

INSPECTION REPORT

PHILPOTS MANOR SCHOOL

West Hoathly, East Grinstead

LEA area: Sussex West

Unique reference number: 126141

Director: Mr P B Ogilvie

Reporting inspector: Mr M G Whitehead
21061

Dates of inspection: 15th – 19th January 2001

Inspection number: 184653

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	7 to 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	West Hoathly East Grinstead West Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The Director
Date of previous inspection:	27 th March 1995

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21061	Mr M G Whitehead	Registered inspector	Modern foreign languages	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9799	Ms S Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22948	Ms M Vallis	Team inspector	Design and technology Geography Physical education Residential provision	How well does the school care for its pupils?
18261	Mr A Hill	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music	How well is the school led and managed?
10753	Ms D Drury	Team inspector	English, History English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18498	Ms D Morris	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities Therapy	
21044	Mr T Smith	Team inspector	Science	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Philpots Manor School is an independent residential school and at present there are 47 boys and 14 girls on roll. There is one pupil of Turkish origin, four of black Caribbean heritage, one Indian and the rest are white European. All pupils have very significant emotional and behavioural difficulties and some have additional moderate or specific learning difficulties. The attainment levels of pupils when they enter the school are generally below the national average and vary a great deal. There is only one pupil for whom English is an additional language and he is beyond the early stage of language acquisition. Pupils come from many different areas of the Midlands and south-east England.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for all its pupils. The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory as is the quality of teaching. Taking account of these factors, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The spiritual development of all pupils is very good.
- The school engenders very good relationships between staff and pupils.
- The social development of all pupils is very good.
- The school enjoys the confidence of all its pupils.
- There is a shared commitment to the Steiner philosophy.
- The residential care provided by the school is very good.
- Some aspects of teaching and learning in music and art are very good.

What could be improved

- The planning and assessment of pupils' work.
- The breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills to the pupils.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance.
- The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology.
- The quality and sufficiency of resources for teaching in most subjects.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The quality of teaching throughout the school has improved greatly since the last inspection. However, it is a matter of concern that the following issues, arising from the last inspection, have not been addressed.

- Regular review of the curriculum to ensure that change can take place.
- Ensure that assessment, recording and reporting systems are effective and guide the teaching.
- Improve the quality and range of resources, linking purchases with curriculum development.

The following issues raised at the last inspection have been only partially addressed:

- Establish a system of management and produce a development plan that will take full

account of the development of the school over a three to five year period.

- Introduce the direct teaching of information and communication technology in all key stages and consider its use in supporting teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Review health and safety policies with advice from the relevant statutory agencies.

Taking account of these issues, the inspectors are of the view that the school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. The school is in a good position to improve as it has the capacity to succeed through the strong commitment of the staff.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by age 11	by age 16	by age 19	Key	
speaking and listening	C	C	C	very good	A
reading	C	C	C	good	B
writing	C	C	C	satisfactory	C
mathematics	C	C	C	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	B	B	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	C	C		

*IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

In all groups throughout the school there is a wide range of achievement. Pupils are more confident and highly skilled in speaking than they are in listening. The pupils' progress in personal and social education is good and the quality of health education is satisfactory. The school has clear educational targets for each pupil and works successfully to achieve them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils usually enjoy coming to school and work with enthusiasm. This is particularly so where lesson planning takes into account their short attention spans.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Pupils are particularly co-operative and helpful in the residential accommodation. Pupils respond well where teachers use suitable management strategies in lessons and make good progress. Pupils are courteous and are respectful of other people's property.
Personal development and relationships	The relationships of pupils are very positive both in and out of the classrooms and this results in good co-operation between pupils and staff. Pupils take responsibility for school and house routines.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Despite the fact that pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties, they respect the rules of the school. The very good relationships that the pupils have with each other and the very good relationships that the pupils have with the staff are major strengths of the school. The opportunities that are provided in the residential settings are greatly valued by the pupils and help them to gain social skills and independence skills that will serve them well when they leave school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 90 per cent of the lessons observed. It was good or better in 47 per cent of lessons and very good in ten per cent of lessons. A small but significant number of lessons were observed where the quality of teaching was less than satisfactory due to the fact that the management of pupils was not effective and the lesson planning was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics throughout the school is satisfactory but the teaching of specific literacy and numeracy skills is unsatisfactory. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in science. The school's procedures for meeting the individual special needs of pupils are satisfactory.

The quality of learning by all pupils is satisfactory. There is no significant difference between the learning of boys and girls, nor is there any difference in learning by pupils of different ethnicity.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school's curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is rooted in the Steiner/Waldorf philosophy. The arrangements to enable subject managers to monitor the teaching and content of the individual subjects for which they are responsible are unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for social and spiritual development of pupils is particularly strong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Pupils feel safe, valued and supported.

The school works well in partnership with parents and provides them with good quality information about the school and the progress that their children make.

There are some aspects of the curriculum, particularly in art and music, that are very strong. All members of staff in all subjects strongly and effectively promote the spiritual development of pupils. The school also provides a wide range of activities for pupils outside of lesson times. These include the good use of facilities in the local towns and villages.

The school curriculum does not meet statutory requirements in that there is no provision for the teaching of drugs awareness and understanding amongst the pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the college of staff	The developing roles of subject co-ordinators and the more clearly defined responsibilities of the management group indicate a strengthening leadership and the existence of a clearer management system than there was at the time of the last inspection. These roles and responsibilities are in need of further development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a clear philosophy but there are times when decision making, particularly in reference to the curriculum, is slow and cumbersome. It does not always enable the education co-ordinator to effectively introduce new curriculum initiatives in line with the Steiner/Waldorf philosophy.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory.

Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall and the levels of staffing are also satisfactory. Staff have appropriate experience and there has been an increase in the number of classroom assistants since the last inspection. The accommodation is also satisfactory. There are some good specialist rooms and generous outdoor space, but the lack of risk assessment is a weakness. Resources for learning are unsatisfactory and in this respect there has been little improvement since the last inspection. Resources for English, mathematics, history and physical education are poor.

The leadership and management of the school are sound and have many strengths. The collegiate style of management enables all members of staff to have ownership of the school and its whole philosophy. The weakness within the management structure is that decision making and the implementation of initiatives can prove to be slow processes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The teaching is good. • Their children make good progress. • There is an interesting range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Information about the progress that their children are making. • Closer working relationships with parents.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views about the interesting range of extra-

curricular activities and their children's attitudes towards school. They feel that both the standards of teaching and the progress made by the pupils are satisfactory overall. Inspection evidence confirms that not enough information is provided for parents about the progress that their children make in lessons. However, information given concerning children's personal development and pastoral care is very good. Inspectors do not agree that the school does not work closely with parents although the quality of information for parents of day pupils is not as good. The use of homework, to help pupils' learning, is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. For many pupils within the school, it is inappropriate to judge their attainment by comparison with the national averages or expectations. However, there are some pupils who take nationally accredited courses and a small minority of them achieve results which are almost in line with the national average. There is a wide range of ability amongst the pupils in each class as well as a wide range of learning difficulties.
2. Throughout their time in school, pupils make satisfactory progress. This enables them to take examinations having followed nationally accredited courses. During the year from September 1999 to July 2000, four pupils took GCSE examinations and certificates were awarded in mathematics, English and information and communication technology. Four pupils were also awarded Certificates of Achievement in art and two of them were awarded distinctions. The above GCSE examination entries were taken through the local College of Further Education as Philpots Manor School is not a registered centre for these examinations. All other examinations were taken in school. Fourteen pupils also took the City and Guilds Numeracy examination and were awarded passes at levels ranging from one to three.
3. Pupils' achievements and progress in English are satisfactory overall. The assessment procedures within the department are unsatisfactory and do not allow a clear overview of the attainment and progress of the pupils. There is no overall strategy for marking and recording achievements. Consequently, it is not possible to obtain detailed information about the work of individual pupils without scrutinising all the work that they have produced during the time that they have been in Philpots Manor School. The school has not yet developed an effective strategy that can be used successfully throughout the school to promote the teaching of literacy skills.
4. In mathematics, the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory. There is indication of more success in the achievements and progress of pupils who are in Key Stage 3 and this is clearly connected to the more structured approach to teaching which is closer to that recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. The progress made by pupils in mathematics is satisfactory.
5. Levels of attainment for pupils in science are low and the progress made by pupils is generally unsatisfactory. This results from a curriculum that is narrow and does not allow pupils the opportunity to carry out sufficient investigative work. The subject is addressed through a part of the main lesson each day and does not enjoy a sufficiently high profile in the school's curriculum.
6. Levels of attainment in other subjects taught are below the national average, but the overall progress that they make is satisfactory. In art and music, pupils make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are good overall. This is an excellent reflection of the hard work, skill and dedication of all staff, when working with pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. At both key stages they often show enjoyment and enthusiasm for their work. At the beginning of lessons, pupils often take

considerable time to settle and this reduces the time available for productive work. Although concentration spans are usually very short, they usually listen attentively and follow the instructions of their teachers well. Most are able to stay on task and concentrate well for short periods, a few can maintain this level of focus for whole lessons. This is particularly so when work is stimulating and where it has been planned to provide a suitable degree of challenge for the individual. Although sometimes showing frustration when challenged, pupils often become bored with routine or unexciting tasks. They particularly enjoy practical work, becoming fully involved and learning well. Pupils are pleased with their successes and applaud those of their peers. In team games, they respond well to the principles of team membership and show good levels of give and take, particularly when effective teaching focuses on this as an integral part of the lesson. Their confidence in asking and answering questions has a positive effect on learning, although some interrupt and answer questions directed at others and this slows learning for some. Most take full advantage of the extra-curricular activities provided. The progressive development of positive learning habits supports learning well; this is supported effectively by house parents. The habit of persevering with challenging tasks and working independently is less well developed although there are some good examples in art, music and some maths lessons. There is little independent use of the library. Pupils willingly take responsibility for everyday routines such as giving out materials and equipment in lessons and for clearing up afterwards.

8. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall and this has a positive effect upon the progress that pupils make. Some pupils have very challenging behaviour, are distracted easily and sometimes provoke confrontation. They usually respond very well to staff who have high expectations of them and calmly and patiently insist on continuing with lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of school rules and routines and usually abide by these. After occasional lapses in expected standards they often respond well and willingly to the school's code of 'making it good'. When disruptions occur in lessons other pupils rarely become involved, usually allowing the teacher to deal with it whilst they continue with their work; this reduces the extent to which behaviour slows learning. Standards of behaviour in lessons often reflect the extent to which lessons have been planned to provide interest, stimulation and relate to the individual abilities of pupils. Overall, self-discipline develops increasingly well. The behaviour of a few continues to be of concern and the school makes every effort to help these pupils, in liaison with parents, where possible. Exclusions are used by the school with regret and only as a last resort. There were three permanent and seven fixed-term exclusions during the last school year. Pupils usually move around the site in a sensible manner and behave well when being transported by bus to activities off site. The school premises and equipment are invariably treated with respect, as are displays of pupils' work, flower arrangements and artefacts around the school. There is no graffiti and the site is notable for its lack of litter. Pupils respond very well to the high standards set by house parents and willingly acknowledge their responsibility for keeping the premises tidy and helping with chores such as clearing away after meals and washing up. They are well mannered and confident when they meet and talk to visitors.
9. Relationships are very good throughout the school and contribute significantly to pupils' learning. Pupils feel able to express their views with confidence and most are willing to listen with respect to those of others, although some have not yet learnt not to interrupt with their own views when others are speaking. When they are given the opportunity to work in pairs and small groups, they usually show good levels of give and take. Some offer their help to each other; for example, a pupil in music voluntarily went to sit by another to help by playing alongside. Pupils like and respect their teachers, resulting in them willingly offering to help where this is needed. The occasional incidents of bullying are dealt with well by staff, although most aggressive behaviour is of a spontaneous

nature rather than persistently directed towards one person. Those in boarding accommodation show high levels of respect for house parents and respond well to each other.

10. The response of pupils to opportunities provided for their personal development is good overall. The lunch period is used very well as a learning opportunity to reinforce good social skills; pupils respond well. The small family units for boarding pupils are well managed and this is reflected in a developing understanding of the need to consider other people as well as themselves. Their self-confidence and personal independence develops effectively through a broad range of extra-curricular activities and visits.
11. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and help pupils to learn. A sample taken as part of the inspection indicated a level of 89 per cent attendance overall. This is low in relation to other similar residential schools, however, it reflects the number of exclusions that have a disproportionate affect because of the relatively low number on role. Where permanent exclusion is being considered and dealt with, the few pupils concerned have remained on role whilst being marked absent. The school day usually starts on time and pupils arrive for their first lesson punctually. Although pupils usually move promptly between lessons where this is needed, there are occasional delays to the start of lessons where, for example, they are slow in returning from the gym.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. All teachers have good relationships with the pupils and present very good role models for them. Teachers have very good knowledge of individual pupils, their special needs, their likes and dislikes. This helps pupils to make satisfactory progress throughout their time in the school. In one lesson observed, the teacher showed her very good knowledge of pupils in the way in which she asked questions of them. She made sure that the questions that she asked were difficult enough to make them think hard, but not so difficult that they were unable to find the right answer. In this way, all pupils took part in the lesson, all had to work hard and all made considerable progress.
13. The highest quality teaching was seen where the teachers planned the lessons carefully to meet the individual needs of the pupils. In these lessons, the teachers had clear records of what was going to be taught and how the pupils succeeded in meeting the demands made upon them. In one of the best English lessons observed, the teacher's file contained detailed planning for each pupil. Very good teaching was also observed in a mathematics lesson where the lesson proceeded at a brisk pace and ensured that the work was challenging for the pupils, whilst still being achievable. The teaching of physical education was also of a high standard. Lessons started promptly and the teacher maintained the interest of the pupils through his own enthusiasm and commitment. Pupils were encouraged to work with each other and the teacher made sure that they had a very clear understanding of their actions and the effects that they had on other members of the class.
14. Good teaching strategies were also observed in lessons where art, music, information and communication technology, history and design and technology were being taught. Teachers use language that is clearly understood by the pupils and is also correct concerning subject content. Pupils are given responsibilities for getting equipment ready at the beginning of the lesson and also for clearing away at the end of the lesson. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss the stories that they hear during history lessons, whilst setting very clear boundaries concerning behaviour in class.

15. The quality of delivery of the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum varies according to individual teachers. Teachers are autonomous so that the quality of delivery depends on the individual teacher. They make their own decisions about the content and method of delivery of the lessons. In some lessons observed, activities were dull and repetitive and there was a lack of pace and variety of strategies to promote pride in work and sense of achievement. There is much copying from board, worksheets and books. Extension tasks for those who complete work are limited to simple embellishment of the page.
16. There is an underlying weakness in much of the teaching in the school and that focuses on the elements of planning and assessment. Individual lesson planning is not clear enough to show what the pupils are expected to learn and how their achievements are to be assessed. As a result of this deficiency in the work of many teachers, it is not possible to gain a clear picture of the individual progress that is made by the pupils. Teachers themselves have a very clear knowledge of the pupils and how they are progressing but this information is not clearly recorded.
17. There is a similar problem in the co-ordination of teaching in the different subjects. Many teachers are working very well, but in isolation. Subject co-ordinators and senior managers do not have sufficient knowledge of the working in their areas. This lack of formal planning and assessment inhibits the further development of their subjects and also denies teachers opportunities to share the good practice of others and celebrate their own successes. There is a great need for development planning with clear success criteria and evaluation procedures at all levels, from the management of the subjects to the teaching in the classrooms.
18. There were ten per cent of lessons observed in which the teaching was less than satisfactory. In these lessons, there was a lack of clear focus and lack of pace. In some lessons, the teachers' strategies for managing pupils' difficult behaviour were not effective.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

19. The school's curriculum is rooted in the philosophy of Steiner. The shared commitment to this philosophy promotes the spiritual and social development of the pupils and some aspects of the music and art provision are very strong. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. The arrangements which enable the education and curriculum co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the curriculum are, however, unsatisfactory and they are not able to ensure that what is taught is sufficiently broad, balanced or relevant.
20. The main focus of the morning, each school day, is the two-hour main lesson. The content of the main lesson is chosen from a wide range of topics. The nature and content of the topics are determined by the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum. The topics provide an integrated vehicle for the delivery of the subject areas. This approach aims to lead pupils through a series of experiences that build incrementally reflecting the holistic approach to the curriculum. Topic themes include: Greek mythology; art history; water; mining; astronomy; world wars and the Victorians.

21. The commitment to developing the whole child is reflected in the provision of a wide range of curriculum opportunities for pupils. This provides an appropriate range of subjects for pupils during the years that they spend in the school. These include: riding; stable management; horticulture; sewing; weaving; pottery; textile crafts; art; cooking; cycling; eurythmy; music and opportunities to learn and perform with musical instruments. Pupils also study religion and there is appropriate sex education provision. In addition, some pupils have access to specialist therapies like speech and language, physio, music and art therapy depending on individual need. There are key elements of the curriculum, however, that are not fully developed or available. There are no planned whole-school strategies to develop numeracy and literacy within the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum. There is no information and communication technology provision for pupils at Key Stages 2 and 3 and restricted opportunities for design and technology at Key Stage 4. There is no provision of any drugs awareness education within the timetable and this is an area that needs to be addressed.
22. There has been good improvement in the opportunities given to pupils in this current year. Pupils are now following nationally accredited courses in a much wider range of subjects and through a wider range of examining boards. These include: GCSE; GNVQ; Certificates of Achievement; City and Guilds; Welsh examining boards; The Midlands examining board and the Open College Network. This is a very positive change on the part of the school and is helping to raise the achievements of all pupils in the school as they have targets to aim for that are within their grasp.
23. Most pupils are resident, at least during the week. This enables the school to provide a 24-hour curriculum. Regular staff meetings and child studies to plan the management of individual pupil's needs and learning ensure the consistent delivery of the shared philosophy of the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum in all activities by all staff. This consistency of approach promotes the personal, social and spiritual development of the pupils and is a strength of the school.
24. Pupils made most progress in lessons seen where teachers had long- and short-term planning in place, identified clear learning outcomes to the pupils and reviewed with them, progress made towards the achievement of those outcomes.
25. Pupils make good progress in personal, social and health education. There is no formal planned curriculum to promote this area of pupils' development. It is delivered through the shared commitment to the Steiner philosophy and is central to the core purpose of the school. The school's health education policy describes how the provision is integrated into the everyday activities and values of the school. The role of house parents in this aspect of the curriculum is key. Staff are aware that they urgently need to develop the drugs awareness element of the health programme in order to meet the requirement for approved independent schools to cover this topic.
26. Pupils have individual education plans that are followed by the teachers and the care staff. This ensures that there is uniformity of approach and consistency in the care and management pupils receive.
27. The school makes regular use of the facilities in the local community to enrich the curriculum. Some pupils in the training centre study at the local college of further education and have work experience opportunities with local employers. The local careers service ensures that each pupil has a careers interview and an action plan to support their transition to further education and work. Pupils go swimming, attend the local sports centre, go bowling, visit the cinema and attend local churches. The school

has three mini-buses to support access to these facilities. Much of this community access is managed by the house parents. Staff are also developing links beyond the school. The education co-ordinator is working in collaboration with nearby Steiner schools. Philpots Manor School has applied to join the Steiner Schools Fellowship.

