

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Riverside School**  
Goole

LEA area: East Yorkshire

Unique Reference Number: 118148

Acting Headteacher: Lynne Jarred

---

Reporting inspector: Rosemary Eaton  
15173

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708456

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	5 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ainsty Street Goole East Yorkshire DN14 5JS
Telephone number:	01405 763925
Fax number:	01405 763925
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J. Speight
Date of previous inspection:	26 <sup>th</sup> February 1996

© Crown Copyright 1997

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the Education Act 1993, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Rosemary Eaton, RgI	English; art; design and technology; information technology; personal, social and health education	Attainment and progress; teaching; leadership and management
Roberta Mothersdale, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; attendance; spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; support, guidance and pupils' welfare; partnership with parents and the community
John Pearson	Science; modern foreign language; physical education; religious education; special educational needs	Staffing, accommodation and resources
Bob Thompson	Mathematics; history; geography; music	Curriculum and assessment; Efficiency

The inspection contractor was:

QICS

“Ibsley”  
4, West Cliff Road  
Dawlish  
Devon  
EX7 9EB

01626 867575

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

### **MAIN FINDINGS**

- What the school does well
- Where the school has weaknesses
- How the school has improved since the last inspection
- Whether pupils are making enough progress
- Quality of teaching
- Other aspects of the school
- The parents' views of the school

### **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

#### **Paragraph**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Characteristics of the school 1-6
- Key indicators

### **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

#### **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

- Attainment and progress 7-19
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 20-23
- Attendance 24

#### **Quality of education provided**

- Teaching 25-32
- The curriculum and assessment 33-39
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 40-43
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 44-48
- Partnership with parents and the community 49-51

#### **The management and efficiency of the school**

- Leadership and management 52-58
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 59-67
- The efficiency of the school 68-73

### **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECT**

- English, mathematics and science** 74-100
- Other subjects or courses** 101-148

### **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

- Summary of inspection evidence** 149-153



## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the quality of relationships are good. The school promotes good behaviour very well.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The school provides a good quality curriculum.
- Good provision is made for pupils with autism.
- The provision for moral and social development is very good.
- Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the health, safety and well being of pupils are very good.
- The school provides very good quality information for parents and its links with the community are very good.
- The acting headteacher provides very strong leadership.
- The school's finances are controlled very well.
- The school's ethos is very good.

### • Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The quality of teachers' planning to meet pupils' individual targets is variable across the school.
- II. Pupils lack sufficient opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning – for example, when carrying out investigations in science.
- III. The role of the governing body is under-developed.
- IV. The condition of some window frames represents a hazard to pupils and staff.

The school's many strengths clearly outweigh its weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how they intend to tackle the weaknesses, and a copy will be sent to all parents or carers.

### • How the school has improved since the last inspection

Pupils now make better progress, particularly in Key Stage 4. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. A very high quality annual management plan has been produced. The curriculum is now good and procedures for assessment, recording and reporting have improved and are satisfactory. The role of subject co-ordinators is now clear and is understood by teachers, and the curriculum is monitored effectively. The provision of extra-curricular activities has very much improved. The way teachers manage pupils' behaviour is considerably more effective and as a result, pupils' behaviour has improved. The accommodation has been developed and there are now good quality specialist facilities for science, information technology and food technology. The provision of educational resources has improved, and the resources for information technology are now good. All statutory requirements are met. The school provides much better value for money.

The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection and no longer has serious weaknesses. However, the purpose, role and future development of the school has not been established. The acting headteacher is clearly very able to continue to lead and develop the school, but her position is insecure, and the governing body does not give sufficiently active support. The school's capacity to improve is therefore just satisfactory.

• **Whether pupils are making enough progress**

Progress in:	By 11	By 16		
Targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B		<b>Ke</b>
English:			<b>y</b>	
listening and speaking	B	B	<i>very good</i>	A
reading	B	B	<i>good</i>	B
writing	C	C	<i>satisfactory</i>	C
Mathematics	B	B	<i>unsatisfactory</i>	D
Science	C	B	<i>poor</i>	E
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	B	B		

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

Pupils make good progress in physical education, and some reach the national expectations for pupils of their age. In Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils make good progress in modern foreign language. In Key Stage 4, progress is also good in science, art, and religious education. Most of the work of these pupils is externally accredited. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and information technology.

•

• **Quality of teaching**

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
5 – 11 years	Good		
11 – 16 years	Good	The early years of Key Stage 3.	
English	Good		
Mathematics	Good		
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	Good		

During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons. It was good in 55 per cent and very good in six per cent.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Good. Behaviour is much improved since the previous inspection. There have been no exclusions during the past year.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Most pupils are punctual to school.
Ethos*	Very good. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and relationships are good. There is a clear commitment to helping all pupils to make the best progress that they can.
Leadership and management	Good, because the acting headteacher provides very strong leadership. The governing body's role is insufficiently active, although the chair of governors is very supportive and well informed about the school.
Curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and all pupils have equality of opportunity. Provision for autism is good. The curriculum in Key Stage 4 is very good and prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Social and moral development is very good, and cultural development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The number of teachers is satisfactory, and they have a good knowledge of special educational needs. Support staff make an effective contribution to pupils' progress. The accommodation has been improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory.
Value for money	Good. Pupils make good progress in important areas of learning. The school provides high quality teaching and a good curriculum, and is efficient.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

• **The parents' views of the school**

**What most parents like about the school**

- V. They are kept very well informed about their children's progress.
- VI. The school is approachable when parents have problems.
- VII. The school encourages pupils to get involved in a wide range of activities.
- VIII. Parents have a choice over whether or not they wish to support their children's homework.
- IX. Children like coming to school.

