teaching are overlong introductions which slow down the pace of learning and make the pupils restless. In addition, the work set for pupils is not always sufficiently demanding in scientific content and there is significant underestimation of the capabilities of more able pupils. All of these weaknesses were also noted when the school was inspected in 1999.

74. When the school was inspected in 1999, ICT was judged to be underused in the subject. This is no longer the case. The teachers make good use of ICT to stimulate the pupils' learning in their teaching. In addition, the pupils have used it to find out information, classification and to word process their work. There are also good links with other subjects such as mathematics and art. However, although pupils record their work in suitably varied ways, the use of their writing skills is not as well developed as it is in many other schools. Too much writing is undemanding in its nature and can consist of a single word. In other cases, all pupils copy identical writing produced by the teacher and, not infrequently, the quality of their writing is restricted by an over use of worksheets. This problem, and the progress of the more able, is exacerbated by the fact that the pupils work in mixed ability groups too much of the time. This form of organisation helps the less able but does not always result in the more able being fully challenged and making the progress of which they are capable.

75. The subject is jointly managed by co-ordinators who have responsibility for Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 respectively. Both co-ordinators have attended recent and significant in-service training. They teach science to all of the year groups for which they have responsibility. This is a relatively new arrangement but the result is good leadership and management overall. However, although the co-ordinators have a clear idea of the way in which the subject should develop, they do not have a formal action plan for science. The pupils' work in the subject is comprehensively and effectively planned and gives a good basis for the pupils to make progress. Curricular provision is enhanced by links with the local secondary school which include scientific workshops and projects which assist the pupils to move on to the next stage of their education easily. Pupils' work in science also benefits from visits such as that to an active science centre and from the Year 6 pupils having responsibility for developing the school's environmental area. There has been a good improvement in the school's provision for science since it was last inspected in 1999.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to enhance teaching.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and confidence in teaching ICT.
- Very good leadership and management provide clear direction for the subject's development.

### **Commentary**

76. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching and learning or the overall provision in the subject. Other evidence indicates good improvement from the previous inspection, when some aspects of the National Curriculum were not met. Standards are now broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils are now making satisfactory progress and achieving soundly across all aspects of the subject. Pupils' previous work shows a sound range of experiences across all strands of ICT.

77. The school has a sufficient number of new laptops, which are well used across all subjects. In an excellent English lesson pupils worked on text and fully exploited the advantages of ICT over hand written work. The interactive whiteboards are proving successful in delivering whole class lessons in both ICT and in other subjects and providing clear explanations to teach new skills.

78. All teachers are now confident and competent in using computers. All have received training in the use of the interactive whiteboards and training opportunities are taken regularly in staff meetings. The co-ordinator teaches all pupils in Years 3 to 6. This specialist teaching to half classes ensures systematic development of skills at appropriate levels. In the lesson seen, she successfully taught the early stages of working with spreadsheets in the form of a function machine to Year 3 and 4 pupils.

79. Leadership and management of the subject are now very good. The recently appointed co-ordinator is skilled and experienced and has really moved the subject on. She has a very clear vision for the subject and has the skills to develop it further. She has carried out an audit of staff needs and provides differentiated training.

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

80. Opportunities to use computers in other subjects are developing well. Examples were seen of several year groups using a selection of mathematics programs to reinforce learning and using the Internet to find information. Pupils handle data in science and mathematics and use a range of techniques in art. They use the Internet to research topics in history and the digital camera to record aspects of PE.

## **HUMANITIES**

81. The teaching of **history** was not observed during the inspection and, therefore, no overall judgement about provision in the subject is possible. However, evidence was collected from the analysis of pupils' work, discussions with teachers and pupils and the examination of displays of work. This evidence indicates that a broad curriculum, embracing both historical knowledge and skills, is taught and that standards are in line with national expectations. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils have studied their own growth and their family trees at suitable levels. This develops their understanding of chronology from their own experiences. These pupils also look at toys of varying ages, compare them and identify reasons for the age of the toys that they study. In Year 2, pupils have also been taught about the Fire of London and have produced an interesting art display to support this work. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have learnt about Ancient Greece and show a suitable understanding of aspects of this topic. For example, pupils in Year 6 have compared the city states of Athens and Sparta, know how ideas from that time influence modern life and have researched topics such as schools in Ancient Greece.