28. Post-16 pupils attend the Training Course classes. They are grouped according to need and maturity. Apart from the access to the local college of further education, careers advice and work experience, there is little that distinguishes the provision from that of the rest of the school. There is need for a greater emphasis on the changing roles and responsibilities that pupils are required to take when they begin the course in the Training Course. The environment, resources and organisation do not provide an age-appropriate adult environment or provide planned opportunities to take responsibility. It does not sufficiently establish an environment appropriate for young adults or support transition to further education, work and beyond. Although there has been a gradual increase in access to nationally accredited courses, these do not yet provide a curriculum which will fully prepare pupils for their transition beyond school.
29. Overall, the school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. The spiritual and social provision is a particular strength of the school. Each day begins with a gathering that provides an opportunity for reflection with a shared verse and hymn. The main lesson each morning starts with a verse. Pupils have daily access to music and movement through the eurythmy provision, which calms them and develops concentration. They play instruments, listen to, read and write music. There are regular opportunities to perform at musical evenings and to attend religious services. Meal times in the bungalows provide a civilised daily occasion, enhanced by the high quality and well presented food. Pupils entertain guests with impressive maturity. They regularly organise birthday parties and other social activities.
30. All curriculum areas and lessons contribute to the moral development of the pupils. The differences between right and wrong are emphasised as part of the core purpose of all activities. Inappropriate behaviour is identified and good behaviour praised. In the residential accommodation, pupils willingly take responsibilities for the smooth running of their home. There are, however, fewer opportunities to take responsibility for their learning in the classroom. The main lesson topics, and the resources to support them, have a strong cultural element. They include reference to topics such as Greek mythology and art history. Music and verse are common features of most lessons. The art and music curriculum in particular, enriches the cultural development of pupils. Much of the literature available to pupils both in the classrooms and in the library is somewhat dated.
31. Improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The school has begun to make some links between the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum and the National Curriculum. A new science curriculum is being introduced at Key Stage 3. There is a gradually increasing number of students who are entered for nationally recognised examinations in mathematics, English, information and communication technology, catering, vehicle maintenance, food studies, science and art. The school is also developing Open College Network courses.
32. There has been insufficient analysis of procedures and a lack of consistent planning across the school. Little progress has been made in developing whole-school approaches to curriculum planning with identified priorities for development, particularly in relation to staff training and resources. The role of the education and subject co-ordinators has not been fully established and they are not yet able to inform the teachers' meeting and college of staff about how the curriculum is being taught. The

school makes satisfactory use of homework and this is well supported by the work of the care staff. Resident pupils are encouraged to do their homework and time and space are made available for them.

33. The establishment of the post of education co-ordinator indicates the school's commitment to review the quality of the curriculum. Since September 2000, the current postholder has been allocated a greater proportion of his time to undertake the role. He has begun to promote, with the staff, a shared approach to developing the curriculum. For example, he has collected resources for the main lesson topics from individual classrooms and is housing them in topic boxes stored centrally in the main school building.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The care that the school gives its pupils is satisfactory overall. There are significant variations, however, in the different aspects of care. The arrangements for child protection are very good. Two fully qualified co-ordinators share the role effectively, ensuring that all members of the teaching and care staff are well aware of procedures and signs and symptoms of abuse. The child protection policy, written with the help and advice of the local authority, reflects the ethos of the school: 'Central to the work of the school is the care and protection of children'. Very good practice is seen in the keeping of records and initial concern notes and in the way that all pupils are assisted to voice any concerns they may have. Pupils are listened to carefully and the school does not hesitate to involve outside agencies at an early stage. The needs of the number of pupils who are in public care or on the at-risk register are met well, including close liaison with their local social services. Employment at Philpots Manor is dependent upon a satisfactory police check in this country or in the country of origin of the applicant.
35. The school does not monitor levels of school attendance overall, although house parents keep careful records of those present in residential accommodation. Most teachers take a register at the beginning of the day and all note and require reasons for individual absence; they liaise effectively with house parents about this. A register is suitably kept for the small number of day pupils and any reasons for absence reported by the taxi drivers who collect them from home in the mornings. Parents and local education authorities are contacted immediately if residential pupils fail to return to school at the agreed time.
36. Some procedures for health and safety are unsatisfactory, as was the position identified during the previous inspection. The school has been provided with a list of issues to address. The health and safety officer has ensured that good fire procedures are in place in residential accommodation. Extinguishers, fire blankets, alarms and exits are checked regularly and fire practice takes place at night as well as during the day. A fire drill during inspection was observed to be effective but highlighted that fire alarms in some areas cannot be heard clearly. All staff are regularly trained in fire protection by external agencies. Procedures for use of the mini bus are good but there are inconsistencies in the quality of care off site. Although supervision levels are high, there is insufficient risk assessment of activities. Because of the philosophy of the school, it is sometimes difficult to identify a named leader and this is unacceptable in relation to health and safety. Regular risk assessment of the school building and equipment is also unsatisfactory. There is meticulous recording of incidents however, and reports are sent to the Health and Safety Executive as required by the regulations. Supervision on site is good, with sufficient levels of staffing at break times and in the residential accommodation. Procedures for hand over at the beginning and end of the day are also

good. Arrangements for medical care are satisfactory, with trained staff always on site and all pupils registered with the local G.P.

37. Procedures for monitoring and promoting acceptable behaviour are good. The respect and dignity with which each individual is treated and the non-confrontational approach of all staff help to promote satisfactory standards. Positive role models abound. The sensible behaviour policy and the very good personal support for pupils help them address the significant problems they bring to the school. Concentration on clear structures for each day helps pupils feel secure. They appreciate that staff care enough about them to ensure that simple rules are complied with. Sanctions and rewards are few and seen as fair. They are often negotiated with individual teachers or house parents. Bullying is minimal and, like all incidents, is dealt with swiftly. Record keeping is thorough, showing that the school has good procedures for dealing with episodes that can be serious. Parents and outside agencies are fully involved in any decision to exclude pupils for a fixed term, or permanently. All members of staff have been trained in crisis management and appropriate form of restraint, which are used sparingly and recorded thoroughly. Pupils and staff receive support after such incidents. Procedures for supporting pupils' personal development are good. Pupils are very well known to all staff. They build up very good relationships with class teachers and care staff and feel secure in the knowledge that they are valued and cared for. Each pupil identifies a key person with whom they feel comfortable and in whom they can confide. Teachers observe three or four pupils on an informal basis each day, noting their mood and behaviour and having a friendly word. In many lessons, and in the accommodation, the staff record pupils' attitudes and reactions. Any significant information is noted in records and contributes to the pupils' annual review of statement and the annual report to parents. Individual education plans and care plans may highlight areas for development or focus. These plans vary in effectiveness. However, not all targets are measurable.
38. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and social development are unsatisfactory. Systems are too informal and dependent on individual teachers. Too little information is recorded to be of value in planning for future learning. Teachers are not sufficiently aware of the academic levels pupils have reached, neither do they give them enough information and guidance to enable them to reach higher levels. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection, where it was highlighted as a key area for improvement. Reading and spelling ages are gauged when pupils join the school as is their emotional maturity level. Other reading, spelling and mathematics tests are carried out annually. However, the school is looking to introduce more up-to-date and diagnostic testing, especially in mathematics. Some good practice does exist. In English, written work is assessed against National Curriculum levels at least termly; some teachers have devised simple tick lists to show the skills and knowledge covered in other areas of the curriculum. Oral assessment is good but there are no written comments on work to guide pupils' future work. Annual reports do not consistently cover all areas of the curriculum and give little indication of academic levels. Significantly more pupils have been entered for nationally accredited courses this year and this is a positive development. Several pupils are studying for GCSE examinations or for the Certificate of Achievement. Practical subjects, including stable management, riding and weaving lead to accreditation through the Open College Network. A small number of pupils in the Training Class are studying for GNVQs in catering or car maintenance.
39. The school has very good arrangements for boarding pupils, and takes into account statutory regulations relating to residential schools. This shows a significant improvement since the previous inspection where shortcomings were identified.

Recommendations made after a recent Social Services inspection have been addressed well. These include ensuring that all staff involved in the preparation or handling of food now hold a Food Hygiene Certificate and that induction procedures for new staff have been improved. The relationships between teaching and care staff are very good and help to ensure that the residential experience for pupils is very positive.

Special Educational Needs

40. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Almost all pupils at the school have a statement of special educational needs for their behavioural and emotional difficulties, and many also have moderate learning difficulties. A significant minority have additional difficulties such as physical difficulties, sensory difficulties or autism. There are some good therapies in place and pupils are carefully diagnosed and monitored to ensure that an appropriate programme is identified to meet their individual needs. All pupils have individual education plans and annual review procedures are effective and are in line with the Code of Practice. Parents and placing authorities have full involvement in review meetings at which future targets are set. Sometimes the targets identified are too broad and they are not small enough to enable pupils to achieve success. This inhibits the amount of progress that pupils make over time.

Equal Opportunities

41. The school provides equality of opportunity for all its pupils. Each pupil has the option to take part in the wide range of activities on offer. Many day pupils stay after school so that they can also take part in after school clubs. There are good male and female role models among the staff, and although the number of girls at the school is small, every effort is made to ensure that they have equal access and the opportunity to make friends among their peer group.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. There are very good levels of satisfaction amongst parents with what the school provides and achieves. They say their children like school and benefit from a broad range of extra-curricular activities. Parents are also pleased with the standard of teaching and the progress their children make; in particular with their personal development. Inspection evidence confirms these positive views. Some parents are not satisfied with the homework provided. It was noted during the inspection that this does vary between teachers, but is generally suitable. There is usually frequent and regular liaison between teachers and house parents to support work to be done at home. However, this level of contact is not so well maintained with the parents of non-residential pupils. Written comments from parents particularly praise the quality of pastoral care, the regular contact with house parents where their children live in residential accommodation and say that they are made to feel welcome in the school. Parents of day pupils, whilst valuing the opportunities provided through trips and visits out of school, would appreciate more notice where there are demands on them to supply, for example, packed lunches.
43. Some parents do not feel they are given sufficient information about how well their children are doing. Annual reports to parents usually provide good information about what work has been covered during the year, their children's attitudes to school and progress made with their personal development. There is, however, inconsistency in how well these reports communicate what pupils know, understand and can do; the progress they have made and what should be the focus for future development. Where

this is the case, it restricts opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning and is unsatisfactory. Reports following annual reviews are similarly inconsistent in their helpfulness to parents.

44. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents and carers through the information provided for them is good overall. The prospectus is written well to provide a suitable range of information about expectations, procedures and the work of the school. Visits prior to enrolment ensure parents know the school and its staff well. There are regular newsletters that keep parents up to date with school events and provide useful information about who to contact when there are queries and concerns. The quality of communication between the school and parents relating to pastoral matters, usually with house parents, is particularly effective in ensuring they understand their children's lives at school and the routines that support their development. Open days are held at the end of each year to coincide with parents collecting their children to take them home. There are good levels of attendance and they are planned well to ensure opportunities for parents to develop understanding of their children's lives at school, talk with their teachers, care staff and visiting specialists.
45. The involvement of parents with the school helps pupils with their learning. The large majority are interested in their children's progress and are pleased to support staff where this is needed, for example in working together to find a way forward when difficulties present themselves. The particularly effective contact between pastoral staff and parents prepares parents to support their children through the continuation of routines during home visits. Attendance at annual reviews and open days is good, although other involvement is restricted because of the long distances many need to travel.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership and management of the school have a clear and shared philosophy and have improved since the last inspection, although the management has addressed few of the issues raised at the last inspection. At present, the collegiate system of management and consultation makes it difficult to introduce whole-school curriculum initiatives such as literacy, numeracy and the use of computers to support the curriculum. Although individual subjects such as music and art are effectively co-ordinated and offer good quality education to pupils and students, there is a lack of clarity in whole-school curriculum direction. The Steiner/Waldorf school curriculum is not tied to the National Curriculum and initiatives that would accelerate learning are not given sufficient consideration. The education co-ordinator is the key to an enriched curriculum and it is that role which is most in need of strengthening.
47. The roles of the education and subject co-ordinators are underdeveloped and do not allow co-ordinators to monitor effectively the progress that pupils make and the quality of the teaching that they receive. There are not enough procedures or structures to support them in doing this. Teachers are not able to track that the balance in each subject is appropriate and the provision for history, geography and some elements of religious education are not satisfactory. Similarly, the main lesson is also the vehicle for teaching science and the co-ordinator is unable to monitor the quality of what is taught. This limits knowledge of the effectiveness of the new science course that is being developed from Year 9.

48. The school's curriculum document was drafted in 1989. Although Rawson and Richter's book, 'Education Tasks in the Context of the Steiner/Waldorf Curriculum', sets out advice on curriculum reviews and the need for an education development plan, there is no evidence of a whole-school exercise to monitor and review the effectiveness of the curriculum. Nor is there any indication of a shared policy or consistent approach to planning and assessment, or a development plan with identified priorities for improvement.
49. The school is organised on a democratic basis with no hierarchy. There is an education co-ordinator who has responsibility for the formal curriculum delivered within the school. There are identified co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science. All other subjects are co-ordinated by the education co-ordinator. There are no governors of the school. The director, along with a small group of experienced staff, forms a senior management team, who give guidance and support to the college of staff. All staff have a responsibility for the school development planning and the post-inspection planning. The action planning to follow this inspection report is the shared responsibility of all staff but will be facilitated by the 'senior' managers and the director.
50. The democratic structure of staffing has many strengths and enables every member of the school, residential and ancillary staff, to contribute to the decision making process. All can feel a sense of ownership of the school as a whole. With further strengthening of the management group and subject co-ordinating roles, a more focused sense of direction can be maintained. The school can then, in the words of Steiner, 'avoid being isolated, becoming an elitist or minority schools movement', since its 'social task can only be achieved within the mainstream of society'.
51. The school set aside the staff appraisal scheme over two years ago and has not yet developed a system to enable the performance of teachers to be formally monitored and evaluated. Consideration is being given to a system based on peer appraisal and all teachers have been seen teaching by the education co-ordinator. This initiative has not yet translated into a fully effective system for ensuring that good practice is disseminated and weaknesses addressed supportively within a framework of professional development. This is an unsatisfactory situation.
52. Staff new to the school are given an induction package and the support for them is good. The system whereby Steiner-trained teachers mentor the new state trained or untrained teacher, and state-trained teachers mentor the new Steiner-trained teacher, is very good. It has the potential to ensure that the values and standards of both can benefit pupils and students and raise the quality of teaching and the standards of achievement.
53. The school development plan reflects the present uncertainty about direction for the school. It is not a rigorous plan for future development that has costings, achievement times and nominated persons responsible for monitoring developments. It is more a commentary on what has been done, interspersed with comments about pupils and the school. As such, it offers no clear direction for future developments, particularly curriculum developments, that would have a positive impact on standards and the rate of progress that pupils and students make in the subject areas. This is unsatisfactory. The very good developments in residential care and in the provision of specialist accommodation for art and crafts have not been part of a cohesive long-term set of planned priorities, linked to budget. They tend to be discrete ideas that have come to fruition through the collegiate management process. The budget allocation for such developments is based on a response to needs as they arise, rather than a whole-school view of long-term planning needs and priorities.

54. The staffing and the accommodation at the school are satisfactory overall but resources for learning are unsatisfactory. This is a similar picture to that at the last inspection. There is a sufficient number of staff with appropriate expertise and a wide range of qualifications. The number of classroom support staff has increased and they now make a significant contribution to learning. The stability that they offer in the classroom is good. All staff have appropriate job descriptions which identify responsibilities for teaching, co-ordination or support and care. There are times when staff are not able to undertake the responsibilities identified because they are not given the time or support to do them. For example, subject co-ordinators do not have any time identified to monitor, evaluate or improve the subjects that they are responsible for. This is a weakness in staffing. Although staff are able to undertake training, and can ask for particular courses, staff development is not linked to whole-school planning and therefore has limited effect on the quality of teaching that takes place.
55. The accommodation at the school is sufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum and residence. Some classrooms are small and cold but there are enough rooms available and the school is clean and tidy. There are some good specialist rooms, such as a new computer room, and art and music rooms. There is some good outdoor accommodation to enhance facilities for gardening, farming and sport. The school makes good use of the school gardens and also uses some good off-site provision to support learning. There is a weakness in the accommodation for the teaching of science and there are too few book areas in classrooms. The library requires refurbishment to ensure that it is comfortable enough to encourage reading and browsing.
56. Resources for learning are unsatisfactory overall. No significant improvement has been made since the last inspection. The management and organisation of resources is weak, although a start has been made on a central resource base. This will prevent teachers buying the same resources for each class. Resources for English are poor. Many books are old, atlases are out-of-date and there are too few research books in place. The lack of attractive book areas is a weakness. There are also weaknesses in the resources for mathematics, history, physical education, where some are unsafe, geography and design and technology. The new computer resources are good and enable access to a whole class of pupils at a time. There are also some good resources for art and music. Overall, the unsatisfactory state of the resources is having a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning in many subjects.
57. The school bursar carries out the administration of the school budget. Staff within the school office provide further administrative support. Accounts are compiled manually, without the assistance of information technology. An annual audit of accounts recognises that they represent a fair and accurate reflection of the school's financial status. The bursar has a detailed knowledge of the expenditure accrued by school staff and he has a significant input to decisions relating to any significant financial spending. In this regard the school operates a prudent budget.
58. Expenditure relating to any area of school activity, such as residential or education, is historically 'needs led'. In practice, this means that staff may request any item to support their subject or activity. If the proposed expenditure is substantial, the outlay needs approval by the college of staff and senior members of the school. Such expenditure is not related to a school development plan and, as such, cannot contribute to an overall vision of school improvement and this is unsatisfactory.

59. The decision not to employ information technology denies the opportunity to effectively monitor spending. In practice, the school maintains a satisfactory contingency fund but budget headings are derived from the results of expenditure rather than contributing to anticipated expenditure. Within such a system, improvements within specific areas, such as education, are open to the uncertainty of debate and the consequent ability of individuals to present effective bids for improvement. There is no clear system of prioritising educational or residential improvements and this is unsatisfactory.
60. Purchases relating to school activity are made on historical connections. Currently there is no system whereby best value purchases are sought. Having purchased major items, such as word processors, the school does not hold an inventory of these, nor of items exceeding a particular value. This is an unsatisfactory practice that does not support the practice of replacement or renewal.
61. Taking account of the effective deployment of staff, the levels of satisfactory and good teaching, the good behaviour of pupils and the satisfactory progress that pupils make, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to improve the quality of education provided for the pupils, the director and college of staff should:
 - Keep clear records of all lesson planning and use consistent agreed criteria for assessing the work of pupils. These assessment results should be used when planning future lessons to ensure that they are meeting the individual needs of all pupils. (Paragraph 38)
 - Make sure that all pupils receive a broad and well-balanced curriculum. (Paragraph 19)
 - Improve the strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills to the pupils. (Paragraphs 80 & 85)
 - Establish systems to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. (Paragraph 47)
 - Use new technology more effectively to support and develop teaching and learning in the school. (Paragraph 59)
 - Improve the quality and level of resources for learning. (Paragraph 56)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Therapies

63. The school makes good provision for different therapies such as art, play, speech, movement, remedial and eurythmy. These help pupils to improve their personal skills and develop confidence in their own abilities. Pupils are offered different therapies according to their needs. For example, they may develop their self-confidence through improving their literacy skills during remedial therapy, and their creative skills through art and movement therapy. Many good approaches are used and teachers are skilled in encouraging pupils to join in and express themselves. The quality of teaching in the therapies is good and pupils make good progress and enjoy these sessions. Groups

are small and this enables high levels of individual support. Because of this, relationships are strong. Pupils respect their teachers and behave well.