**What some parents are not happy about**

- X. Parents are worried about the uncertain future of children's education.

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views of the school. The local education authority is currently undertaking a consultation exercise to help them to determine the future of the school.

• **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to continue to raise standards, the governing body, acting headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve the consistency and effectiveness of teachers' lesson planning by:



- ensuring that teachers indicate clearly what they intend pupils to do and to learn, particularly in English and mathematics;
  - ensuring that planning reflects the targets in pupils' individual education plans;
  - continuing to develop assessment and recording procedures so that pupils' progress in lessons is evaluated and the information gathered is used when planning future lessons. (paragraphs 28,39,86,93)
1. Increase the opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning by finding ways for them to make choices and decisions – for example, about what they do and the resources they use – across the curriculum, but especially in science, art and design and technology. (paragraphs 27,96,112,113,119)

The governors should:

2. Develop the role of the governing body by:
  - Continuing to seek ways to increase the governors' active involvement in the life of the school;
  - Encouraging governors to play a more positive part in shaping the future direction of the school – for example, by appointing a headteacher and developing a senior management team. (paragraphs 53,58)

In partnership with the local education authority, the governors should:

1. Make the school building safer for pupils by repairing or replacing those window frames that are in poor condition and represent a hazard to pupils. (paragraphs 48,64)

In addition, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- The range of pupils' writing is limited and they are not always encouraged to write as independently as they are able. (paragraphs 27,82,84)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

- 1 Riverside School is designated as catering for pupils aged 5-16 with moderate learning difficulties. It is situated in a pleasant location, just inside a residential area, and adjacent to a primary school. In the main, pupils are from East Yorkshire, but a number come from neighbouring authorities. It is the only school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties in the authority. Less than half the pupils have moderate learning difficulties as the sole reason for attending. A number in Key Stages 2 and 3 have severe learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. This represents a significant change to the character of the school. The socio-economic circumstances of pupils' families are diverse. 33 per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Only two are from minority ethnic backgrounds and there are two children from traveller families.
- 2 The previous inspection was in February 1996, and the school was considered to have serious weaknesses. However, by April 1997, an HMI monitoring visit concluded that such improvement had taken place that there was no need for further monitoring. Immediately before the inspection, the headteacher left the school and the deputy headteacher became acting headteacher. She is still in this acting capacity. The future of the school is unclear, as local education authority reviews of its provision for pupils with special educational needs have been inconclusive, and a consultation process is currently under way.
- 3 At the time of the previous inspection there were 52 pupils on roll. 15 in Key Stages 3 and 4 were integrated full-time at a local comprehensive school, with two teachers based there. There were eight teachers altogether, giving a pupil - teacher ratio of 6.5:1. Currently, there are 45 full-time pupils on roll, and two attend part-time. This means that the school is very small compared to similar schools. There are now five teachers, giving a pupil – teacher ratio of 9:1. This is above average for schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. There is only one pupil in Key Stage 1.
- 4 The link with the mainstream school ceased after the previous inspection. Currently, a small number of Key Stage 3 pupils attend lessons in physical education at a mainstream primary school, and Key Stage 4 pupils attend a college of further education for one day per week. At the time of the inspection, a link with the secondary school, for design and technology at Key Stage 3, was just starting.
- 5 The school's current priorities include objectives for the curriculum and assessment; the governing body; staff development; information technology; integration; literacy; and numeracy. Targets have been set for pupils in 2000, including for 50 per cent of pupils in Year 11 to achieve one or more GCSE passes, and 50 per cent to achieve five or more Certificates of Achievement.
- 6 The school's mission statement is:

“To provide a stimulating and caring environment for the children of this school, within which they can realise their full potential through the enjoyable and rewarding experience of education.”

## 6 Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 4

In 1999, three pupils achieved pass grades in GCSE art.  
Four pupils had modules of work accredited in a units award scheme.

### 6 Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	8.5
	Absence	National comparative data	8
	Unauthorised	School	1.6
	Absence	National comparative data	3

6

### 6 Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

### 6 Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	6
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

## 6 PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 6 EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 6 Attainment and progress

- 7 It is inappropriate to judge the attainment of pupils for whom this school caters against age-related national expectations or averages other than in physical education, and in Key Stage 4 where most of the work pupils do is externally accredited. The report does however give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about progress and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements, annual reviews and individual education plans.
- 8 Overall, pupils make good progress. In general, pupils throughout the school now make better progress than at the time of the previous inspection, when it was judged that progress was unsatisfactory in a number of subjects, particularly in Key Stage 4. The improvements are largely the result of more effective teaching and better quality curricular planning, together with improved behaviour so that pupils can take full advantage of the opportunities they are offered. In Key Stage 4, externally accredited courses provide a particularly effective structure to pupils' learning.
- 9 Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, physical education, and personal, social and health education. Progress is satisfactory in all other subjects, although at Key Stages 3 and 4, progress is good in modern foreign language and Key Stage 4 pupils also make good progress in science, religious education and art. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, because these are focused on English and mathematics, together with other aspects of significance to particular pupils. It is clear from lesson observations that many pupils are able to build upon their previous learning, thus forming an overall understanding of the topics taught. This is particularly so within the groups of pupils who have moderate learning difficulties at Key Stages 3 and 4 but is less true of lower attaining pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3. For example, some of these younger pupils have problems attending to a story at the start of a lesson and have difficulty transferring their learning from one lesson to another.
- 10 In English, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and in reading. During Key Stage 2, they learn to listen carefully, although some have difficulty in concentrating – on stories, for example - due to their learning difficulties. Most develop their ability to talk about their work and to speak with increasing clarity. Progress is particularly good in the early part of Key Stage 3, due to the teacher's skills, and during the key stage, most pupils learn to speak out confidently to the class. During Key Stage 4, pupils' progress is enhanced by drama lessons at college and by opportunities to communicate in a range of situations. Higher attaining pupils learn to express their opinions and explain their reasons.
- 11 In reading, pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in learning the sounds made by letters and in using this knowledge to help them tackle unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils, reading books from published schemes, develop this ability and learn to recognise words and to use pictures to help them to read. During Key Stage 3, pupils build on these early skills. The scope of their reading widens, and many learn to find information from books. Lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 4 continue to develop their use of letter sounds to help them to read. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and are developing their understanding of the content of books.
- 12 Progress in writing is satisfactory. During Key Stage 2, lower attaining pupils learn to write over or under words written by adults, and some progress to copying from a separate sheet. A small number of higher attaining pupils start to write independently, beginning to organise their ideas into sentences. In Key Stage 3, most pupils learn to write short sentences and they improve their handwriting and their ability to punctuate their work. Writing skills continue to improve