82. Throughout the school, there is clear evidence of the sound use of ICT to support the development of historical understanding. This evidence includes work on the Olympic Games, local buildings and the use of art programs to draw dinosaurs. There is also a good list of Internet sites for pupils to find information about their work in history. Visits and visitors to the school give additional interest and breadth to the teaching of history. These include visits to Blenheim Palace, the Dinosaur Museum in Oxford and a visit by an 'ancient Celt'. Weaker aspects of the curriculum are the interpretation of historical events and, in Years 1 and 2, the development of research skills. In Years 1 to 6, the pupils' writing skills are not always fully extended and the presentation of their work is variable. Although assessment procedures for the subject are good, more able pupils are not always set work which is sufficiently challenging for them.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Curricular provision is broad.
- Pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, have a good awareness of environmental issues.
- Map work is strong, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- Visits and visitors to the school enhance the pupils' understanding.

- Geography makes a good contribution to the pupils' moral and cultural development.
- The use of ICT is developing well.
- Good links are made with mathematics.
- The use of the pupils' recording and literacy skills is variable.
- More able pupils are not always fully extended.
- Marking of the pupils' work is variable.

### **Commentary**

83. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average. This represents satisfactory achievement which is promoted by satisfactory teaching and learning. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's 1999 inspection in those cases where judgements were made by both inspections. The evidence indicates that pupils have a sound knowledge of all aspects of the well planned curriculum which provides a secure basis for the progressive development of their geographical understanding.

84. A particular strength in Years 1 and 2 is the development of map work. This is based on working from their understanding so that they start by drawing plans and side views of familiar objects and progress to, for example, drawing plans of the school playground and locating features on maps with simple co-ordinates. Map work continues to be developed successfully in Years 3 to 6 where, for example, pupils gain an understanding of scale and symbols. Pupils in Year 2 successfully contrast the area in which they live with life in Mexico and those in Year 4/5 compare Chipping Norton with part of the Peak District. Pupils in Year 6 show a marked awareness of the environment. They understand that humans can change the environment and that it needs to be carefully managed. The pupils showed a sensitive understanding of the different needs of humans and animals when animals are hunted.

85. A good range of educational visits and visitors enhances the curriculum and the pupils' geographical understanding. Good use is made of the local area for fieldwork which develops the pupils' knowledge of human and physical geography. This type of work is extended during a residential visit to the Isle of Wight for pupils in Years 5 and 6. In addition, visits have been made to, for example, Cotswold Wildlife Park, a Butterfly Farm and a working farm. Visitors to the school have included speakers talking about endangered species and Uganda. This range of activities, allied to the basic curriculum, makes a good contribution to the pupils' understanding of moral and cultural issues.

86. When the school was last inspected, ICT was judged to be underused to promote teaching and learning in the subject. This is no longer the case. Teachers use a range of ICT to assist the pupils' development of geographical understanding. These include video tapes and interactive whiteboards. Pupils have used computers to find out information, for example, about fishing grounds and coral reefs in relation to their work on the environment. They have also produced a range of graphs using ICT. The links between mathematics and geography are strong. In addition to analysing and presenting geographical information graphically, pupils, for example, apply co-ordinates practically and gain a clear understanding of scale in their map work.

87. Good use is also made of the pupils' speaking and listening skills in discussion and the development of their ideas. Geographical vocabulary is also well extended. However, the application of the pupils' writing skills is less consistent. Opportunities to exploit the styles of writing available in this subject and chances for pupils to develop their ideas at length are frequently missed. One reason for this is the over use of restricting worksheets. More able pupils are particularly affected by this issue. These pupils are also disadvantaged by the fact that too much of the work is set at the same level of demand and does not challenge them. This is in spite of the fact that the assessment of progress in the subject provides adequate information to allow suitable work to be set. The situation is compounded by the fact that much of the marking of pupils' work in this subject consists of praise and correction and gives them too little information about how to make their work better.