Residential Provision

64. Provision for residential care is very good. All but six pupils are boarders, living in small residential units, each accommodating about six pupils, sharing the homes of their house parents. The allocation of the single sex or mixed accommodation is considered with care to account for age, need and availability. There is freedom within a clearly defined structure for each 'family' and each individual to develop in their own way. For example, each unit sets its own simple rules and routines and allocates daily chores whilst adhering to the philosophy and principles of the whole community. No more than three pupils share a bedroom, with most rooms accommodating one or two pupils. The purchase of a house with four acres of land approximately eight miles from the school has alleviated some overcrowding noted at the time of the previous inspection. Here, house parents and their two sons share the excellent accommodation with six boys from the school. The site includes a swimming pool and large areas of grass and woodland, an ideal environment where young people can grow and explore. It is commendable that the house parents drive so far to school each day to share lunch with their 'family' as well as delivering and collecting them at the beginning and end of each day.
65. The quality of care staff is high. All carers, and house parents in particular, are chosen with discretion. They are thoroughly vetted before employment for their suitability for working with children. Men and women work in harmony together in all residential units, acting as excellent role models for the pupils. There is no shift working so there is a feeling of stability which is of particular importance to pupils at Philpots Manor. Staff come from a wide range of backgrounds and countries bringing a wealth of valuable experience and expertise with them. They retain their individuality whilst quickly becoming part of, and contributing to, a supportive community.
66. All accommodation is at least adequate, with most being of good quality. Maintenance of buildings is satisfactory and good regard is paid to hygiene. Homes are almost always tidy and warm although one larger unit was cold in the frosty weather during inspection. Most pupils personalise their bedrooms with posters, drawings and toys. Beds are of variable quality with some soon in need of replacement. Shared areas are mainly bright, very clean and welcoming, reflecting the personal style of the house parents and the fact that it is their home. There are comfortable, well furnished sitting rooms with plenty of books and games. Many of these are old and in poor condition, however, with pupils reporting that some games are incomplete. Dining areas are particularly attractive with large tables able to accommodate the residents and visitors. Bathrooms and toilets are satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to retain their dignity and privacy. All doors are lockable and pupils wash and shower individually. Staff bathrooms are separate.
67. Eating is a pleasure at Philpots Manor. There is a rich feeling of community at the meal table which contributes positively to spiritual development. Pupils and staff unaffectedly hold hands as a short verse is said at the beginning and end of meals. Food is well prepared, wholesome and plentiful. All tastes are catered for. Local organic suppliers are used whenever possible and the school grows many of its vegetables on its own small farm. Pupils eat all meals in their family accommodation with members of the teaching staff joining them. Breakfast and tea are prepared within individual units but the main midday meal is prepared centrally and delivered to each home. Tables are laid attractively and good manners are quietly insisted upon. Pupils benefit considerably

from well-established routines and are proud to show newcomers their customs. Speaking and listening skills as well as social skills are developed well during these pleasant occasions.

68. Care staff and teachers combine to provide plentiful opportunities for out-of-school activities. Challenge is provided by visits to a leisure centre for activities which include swimming, abseiling and ice hockey. Long cycle rides are frequently arranged, sometimes including a chance to camp overnight. Floodlighting enables ball sports to be played on the hard playground at night and there are extensive grounds to explore. Musical evenings and dancing, enjoyed by the whole community, provide opportunities for cultural development as well as fun and they make good use of the significant talents of staff. Everyone will long remember coming together to watch the recent eclipse of the moon on a frosty evening.
69. Liaison between care and teaching staff is very good. Care plans are often linked to individual education plans. There are very well established hand-over routines at the beginning and end of days with any incidents or important information shared immediately. Procedures at the end of the day are pleasing. House parents wait in the playground with pans of hot drinks to greet pupils as they are brought to them by teaching staff. House parents attend annual reviews of statements and also contribute well-prepared written reports for those occasions.
70. Pupils have access to private telephone lines. They are encouraged to receive calls from home and to call home regularly. Very good procedures exist to ensure that they can report concerns which are taken seriously. Telephone numbers of Childline and named staff, who can be contacted at home at any time by pupils if necessary, are displayed by telephones. Each pupil has ready access to a named person who they have chosen as someone in whom they can confide. Records are kept of pocket money and pupils can ask staff to lock away precious possessions.
71. Procedures for health and safety are generally good with some exceptions. Good systems exist to test fire alarms weekly in each home. These are recorded. Practice drills are held at the prescribed intervals both during the day and evening. There is trained medical care on site at all times and there is adequate sick room accommodation available should pupils need to be isolated from their homes. This was as a response to criticism at the previous inspection but is proving unnecessary as pupils are cared for in their homes, taken home by parents or to hospital as necessary. Pupils are supervised by good numbers of staff when on activities out of school. Insufficient risk assessment procedures are carried out however, and no one person has overall responsibility for the activities because of the philosophy of the school. These matters must be addressed.
72. The overall management of care is very good. The well-qualified co-ordinator provides strong and sensitive support for pupils and staff. He listens well and takes decisive action when necessary. Living on site, he is closely involved in all aspects of school life but especially residential care. The shortcomings in residential care noted at the time of the previous inspection have all been addressed.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	37	43	7	3	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	60
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

There is no pupil in the school who is at an early stage of language acquisition.

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	11	School data	0

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	55
Turkish	1

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	1	2
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	6	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4
Average class size	6

Education support staff: Y3 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	191

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	1,937,376
Total expenditure	1,894,143
Expenditure per pupil	31,051
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,773
Balance carried forward to next year	43,233

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	61
Number of questionnaires returned	14

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	43	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	36	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	50	14	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	7	29	7	43
The teaching is good.	43	50	7	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	29	29	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	14	0	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	36	7	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	36	29	29	7	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	14	21	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	36	0	7	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	36	7	0	0

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

73. Overall, the school's provision for English is satisfactory. The pupils have special educational needs and their learning has been limited by their circumstances and level of emotional and behavioural needs. In general, attainment is below expected levels, although individual standards of work seen during the inspection vary across all key stages. There is a wide range of attainment on entry and across the whole school.
74. Much of the English curriculum is taught through the topic work in the main lesson. There are also some discrete English lessons but the time allocated and content of these is not consistent across the school. Additional special needs support is provided on a one-to-one basis for some pupils according to need. A special class which delivers structured programmes has been provided to boost the basic skills of four pupils in Year 9.
75. The quality of the teaching of English is satisfactory overall but depends on the practice of individual teachers and so is not consistent across the school. Teaching at all key stages is most effective in the lessons where the teacher undertakes long- and short-term detailed planning, identifies with pupils the desired learning outcomes for each lesson and reviews with them at the end of the lesson what has been achieved. A few lessons observed only in each of the key stages provide this, together with clearly planned comprehensive and fast moving programmes of varied and challenging activities that maintain pupils' interest and promote their learning. Many lessons across the school, however, lack planning and pace and have too low an expectation of what pupils can do. Pupils spend too long on one activity and there is a lack of clarity about the purpose. There are dull and repetitive tasks, with an over reliance on copying from the board, books or worksheets. Verses are learnt and recited by rote with little opportunity to explore the subject matter or use of language. Pupils are not sufficiently challenged and lack opportunities to make their own decisions or take responsibility for their own learning. In most of the main lessons, teachers do not provide a range of tasks differentiated to match the varying needs of the pupils.
76. The quality of teachers' relationships with pupils in English lessons is consistently good across the school. Generally, a calm and supportive atmosphere is maintained and pupils are encouraged and praised. Teachers know the pupils well and there is mutual respect between staff and pupils. The pleasant, warm and supportive atmosphere fosters positive attitudes and good behaviour. Staff take appropriate opportunities to discuss work and behaviour and to offer guidance. Learning support staff provide effective support and pupils enjoy high levels of individual attention. The quality of the relationships makes a positive contribution to the personal development of the pupils. Reciting verse at the start of lessons promotes spiritual development, the management of the pupils supports the core values of the school and emphasises the differences between right and wrong. The shared reading activities foster social interaction and the literature and stories in English lessons promote cultural development.
77. In those lessons where teachers record progress systematically, it is possible to identify satisfactory achievement in pupils' speaking and listening and reading and writing in relation to individual targets set out in individual education plans. It is not possible to distinguish standards of achievement between key stages. At Key Stage 2, pupils can recite rhymes independently, use paint and shapes to illustrate a story and design and write a 'Good Luck' and 'Thank you' card. They are at varying levels of achievement with

reading. One pupil has early reading strategies only and asks the learning support assistant to read to him. Another pupil is able to read from a simple book with support, whilst another can read independently at an age-appropriate level. A further pupil can read confidently with good expression and recall.

78. Pupils at Key Stage 3 have similarly varying levels of achievement. Some can read letters from cards and identify words from the first letter and some can undertake simple writing and colouring tasks. In the low attaining group, pupils trace letters from guides provided and copy words from the board. One pupil can read the text on Greek Mythology with support, one can read slowly with support while others can remember and recite verses with expression. At Key Stage 4, pupils can use a word processor to draft and redraft their own descriptive writing. They can use a dictionary and complete a close exercise; some independently and some with support. They can discuss their preferences for various genres of books and understand the meaning of terms such as 'science fiction' and 'biography'. Teachers' records show that there are pupils at this stage with reading ages on a continuum between six and fifteen years.
79. In the post-16 Training Centre, group achievement also varies widely. One group can read fluently and with expression, have a wide vocabulary and manage unfamiliar technical words. They are able to explain clearly the meaning of the term 'consensus'. Another group can recite by rote and recognise familiar words with much repetition and support. Throughout the school, all pupils achieve higher than expected levels of oral communication skills. Generally they are more confident in speaking than they are at careful listening and this reflects the personal and social development of the pupils and the high quality of relationships developed.
80. The English curriculum itself is not satisfactory. Since teachers in the school operate autonomously, they make their own decisions about the content of the English lessons. There is no whole-school strategy or consistent approach to developing literacy. There is no agreed reading scheme or structured approach to teaching reading nor any evidence of a whole-school policy to monitor and review the effectiveness of the curriculum. Some lessons are carefully planned, a number lack planning and structure and some are too rigidly prescribed. Often activities observed do not reflect the agreed content of the main lesson topics. There are few opportunities for teachers to observe the practice of others or to share effective approaches and resources.
81. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English are not satisfactory. Teachers use their own systems, some of which are comprehensive and well maintained. Updates on the progress of individual pupils take place during weekly teachers' meetings and liaison with house parents. The staff college meetings also include sharing of information about individual pupils and detailed child studies support this process. Class teachers are responsible for one-to-one weekly guidance for pupils on their targets. Annual reviews and individual education plans inform the assessment procedures for some teachers who link English learning targets to these. There has been a whole-school training session from the English co-ordinator but systems remain informal and are not consistent across the school. In some classes, reading records are untidy and not kept regularly. There is a lack of clarity about the learning outcomes planned for many lessons so it is not possible for teachers or pupils to identify what progress has been made towards achieving the learning intended. Main lesson books and other examples of pupils' work contribute to the assessment process. These are, however, not always available or do not contain enough material upon which to make a judgement. The learning support teacher undertakes a base line assessment of each pupil on entry to the school which is not consistently used by teachers to inform their planning.