satisfactorily in Key Stage 4, but most pupils need a significant amount of support in order to produce work with correct spelling and punctuation.

- 13 In mathematics, Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in their understanding of mathematical language and in their ability to add and subtract. During Key Stage 3, pupils learn to tell the time and to name two-dimensional shapes, and they become increasingly able to work with fractions such as halves and quarters. Key Stage 4 pupils follow a range of accredited courses and develop practical mathematical skills involving measuring and handling money.
- 14 During Key Stages 2 and 3, pupils make satisfactory progress in science, learning about a wide range of scientific topics. However, although they take part in practical experiments, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to take an active part in planning their own investigations – for example, by choosing the resources they will use. In Key Stage 4, pupils develop their skills of investigation, because they follow an accredited course. They also build upon their knowledge of science, in topics such as the human body and the effects of forces on solids and liquids.
- 15 Pupils make satisfactory progress in information technology. During Key Stage 2, they become familiar with the computers and develop basic skills, such as the ability to control a mouse. In Key Stage 3, pupils gain confidence. They develop their word processing skills and learn to save their work and to shut down the computer. Pupils in Key Stage 4 use information technology for a wider range of purposes and are more independent in their use of computers.
- 16 Progress in religious education is satisfactory in Key Stages 2 and 3 and good in Key Stage 4. During Key Stage 2, pupils learn about stories from the Bible – for example, the parable of the loaves and fishes. In Key Stage 3, pupils increase their knowledge of places of worship, and of the festivals of some major world religions. During Key Stage 4, pupils make good progress because they are able to recall information from previous lessons, adding to their knowledge and understanding of religions such as Judaism.
- 17 Pupils make good progress in physical education and, in Key Stages 3 and 4, the attainment of some pupils is in line with national expectations for their age. Pupils' good progress in personal, social and health education is enhanced by their work in other subjects and by the attention the school pays to developing their social skills outside lessons. In design and technology, pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress. Progress in art is satisfactory in Key Stages 2 and 3 and good in Key Stage 4, where some pupils achieve success in a GCSE course. Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils make satisfactory progress in geography, history and music. In modern foreign language, Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils make good progress.
- 18 Pupils' good progress in English and mathematics supports their learning in other subjects. For example, they take part in discussions and read to find information. Pupils weigh and measure in design and technology and they record their results in science. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory use of information technology to help them to make progress in other subjects, mainly in English and mathematics.
- 19 Pupils with severe or complex learning difficulties, such as autism, make progress at the same rate as other pupils, because teachers are very aware of their needs, and the provision to meet these is so well considered. For example, pupils with autism make good progress in their ability to take part in class activities. They become less anxious about daily routines and social interactions as a result of the consistent way in which staff manage their behaviour. Additionally, some pupils become increasingly able to use signs and symbols and other visual prompts, to help them to understand and react to their environment. They appear to benefit from contact with other pupils. For example, in a physical education lesson, a pupil was able to take part in balancing and climbing activities, following the example of other pupils.

19 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

20 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They pay attention to the teachers, are not easily distracted, are highly motivated and interested in their work. Pupils frequently work well in pairs - for example, when working on units of measurement in a mathematics lesson. They collaborate well, as when they discussed a video recording about slavery, and they are confident to speak in front of the rest of the class. Pupils take a pride in their work - for example, when a group of pupils were mixing a Christmas cake, they were very careful not to spill their ingredients and they worked hard to ensure an even mixture. They enjoy lessons and are keen to take part in extra-curricular activities such as the library and music clubs.

21 Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. During the week of the inspection, pupils responded very well to the restrictions on outside play that wet weather imposed on the school. Most pupils appreciate the difference between right and wrong. They ignore the occasional challenging behaviour of other pupils and they concentrate on their work. This has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils with complex special educational needs, such as autism, enjoy being with their classes and are usually happy and relaxed. Pupils are polite to staff and visitors. They take a pride in their school and do not damage the building or displays. There were no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection, and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when the number of exclusions was high.

22 Overall, relationships in the school amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are good. Pupils genuinely care for each other - for example, when a pupil became ill in a lesson, the others in the class were very concerned for the well being of their friend. Pupils in Key Stage 4 work together particularly well. They help to run the school tuck shop and discuss, improvise and act out scenarios at college. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection.

