

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MARY ELTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Clevedon

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109115

Headteacher: Mrs K Case

Lead inspector: Mr G Bassett

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005

Inspection number: 267291

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 406  
School address: Holland Road  
Clevedon  
North Somerset  
Postcode: BS21 7SX  
Telephone number: (01275) 876 432  
Fax number: (01275) 343 756  
Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mr J S Foulds  
governors:  
Date of previous January 1999  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Mary Elton Primary School is situated in Clevedon, a coastal town about 12 miles from Bristol. It is a school bigger than other primary schools. It serves a well established area immediately around the school. At present there are 14 classes in the school and 406 pupils on roll, nearly all of white ethnic origin. There are 214 girls and 192 boys on roll. There are 15.2 full-time equivalent teachers including the headteacher but during the inspection time four supply teachers were teaching in classes where permanent teachers were absent. There is no pupil in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Thirteen pupils have joined the school and nine have left during the past year. The proportion of pupils registered as eligible for free school meals is below the national average, but the proportion actually entitled to free meals is more in line with the average nationally. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs (SEN) which are mainly moderate learning difficulties and the proportion with statements is also below the national average. The children join the school full time at the beginning of the school year in which they become five and most have previously attended local play groups. The school's assessments show that the pupils' attainment on entry into the Reception class covers a wide range of ability but is well below average, overall. The school has recently

been awarded an “Activemark” for its development in physical education. The school has “After school care” provided for about 24 children.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21500	Mr G Bassett	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology
14347	Ms Joan Lindsay	Lay inspector	
22990	Mr C Furniss	Team inspector	English History Geography Physical education English as an additional language
23055	Mrs W Lucas	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
17756	Mrs H Monaghan	Team inspector	Science Music Religious education

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

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**The overall effectiveness of the school is very good.** Under the very good leadership of the headteacher all the staff are committed to providing a very caring environment where the ethos is very good so that the pupils do as well as they can. Consequently, the pupils' standards in English and mathematics are in line with the expected levels showing clearly that all pupils are achieving very well considering their well below average standards when they started at the school. The pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve very well. The parents express positive views about the quality of education provided by the school. The school provides very good value for money, receiving well below the national average funding each year.

#### **The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and her management is good.
- The governance of the school is very good.
- Quality of teaching is good overall and especially good in Year 6, with all teachers throughout the school making reliable and accurate records of what each pupil can do.
- In some classes the higher attaining pupils are not challenged rigorously enough in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The pupils' achievements are very good and the school's strategies to raise standards further are well founded.
- The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are very good.
- Overall provision for the Foundation Stage is very good and the children achieve well.
- The school cares very well for all the pupils and encourages equality of opportunity very well.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school has dealt well with the issues raised at that time. The quality of education has improved overall. The teachers' use of assessment is now good and teaching has improved significantly, with more lessons being good or better. A more structured approach to reading has been put into place and the standards have improved in reading and writing. The standards in information and communication technology are now in line with expected levels. Good improvements have been made to the outdoor provision made for the pupils in the Foundation Stage. The school is well placed to continue the improvements made.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

**The pupils' achievement is very good overall.** The children enter school with standards well below those expected. In the Foundation Stage they achieve well and although they are on course to reach the goals expected in many areas of their learning most will not reach the goals in literacy and numeracy. The standards in the most recent national tests in 2004 at the end of Year 2 are confirmed by the inspection and are average in reading and in writing but below the national average in mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher Level 3 is below average in reading and mathematics but broadly average in writing. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. The test results at the end of Year 2 are lower than those in similar schools. The standards, however, could be higher as some higher attaining pupils are not always challenged as well as they might be. However, the school has good strategies to bring about improvement. At the end of Year 6, standards in the national tests in 2004 in English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with the national average, but are better than those in similar schools in mathematics and science and about the same in English. The pupils' performance in the tests represents very good achievement from when these pupils joined the school. These standards seen

in the Year 6 tests for English and mathematics are confirmed by the inspection, but for science, the current work in Year 6 shows that standards are better and are above the expected levels. The standards in information and communication technology have improved significantly and are now in line with the expected levels. The standards in religious education are above expected levels at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 they are well above the expected standards. Music is a strength of the school and standards are well above the expected levels.

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

*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.*

**The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development, is very good.** Their behaviour is very good in and around the school and their attitudes to school and their work are very good. Attendance is satisfactory, but too many pupils are absent for holidays during term time.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall** and often very good, especially in Year 6. This has a very good influence upon the pupils' attitudes. The teachers' planning of the curriculum is good and has improved since the last inspection with the use of the national guidelines. The teachers use effective teaching methods and have mostly high expectations for the pupils' achievements, although in some classes the higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Consequently, the pupils are enthusiastic and interested and respond willingly to answer questions. There are good arrangements at the end of each term to formally assess what each pupil can do in English and mathematics. The curriculum is good and well planned by the teachers. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good overall, but having six small and poorly heated temporary classrooms is not conducive to good learning. There are very good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The support and guidance for pupils are also very good. The links with parents and other schools are good and those with the community are very good.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management of the school are very good.** The governing body makes a major contribution to the leadership of the school and the governance of the school is very good. All statutory requirements are met. Because of the very good leadership and good management by the headteacher, the quality of teaching has improved and very good strategies are being developed to ensure that the pupils' standards and achievements are of the highest priority. The headteacher has a very strong commitment to fulfilling the vision of the future developments and she has a total commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in whatever the school plans. The leadership development is fully supported by the senior management team and the subject leaders. The school has very good procedures to evaluate its progress and where improvements are necessary the school takes necessary steps. The teaching assistants are deployed well and give very

good support. The leadership of the Foundation Stage and for special educational needs is very good.

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

The parents have positive views of the school and are especially happy with the standard of teaching, the way their children develop personally and how staff expect their children to work hard. The pupils enjoy their lessons and have a high level of interest in what they do.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Build upon the existing strategies for raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that there is a consistent approach to providing a more rigorous challenge for the higher attaining pupils.
- Work with parents to reduce absence caused by term-time holidays.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

The pupils' achievements by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 are very good and standards are in line with the expected levels in English and mathematics and above the expected levels in science. Currently, the pupils in Year 2 achieve well to attain standards in reading and writing that are broadly in line with the expected levels; standards are below expected levels in mathematics with higher attaining pupils not achieving as well as they might.

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

- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Nearly all the pupils achieve very well by the time they leave Year 6.
- There has been a marked improvement in the standards reached in Year 2 in reading, writing and science since the last inspection.
- The pupils' standards of work in science in Year 6 are above the expected levels.
- In some classes the higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they might.

#### **Commentary**

1. Nearly all the pupils achieve very well in all subjects by the time they leave the school. The present Year 6 cohort entered school at the age of four years with standards in literacy and numeracy that were well below the average of the other schools in the county. These well below average standards are evident in the succeeding groups of pupils entering the school and are also much lower than at the time of the last inspection. This has a profound effect upon the standards being reached by the school, especially at the end of Year 2.
2. The standards on entry to the school have been falling since the last inspection. The current group of children in the Foundation Stage entered the school last September with standards that varied from child to child but, overall, their standards were well below the expected levels for their age. During their short time in the reception classes they have made good progress and have settled quickly to the routines of the class and school. They achieved well in the lessons observed because of the good quality of teaching and the use of the good assessment records already completed. Although nearly all have achieved well so far, most of them will not reach the goals expected in literacy and numeracy before they enter Year 1.
3. There has been a marked improvement in standards at the end of Year 2 since the last inspection. As the pupils in the current Year 2 entered school in the reception year with attainment well below the expected levels for their age, it is evident that they have achieved well overall, especially in developing their skills in reading and writing. Currently the pupils' work in Year 2 shows that standards are in line with the expected levels for their age in reading and writing but are still below the expected level in mathematics. Many of the pupils enter Year 2 with some gaps in their knowledge and understanding. The inspection findings match the results of the national tests for 2004. Currently the pupils' standards in science are judged to be broadly as expected in Year 2 even though the teachers' assessments for the pupils in Year 2 in the national

tests for science in 2004 show that standards are above expected levels. In both instances this is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below the expected level. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was below average in science and well below the national average in reading and mathematics. This had a detrimental impact upon the overall standards in these subjects. In the current work seen there is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.