82. Not enough use is made of records of achievement or portfolios of work and this is unsatisfactory. Teachers are unfamiliar with progress file materials or the new National Qualifications Framework and the range of portfolio-based courses now available. Access to national qualifications is developing slowly. A few pupils take GCSE courses in English and media studies at Crawley College. Some are working towards the Certificate of Achievement. The school is developing courses with the Open College Network.
83. The adequacy of learning resources for the teaching of English is unsatisfactory. The education co-ordinator is collecting resources for the main lesson topics from individual classrooms and is housing them in topic boxes stored centrally in the main school building. Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the Training Centre have access to word processors. The classroom libraries and main school library have a poor selection of books that have no indication of reading levels. There are no books to support a planned reading scheme. Many of the resources used in classrooms are inappropriate to pupils' ages and special needs.
84. The level of improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. A co-ordinator has been appointed for English and he has developed some areas of good practice and worked with some staff to share these. The role of the English co-ordinator for ensuring the quality of provision is, however, not yet established. There are not sufficient procedures or structures to support him to monitor and evaluate what is taught. Nor is there any indication of a consistent approach to planning and assessment or a development plan with identified priorities for improving the English provision.

MATHEMATICS

85. The achievement of most pupils and students is satisfactory as they move through the school. The standard of achievement at Key Stage 3 is a little higher, where the curriculum is linked more closely to the National Curriculum and there is focused teaching on the development of basic mathematical skills. The narrow curriculum and the lack of any whole-school numeracy strategy or work supported by computers, hinders any higher achievement. Those few pupils who take accredited examinations do not gain grades that reflect their potential ability. The lack of any coherent assessment and tracking of progress leaves pupils, students and parents unclear about the progress their children are making.
86. In Key Stage 2, pupils are able to identify simple fractions such as $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{1}{6}$ and $\frac{1}{12}$. They identify them as numbers and as sectors of a pie chart. They are able to name basic shapes such as circle, square and rectangle. They recite multiplication tables and higher attaining pupils are able to recall their tables up to ten. Clapping exercises serve to reinforce their ability to recall the tables they learn. The focus of mathematics lessons at this stage is on social development through play and there is insufficient clear evidence of progress in number work skills as pupils move through the key stage. By age 14, lower attaining pupils are aware of the different days in the calendar months. They can form two-digit numbers using 'finger maths' and can count on in numbers up to 100, most needing support. Higher attaining pupils can multiply a two-digit number by a single digit up to five. By age 16, pupils have progressed to long multiplication and division and can carry out simple tasks using the numbers two and five. They use these skills to divide amounts of money. They are able to identify the common denominator in a series of three or four and are able to add and subtract simple fractions. Pupils who achieve higher than expected levels for their age, are able to solve compound fractions containing single-digit whole numbers. By age 18, students learn the difference between a salary and wages and follow the calculations in set examples. Lesson content is

sometimes not age appropriate, such as sticking numbers onto a number line, and the lessons do not challenge students across a sufficiently wide range of mathematical skills.

87. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is better at Key Stages 3 and 4. The teaching of the youngest group is based on play as a way of recovering the pupils' interest in school, some having been out of school for a year or more. This leads to an interesting experience that ensures that half of the pupils are engaged in the lesson. Other pupils show evidence of boredom at the lack of challenge, or exhibit poor behaviour that is not effectively challenged by the class teacher or his assistant. A well-planned multi-sensory approach to sequencing numbers is used effectively with Key Stage 3 pupils. This 'holistic' approach to teaching accords well with the social philosophy behind the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum, although it leads to an undue amount of repetition and routine. There is insufficient variety to challenge pupils and their progress is slow over time. The pace of lessons at Key Stage 4 is more rapid and pupils are pushed harder to work towards ever more complex number operations. The use of computers is being piloted at this stage and pupils are working from an accredited syllabus that prepares them for the Certificate of Educational Achievement at the post-16 stage. There is clear lesson planning from the syllabus and pupils are regularly tested to monitor their progress and assess their attainment levels, enabling the class to be divided into different ability groups. A significant minority of lessons at the post-16 stage are dull and do not motivate pupils to enhance their mathematical skills. In one lesson observed, there was no structured activity for the students to undertake whilst the teacher spent between five and ten minutes correcting the class work. All teachers have very good relationships with pupils and students and the majority are effective in managing the classes. They are patient and persistent in their attempts to manage challenging behaviour and make good use of the limited resources available to them.
88. There is no clear direction for the development of mathematics in the school, although the co-ordinator has unsuccessfully tried to introduce new initiatives such as a whole-school numeracy strategy and the use of computers across the school. The curriculum is narrow and there is no clear record of how pupils build on their numeracy skills through the school. Teachers are positive in evaluating work through the lesson but written records do not enable them to plan effectively for subsequent lessons. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the department are weak and pupils and students do not have an appropriately broad experience of mathematics that would effectively prepare them for further education or work.
89. The department has made a satisfactory response to the last inspection. There is evidence of improved standards at Key Stage 4 where computers are being brought into use to support the curriculum. The quality of teaching has improved and the smaller classes are being managed more effectively. Lesson preparation and the assessment and recording of achievement and progress remain unsatisfactory and there is still evidence of under achievement, in particular at Key Stages 2 and 3.

SCIENCE

90. When pupils are admitted to the school the standard in their knowledge of science is low. As a result of the teaching they experience and the learning they undertake, their knowledge of and progress in the subject remains unsatisfactory. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 4, their knowledge of science and scientific processes is unsatisfactory. In this respect, no improvement has been made since the last inspection when the achievements of pupils were also judged as unsatisfactory.

91. For younger pupils in the lower school, the study of the subject is through the framework of the Steiner curriculum. Their knowledge is provided within the main lesson. They learn about the three states of matter and know that changes in temperature will change the state and form of water. They know that air is a composition of gases and have included this knowledge in a study of weather. Standards are generally low and much of the work contained within exercise books shows evidence of being copied from other sources.
92. Upper school pupils study the subject based on the requirements of the National Curriculum. The framework for this is provided by a commercially available scheme and leads to accreditation at the level of Certificate of Accreditation (CoA). Pupils know and understand basic physiology, such as the circulation and respiratory systems. They study magnetism and higher attaining pupils know about the earth's polarity and its consequent effect on magnetised needles. Pupils in Year 9 know that levers can be of different lengths and that the longer these are the greater force they can exert. These pupils also know about basic astronomy and some have observed the most recent eclipse of the moon. Standards are low and because pupils start their study of the subject in Year 9, their scientific knowledge and skills of investigation are less than those of corresponding pupils in other schools.
93. Insufficient teaching was observed to inform clear judgements about its standards. However, when considering the outcomes, as seen in pupils' work, it would appear that much of this is unchallenging. Work is not well targeted according to the previous attainment of pupils. Where the subject is contained within other lessons, such as the main lesson for lower school pupils, scientific investigation and understanding does not receive appropriate emphasis. Pupils' skills of observation, hypothesising, testing and recording are being insufficiently developed. In the lessons observed, teachers had low expectations of pupils and in some examples, pupils were commended for giving a 'good wrong answer'.
94. The accommodation for teaching of science is unsatisfactory. Very recently a science room has been converted into a storage room. Lower school pupils are taught within their class base, while pupils in the upper school are taught either singly or as groups in any available room. For the latter, the arrangement severely inhibits their opportunity to study the subject in surroundings that would encourage scientific investigation and experimentation. Resources for the subject are satisfactory but because there is no satisfactory accommodation, many of these are stored in a way that means they are not readily accessible.
95. A non-specialist carries out the co-ordination of the subject, as well as much of the teaching. Her current level of knowledge is insufficient to ensure that older pupils particularly receive an appropriate level of challenge in their learning. She has recognised this need and has taken positive steps to upgrade her knowledge to the required level. The school authority is to be commended for the support it offers to the co-ordinator in her study for this Open University degree.
96. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. The outcomes of most pupils' work are not referenced to any objective criteria and teachers are therefore unable to ascertain with any accuracy whether or not pupils make progress. Older pupils in the upper school sit end of module tests derived from the commercially available science programme used within the school. For these pupils this leads to the award of the CoA.