23 Pupils' personal development is good. When out of school, pupils know how to behave appropriately - for example, when on their work experience placements. Older pupils demonstrate a sense of responsibility towards younger ones. At lunchtimes they ensure that they observe good table manners and take their finished plate, knife and fork to the correct place to be washed up. When working at college, older pupils know how to behave in the college common room and they fit in with other students. Pupils are aware that there are others who require support for their special needs, and they have contributed to a range of charities through sponsored activities and fund raising. There is a strong commitment to the community and older pupils have created a range of information on facilities in the area, displayed in the college library. They were pleased that the produce and items of food from their harvest festival were sent to a community cause.

23 **Attendance**

24 Overall, attendance is satisfactory and in line with similar schools. There are few persistent absentees, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are generally punctual to school, and any lateness is usually as a result of transport problems. The school is aware of all of the reasons for pupils' absences in the current year but in the previous year, one pupil, who has now left, had a number of unauthorised absences. The school has regular contact with the education welfare officer and registration procedures comply with statutory requirements.

24 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

24 **Teaching**

25 Overall, the quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching was good in 55 per cent of lessons, very good in six per cent, and satisfactory in the remainder. This represents a significant

improvement since the previous inspection, when although the overall quality was satisfactory, teaching was unsatisfactory or poor in 14 per cent of lessons. The improvements have been achieved through effective staff development procedures; monitoring and support of teaching by the acting headteacher and the establishment of clear policies to guide teachers' work - for example, in the management of pupils' behaviour.

- 26 Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when doubt was expressed about the adequacy of teachers' expertise to cover the National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4. Teachers are able to give clear explanations and to teach skills carefully. This is very evident in a number of subjects, including art. The teacher in the class for pupils in Key Stage 4 has acquired a good knowledge of the accredited courses she teaches. In this key stage, the quality of teaching is enhanced effectively by the contributions of college lecturers, in subjects such as engineering. In Key Stage 2 and in the early years of Key Stage 3, a significant proportion of the pupils have autism. Teachers have developed a good understanding of autistic spectrum disorders. They have carefully thought out strategies for teaching this group of pupils which enable them to make good progress.
- 27 Teachers generally have high but realistic expectations of the progress pupils can make. Occasionally they underestimate the potential of higher attaining pupils and do not provide opportunities for them to extend their learning. For example, in a science lesson for older pupils in Key Stage 3, all were required to carry out the same task with no opportunities for higher attaining pupils to make faster progress. Sometimes, too few demands are made of pupils' writing skills so that higher attaining pupils are not always expected to write independently. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of their full participation in activities. In the class for younger pupils in Key Stage 3, pupils are consistently required to communicate their needs and responses clearly, promoting their progress in English. A weakness of the teaching is the lack of planned opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, in subjects such as science, art and design and technology, teachers provide too few chances for pupils to be involved in making choices and decisions about their work.
- 28 Overall, teachers' planning is satisfactory, but it is variable across the school. In some instances, planning takes insufficient account of pupils' particular needs. This is especially so in mathematics and English lessons. In these subjects, all pupils have clear individual targets, but these are not always considered fully when teachers plan work for the class. Some teachers have realised this, and modify the school's weekly planning document to provide more space to show what they intend groups or individuals to do and to learn. In the class for pupils in Year 7, the teacher's planning for English and mathematics is very good. It is clearly linked to pupils' targets and results in a very close match between their needs and the work they are given. In other classes, although teachers plan in outline what pupils are to do, and often have slightly varying expectations for groups of differing attainment, it is not always clear exactly what pupils are to learn and how the lesson contributes to meeting their individual targets.
- 29 Lessons are well organised. In the most effective ones, teachers provide a well thought out series of activities that helps pupils to make progress in gradual steps. They include opportunities for pupils to develop a range of learning skills, such as listening to the teacher, answering questions, and working in small groups or as individuals. In the good quality lessons, teachers manage group activities well, judging carefully when to provide support and when to stand back and let pupils get on with their work – for example, when trying to solve problems in information technology.
- 30 A particular strength of the teaching is the very effective way in which teachers manage pupils' behaviour, which has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The school's systems for rewarding good behaviour are implemented consistently. Teachers use praise and encouragement very well, although occasionally pupils are deterred from making contributions - for example, when their spontaneous responses to stories are discouraged. Pupils are gently reminded about classroom rules such as being quiet whilst others are talking, and agreed strategies

are used to manage pupils with challenging behaviour. The management of the behaviour of pupils with autism, by teachers and support staff, is very good. They are experienced at analysing the reasons for incidents, and in adapting their strategies to avoid repetition. Teachers treat pupils in a manner appropriate for their age. This is especially notable in the class for Key Stage 4 pupils, where pupils are encouraged to behave responsibly and to adapt to different social situations.

- 31 Teachers generally make good use of the available learning resources. They carefully prepare resources such as worksheets, which are often varied according to the needs of different groups of pupils, and are usually well organised and readily available. Occasionally, worksheets include the majority of answers, which inhibits pupils' independent writing. Although information technology resources are used effectively for skills development lessons, they are not in constant use to support learning across the curriculum. Learning support assistants are deployed very well. They usually work in partnership with teachers and provide good quality support for groups or individuals. They make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress as well as helping to meet their medical and physical needs. The time in lessons is generally managed well – this is important because most lessons last for an hour. Teachers judge accurately when to change activities – for example, in physical education lessons, activities continue long enough to enable pupils to learn and to practise skills, but not so long that the pace of the lesson slows and pupils lose interest. Occasionally, when teachers' planning is not detailed enough, important parts of the lesson may be rushed, as was the writing element of an English lesson for older pupils in Key Stage 3.
- 32 The quality and use of day to day assessment is variable, but it is satisfactory overall. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils to place them in groups according to their attainment, but less consistently to match work closely to their individual targets. Similarly, teachers make good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding. However, in only a minority of lessons do they make notes of their observations of significant progress or difficulties, or modify their plans to take these into account. Good practice is seen in the class for Year 7 pupils and in some lessons in Key Stage 4. The quality of teachers' marking varies – at its best it is very helpful to pupils. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' progress, as it is often linked closely to the work done in class. Teachers demonstrate that it is valued and this encourages pupils to develop personal study skills.