4. The long-term trend shows that the school's performance in reading, writing and mathematics in recent years is broadly in line with the national trend at the end of Year 2. When test results are compared with those in schools having a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics is low. However, this does not represent the full picture – a significant number of parents fail to register their children's eligibility for free meals and the proportion actually entitled to free meals is higher than recorded. When this is taken into account, the pupils' performance is comparable to that of similar schools. The pupils' overall performance is also affected by the low numbers who reach the higher Level 3 in the national pilot tests for 2004. The standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are much improved and are currently in line with expected levels. In religious education standards are above expected levels and in music they are well above.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.0 (15.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.6 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. Currently, the achievement of the pupils by the end of Year 6 is very good because of the overall very good quality of teaching and use of assessments. From the work seen and the lessons observed it is evident that the pupils' standards are in line with the expected levels in English and mathematics. This is similar to the results shown in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2004 and is the result of the special attention paid to raising the profile of reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. A better than average proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in mathematics, and in English this proportion was average. This again reflects the very good achievement brought about by the very good quality teaching in the older age groups. It is clear that the standards in science are also improving and are above those expected nationally for pupils of their age. Following a scrutiny of pupils' written work and discussions with pupils it is clear that the standards in science in Year 6 are better than those reached in the national tests 2004. This again is because of the improved quality of teaching. The fact that all aspects of the science curriculum are now taught effectively ensures that pupils experience frequent practical activities and that appropriate emphasis is placed upon scientific investigation. In the current work seen there is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls by the end of Year 6.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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English	27.1 (26.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.6 (28.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.3 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

6. From a scrutiny of the pupils' work stored on the computers and from discussions with some pupils, it is evident that the standards in ICT are now in line with expected levels by the end of Year 6; this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. In religious education and in music the pupils' standards are well above the expected standards for their age. The pupils' standards in art and design are broadly in line with expected levels.
7. The pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve very well by the time they leave the school and although their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are often below the levels expected for their ages they do as well as they can because of the good attention that is paid to each pupil's needs by the teachers and the learning support assistants.
8. It is not possible to make judgements about the standards at the end of Year 2 or Year 6 in design and technology, history, geography and physical education because too few lessons were seen during the inspection.

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

The pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They have very good attitudes to school and their behaviour is also very good. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance levels are satisfactory and punctuality to school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All the pupils show a very high level of interest in school life.
- The pupils behave very well in lessons, assemblies and in the playground.
- The school's promotion of good relationships is excellent and bullying, which is very rare, is handled very effectively.
- The pupils have a very high level of spiritual awareness and their moral and social development is very good.
- Some parents take their holidays during term time and this interrupts the pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

9. The pupils' very high level of interest in all aspects of school life has a positive impact on their learning, as they listen very well to teachers and to each other, settle to their tasks quickly and remain focused on what they are doing. For example, in a Year 4 ICT lesson, they listened very well and then tried hard to write their initials using a command program. Pupils took pride in their achievements and persevered very well. Younger pupils in Year 2 sat enthralled when a theatre group visited and they participated extremely well throughout the morning. The pupils also show a very high level of interest in other areas of school life such as in the very good range of clubs

and activities held each week. Many show that they are confident enough to sing or play solo instruments in assembly.

10. The standards of behaviour have been maintained at the very good levels seen at the last inspection. Although there are some pupils who find it difficult to behave well all the time, the school's positive strategies for supporting them mean that lessons are not disrupted. Behaviour during assemblies and special occasions such as a theatre workshop is often excellent, with even young pupils already knowing how to behave in these situations. The recent improvements in the playground provide zoned areas for more activities and this has had a positive impact on the pupils' behaviour and relationships. There were no exclusions during the last reporting year, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
11. The relationships throughout the school are very strong and have a positive impact on the way all pupils learn. Adults speak to pupils with a great deal of respect and this is reciprocated not only in how pupils speak to adults but also in how they relate to each other. The pupils are taught to empathise with others, such as with those who find it more difficult to behave or to socialise. Older pupils are very kind to the younger ones, helping them at lunchtime or showing friendship towards those with specific physical or learning needs.
12. The pupils' spiritual development has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now very good. This is because there is a sense of spirituality throughout the school. This is evident when pupils listened to and appreciated the beauty of Mozart's music when coming into assembly. The pupils are encouraged to appreciate the beauty of nature through planting trees and bulbs or through the gardening club and through science by looking at rainbows. Older pupils have the chance to think more deeply about wider issues through the philosophy group. The pupils' self-knowledge is also developed very well through thinking about themselves and what progress they have made at the end of lessons and for their personal profiles.
13. The pupils' moral development is very good and consequently even the youngest children already have a strong sense of right and wrong and fairness; this is consistently reinforced throughout the school. The personal, social and health education lessons give pupils moral guidance such as thinking about how to tell someone you do not like what they are doing. All adults are very effective role models in the way they support and show respect for each other and for pupils and as a result there has been a very positive impact on behaviour and relationships within the school.
14. The pupils' social development is very good. Reading partners help different age groups relate to each other and older pupils are keen to volunteer to help at lunchtime with younger pupils. The school council members have a well-developed sense of the responsibilities of living in a community and have had a recent focus on improving the resources for pupils at lunchtime. A 'buddy bench' is a recent addition to help pupils who feel lonely. Residential visits for older pupils are also an important means to enhance their social development, as is the very good range of clubs provided. The effect of the very good provision is seen in the way pupils relate to one another very well regardless of age or ability and in their understanding of the needs of others in the wider community and world. The pupils have recently raised £800 towards a fishing boat for Sri Lanka and it is to be named "*Mary Elton*".

15. The pupils' cultural development remains good and as a result, pupils have a wide experience and appreciation of different cultures. Music is a very important aspect of school life, with confident pupils adding much to assemblies and concerts through their solo performances. The school participates in major local musical events and also makes good use of the local theatres and their companies to enhance pupils' cultural development. Studying different artists such as Picasso and Klee helps pupils to develop an appreciation of art, as does the work of visiting artists. Other cultures and beliefs are studied and celebrated through religious education, history or geography and the school has set up Internet links with schools in other lands. Younger pupils learned effectively about a variety of cultures, their music and stories. This was enhanced through their work on "The Smallest Angel" production for Christmas.
16. Attendance levels are similar to those seen at the last inspection but are now in line with, rather than better than national averages. The school has very little unauthorised absence but authorised absences are adversely affected by some parents removing their children from school for holidays during term time. Although the school monitors this well and issues frequent reminders to parents that it is crucial not to miss any schooling, a significant minority of parents still take their children out of school. Punctuality to school is good and the start of lessons is not disrupted by latecomers.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.1
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.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The teaching is good overall with many occasions when lessons are very good. The assessment procedures are very good and are used well by the teachers to plan what they need to teach next. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of activities outside of lessons and by the very good links with the community. The school provides very good care, support and guidance for its pupils.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall, with most lessons being good or very good. The quality of learning is good and often very good especially in Year 6. The assessment procedures have improved significantly and are now very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- High quality teaching represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- The teachers provide well-planned and imaginative activities in the Foundation Stage.
- The teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.
- Learning is relevant to pupils' lives and tasks build very effectively on what they already know.

- The practice of providing specific work to challenge the more able pupils is inconsistent.
- Teaching ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils, particularly so in the very good support given to the pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment procedures are very well developed and are used very effectively to support pupils' learning.