97. Weaknesses in the provision for the subject exist in the lack of challenge for individual pupils. Pupils of high attainment particularly, are provided with skills and knowledge below their capability. The weakness is further exacerbated by the lack of suitable accommodation. Pupils are taught without the benefit of a specialist room, even though such facilities exist for other areas of the curriculum, such as weaving. The lack of such facilities inhibits teaching through experimentation as well as long-term observation and recording. Improvement should be considered in the range of accreditation available to pupils. Currently this is too narrow and restricts the attainment of some pupils. Information and communication technology is not used to support pupils' learning. This restricts the access that pupils have to many sources of information as well as the opportunity to support their work, for example in handling data that may accrue from their work.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Achievements in the subject are generally good, with higher standards being achieved in Key Stage 4, and at the post-16 stage. The curriculum range is narrow but the subject is taught in a way that deepens the pupils' understanding of colour and the harmony that is to be found in nature. Pottery has been re-established on the curriculum and is making an effective contribution to standards in art.
99. By the age of eleven, pupils are able to make a simple thumb pot and decorate it with Greek key designs, having learned something of the background to Greek pottery. They use both coil and slab techniques to construct model buildings, joining pieces correctly to ensure that they stand up to the stresses of the firing process. They can lay a ground colour evenly on paper, using watercolour, leaving a clear, bold shape in the centre. This they fill with a complementary colour, observing what happens as the colours mingle at the edge of the shape. By age 14, pupils use a grid to copy from a print of Degas' drawing of a horse. The discipline of this method forces them to look closely at the picture. They alter and refine their drawing under guidance, improving their technical skills as they work to finish the study. They are able to mould, shape and cut clay to produce a range of dishes, trays and containers. They also form model buildings from slabs of clay, embellishing them in individual ways. Their work is fired and then glazed with their choice of dipped and trailed glaze colours before a final glaze firing. By age 16, pupils mark and cut clay using their own design of templates. They build forms to a good standard of finish and understand the importance of joining clay correctly, enabling them to embellish their work in imaginative ways. Students at the post-16 stage are able to prepare clay for modelling and form well-defined shapes to build up a model animal. Higher attaining students give their models individual character as they add component parts. They understand that clay needs to be dried to a 'green' stage if decoration is to be successfully applied or impressed. A few students learn to centre clay on the potter's wheel, being given expert guidance by the class teacher. They are able to open the clay to form a shallow container and learn to finish the foot of the container on the wheel, before cutting it off ready for drying.
100. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory, with good teaching evident in Key Stage 4 and post-16. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Steiner/Waldorf art curriculum and teach it with conviction. They do not plan for individual lessons but work from a half-termly scheme of work in a carefully prescribed way. The teaching of basic art skills is not covered with sufficient rigour to enable pupils to draw freely using a knowledge of texture, tone, line and form. Work is evaluated positively during the making process, but there is no system for the assessment and monitoring of progress against a defined baseline. The teaching of pottery is a strength within the subject. Good use is made of questioning to check on the learning of pupils

and students. They are left free to develop their ideas from the set project and most learn effectively from overcoming problems they come across in handling clay. The unqualified teacher does not yet have the skills to manage challenging behaviour, but he is well supported and is gaining in confidence through his first year of teaching. The study of artists and their work is separated from the practical art lessons. This is appropriate for the way in which the Certificate of Educational Achievement is approached, but the knowledge and understanding of art that students gain is not used effectively to influence their work. Their work lacks richness and variety as a result.

101. There is good leadership in the subject and it reflects the school's aims and values very well. No use is made of computers in art, but the new teacher has expressed an interest in animation and this may well lead on to computer-aided art. The specialist accommodation, designed in consultation with the co-ordinator for art, is a very good provision. Unfortunately it has been spoiled by the poor siting of the kiln and the lack of ventilation in the pottery room. The storage and drying space for three-dimensional work is very limited and there are insufficient modelling tools to develop clay work to full effect.
102. The department has made a satisfactory response to the last inspection. There is evidence of improved teaching in Key Stage 4 and at post-16. Standards have risen as a result. The lack of clear aims for lessons remains and the learning experience of pupils and students remains impoverished by the narrow curriculum. There are colourful displays of work around the school and in the residential areas. The skills of more talented pupils are not developed until the later stages of learning. There is evidence that a significant minority of pupils and students lose interest in the subject as they are required to work in prescribed ways until they reach Key Stage 4.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Levels of attainment in design and technology at the end of all key stages are below those usually seen for pupils of similar age. At Philpots Manor, the majority of teaching of design and technology concentrates on handwork and food studies. A minority of pupils achieve standards in line with national standards in these areas of the curriculum.
104. The achievement and progress of pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 are satisfactory. They explore a variety of materials and look closely at the work of other pupils before deciding which aspect of handwork interests them. The highly skilled teacher is successful in encouraging them to explore a wide range of media and techniques appropriate to their age and stage of development. Difficulties of co-ordination are helped by careful cutting and joining of materials such as paper, card and felt using sellotape or a variety of simple stitches. Pupils have to demonstrate self control before being entrusted to use scissors or the sewing machine. Very simple designs are sometimes made, for example before making a cushion cover, but the design element of technology is a weakness throughout the school. This shows no improvement since the last inspection. Pupils produce work which is pleasing to the eye and contributes well to raising self-esteem. A puppet theatre is painted and decorated with glitter. Stitched curtains pull back to reveal a well made hand puppet. Boys and girls persevere well to make striking dragons from egg boxes. They complete tapestry panels which are assembled to make decorative but practical boxes. During cookery lessons, pupils are industrious and polite. Pupils work independently and as part of a team as they peel and chop onions and core and chop peppers before rolling out pastry and assembling and cooking a quiche.
105. Pupils in Key Stage 4 and post-16 achieve well and make good progress within a

restricted curriculum. In textiles, simple target setting helps them to focus, for example, 'I will keep calm, I will complete the task.' They learn a wide range of stitching skills such as cross-stitch and blanket stitch which need co-ordination and concentration as well as enhancing the articles they are making. Pupils preparing for a nationally accredited qualification in food studies work purposefully and responsibly. They keep in mind basic hygiene and health and safety rules. Skills learnt in mathematics are reinforced as they measure and weigh with accuracy. The very good subject knowledge of the teacher encourages good achievement in woodwork. Pupils have been taught to use tools with respect and to develop a feel for wood. They discuss their ideas willingly but do not record the design process sufficiently. Pupils work cheerfully and carefully to produce articles of which they are justly proud. One pupil has persevered over several months to make a chess board from local oak and sycamore. This forms the lid of a box which will hold the pieces. A range of skills has been mastered and the finished product is to be given to his 'family' home.

106. All teaching is at least satisfactory with 50 per cent being good. Teachers' strengths are their relationships with pupils and their good subject knowledge. They have high expectations of good work and behaviour and set tasks appropriate to the age and ability of pupils. This means that pupils have the confidence and willingness to explore materials and techniques within a structured framework. Formal recording of assessment, needed to provide evidence for reports and qualification as well as to help plan future work, is insufficient.
107. There is no overall co-ordination of design and technology. This is a weakness as there is no one with responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring the different aspects of the curriculum or for monitoring teaching and learning. One teacher co-ordinates hand-work, which includes weaving and textiles, sharing her excellent expertise with colleagues. However, the curriculum is weak especially for older pupils. There is no provision for the use of information and communication technology in design; there is no metal work, plastics or electronics. This handicaps pupils leaving Philpots Manor although some pupils in the Training Course have access to workshops at college. There are no written schemes of work and assessment is inconsistent. There are some good examples, however, especially in the lower part of the school, so there has been some improvement since the last inspection. Accommodation is unsatisfactory overall though there are some newly equipped and refurbished areas. Resources in many areas are barely adequate. The poor state of the cookery room and the fact that only one cooker works detracts from the effectiveness of food technology and adds little to the status of the subject. Accommodation for woodwork is also unsatisfactory. The room is cluttered and cold and does not meet health and safety requirements. The fire alarm was not heard during a fire drill during inspection week.

GEOGRAPHY

108. The standards of pupils in geography are below the standards of expected nationally at the end of all key stages. Pupils in Key Stages 2 and 4 and those post-16 do not achieve high enough standards even taking into account their range of special needs, neither do they make enough progress. Pupils in Key Stage 3 achieve satisfactory standards for their ability and make satisfactory progress.

109. Geography is not taught as a separate subject except to the oldest pupils. Judgements have therefore been made on the analysis of the small amount of work seen, on looking at planning and records and on observing elements of geography which form part of the daily two hour main lesson. Some main lessons, for example on Ancient Greece, provide satisfactory opportunities for teaching geography, other topics mean that pupils can go for some considerable time without encountering the subject. The skills, knowledge and understanding of geography are not identified separately, neither is there an up-to-date geography curriculum. Too much, therefore, rests on individual teachers to ensure that pupils make progress.
110. The youngest pupils talk about the seasons and sing about the weather. Because teaching and behaviour are poor, little learning takes place. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are making satisfactory progress because the teacher provides sufficient opportunities and prepares suitably challenging work. Map work starts with plans of the playground then of the school grounds. Pupils learn the countries and capital cities, first of the United Kingdom then of Europe. Knowledge of direction and climate are reinforced by the study of the migration of birds. The teacher's good subject knowledge helps the pupils in their study of geology. Pupils continue to learn about the structure of the earth in Key Stage 4 but more progress could be made if pupils had more opportunities for independent learning. Work is neatly presented, especially diagrams showing how a volcano flows. Writing is copied neatly but shows no evidence of research or individuality. Older pupils learning about mining, develop their literacy skills as they read about mines in the past, discuss safety lamps and listen as the teacher tells them of the purpose of mining. The lesson lacks a clear focus however and independence skills are not sufficiently developed. The lack of reference books, up-to-date atlases and globes in every classroom contribute to the unsatisfactory progress which is made. Out-of-school activities provide good opportunities for the development of map work. Pupils studied contours to plot the easiest route when taking part in an overnight cycle trip which used a combination of roads and local cycle tracks.
111. No overall judgement can be made on teaching because there was insufficient teaching to observe. The one lesson seen, which was for the oldest pupils, was unsatisfactory because it was poorly planned and lacked challenge. Teacher records show considerable variation in the planning of lessons and the recording of attainment. Assessment is poor. Some teachers record brief comments about individual pupils but these usually refer to attitudes. There is no systematic assessment of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding and the reporting of geography in annual reviews of statements and annual reports to parents is inconsistent. Teachers make good use of the local area, however. For example, over a period of time, older pupils followed a river from its source to the sea, developing geographical vocabulary as they went, looking at features such as erosion and noting tributaries and an ox bow lake.
112. The co-ordinator has the knowledge to develop the subject further. He is in the process of updating the curriculum and is aware that more resources are needed. A good start has been made collecting together resources needed for individual topics. No nationally accredited courses are available to pupils at present. There have been no significant improvements in this subject since the last inspection.