## 32 **The curriculum and assessment**

- 33 The curriculum is good. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, and has developed a broad and balanced curriculum which meets all statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. This has been achieved by improved arrangements for monitoring the curriculum, and by producing policies and effective guidance for all subjects, which include long term and medium term plans of good quality. The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development.
- 34 The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced satisfactorily into Key Stage 2, and there are appropriate plans to extend it to Key Stage 3. The National Numeracy Strategy is being introduced, and will shortly be fully in place in Key Stage 2. The provision for personal, social and health education is good, and includes arrangements for health and sex education and for informing pupils about the misuse of drugs.
- 35 Careers education and guidance is good. Following a recent agreement with the careers service, the provision is to be extended and taught as part of personal, social and health education for pupils in Year 9 as well as in Key Stage 4. The programme is well thought out and includes work experience placements, in both Year 10 and Year 11, so that pupils have good opportunities to consider their lives beyond school.
- 36 The breadth, balance and relevance of the Key Stage 4 curriculum are very good. It is enhanced effectively by the school's links with the local college of further education. Pupils attend college



for one day each week on a range of pre-vocational courses, which are valuable in raising pupils' self-esteem and creating good links between the school and the local community. During the key stage, pupils participate in a broad programme of modules, culminating in nationally accredited awards in a number of subjects and in certificates from the college. The work undertaken in personal, social and health education is accredited by a nationally recognised scheme, and pupils receive awards to demonstrate their increasing competence. A GCSE course is offered in art. There are opportunities for all pupils to achieve accreditation, and the certificates they gain are collected in their impressive National Record of Achievement folders. The curriculum effectively prepares pupils for the next stage of education.

- 37 Equal access to the curriculum is ensured for all pupils. The school has a policy for special educational needs which is implemented consistently across the school and which pays due regard to the Code of Practice. Detailed individual education plans take full account of pupils' needs and provide a good basis for teachers to provide an appropriate curriculum for each one. Pupils with autism take full part in the school curriculum, within which they are provided with tasks appropriate to their abilities and with support as required. Their individual education plans place appropriate emphasis on the areas in which they have the greatest difficulty - language development, social interaction, life-skills and behaviour management.
- 38 The provision of extra-curricular activities has improved considerably, and there is now a good range of lunchtime activities, such as a library club, hockey, and music appreciation. Other activities which enrich the curriculum include visits to places of local interest, trips to theatres and museums, as well as a variety of inter-school sporting events.
- 39 The arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress are satisfactory. A range of procedures are in place, although some of these are time-consuming and do not link clearly to teachers' planning. Teachers' short term planning and assessment practices are variable. There are very good examples at the lower end of Key Stage 3, where detailed individual education plans, comprehensive short term plans, and effective ongoing assessment procedures are linked to pupils' records. This enables pupils' progress to be accurately measured and evaluated. The school is well aware of the need to refine its systems further, and this is a major focus of the current school management plan. Termly meetings are held with parents, to review and amend pupils' individual education plan targets, and the arrangements for annual reviews are very good, involving parents and support services.

39 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 40 Overall the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The provision that the school makes to raise pupils' spiritual awareness is satisfactory. Pupils attend a daily collective act of worship and are encouraged to reflect on a range of themes and issues. Remembrance Day took place during the week of the inspection, and pupils were helped to appreciate the symbolism of the poppy in remembering those who died, and the significance of the two minutes silence observed by the school. The school encourages a number of visitors to lead assemblies, offering pupils opportunities to gain insights into differing values and beliefs and to extend their awareness of how others might feel, on sad or happy occasions. Because there is no obvious visual focal point for assemblies and because pupils are sometimes asked to pray in an overly formal manner, it is sometimes difficult to establish a reverent atmosphere. Pupils are encouraged to value their environment, families, friends and school, and this has a positive impact on their self knowledge.
- 41 The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. The emphasis on a positive approach to discipline leaves pupils in no doubt as to the high standard of behaviour expected of them, both in and out of the school. All staff know the pupils well and have introduced rewards for good behaviour, such as certificates and raffle tickets, which encourage pupils to behave well. At the same time, the school makes very effective use of praise, fun and good relationships with pupils

in reinforcing positive attitudes and good behaviour.

- 42 The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils are encouraged to take a pride in their appearance and the good quality personal, social and health education programme helps to enhance pupils' self esteem. Through the work experience programme and the modules of an accredited course, older pupils begin to understand the responsibilities of citizenship and the discipline required by further education or employment. The wide variety of lunch time clubs encourages the development of qualities such as team work in games; co-operation in caring activities – for example, looking after the fish in the aquarium; and participation in social activities such as bingo. Pupils are taught the importance of making a commitment to such activities, and are expected to attend them regularly. They are encouraged to take pride in their surroundings and so a number help to weed the gardens surrounding the school. The school encourages pupils to go to social events such as the theatre and concerts and is presently organising a residential visit that is open to all pupils.
- 43 The school's provision for the cultural development of pupils is good. Musicians – for example, from Opera North, and theatre groups are regular visitors to the school. During the week of the inspection the pupils delighted in a concert of Irish music, joining in to sing, play and respond to the music and words of the songs. Pupils are encouraged to value their own locality, such as the structures of bridges in the area, which are a focus of some art lessons, and to appreciate the importance of community centres, theatres and museums that celebrate the rich sea-going tradition of the area. Some pupils are already beginning to anticipate the excitement of the traditional preparations for Christmas by making Christmas cakes for their families. The school raises pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of other cultures, mainly through religious education lessons, but also through the pupils' support for a young girl in India.