## Commentary

17. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall with many lessons being very good. This high quality of teaching represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	17 (33%)	23 (45%)	11 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

18. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage have many good features and in particular, the good quality of planning and organisation which contributes to the effectiveness of the early years curriculum. Teaching is often imaginative and regular note-taking on the nature of individual children's responses to learning activities regularly takes place to identify what needs to be taught next. The teachers are very knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and the way in which young children learn. They provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum which takes children's learning forward and provides opportunities for all children to succeed. The good level of provision at the time of the last inspection has been maintained, with an improvement in assessment procedures and also in the opportunities given for the youngest children to develop physical skills through the use of large toys and equipment in a dedicated and enclosed area.
19. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and the pupils achieve well. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is mainly very good and consequently the pupils achieve very well by the time they leave the school. There is no significant difference between the progress made by the boys and girls. Nearly four fifths of the lessons seen were good or very good. Most of the very good lessons were seen in Year 6.
20. When the teaching is good or better the teaching time is used effectively and teachers use a wide variety of teaching methods which maintain the pupils' attention. There is a good balance between individual, group and whole-class activities and between oral and written work. The tasks set are appropriate for the range of ability in the lessons and challenge the higher attaining pupils well. Thoughtful questioning and a very practical approach to learning in most subjects ensure that teaching builds on pupils' knowledge and interests. The pupils are engrossed in their work and the teaching is stimulating and enthusiastic. This is especially so when the teachers use the interactive whiteboards. The pupils are becoming independent learners because from an early age they are taught how to find things out for themselves. This makes learning relevant to their lives and experiences and relationships are very good. The teachers insist on high standards of behaviour which means that that all pupils contribute willingly and confidently to class discussions. The pupils work

independently and collaboratively to complete the work set and achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and they make very good progress by the end of Year 6.

21. Overall the work is generally well matched to the range of abilities within a class. Subject managers support class teachers well and the two teachers in each year group plan together to share their expertise. However there is no consistent practice across the school to provide specific work to challenge the more able pupils. In some lessons, where the teaching was satisfactory, the teachers relied too much upon published lesson plans. The teachers do not always adapt these plans sufficiently well to take account of what they need to teach to extend the learning of the more able pupils. Often these pupils are given extra work once they have completed the main class task but too often this is a similar task. Consequently they get more of the same and they are not necessarily challenged by new learning. Some teachers inadvertently direct most of their questions to girls and consequently some boys sit back and do not willingly offer answers.
22. During the last inspection the assessment of the pupils' work was found to be unsatisfactory and was identified as a key issue for development. Currently, the assessment procedures are very good throughout the school and are used very effectively to support pupils' learning and this has improved the pupils' achievements. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. All teachers carry out regular formal assessments of pupils' understanding and skills in English, mathematics and science. These records are kept from year to year and form an efficient system for tracking each pupil's progress over time. Those who do not make the progress expected are identified and given appropriate additional support. The records are used to set targets for all pupils and in Years 2 and 5 to decide upon which teaching group each pupil will be in for English and mathematics. The teachers identify learning objectives for each lesson and share these with pupils. They evaluate the pupils' achievements during the lesson and are skilful at identifying misunderstandings that may arise. The pupils' written work is marked regularly and the pupils also help to assess their own work. Consequently, most of them know what they need to do to improve. The school has also identified pupils who are gifted and talented and is linking with other primary schools in the area to make additional provision for these pupils.
23. Those with special educational needs are suitably supported by class teachers and support staff. The support staff who work with pupils who have a statement of special educational need work effectively to help the pupil have full access to the whole curriculum and they make good progress. The work with pupils who have special educational needs is appropriately guided by their individual educational plans, which clearly set out appropriate targets for them to meet.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides an effective curriculum with a breadth and balance which meets the needs of the pupils, the requirements of the National Curriculum and the local agreed syllabus for religious education well. There are very good opportunities for enrichment through very effective use of visits and visitors and a broad range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good and are well used.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good, well-balanced overall curriculum.
- The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage, for music and religious education is very good.
- Very good opportunities are provided for enrichment outside of lessons.
- There are very good resources for children under five, for pupils with special educational needs and for the teaching of information and communication technology, religious education and music.
- Accommodation for children under five and for information and communication technology is very good.
- There is very clear commitment to making sure that all pupils are fully included and have equal access to all the school offers and effective links between subjects help make the learning more relevant and easier.
- The high number of mobile classrooms is detrimental to learning.

## Commentary

24. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum that meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and ensures that all pupils achieve well. Provision for religious education is very good and meets the demands of the local agreed syllabus and the subject is very well resourced. There is very good development of all pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship, including sex and drugs awareness. Children in the Foundation Stage are very well provided for in the curriculum offered and in the quality and range of accommodation and resources. The very good computer suite and the extensive range of computers, interactive whiteboards and software enable good provision in ICT and support the whole curriculum well. Literacy and numeracy are well supported by other subjects and the good links between different subjects make pupils' learning more relevant and interesting. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for very well. This area is well resourced so that pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them. There is a very strong staff commitment to making sure that all pupils have as rich and a broad a range of experiences as possible and that everyone has equal access to everything offered.
25. This enrichment extends beyond the lessons taught and the school offers a very wide range of activities to enhance pupils' experiences. Visits are well planned to further pupils' learning and include theatre and museum trips, visits to churches and residential homes, farms and supermarkets. Year 5 pupils have the opportunity of a residential visit that includes field and outward-bound experiences and this is built on more locally in Year 6. Theatre groups, historical groups, nurses, policemen, parents, grandparents and a range of local and not so local visitors are all used extensively to make pupils' experiences as broad and interesting as possible and to help with learning. The wide range of clubs and activities varies from term to term and includes a film club, a gardening club, German club and Club Français, tag rugby, various football clubs, netball, choir, dance, guitar and an ICT website club. Sports links are very good and there are lots of opportunities to take part in music.
26. Accommodation is satisfactory overall but very good for children in the Foundation Stage and for information and communication technology. The resources are good and used well to promote the pupils' learning. The environmental garden is a great benefit and well used to make the quality of science accommodation good. Having so many temporary mobile classrooms is not conducive to good learning and the mobiles

are rather small and are not well heated. Pupils often have to move between the mobiles and the main building, for example, for library, computers, assembly and in bad weather this can be difficult and disruptive.

27. Teachers and learning support assistants are very committed and are well matched to the needs of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage and in the classes with younger pupils. However, because of financial constraints, the school is not able to increase the number of learning support assistants in Years 3 to 6. This reduces the amount of support given to pupils in these years. Pupils with special educational needs have very good equality of access to all areas of the curriculum, including after school clubs. In conjunction with the special needs co-ordinator, teachers write clear and precise individual educational plans, which contain appropriate and attainable targets. Good planning and effective use of the very good resources enables pupils to work successfully towards their identified targets.

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

There are very good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on monitoring is also very good. Pupils are involved very well through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Child protection and health and safety are given a very high priority in the school.
- Adults know the pupils very well and provide very caring levels of support and guidance.
- Pupils have a very trusting relationship with adults and feel they have a very important role to play in the school.
- The arrangements for children starting school for the first time are very effective.

### **Commentary**

28. The school's care for pupils is now considered even better than that seen at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection matters and she ensures that all staff, including those who support in class and at lunchtimes, are aware of the school's procedures. The school also ensures that younger pupils have a clear understanding about inappropriate touching through the use of an excellent theatre workshop. Health and safety issues are reported and dealt with as soon as possible and governors play a very important role in ensuring the school is a safe environment.
29. The level of support and guidance for all pupils is very high and visitors who were spoken to during the inspection highlighted this major strength. Pupils' academic progress is very closely tracked so that they are aware of their targets, which may be class, group or individual and know what they need to do to improve. In addition, pupils all have personal profiles that they can add to as they progress through the school to show not only how they have developed academically but also how they have matured personally. Any pupils with specific needs such as coping with a family bereavement or who are having difficulty relating to others are given a great deal of sensitive care and support.