HISTORY

113. It was not possible during the inspection week to observe discrete teaching of history or to make judgements on the quality of teaching. History is integrated into the topics taught through the main lesson. A little of some teachers' planning, pupils' main lesson books, main lesson resource boxes and some display work have evidence that topics such as Greek mythology, the Victorians and mining have historical elements.

114. There is no identified history co-ordinator and the education co-ordinator takes responsibility for developments and support to staff. The only way in which he can monitor the balance of the historical elements in the main lesson is through informal discussion, debate during the teachers' meeting and observation of the main lesson books. As the role of the subject co-ordinators is as yet underdeveloped in the school, there are no formal mechanisms for him to ensure the quality of what history is taught.
115. The education co-ordinator is using some curriculum documents from his previous school as a starting point for planning developments to the history curriculum. Currently, the provision is fragmented and the curriculum unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. There is no provision for the subject in Key Stage 2 and minimal provision in Key Stage 3. When pupils reach Key Stage 4, and throughout the post-16 classes, they do have access but standards remain low because of the lack of prior knowledge. This is an unsatisfactory situation.
117. At the time of the last inspection, information and communication technology was a weakness at the school. There has been some improvement since that time but it remains a weakness. Very little use of the new computer room was observed during the week of the inspection. The good, new computer suite is underused. In the one lesson observed in Year 10, teaching was satisfactory with clear aims and effective support and guidance for pupils. They were working towards an accredited course in word processing. Pupils were able to complete a simple application form, changing and refining a given text. They were able to use different tools to highlight information, change dates, insert punctuation and save their own work. They showed enjoyment in the tasks and were willing to talk about their work. The standards that they achieved were low in relation to their abilities. This is because they have little prior knowledge and have missed the early skills necessary to enable them to reach higher standards.
118. There is no curriculum documentation available for the subject and there is no identified co-ordinator to ensure improvement in provision and standards. The school has made a good attempt to improve the subject by purchasing the new computers but lack of leadership inhibits further improvement. There are no computers based in classrooms and the new room is a long distance from the younger pupils. Hence, there are no opportunities for pupils to use computers as a tool to support other subjects or to search for information when necessary.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH

119. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well. Pupils make satisfactory progress and develop positive attitudes towards their work. There is still room for improved provision and more detailed assessment with a view to national accreditation in the subject.
120. French is taught to pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. The work focuses mainly on conversational French which enables pupils to greet each other appropriately using a foreign language. They also learn to count and with this knowledge, they then translate the date and the year in order to write the date on the blackboard in the classroom. They also learn the vocabulary for colours and the names of animals.

121. Pupils are somewhat reluctant to take part at first, but as they gain knowledge of the days of the week and the months of the year, they answer questions from the teacher. The teachers showed very good knowledge of the language and helped to give the pupils confidence when they answered questions.
122. There is not yet an effective co-ordination of the subject within the school. Though teachers plan lessons carefully, they work in isolation.

GERMAN

123. German is taught to pupils in Year 11 only. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe any teaching of German nor scrutinise any of the work. Pupils learn basic conversational German during a single lesson each week.
124. Through discussion with the teacher, it is clear that levels of attainment are very low when compared with the national average. No accreditation is offered in the subject

MUSIC

125. Music has a special place on the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum, especially when combined with eurhythmics. Here it becomes a vehicle for developing self-confidence and encouraging a sense of community. Teaching of the recorder is a strong feature of the subject and begins with training in basic musical skills through singing. Some pupils learn to play folk instruments such as the Irish tabor and the penny whistle.
126. Although no music lessons at Key Stage 2 were observed during the inspection, discussion with staff and pupils indicates that they make at least satisfactory progress in their singing and recorder lessons. They also learn to read music. By age 14, they are able to sing well-known songs and rounds and know the names and values of notes and simple notation marks. Most are able to play the recorder well and can hold their place in a musical round. By age 16, pupils recognise time signature and use terms such as 'quaver', 'trio' and 'triplets' correctly when questioned by the teacher. They can identify and name notes on sheet music and play them accurately on the recorder. They show a high level of co-ordination in their choreographed eurhythmics exercises, producing intricate group moves, with practice. On occasion, one or two pupils show frustration during these exercises but the group commitment is strong and they are brought back into the lesson and make an effective contribution. The older students play the recorder well, some to a high standard. Higher attaining pupils write their own simple tunes or vary the lyrics of the tunes they play. They are able to count out and clap a wide range of musical rhythms and identify ascending and descending rhythms. They learn about 'octaves', 'tonics' and 'fifths' as they respond to the music that accompanies the eurhythmics exercises. All pupils and students learn to listen to and appreciate a good range of music from different historical periods.
127. The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good. Most teaching is undertaken by the co-ordinator, who is firm and clear in his expectations of the behaviour and standards of performance of pupils and students. He has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Steiner/Waldorf approach to music. Pupils and students appreciate his knowledge, commitment and enthusiasm for the subject. He has to work hard against their resistance in some lessons but his patience and persistence pay off and the majority of pupils and students participate with enthusiasm and clearly enjoy the lessons. Very good relationships are a feature of all lessons and the commitment to music spills over into the residential area, where pupils and students frequently gather to sing and play.

128. Although music is a strength of the school curriculum, it does not lead to any nationally recognised accreditation. The progress of pupils and students is not monitored formally, although good and very good progress is made during lessons. The school's aims and values are fully reflected in the lessons and their outcomes in group performance. There is no use made of computers in music lessons, the focal idiom being folk music. The subject makes a powerful contribution to the cohesion of the school community and to the personal and spiritual development of pupils and students.
129. The department has made a satisfactory response to the last inspection, maintaining its strong position on the curriculum. It has not broadened to take in the many interesting initiatives found in the mainstream National Curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Pupils' standards in physical education across all four key stages are below those usually seen nationally. This is unsurprising given the fact that all pupils have special needs, many of which affect co-ordination and concentration. However, a few individual pupils in all key stages achieve standards in line with mainstream peers in a narrow range of physical activities, for example swimming or ball skills.
131. Taking pupils' special needs into consideration, their achievement is satisfactory in Key Stages 2 and 3 and post-16 and is good in Key Stage 4. Pupils underachieve in Key Stage 2 in gymnastics because of some poor teaching. The youngest pupils develop individual skills and also work as team members through activities planned to engage their interest. Co-ordination is improved as they keep balloons in the air using different parts of their body. They collaborate well together to pass the balloon coping well with the pace of the lesson. In the swimming pool they show the confidence to swim under water and float on their backs. They are prepared to work hard to refine breaststroke and front crawl. They climb in and out of the pool quickly and safely as they practice pencil jumps, but in their enthusiasm they do not always await their turn. Pupils in Key Stage 3, especially those with greater special needs, benefit significantly from the calming influence of eurythmy as they learn simple dance movements in time to the music. They quickly build up to a sequence of movements and understand the importance of working in a group. In more rigorous activities pupils show a fair degree of success in developing basic skills using balls of various sizes. They bounce and catch them successfully, sometimes in sequence, but find passing to a partner more difficult. Older pupils benefit from opportunities for larger team games at a local all-weather hockey pitch. Very good relationships, and a keenness to learn, mean that time can be used well to refine skills such as dribbling and passing. Opportunities for personal development are good as pupils engage in competition with good humour and willingly share their equipment.
132. Teaching is good overall, with half of all teaching good or very good. The quality of teaching is better for pupils in Key Stage 4 and those who attend the Training Course. One lesson was poor with insufficient planning or regard for health and safety. Teachers convey their enthusiasm to the pupils and are successful in persuading them to try hard. Relationships are very good with the result that pupils usually behave very well and time can be concentrated on developing skills. Most teachers have very good subject knowledge and are able to challenge and extend pupils who show confidence in them.

133. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection when it was criticised for being narrow. There are still too few opportunities for taking part in large team games but the pupils have a good breadth of physical activities. Rock climbing, abseiling, ten pin bowling, ice skating, walks and frequent cycle rides are some of the activities challenging pupils after school or at weekends. All pupils have the opportunity to ride the school's own horses or sail in the school boat. The school curriculum is considerably enhanced by the use of local facilities and this has had a positive influence on developing social skills. Pupils almost always use speech and behaviour which is acceptable in a public place.
134. The subject leader is well qualified and co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. There is insufficient monitoring of teaching however and assessment and recording of attainment and progress are weaknesses. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that pupils experience a wide range of good quality physical activities. The poor indoor accommodation for gymnastics and unsafe physical education equipment do not support his efforts well. Outdoor facilities are better with floodlit hard surfaces suitable for basketball or netball. Football is constrained by the number of mole hills on the pitch.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. The school curriculum for religious education indicates that many of the social and personal skills of the pupils will be developed through the subject. In fact, religious education permeates many of the activities that take place each day. For example, pupils have daily opportunities for spiritual reflection and are continually reminded to reflect on their own lives. Pupils learn about sharing and caring as they listen to different stories from the Bible during their weekly religious education lesson. They benefit from experiences such as therapies, in which they are encouraged to develop friendships and empathy. They learn about helping others. Each week the school holds a non-denominational Christian service which is an important feature in the life of the school. A great deal of religious education takes place during these services. Religion is regarded by the school as something living within the ethos of the school.
136. Standards of attainment are below average because of the learning difficulties of the pupils and also because of the lack of progressive activities to promote learning. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed but others were planned. However, there is very little evidence of any written work in the subject and this is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their understanding and knowledge through reading stories for themselves, or through writing about them. There are too few resources, particularly books. There are also missed opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of different faiths so that they are prepared for the multicultural, and multi-faith society when they leave school. The lack of a progressive range of activities to ensure that pupils build on prior knowledge leads to unsatisfactory progress overall. The current curriculum documentation is weak and has not been reviewed for 12 years. Religious education does not have a curriculum leader. This means that there is little monitoring of teaching or of learning.