43 **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

- 42 Overall the school's provision is very good. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory. Detailed assessments are made of all pupils' work, but these are not used consistently to provide for the different needs of pupils in lessons. Pupils are well known by all staff, and the acting headteacher maintains a comprehensive oversight of all pupils' progress. The Record of Achievement that pupils compile is a comprehensive summary of their time in the school. These are used well to draw together the whole range of their achievements, from regular good attendance to college certificates. The school encourages the regular participation of therapists in the curriculum, and staff support their work very effectively. This has a significant impact on pupils' progress - for example, through social language lessons with speech therapists, and exercises with an occupational therapist to improve a pupil's ability to hold a pen correctly and write legibly.
- 43 The school has very good procedures in place to promote discipline and good behaviour. As a result, incidents of confrontation and poor behaviour amongst pupils have diminished significantly since the previous inspection. Staff set a consistent example of good behaviour to pupils. Pupils' good behaviour is rewarded and encouraged by imaginative means such as raffle tickets. Staff are fair in their application of sanctions when they are necessary. The school is very effective in eliminating oppressive behaviour, but when outbursts of aggressive or anti-social behaviour do occur, staff usually act swiftly, confidently and unobtrusively to deal with the incident.
- 44 There are very good procedures to monitor and promote regular attendance. Pupils are rewarded by certificates of good attendance for inclusion in their Record of Achievement. The administrative officer has oversight of the regular analysis and monitoring of the school's attendance figures. Staff and the acting headteacher ensure that the reasons for pupils' absences are established speedily. Appropriate signing in and signing out procedures for pupils are in place, and the school maintains regular contact with the education welfare service.

- 45 The school has very good child protection procedures and there is a high level of awareness of the importance of monitoring the welfare of pupils. Two members of staff have received up to date and relevant training in child protection procedures, and ensure that the rest of the staff are kept well informed of current practice. Close and effective links exist between the school and the social services responsible for child protection issues.
- 46 The school has exceptionally good arrangements to promote the health and well being of pupils. Where appropriate, detailed individual care plans have been drawn up in consultation with pupils' parents and the appropriate medical personnel, and the arrangements for recording the dispensation of medication are precise and secure. When pupils go out of school for educational visits, there are very good arrangements to ensure that the appropriate medicine is taken with them. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal hygiene within the personal, social and health education curriculum and as part of everyday school life. There are three trained first aiders in the school and all staff know who these are. First aid boxes are well stocked and accidents are recorded appropriately. The school makes very good arrangements for the safety of its pupils. Regular safety checks are carried out on the school premises and risk assessments have been completed. Cleaning materials are stored securely by the caretaker, and the school regularly checks that fire fighting equipment, physical education equipment, fire alarms and portable appliances, are correctly maintained. Concern for pupils' well being has led to the demolition of the school's swimming pool, which represented a safety hazard. The school continues to express concern over the condition of a number of rotting window frames in the school building, which constitute a considerable hazard to pupils and need urgent attention to repair or renew them.

#### 48 **Partnership with parents and the community**

- 47 Overall the school's partnership with parents and carers and the community is very good. Parents and carers are involved in the work of the school and make a good contribution to pupils' progress. A group of parents regularly support pupils' reading during lessons. Parents take responsibility for supporting their child's homework if they have opted to take work home. Most parents and carers regularly attend annual review and individual education plan review meetings, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school values the involvement of parents and carers in helping to review their children's progress and to set new targets. Parents consider the staff to be very approachable, and value the clear oversight that the acting headteacher has of all pupils and activities. Parents and carers have taken a very active role in supporting the school during the current review of educational provision in the area. They feel strongly that the school effectively meets the needs of their children and promotes high educational standards. Parents and carers also support the school very well by organising fund raising events.
- 48 The information that the school provides for parents about their children's work and progress is very good. There are no omissions in the statutory information for parents, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Annual reports are very comprehensive. They form part of the wide range of information for parents that also includes regular parents' meetings, frequent newsletters and the provision of daily home-school diaries, where this is thought appropriate by the school and parents.
- 49 The school's partnership with the wider community is very good and it significantly enhances the curriculum. The school's close links with a neighbouring primary school and with the local comprehensive school and college of further education, all support integration opportunities for pupils. The school relies on the support of local commercial and business concerns for the success of its work experience programme for pupils - for example, a pupil is currently helping to care for dogs in a refuge. Many organisations in the area, such as the Goole Bikers' Club, and local charities have provided the school with welcome support for projects, performances and visits in the community. The school values the sponsorship it receives from industries such as British

Aerospace and is equally appreciative of the support it receives from individual members of the community. For example, during the inspection a voluntary helper demonstrated her commitment by supporting staff and pupils during lessons and by arranging and performing in a concert of Irish music.

## 51 THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### 51 Leadership and management

50 The acting headteacher provides very strong leadership. That the school no longer has serious weaknesses is due to the clarity of her analysis of the actions needed to bring about improvement. Her commitment is demonstrated by the determination and energy with which she has carried out her plans, motivating staff and driving the school forward. Despite her efforts, the future of the school remains unclear and so criteria for admitting pupils have not been developed. This places a heavy burden of responsibility on the acting headteacher in balancing the school's resources and its existing pupils with the needs of prospective pupils.