30. Pupils with special educational needs are identified during their first term in the Reception unit and appropriate informal support is given. The procedures for the care and welfare of pupils with special educational needs have been well met. Detailed records, which evaluate and record pupils' learning, are available to teachers and classroom assistants. Support for pupils is appropriately provided both within the class and by withdrawing pupils when necessary.
31. The good organisation and deployment of the teaching support assistants enable maximum, appropriate support to be given by both the teacher and the learning support assistants. The teaching is suitably adjusted to their needs. The school takes good care to ensure that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored, recorded and adjusted as necessary.
32. Largely as a result of the very good relationships and the very high levels of care evident within the school, pupils all have a great deal of trust in adults. They feel comfortable talking to a range of adults such as teachers, support staff and the headteacher, as all are approachable and they know that issues such as bullying concerns will be treated seriously. Pupils feel very much a part of the school and their views are listened to. For example, the school council that has representatives from Year 1 upwards, is able to canvass and report back to others in the class so that the views of pupils can be heard about initiatives such as the zoning of the playground. The school also uses questionnaires to gauge pupils' opinions.
33. One of the aspects of the school that parents are most happy with is the way their children settle in when they first start. This is very well organised by the school so that children visit with their playgroup and with their parents and build up slowly to full-time education. As a result of the very good induction procedures the start to their life in school is made as smooth as possible so that all settle quickly. There are good arrangements in place for pupils who join later in the school year as they can visit beforehand and are teamed up with a friend when they arrive.

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

Links with parents and with other schools are good. There are very good links with the local community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides high quality information for parents and deals with any concerns very well.
- Although most of the parents support the school well, some parents are not supportive in relation to homework and attendance.
- Very beneficial links have been established with the local community and pupils benefit from strong links with other schools.

### **Commentary**

34. Parents have generally positive views of the school and are especially happy with the standard of teaching, the way pupils develop personally and how staff expect pupils to work hard. The evidence from the inspection confirms all these views. A very small number of parents have some concerns about bullying but the school was aware of this through the use of its own parent questionnaires and has acted very effectively to

deal with any issues. All members of staff are very approachable should parents wish to talk to them informally and there are also opportunities to meet teachers at regular consultation meetings throughout the year. In addition, the school holds "Year Ahead" meetings in the autumn term to ensure parents know what to expect in relation to topics covered and homework expectations. Parents also have the opportunity to sit in on lessons so that they can see how subjects such as literacy and numeracy are taught. A weekly newsletter is provided and the school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are both very informative and attractive documents. The annual pupil progress report is satisfactory and includes useful information about what progress pupils have made.

35. Many parents support the work of the school well in practical ways such as volunteering to help in school or with clubs or to talk about their jobs. In addition, the Home School Association raises substantial amounts of money each year to enhance the school environment and resources, for example, by making a vital contribution to help pay for the computer suite. However, a significant minority of parents are less supportive and remove their children for holidays. A few parents do not support their children with their homework.
36. The links with the local community are many and various and do much to enhance learning for pupils. For example, the school makes very good use of the local area, inviting historians in to talk to pupils and going on heritage walks. There are very close, beneficial links with the local church and the vicar is a regular and popular visitor. Pupils use the nearby swimming pool and also visit local theatres and take part in several music festivals. Companies support the school through donations of items such as a pergola and sports coaches come in to develop pupils' football skills for example. The community also uses the school premises for a variety of clubs such as karate and football and supports school events such as the summer fair.
37. There are very close ties with the many playgroups from which the children transfer and these help with their transition to full-time education. At the other end of the school, there are good links with the receiving secondary school, that include pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 visiting for taster days, staff from the school coming to talk to the pupils and transition projects that are begun in Year 6. These ensure that when pupils do move on, they look forward to the process and are well prepared.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The governance of the school is very good. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and her management of the school is good. The subject leaders are developing their subjects well and are providing good direction to the development of their areas of responsibility.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is committed to enabling the school to fulfil its vision of the future developments for the school and together with all the staff and governors has developed a very good ethos.
- The school has a very good commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in all that it does.

- Reading, writing and mathematics are being developed well under the guidance and direction of the headteacher and the subject leaders and consequently all pupils are achieving very well.
- The governing body gives the headteacher and the school very good support.
- The quality of management of the school is good with the establishment of a good school improvement plan.
- The school does not have a policy to ensure consistent practice for extending the learning of the more able pupils.
- The management of the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The management of special educational needs is very good.
- The school has a good monitoring procedure to ensure that funds are allocated sensibly and carefully.

## **Commentary**

38. The quality of leadership of the headteacher is very good. She is fully committed to improving the quality of education and to developing a school where every child is totally included in all that is done. Consequently the school's priorities focus appropriately upon raising the pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. The school is organised very effectively and the headteacher and the senior management team have set out a clear direction for the future developments of the school. They continually revise their targets in order that the pupils achieve very well to reach their expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Through training and performance management, the quality of teaching has been improved significantly since the last inspection and good and often very good teaching has developed successfully. The headteacher and the subject co-ordinators have devised good strategies to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning in each classroom and these have had a very good impact upon raising the quality of teaching throughout all classes.
39. The senior management team has developed good strategies to check upon the school's performance and carries out good evaluation of what it achieves. Comprehensive records are established for each pupil so that their achievements can be tracked and targets set as they progress through the school. There are regular whole-school sessions to sample and monitor the pupils' work and to make judgements about the standards achieved in each year group. The headteacher has fostered a very positive attitude throughout the school, so that all adults and children make sure that all pupils are valued as individuals. Most parents give the headteacher their full support. All pupils are totally involved in all that the school does, consequently, the school has a very good ethos, which is a major strength.
40. The governing body, led by a committed and very knowledgeable chair of governors, gives the headteacher and the school very good support. The governors have successfully improved the quality of their governance since the last inspection and take an active part in planning and monitoring. There is full compliance with statutory requirements and many governors visit the school frequently and work closely with the headteacher and staff. All governors follow training sessions and they now have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, being able to challenge and support the senior management of the school well. The governing body and the headteacher have faced many difficult times over the past two years and there have been disruptions to the staffing especially in the older age range. These problems have been handled and resolved effectively and sensitively, with the school

drawing upon the small group of good supply teachers and with everyone working with a common purpose.

41. The quality of management of the school by the headteacher is good. The headteacher, staff and governing body have established a good school improvement plan, which gives a clear outline of the planned priorities for the next three years. The subject leaders have also developed their management roles effectively since the last inspection. They manage the resources for their subjects carefully and many have had opportunities to check upon the quality of teaching for their subjects. They monitor their subjects effectively and this has helped to improve the quality of the teachers' planning, assessment and teaching. This is evident in the improvements seen since the last inspection when the teaching was satisfactory and the assessment procedures needed attention. However, the school does not have a policy to emphasise a consistent approach to extending the learning of the more able pupils.
42. Some additional emphasis has been placed upon the development of the teachers' ICT skills and most teachers are now successfully using the computer suite and interactive whiteboards in their classrooms. This is proving to be most successful in enhancing the way they teach subjects such as numeracy and literacy and is a strong influence upon improving the pupils' attitudes to their work and also their achievements.
43. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good and the curriculum is imaginative and very stimulating. The planning routines and the assessment procedures are good. The daily routines are very well organised to ensure that all children experience the six areas of learning appropriately.
44. The leadership and management of special educational needs by the co-ordinator is very good. She has a full-time teaching commitment and has worked very hard to ensure that teachers have the information and knowledge of procedures to help them to teach pupils with special educational needs. Up-to-date policies and procedures are in place and detailed records kept by the teachers are regularly monitored by the co-ordinator to ensure consistency across the school.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	970,352
Total expenditure	1,016,214
Expenditure per pupil	2,484.63

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	86,992
Balance carried forward to the next year	41,130

45. The school has established very good monitoring procedures to ensure that funds are allocated sensibly and carefully. The governors take an active role in monitoring the monthly expenditure and in setting the annual budget. Furthermore, the school makes good use of the resources available and deploys the small number of teaching assistants as effectively as it can to raise standards but financial constraints limit the number of learning support assistants that can be employed to work in Years 3 to 6. Although there was a larger than usual carry forward at the beginning of 2003 the money has now been spent effectively to provide the very good ICT facilities. The school has developed good principles of best value for money, especially when deciding upon the purchasing of new ICT facilities and the selection of the interactive

whiteboards. Both of these areas of expenditure have proved to be successful in raising standards.

46. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved, being good overall and very good in Years 3 to 6. The headteacher and all staff have developed a very caring school. The pupils, whose attainment on entry into the school is well below the expected levels for their age, achieve very well by the end of Year 6. The quality of the leadership by the headteacher is very good and the governance of the school is also very good. There is strong evidence to show that the school has the capacity to improve further and to raise the pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. The annual expenditure per pupil is well below the national average and consequently, the school provides very good value for money.

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

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

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

Children from the two classes in Reception are taught in a combined unit with two teachers and two full-time learning support assistants who work with all the children. The leadership and management of the Foundation stage are very good. The teaching and learning are good with teachers planning well for imaginative activities. The accommodation is very good and is enhanced effectively by the newly created outdoor area.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children feel secure and develop confidence because they are given opportunities to use their initiative and are well supported and encouraged by adults in the school.
- The school fosters very good relationships that enable the very youngest children to settle quickly and happily into school.

### **Commentary**

47. Children enjoy school and are beginning to form good relationships with their peers and adults. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Teachers and assistants help children learn how to behave as a member of the unit. They sensitively explain the routines and organisation of the day which results in children accepting changes and learning to wait their turn. They are gradually given more responsibility. For example, on a regular basis, they independently register their attendance and take part in tasks where they chose to work with other children in a variety of situations. These activities develop their maturity and foster good relationships, as they learn to concentrate on tasks that interest them, negotiate with their peers, initiate their own activities and converse with a variety of adults. The very good interaction of adults provides very good role-models which rapidly help children learn social skills.
48. All children receive very good support from adults and great care is taken to ensure that all are involved in the work of the whole unit. Children are very well behaved around the school and know where they can get help if they need it. Attendance at assemblies and working with a variety of adults help children to be confident and see themselves as part of the whole school community. This means that almost all pupils will at least reach the goals expected in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of their Reception Year.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and all staff provide many opportunities for children to develop language skills through all areas of learning.
- The focus on conversation through the provision of a rich broad environment helps to develop speaking and listening skills, which are well below what is expected for their age on entry to the Reception classes.

- Very good relationships enable children to confidently try out new activities.
- Opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to accelerate their learning are not always given.

### **Commentary**

49. Although most children achieve well, they are not expected to achieve the goals expected for children of this age by the end of their Reception Year in speaking and listening, writing and reading because they are well below the level expected on entry. The very good variety of imaginative opportunities teachers provide for the children to practise their speaking and listening skills and to read and write enables them to make good progress. For example, at an early morning session when all children in the unit are given the opportunity to freely choose an activity, a number of children choose to collect information from others in the class and record their findings on clip boards or in note books.
50. Very good support is given by teaching assistants, who ensure children know what they have to do and ensure they make good progress. Their good relationships and interactions with the children enable the children to make confident attempts to form their letters correctly and almost all are beginning to understand the conventions of writing. The most able children write two to three sentences with good support but they are not always given enough opportunities to accelerate their learning. They enjoy an increasing range of books invitingly displayed in the classroom. Teaching is supported by very good assessment procedures.
51. The very good range of activities and imaginative teaching encourage children to develop their vocabulary. For example, in order to inform the children of what they are about to learn, the teacher sings the aims of the lesson and invites them to join in and by deliberately hesitating when giving them instructions of what they will need to include when writing their individual books, they spontaneously offer vocabulary such as, 'author' and 'illustrator'. Despite children making good progress, standards remain below average because standards on entry have been falling since the last inspection.

### **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

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

- Teachers make good use of incidental opportunities to develop children's mathematical understanding.
- A good range of well-planned practical activities stimulate the children and support their learning.
- Well-focused questioning gives children the opportunity to verbalise and clarify their thoughts.

### **Commentary**

52. Teaching and learning are good. Adults take every opportunity to stimulate children's interest in mathematics while developing their skills and language. Good use of imaginative resources and incidental opportunities puts mathematics in context and encourages children to participate in lessons. For example, when a child wants to

know when it is dinner time the children in the group are requested to look at the clock and guess the time and when teaching simple addition the teacher uses well focused questioning such as, 'What is one more?' and 'How do you know it's three?' To increase their knowledge and understanding, by using opportunities such as these, children are interested and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.

53. Very good support from teachers and teaching assistants enables children to learn quickly. The teachers bring an element of fun into the lessons. For example, in one session the teacher pretended to give the wrong instructions for completing a task well and allowed the children to correct her. The interesting practical activities provide many opportunities for children to use mathematical language well and to develop mathematical concepts. Computer programs are used to good effect to promote the children's understanding of matching pictures and using numbers. Although children achieve well, they are unlikely to reach the goals expected by the end of the Reception Year in calculating, shape, space and measure. They are expected to achieve the goals in number.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching and very good first-hand experiences mean that that children are curious and enjoy finding out things for themselves.
- Children's enthusiasm for this area of learning and the consistently effective support, enable them to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding well.

### **Commentary**

54. A wide range of activities help children to learn about the natural world and consequently, they do well in the Reception unit. Teaching is good and often imaginative and children achieve well. They are developing knowledge of the characteristics of different materials through their play with sand, water and dough and encouraged to use their senses to describe the characteristics of the different materials that have been used to make an assortment of toy elephants. Children extend their knowledge and make comparisons between the different fruit they eat during the morning break in the classroom. Children working independently, involve the teacher spontaneously in their investigations, for example, in order to find out whether a large magnet has an effect on objects through a table top. The effective support, the good teaching and the variety of these very well thought out activities make learning relevant and fun, resulting in a high level of interest and concentration.
55. Most adults ask challenging questions and good opportunities are taken by teachers to assess and record children's progress while they are engaged in activities. Opportunities are also taken to improve the diction of particular children by asking them to repeat vocabulary they are using more clearly. The very good support from adults ensures that children feel safe, confident and willing to try anything new. Currently the children are on course to reach the goals expected at the end of the Reception Year.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good range of physical development opportunities encourages all children to take part.
- The very safe imaginative outside area and high quality resources make the lessons enjoyable, interesting and relevant.

### **Commentary**

56. The children have good opportunities for physical development in physical education in the hall, during outdoor activities and during lessons. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve standards better than expected for this age group and will at least reach the goals expected for them at the end of the Reception Year. Resources for the outside activities are much improved since the last inspection and are now very good.
57. Physical activities are well integrated into other areas of the curriculum. For example, during a drama lesson the pupils sway, jump and step in time to the music. They are beginning to recognise the importance of keeping healthy and how physical activity contributes to this. They hold pencils correctly and show increasing control over clothing and fastenings. They thoroughly enjoy being active and squeal with delight when they accomplish something new.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good balance between teacher led activities and opportunities for children to use their own initiative enables children to develop their imaginations and skills well.
- The very good variety of opportunities and activities fosters children's interests and develops their imagination and language skills.

### **Commentary**

58. Children's standards in creative development are satisfactory and teaching is good overall. Work on display covers a wide range of media such as paint, collage and models and children make pictures using paint, wax crayons, pencils, pastels, sand and water to represent their ideas. They enjoy singing and sing well-known songs such as 'The Grand Old Duke of York' tunefully. They join in action songs, beating time to the music. They show interest in what they see, touch and smell when finding out about materials and they spontaneously role-play when given opportunities to choose their own activities. For example, during the early morning session a child gave a puppet show, drawing on the story of the ugly duckling which she knew and involving the audience in conversations with the duck. The numerous very well managed opportunities and the high provision for imaginative play in the classroom and during drama and music lessons where children hold 'musical conversations', enable children to play together and use their imaginations. As a consequence of the very good balance between self-initiated and teacher directed activities, children make

good progress and are likely to achieve the goals expected at the end of their Reception Year.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Teachers know and are assessing pupils very well.
- There are very good systems for monitoring and tracking how well pupils are doing and this helps to ensure good progress.
- Pupils are achieving well and overall achievement is very good.
- Teachers are not always consistently providing work that sufficiently challenges the more able pupils.
- The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well and has a very clear vision of how to continue to improve.
- Very good relationships and staff commitment to ensure that all pupils have equal access to opportunities, help to motivate and stimulate pupils.