88. Since the school was last inspected, the strengths identified in geography in 1999 have been maintained and the weakness in ICT has been addressed. This represents a good improvement in the school's provision for geography. It also indicates that the leadership and management of the subject are good.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

89. **Art** was sampled during this inspection so it is not possible to make overall judgements about standards or the quality of provision. The lessons seen and work on display indicate that there is good teaching of different skills and techniques. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, in a well planned carousel of activities led by teachers, assistants and parents, learned to print designs with potatoes, moulded clay carefully to make piggy banks and created shades of blue, red and yellow by adding white paints in varying amounts to each colour. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 investigated and discussed what makes a sculpture before working with a partner to plan and design their own. This was linked effectively with pupils' work on mythical beasts in literacy. The teacher also made good use of an interactive Internet site to enhance learning and set pupils an interesting homework assignment to find out about the work of Andy Goldsworthy and Barbara Hepworth in order to extend their knowledge and appreciation of sculpture. Work on display shows that pupils' drawing and observational skills are developed well. The art curriculum is enhanced by visitors, including a textile artist and an animator, and visits to places such as Ironbridge, with a focus on ceramics, and the Oxford Botanical Gardens. Pupils' work is displayed attractively around the school, as well as in county art exhibitions and the school's own 'art gallery'.

90. No **DT** lessons were seen during the inspection so it is not possible to judge overall provision or the quality of teaching and learning. Other evidence indicates that the shortcomings reported at the previous inspection have been remedied. Work is now planned against national guidelines, which build systematically on pupils' knowledge and skills at appropriate levels for their ages. Regular audits ensure sufficient equipment and materials are available for planned activities. Food technology projects are now planned for and the school keeps photographic evidence of projects. There are valuable cross-curricular links, especially with science, and ICT has been embedded in the teaching of DT. Last year a Year 6 project developed control technology and involved robotics. The school has entered Years 4 and 5 pupils in a national competition "K'nx Challenge". There are good links with secondary students in construction workshops.

## **MUSIC**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Specialist teaching helps pupils to achieve above average standards by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment.
- The subject is enriched by a very good range of extracurricular activities.

### **Commentary**

91. The specialist teacher has high levels of expertise and a very good understanding of how pupils learn music. Lessons are well planned, fast paced and provide pupils with challenging and interesting activities, which appeal equally to boys and girls. Pupils who may have special educational needs in literacy, for instance, are encouraged and supported well and have good opportunities to shine in this non-academic subject. In a very good lesson for Year 6 pupils, they explored repetition and contrast in the melody and lyrics of different pieces of music in order to create their own compositions. They improvised rhythmic phrases using their voices and went on to produce a simple score which they performed on chime bars. Time was used very productively for whole class and collaborative work and the teaching was stimulating and enthusiastic. Pupils supported each other very well as they worked in groups. The teacher communicates her own love

of music and singing very well and ensures that pupils have plenty of opportunity to appraise and evaluate their own and others' work. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2, so it is not possible to make judgements about standards or teaching in those classes.

92. Singing is given a high profile throughout the school. It is taught well, not only in lessons but in assemblies and choir practice and for school performances. Pupils often sing the register or their times tables and teachers generate a love of singing by introducing pupils to a wide variety of songs, ranging from hymns to raps.

93. In addition to the choir, which numbers 45 pupils and performs in local music festivals, school assemblies and church services, there are three recorder groups for beginners, intermediate and advanced players, each of which caters for around ten pupils. During one recorder club, the advanced group were performing a lively rendition of Ja-Da. Pupils also benefit from the opportunity to learn to play guitar, violin, cornet, flute and clarinet through specialist tuition. Instrumentalists often play in assembly, as well as in school concerts and the annual carol service. The specialist teacher leads the subject very well and ensures its continuing development. This has contributed to the good improvement in teaching and in pupils' progress since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in PE is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do well in this subject.
- The Oxfordshire School Sport Partnership Programme enhances provision.
- Provision for swimming has improved.
- A good range of extra curricular activities adds to the quality of curricular provision.
- The use of ICT to support teaching and learning in PE is developing well.
- There are strengths and weaknesses in the school's accommodation.