51 Although supportive, the governing body has not played an active role in helping to shape the future direction of the school, and it has not appointed a headteacher. The acting headteacher has devised a number of strategies for involving governors more directly in the life of the school, but the outcomes have so far been disappointing. For example, no governors have attended the weekly curriculum meetings, and the links between governors and particular teachers have not yet been productive. However, the chair of governors is a frequent visitor to the school, and the acting headteacher appreciates his commitment and values his support. Statutory requirements are met.

52 There is no deputy headteacher or senior management team, which means that the acting headteacher has had to take sole responsibility for many aspects of the work of the school, in addition to overseeing its day to day management. For example, she writes the school management plan, supports and monitors teaching, and takes the lead in matters relating to the curriculum and assessment and in establishing policies – for example, to promote good behaviour and discipline. Each teacher has responsibility for a number of areas of the curriculum. This aspect of leadership has improved since the previous inspection. Co-ordinators have produced good quality policies, and they support colleagues with advice and by providing appropriate learning resources. The role of co-ordinators is developing and is the subject of a target in the school's management plan.

53 The procedures for monitoring teaching and the curriculum are good. The acting headteacher makes termly formal observations of each teacher. The results of these monitoring visits are shared with the teachers concerned, and targets for development are agreed. Weekly teachers' meetings are an effective way of monitoring the curriculum, through discussions of planning and pupils' progress, in each subject in rotation. Additionally, the acting headteacher and the subject co-ordinators review teachers' plans, and each pupil's individual education plan is scrutinised by all teachers. The well-conceived plan to extend the role of co-ordinators, to include classroom observations and the examination of pupils' work, is dependent on the provision of non-contact time, currently unavailable because of its resource implications.

54 The school is very successful in meeting its aims, which guide its work in relation to pupils, staff, the environment, parents and the community. Policies are clearly written, and there is a sensible rolling programme for their review. The policy on strategies to educate pupils with autism is firm and well thought out, being based on a clear rationale for integrating the pupils rather than creating a separate unit. The staff handbook sets out the school's expectations in an unambiguous manner. Staff are fully aware of the need to abide by decisions and policies, and this contributes to the strong team spirit within the school.

- 55 It has not been possible for the acting headteacher to draft a school development plan, because of uncertainties about the school's future and the temporary nature of her own position. However, she has produced an annual management plan of very high quality, which includes objectives related to all aspects of the school's work. Tasks, responsibilities, costs, timescales, performance indicators and review arrangements are set out very clearly. This impressive document is testimony to the acting headteacher's personal vision and capacity for clear thinking and hard work.
- 56 The school's ethos is very good. There is a clear commitment by the staff, which is shared by parents, to helping all pupils make the best progress that they can. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and relationships are good. Since the last inspection, the school has made very good progress in the aspects of its work over which the acting headteacher has control. This has been achieved in a climate of uncertainty about the future of the school. The acting headteacher is clearly very able to continue to develop the school, but her position is insecure and the governing body does not give sufficient active support. The school's capacity to improve is therefore just satisfactory.

**58 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 57 Overall there is a satisfactory number of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The school provides a good level of teaching staff, slightly above national averages for its older pupils who have moderate learning difficulties, and a satisfactory level for its younger pupils, many of whom have more severe or complex learning difficulties. A recent increase in the number of younger pupils admitted to the school and in the severity of their special needs has changed the nature of the school significantly. This change has stretched the school's staffing provision, leading to class sizes that are becoming too large to meet adequately the special educational needs of the pupils in the two younger classes.
- 58 The qualifications and experience of the teachers are appropriate to meet the requirements of the curriculum. Teachers are particularly qualified and experienced in the area of special needs education. The teachers of the school's younger pupils have developed their professional expertise further, to meet the new demands placed upon them by the changing nature of the school's pupil population, particularly in teaching pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. The qualifications and experience of these teachers therefore provide a good match to the learning needs of their pupils.
- 59 Because there are few teachers, each one teaches the full range of subjects to his or her class, making it difficult for each teacher to provide a more than satisfactory subject expertise in each lesson, especially in Key Stages 3 and 4. This situation is worsened by the lack of non-contact time for teachers to plan and prepare their lessons. These demands upon the school's teaching staff are increased by the unsatisfactory delay in appointing a permanent headteacher.
- 60 The number of support staff provided by the school is good, enabling pupils' individual learning needs to be met in small groups or individually as necessary. The experience and expertise of the support assistants enables them to make a significant contribution to the work of the school.
- 61 The school provides a satisfactory range of professional development opportunities for teachers within a well-organised staff development programme. The arrangements to provide teachers with the expertise required for teaching pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are good, and there are sensible plans to extend the training to other teachers in anticipation of these pupils moving through the school as they get older. Support staff receive satisfactory training at the school during staff meetings, where there is effective sharing of expertise, but they do not engage in many external professional development opportunities.
- 62 Internally, the school building is well maintained and clean. It provides a bright and cheerful working environment for the pupils, enhanced by numerous displays of their work and interests. Externally, the building is in poor condition. Particularly, the external woodwork has deteriorated to the extent that some window frames are barely strong enough to hold the glazing panels and so present a safety hazard to the school's pupils and staff.
- 63 The school's classroom bases generally provide adequate accommodation for its pupils, but some classrooms are small for the present number of pupils. There is satisfactory storage space in classrooms, though the storage of some art resources in a corridor near to pupils' coat pegs causes some congestion at break times. The facilities for pupils to change before and after physical education lessons, though satisfactory, can become crowded at times, restricting the opportunities for all pupils to take a shower.
- 64 The school has achieved considerable improvements to its curriculum accommodation since the last inspection and now provides good specialist rooms for the teaching of science, food technology and information technology, particularly for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. There are no specialist facilities for design technology using resistant materials, but Key Stage 4 pupils can gain satisfactory access to this accommodation at the local college.