#### **Commentary**

59. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. In the 2004 national tests pupils in Year 2 achieved results broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing. Year 6 English results were about in line with the national average. Although results appear to have declined since the last inspection six years ago there is good evidence to show that many more pupils are coming into the school with much lower standards. Language ability on entry is well below the expected level. This means that overall achievement is very good, raising the overall level of attainment from well below average on entry to average when leaving. The present inspection found that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well and make good progress.
60. Teachers are developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Many pupils enter with a very limited vocabulary and lack the ability to express themselves. Pupils are encouraged to listen to each other and to teachers and they use drama, role-play, regular discussions and 'talking partners' to develop speaking skills. There is an emphasis on broadening vocabulary so that even in Year 1 pupils are encouraged to think about words such as 'caring', 'cunning' and 'untrustworthy' to describe the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood. By Year 6, pupils' speaking skills are above the level expected for their age; they are confident and able to express themselves clearly in a range of circumstances.
61. Reading is well taught and pupils have positive attitudes to books and to reading. Teachers keep very comprehensive records of pupils' reading and there are good links with home so that most families are able to give good support. There is effective use of guided reading and pupils regularly read to adults. Even in Year 2 pupils were able to explain how to use a contents page and an index to get information. Pupils are

taught to use strategies, such as looking at the context, sounding the words out and thinking about similar words. The use of phonics is emphasised. Use of reading partners is very positive and stimulating and this was obvious in a Year 3 lesson seen, where pupils were really motivated about collaborative writing of the legend of Romulus and Remus to read to Reception children. Homework is used well and pupils are often asked to research information for themselves, which they enjoy doing, using both books and the Internet. All pupils use the school library and it is a valuable resource, though several pupils commented that they would like a wider range of books to be available.

62. A lot of time and effort has gone into implementing strategies to improve writing standards. Handwriting is taught regularly and presentation is generally good. Pupils are given opportunities to write extensively on a range of topics. By Year 2 standards are still a little below the expected level in writing but by Year 6 they are secure, with a good number of pupils regularly producing good work.
63. Teaching of English is good and several very good lessons were seen during the inspection. Relationships are very good, staff show real respect for pupils and are very good role models. This mutual respect and the real commitment to making sure that all pupils have equal access to a rich breadth of experience help create a very positive learning ethos. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them.
64. Teachers know the pupils very well and in most classes assessment is used very well to set targets for improvement so that pupils know what they have to do to improve. This is reflected well in the marking of work, which is clear and helps pupils to move on. One of the strengths of the assessment is the way that pupils evaluate and assess their own work and, sometimes, the work of other pupils. This helps pupils to understand their own learning and encourages them to want to improve and to know how to do it. In general, most teachers are consistently setting work which is clearly targeted at the needs of the pupils. However, some teachers are failing to set work that is sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils and this means they are not always achieving as well as they might.
65. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and in consultation with colleagues has developed good strategies for raising standards. She monitors the subject very well, regularly observing lessons, reviewing pupils' work, checking planning and feeding back to colleagues so that all are well informed. There is effective sharing of good practice through regular meetings and training sessions and staff are quite clearly a team and work very well together. There are very effective systems of monitoring and tracking carried out each term to show how well pupils are doing so that teachers can make sure they are achieving as well as they should.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

66. Information and communication technology is used well to support and develop literacy and it is developed well across all subjects, helping to raise standards. Good examples of well-planned opportunities to develop literacy skills were seen in a wide range of subjects, including geography, history, science and religious education.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils by the end of Year 6 achieve very well and standards are broadly average.
- The standards in Years 2 are below the expected levels.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The subject knowledge and the management strategies used by the co-ordinator are good.
- ICT is used well to promote enthusiasm for mathematics.

### **Commentary**

67. In the 2004 national tests the pupils in Year 2 attained results that were below the national average but they achieved well considering that at the time of their entry to the school their standards in numeracy were well below the expected levels for their age. When comparisons are made with schools of a similar type then the results were well below the average. However, when the true entitlement for free school meals is taken into account then the results are more in line with similar schools. The pupils' standards in the national tests in 2004 for Year 6 were broadly average showing that these pupils achieved very well, having also entered the school with standards that were well below the expected levels. However, the comparisons with similar schools show that the school's performance was above average.
68. The pupils in the current Year 6 attain standards that are broadly average. Although these results appear to have declined since the last inspection six years ago, there is good evidence to show that many more pupils in this year group came into the school with much lower standards in numeracy and when compared with expected levels for their age were well below the expected levels for their age.
69. The overall standards of the pupils in Year 2 are below average because too many pupils are not reaching the expected levels for their age at this time of the year, even though they have achieved well to reach these standards. It is clear that many of these pupils have entered Year 2 with gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding. Nearly a third of these pupils do not have a secure understanding of the process of addition and subtraction and many still cannot execute mental calculations successfully with numbers up to ten.
70. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. Most lessons are planned well and many teachers use the interactive whiteboards very well. This is particularly good when mathematical understanding is difficult for pupils to grasp. The lessons are imaginative in general and the pupils are interested and keen to explain their calculations. Where the teaching is only satisfactory the teachers do not plan different work to build upon what each pupil has previously learned. Consequently the pace of work is slower than in the good and very good lessons and the pupils are not challenged sufficiently well to extend their understanding appropriately. Often the more able pupils are given extra work that does not extend their understanding but does more to give them additional practice in tasks already fully understood.
71. The teachers in Year 2 demonstrate good quality teaching and are planning work that successfully matches the needs of all the pupils. The grouping of pupils into two ability

groups is also enabling the lower attaining pupils to receive added support whilst the higher ability pupils are being challenged well with tasks that extend their skills and understanding very well. This is already raising standards with most of the work for many of the lower attaining pupils being focused upon plugging gaps in their understanding of numeracy. Some of the teaching of mathematics in Year 1 is too reliant upon published lesson plans and it is evident that these guidelines are not always adapted to meet the needs of the full range of pupils' needs in the class. Consequently tasks are not promoted with enough rigour and there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the lesson observed in one Year 1 class the pupils were not challenged sufficiently well to raise their standards according to their needs and most of the more able pupils were faced with work that was too easy. In the other Year 1 lesson all the pupils were fully engaged and totally engrossed in their work, because the teacher had considered the plans carefully having realised that many pupils needed additional and more challenging work whilst others needed to use a wide range of counting aids to ensure that they gained full understanding. This was a very good lesson.

72. The subject co-ordinator has very good vision for the development of the subject and many developments she has instigated have proved to be successful. Assessment procedures are good. In addition to the National Curriculum testing at the end of Year 2, the optional national tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 are also used to provide information on each pupil's progress and to highlight any areas of concern. The information is then used effectively by the teachers when planning future work. The pupils' standards and achievements are continually checked by the co-ordinator and following the analysis of these test results she identified areas in shape, space and measure that needed further emphasis during the current year to improve standards. The school has identified that the pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 need more concentrated teaching and the pupils have been put into two ability groups for numeracy. This has enabled the teachers to plan more precisely for their needs. Working closely together to provide specific teaching of English and mathematics, both classes in each year group in Years 3, 4 and 5 are taught mathematics by one of the two teachers. Sometimes this does not work so well because the teacher plans similar work for both classes but does not always match the work to the higher or lower attaining pupils' needs. Consequently the higher ability pupils are not always challenged rigorously enough to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding appropriately.
73. Information and communication technology, mainly through the use of interactive whiteboards, is used very effectively to introduce learning objectives and provides the pupils not only with a focal point for their learning but also with a less abstract presentation of learning that the lower ability pupils in particular relate to well. In lessons, pupils were observed to be well motivated through such use of technology, which helped to make their learning enjoyable and to extend their understanding. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson the pupils were instructed in the use of a protractor and the teacher used the interactive whiteboard very well to display a protractor and how to position it to make accurate measurements. The pupils understood this procedure very quickly and were soon able to measure with precision.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

74. The teachers use mathematics well in science lessons to measure results in investigations. It is also clear from displays around the school that the pupils use their mathematical knowledge in design and technology lessons to measure out and plan

what they are to make. In ICT the pupils are beginning to use spreadsheets well to calculate columns of figures, for example, when planning an event or adding up pocket money.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The standards by the end of Year 6 are above the expected levels and the pupils achieve very well.
- There is no consistent practice in the provision of work to challenge the more able pupils.
- The pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve very well.
- The teaching is good with an emphasis on practical exploration and investigation and pupils achieve well.
- Assessment of pupils' work is very good.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good; they co-operate very well in practical lessons.
- There is insufficient use of ICT in science lessons.