### **Commentary**

94. Standards in Year 6 are above average which represents good achievement. This is an improvement on the findings of the school's last inspection when progress in Years 3 to 6 was judged to be sound. The improvement is due to the fact that teaching and learning are now good in Years 3 to 6 when they were judged to be satisfactory in 1999. In an excellent Year 6 dance lesson, pupils made excellent progress and produced high quality sequences of street dance movements which also increased their appreciation of this type of cultural dance. This was because of the expertise, enthusiasm and energy of the teacher and the response he generated in the pupils. The teacher was provided through the Oxfordshire School Sport Partnership Programme and the lesson illustrated the great value of this project to the school's provision in PE. In a good Years 3 and 4 gymnastics lesson, pupils devised and performed good quality sequences combining travel and balance on mats and apparatus. They showed good poise when starting and finishing these movements which were well controlled when carried out. The pupils were strong at identifying the strengths of each other's work when they evaluated but less secure when attempting to identify possible ways of improving the sequences they observed.

95. The school's 1999 inspection reported that swimming was limited to one class a year and only in warm weather as an open air pool was used. The school now uses a nearby new sports centre and all classes in Years 3 to 6 have some opportunities to swim during the school year. No swimming was observed. However, discussion with teachers and pupils and the school's records provided evidence for standards in swimming. This indicated that most pupils are able to swim at least the required 25 metres safely and unaided using a recognised stroke by the time that they leave the school and that many can swim much further than this.

96. In Year 2, standards in dance are average. This represents satisfactory achievement and is promoted by satisfactory teaching and learning. In a Year 2 lesson in which pupils devised movements relating to a space flight to the moon, they produced imaginative ideas. However, their movements were of average standard and lacked poise and confidence in performance. There was good work by the teaching assistant in this lesson in assessing the pupils' performance.

97. There has been a good improvement in the school's provision for PE since its 1999 inspection. The subject is, therefore, well managed. After school clubs which support the pupils' physical development include rugby, netball, 'kwik' cricket and rounders. The school takes part in sports festivals and regional tournaments which give the pupils chances to work and compete with other schools. The use of ICT supports teaching and learning in PE soundly and is being further developed. For example, CD players are used regularly to provide music for dance lessons. Furthermore, digital cameras are being used to record, assess and develop the quality of the pupils' performance. The school has ample grass and hard surfaced areas to support teaching and learning in PE effectively. However, the school hall is very small which restricts the progress made by the pupils. It is also used as a thoroughfare which disrupts lessons. The school has a number of strategies to overcome these problems such as teaching half of a class to increase the space available to each child during the lessons. However, these strategies cannot overcome the problems created by the inadequate size of the school hall for the subject.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

98. Only one lesson was observed in PSHCE so it is not possible to judge the overall provision or the quality of teaching and learning. In the Year 4/5 lesson the quality of teaching and learning was very good and pupils achieved well in exploring responsibility for their own actions. The teacher's planning was meticulous and she managed the lesson very well. Very good relationships in the class helped pupils feel secure and confident to share their feelings. One boy summed up risk taking very well as "...thinking about something, thinking about the possibilities and assessing whether to do it or not."

99. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has put a lot of time and effort into devising a comprehensive programme, and has worked as a consultant for the authority. In this subject and in science lessons pupils learn about health issues. Drugs and sex education are covered at an appropriate level for pupils' ages. The school council gives pupils a good grounding in citizenship and its sub committees provide a range of opportunities to participate in decision-making. There are close links with community agencies, which make pupils more aware of social and health and safety issues. The subject supports pupils' speaking and listening well providing good opportunities for discussion.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Grade

### *Inspection judgement*

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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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