### **Commentary**

75. The pupils' standards in science at the end of Year 2 are in line with those nationally, as they were at the last inspection. The standards at the end of Year 6 are above those expected nationally, which again reflect the findings at the last inspection. Trends over time show that standards in science are rising steadily and this is confirmed by a scrutiny of the pupils' written work and from discussions held with pupils.
76. The pupils throughout the school make good progress and, overall, they achieve well in relation to their ability. However the teachers' assessments of pupils in Year 2 for the 2004 national tests indicate that when compared with most schools fewer of these pupils achieve at the higher Level 3. This is because practice to provide tasks that challenge the more able pupils sufficiently is inconsistent. Often the teachers do not plan more advanced work to ensure that the pupils succeed at the higher Level 3. The teachers are now aware of this and there are plans to adjust the teaching programme in order to provide a greater challenge for the more able pupils in all classes across the school.
77. The pupils in Year 6 achieve very well. They entered the school with knowledge and understanding of the world broadly in line with expected levels for their age. They have an above average understanding of the heart and circulation system of the human body and the work builds effectively upon their previous ideas and understanding. They are aware of what they have learned; the teachers organise a self-evaluation of the topics so that the pupils can judge how well they have learned. The investigative sessions are well organised and the pupils achieve very well as was seen in the work recorded about retrieving solids from a solution.
78. The pupils with special educational needs are very well supported; they take a full part in all lessons and achieve very well in relation to their ability. All pupils in Years 1 and

2 are well supported by learning support assistants in practical lessons and as a result they are able to learn through first-hand experience and make good progress in these lessons. This level of support is not available for the older pupils because of financial constraints and consequently the support is only satisfactory.

79. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and some is very good. The school has improved the scheme of work for science since the last inspection and now uses a published scheme to support the teachers' planning. This ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught, that pupils learn effectively through frequent practical activities and that there is an appropriate emphasis on scientific investigation. To ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities in lessons the two teachers in the same year group plan together. They use a good range of teaching strategies and this keeps pupils interested and engaged in their work.
80. The teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils cooperate with each other, working well both individually and in groups so that no time is wasted in practical lessons. The assessment of pupils' work is very good and teachers ensure that their teaching builds effectively on what pupils already know. Pupils are also taught how to learn and they often list what they want to know at the beginning of a topic and then identify ways they could find out. The pupils take pride in the appearance of their written work, which is marked regularly. They are beginning to evaluate their own work and most know what they need to do to improve. The development of pupils' scientific skills is well recorded and used to track their progress over time throughout the school. At the end of each unit the pupils assess their understanding of what has been taught and there are plans to develop a more detailed teachers' record which is intended to aid their future planning.
81. The management of science is good. The subject manager is enthusiastic and has a clear plan for the development of the subject. He supports teachers in their planning and monitors teaching in the classroom. He is aware that not enough pupils are reaching the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and made suggestions to show how the tasks can be adjusted to provide a greater challenge. He manages the budget effectively, ordering resources and identifying further training for teachers as appropriate. The school is well resourced and the pupils enjoy using the well planned environmental area and pond. At present the teachers make insufficient use of ICT either to collect data using their data logging equipment or to record and interrogate it efficiently and as yet they make little use of their Intel microscope. The subject manager is aware of this and has already planned improvements.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are now in line with expected levels and have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good, with many teachers using the interactive whiteboards in their classrooms with confidence and imagination.
- Very good facilities and teachers' improved confidence and competence have been effective in raising standards.
- The pupils show enthusiasm and work very conscientiously.

- Methods to record what each pupil has achieved are still in preparation.

## Commentary

82. The pupils' standards are now broadly in line with the expected standards by the time the pupils leave the school. The standards in Year 2 are also as expected for their age. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory and below the expected levels throughout the school.
83. The pupils in Year 2 achieve well during lessons. They can log into the computer and access the programs with ease. They use text and graphics well and because they work with one computer per pupil they have good opportunities to explore the various options when creating stories that incorporate graphics. They are enthusiastic and work quickly and orderly. Most succeed well to complete their tasks by the end of the lessons but nearly all experience difficulties reading the instructions upon the screen because of their reading skills. They have developed good mouse skills and can drag and drop images into their pictures effectively.
84. The pupils in Year 6 can log into the computer system and access programs with ease. They enthusiastically demonstrate their knowledge of spreadsheet programs or database facilities. Word processing skills have been mastered and most of the pupils are very competent in the uses of "*Word art*" and "*Clipart*" to enhance their writing and designs. All pupils in both Year 6 classes can enhance their work using graphics and other commands to change the font, colour and shape of their text. In one lesson in Year 6 the pupils were observed manipulating colour, fonts and auto shapes to create a presentation compiled of several slides about themselves. The quality of this work was good and above the expected standard for their age.
85. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and this has been a main factor in raising the pupils' standards of work. The teachers use the national guidelines very effectively to plan the ICT curriculum for their classes and because the whole class can be taught at the same time, topics are taught in as much depth as is needed to reinforce the pupils' skills and knowledge. The teachers have all undertaken training in the uses of ICT to support the teaching in other subjects and they have improved their own skills, knowledge and confidence effectively since the last inspection. Many teachers are using the interactive whiteboards very well and this new technology has improved the quality of teaching across the whole curriculum. An additional factor which has played a vital part in raising standards in ICT, is the improvement made to the facilities by providing an exceptionally well equipped ICT suite with one computer per pupil and other bays of six networked computers around the school. This means that the pupils have all had good opportunities to master skills, knowledge and understanding in ICT.
86. Because of the interest shown by the teachers in using ICT to teach other subjects, the pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to their work. They pursue their tasks quietly and with perseverance, often working without a sound as they design pages of text and graphics. The pupils make good use of the Internet to research topics in history and geography and also use email to send their work to their friends throughout the school.
87. A senior member of the teaching staff currently holds the co-ordinator's post, pending the appointment of a co-ordinator by the end of the year. She has a good knowledge

of the subject and understands what is needed in the future. She has prepared examples of how the school might record what each pupil has achieved but as yet these assessment procedures have not been approved for use throughout the school and the teachers maintain their own way of recording these achievements. This variation of recording methods does not provide a precise enough system to show what each pupil has mastered by the end of each year.

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

88. The wide range of uses of the interactive whiteboards is bringing about a change in the way lessons are taught across the curriculum. The teachers who have these facilities in their classrooms make good use of them; lessons are brisk and the teachers are able to reinforce and recap on learning points easily and effectively, for example, when teaching mathematics and literacy. The pupils make good use of the Internet when researching topics and often bring work in from home to support their learning. It is clear from the displays around the school that the pupils have been taught to use graphics programs effectively and that the use of the digital camera is being developed well to record events such as the pupils' awards celebration each week.

### **HUMANITIES**

History and geography were sampled and religious education was inspected in full.

89. **History** lessons were seen in Year 3 and Year 4 and in both cases the teaching was good. The pupils in Year 3 were looking at Romans and Celts and following a very successful visit from the "History People" the previous week. It was clear that the pupils had been very well stimulated and had learned a lot about weapons, surgical instruments and leisure. They were developing good levels of research skills as they used a wide range of pictures to make comparisons about the two cultures. The pupils in Year 4 were seen studying the Vikings and they questioned why they travelled from their homeland and looked up about the places they explored. There were good links here with geography.
90. In **geography** the pupils in Year 5 were observed looking at ordnance survey maps of Bruton. This was good preparation for their forthcoming residential visit to that area and it helped motivate and stimulate them. They were able to make comparisons between Clevedon and Bruton and were learning valuable map-reading skills as they looked at the various symbols and what they could learn about the area.
91. In both history and geography the pupils have positive attitudes. They are keen to learn and enjoy the subjects. It is not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of provision or the standards from the limited evidence available but a review of planning shows that all areas of the National Curriculum are covered adequately. Good use is made of visits and visitors to make the subjects more interesting and relevant to pupils. Both geography and history are used well to support literacy.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils' standards have improved.
- Teaching is made relevant to pupils' lives.
- Resources for teaching are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.

## Commentary

92. Due to timetable constraints no lessons could be seen in Years 1 and 2 but in Years 3 to 6, good and very good teaching was seen and judgements are based on these lessons and on talking to teachers, visitors and pupils. Evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' written work and discussions with pupils indicates that standards in religious education are well above the expected standards throughout the school and that the pupils achieve well. This is because all beliefs are respected and the teaching is made relevant to pupils' lives. The pupils' standards show a good improvement since the last inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. Statutory requirements for religious education are met.
93. The teachers plan together very effectively, sharing ideas and resources so that a range of teaching strategies are used and lessons progress at a good pace, allowing time for reflection, where appropriate, while maintaining pupils' attention and interest. They learn about world religions and relate these beliefs and practices to experiences in their own lives. Much of the teaching is oral and teachers are skilled at involving all pupils in discussion. They are sensitive to pupils' developing ideas and by the time they are in Year 6 the pupils demonstrate unusual maturity in class discussion. They contribute thoughtfully as they listen to and learn to empathise with those of differing views.
94. The management of religious education is very good. The school uses a locally approved scheme of work and planning ensures that there is a good curricular balance of faiths and topics across the school so that work develops and is not repeated. Resources for religious education are very good. The school has resources of its own, including a good range of artefacts and videos and also acts as a resource centre for primary schools in Somerset. The pupils visit the local church and visitors to school include the vicar and recently a company, who dressed as religious characters, worked with each year group to explore Bible stories. The subject manager regularly attends meetings with subject managers in other schools and has good links with the local education authority's subject advisor. She has a clear vision for the development of the subject and in particular is working to develop further contacts with people of different faiths who will visit the school and talk to pupils.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology and physical education were sampled. Art and design and music were inspected in full.

95. The pupils' current work in **design and technology** and discussions with pupils indicate that the pupils are achieving satisfactorily. They enjoy lessons and are keen to explain their work. A good variety of interesting tasks are given, where pupils are required to plan, design, make and evaluate their work. The pupils in Year 1 use computer programs to record what they have made and they record how the work has progressed. The pupils in Year 6 made step-by-step plans before making a

Christmas stocking. They labelled their sketches and they worked with a variety of materials and components. Tools and equipment have been used with some accuracy by the pupils in Year 3 when making models of Clevedon lighthouse. They evaluated effectively how they might have improved their work and noted aspects of their work that created difficulties.

96. A review of the **physical education** files showed that all elements of the National Curriculum are well covered. There is very good support for sports apart from the taught lessons, including netball, football and tag rugby clubs this term. The school has the Activemark for promotion of physical education and sports and there are many opportunities for competitive sports with other schools. Throughout the year a variety of activities is organised, including football and cricket coaching, uni-hock days, football festivals, multi sports, orienteering, dance and an annual sports day. The school is justly proud of its many sporting links.

## **Art and design**

Provision for art and design is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High quality displays around the school include a range of lively work.
- Pupils investigate and use a variety of materials to communicate their ideas and meanings.
- The range of media used for art making is good across the school and pupils are successfully learning painting techniques.
- Opportunities for pupils to systematically develop skills in art are not taken frequently enough.

### **Commentary**

97. Although the number of lessons in art and design was limited, the evidence from pupils' past work, teachers' planning and the scheme of work used for the range of learning activities provided for the pupils shows that achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Very attractive displays around the school include a range of lively work. Teaching was satisfactory in the lessons seen.
98. The pupils in Year 2 demonstrate good control of line and colour in sketches and paintings and a well-developed ability to create imaginative artwork with different materials. They investigate and use a variety of materials to communicate their ideas and meanings.
99. The pupils in Year 4 use a variety of techniques to represent symbols that are important to them as a result of studying symbols important to Hindu. Older pupils responded to the theme tune from the film 'Brave Heart' using paint and pastels and they demonstrated what they had learned when studying 'light' in science through the use of scratch wax techniques. Repeat patterns bordering individual prayers demonstrated careful application and were of a good standard. By teaching the key skills of observation, the teachers in Year 6 focus upon pupils learning a process and as a result there was a good standard of portraits that pleased the pupils enormously.

Good use is made of individual sketchbooks to try out ideas but there is little evidence of progress made in learning the necessary skills.

100. The curriculum is good. The range of media used for art making is good across the school and the pupils are successfully learning painting techniques, such as colour mixing, and a variety of ways of working in three dimensions.
101. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject manager provides a clear direction to the subject development and a good role model to the staff and pupils. She has a sound knowledge to promote the good curriculum. However, she has not yet devised any form of recording of pupils' progress and consequently it is impossible to know what each pupil has learned as they move from class to class.

## **Music**

Provision for music is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and teachers' expertise is very good.
- Curriculum enrichment through extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The resources for teaching are very good.
- The subject management is very good.

### **Commentary**

102. Lessons were seen in classes throughout the school during the inspection as well as the carol concert on an earlier visit. The standards in music are judged to be well above those expected nationally throughout the school. This is because of the enthusiasm of the teachers, their very good subject knowledge and the high level of their personal expertise. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the pupils' achievement was recorded as being good.
103. The standard of teaching in all lessons seen during the inspection was very good and the pupils achieve very well. The teachers are creative in the way they plan the curriculum in order to make the best use of their expertise; for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught singing together. The subject manager leads the lesson and other teachers support the teaching by keeping time and miming to control the interpretation of the singing. This is very effective because it ensures that all pupils are engaged all the time and consequently they all demonstrate an enjoyment in singing, have a well-developed feel for rhythm and make very good progress. The school has a very good range of resources for music making, so that in an infant assembly the pupils were able to accompany the singing using a range of percussion instruments with confidence. In Years 3 to 6 plentiful resources meant that pupils in Year 4 were able to compose their own accompaniment to a well known song because there were enough tuned percussion instruments to allow them to work in pairs. The pupils also have the opportunity to be taught by visiting teachers and can learn to play woodwind, brass and violin.
104. The school benefits from an enthusiastic subject manager with considerable personal expertise. She manages the subject very well, making very good use of national and

local initiatives and she ensures that the curriculum is covered fully. For example, a teacher from the county music service taught pupils in Year 3 as part of a government funded initiative to promote music in primary schools. Visits by dance specialists are also organised. The pupils also have the opportunity to perform to wider audiences. The pupils in Year 2 put together a musical performance for parents. On a more formal occasion, older pupils join together with 20 other schools for an impressive performance at a hall in Bristol to an audience of 2,500 in a festival of music and dance.

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

The planned programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. A new co-ordinator has recently taken over the role and although the policy needs to be rewritten, the scheme of work that is in place covers all the necessary aspects. Specific lessons help younger pupils understand how to care for and relate to each other. The school council is a means for pupils to develop their understanding of the social needs of the school. The pupils' health education is enhanced through very well delivered lessons on, for example, alcohol awareness and through an excellent workshop for pupils in Year 2 learning about how to say "no" if they do not like what people are doing. The pupils in Year 6 attend a life skills session and are taught first aid. The impact of the very effective programme of lessons combined with visits and visitors is that pupils' personal development is very good.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2

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

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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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