65 The last inspection identified inadequacies in the school's educational resources. There have been improvements in this respect so that all subjects now have an adequate range of equipment and teaching materials to support the curriculum effectively. There are good resources for science and information technology. In all subjects a range of published worksheets, books and other materials is very well enhanced by resources made by the staff to meet the particular needs of their pupils. The school's stock of library books is limited, but is enhanced by loans from the library service.

67  
**school**

#### **The efficiency of the**

66 The school's finances are used effectively and appropriately to promote and support pupils' learning and progress. Overall, financial planning is good. However, uncertainties about the school's future mean that a school development plan has not been produced, to support financial planning in the long term. The school's annual management plan is effectively prioritised and costed and underpins all aspects of the school's work, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Clear performance indicators enable the school to judge the effectiveness of spending.

67 High quality information is prepared by the administrative officer and the acting headteacher, and is presented regularly to the governors' finance committee, who in turn report to the full governing body. This procedure is welcomed by the governing body as it enables spending to be monitored accurately. The financial controls of the school are very good, with effective and efficient procedures. School accounts and the school fund are regularly audited and recommendations are implemented promptly, reflecting the school's positive attitude to the efficient running of the school. Efficient use is made of specific grants, voluntary funds and community resources in order to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' progress.

68 There is a large sum carried over from last year's budget. This results from a decision made by the governing body and acting headteacher to allow an overspend of this year's budget and to provide a contingency fund to enable another member of staff to be appointed as pupil numbers rise and a new class becomes necessary. However, additional staffing to improve teacher-pupil ratios and reduce class sizes cannot be employed until it is known whether the headteacher's post is to be filled from the existing staff or by an additional appointment.

69 Staff have clear roles, current job descriptions and delegated responsibilities. Roles are now more clearly defined and effective training has been provided. Teachers are deployed effectively. The administrative officer ensures that the school's day to day administration procedures run smoothly, ensuring that teachers are free to focus on their work in the classrooms. Learning support staff are deployed very effectively, and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school uses its accommodation well, and goes some way to making up for deficiencies in design and technology facilities by providing a college course for Key Stage 4 pupils.

70 Learning resources are well organised, easily accessed, well used and maintained, although information technology resources are not always used to their full potential. The effective use of resources is reflected in the progress made by pupils. Subject co-ordinators have responsibility for auditing resources and they ensure that suitable materials are available to support the curriculum.

71 The school successfully achieves its stated aims and provides a facility much valued by parents and pupils. Many pupils enter the school with significant learning difficulties and underdeveloped personal and social skills. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was judged to give poor value for money. Considering the progress made by pupils in their academic and personal development, their good attitudes towards learning and the high quality of teaching, the very strong

leadership of the acting headteacher, and the high standard of financial planning, control and efficiency, the school now gives good value for money.



73 **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

73 **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

73 **English**

- 72 Throughout the school, pupils make good progress. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils made good progress in speaking and listening and satisfactory progress in reading, although some pupils in Key Stage 2 made good progress. Although progress in writing was generally satisfactory, progress was less secure in Key Stages 3 and 4. Overall, there was significant underachievement in Key Stage 4. Progress in speaking and listening remains good. Progress in reading has improved and is good throughout the school. Writing has improved so that progress is now satisfactory throughout. Particular improvement has been made in Key Stage 4, where there is no underachievement. Instead, all pupils' work in English is leading to external accreditation.
- 73 During Key Stage 2, pupils learn to listen carefully to teachers and support assistants. For example, the teacher reads stories and questions pupils about the content, prompting them to pay close attention. Some pupils have difficulty in concentrating, but the teacher makes generally effective use of 'big books' with interesting illustrations, helping to keep their attention. Pupils develop their ability to speak clearly. They are given frequent opportunities to talk – for example, about events during the weekend or about stories they have listened to or read. Some pupils work with speech therapists, improving their communication skills. They learn to greet people appropriately and to use increasingly lengthy responses in reply to questions.
- 74 During Key Stage 3, pupils continue to make good progress in their ability to listen carefully and to communicate effectively. They make particularly good progress in the early part of the key stage. Here, the teacher is very skilled at encouraging pupils to respond clearly to questions, and she pays close attention to correcting pupils' pronunciation. Towards the end of the key stage, most pupils can speak out confidently to the class. For example, they can describe the sportswear that they prefer. Whilst some pupils use single words or short phrases, higher attaining pupils have learned to express themselves with clarity.
- 75 Pupils in Key Stage 4 are able to build on and extend these skills, because they are regularly required to take part in discussions; they have weekly drama lessons at college; and they have frequent opportunities to communicate with a variety of people – for example, during work experience placements. Pupils become confident to improvise scenarios, to read a script or to repeat words. They learn to take an active part in discussions – for example, about the book they are reading. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, develop their ability to express their opinions and justify their points of view. These pupils appreciate the importance of being able to communicate effectively, and they know that their speech needs to be modified in different social contexts.
- 76 In reading, Key Stage 2 pupils learn the sounds made by letters. Most are able to use this knowledge to help them to identify words, so that they can choose the correct ones to complete sentences. Lower attaining pupils recognise an increasing number of words, working towards reading simple books. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate their developing skills as they read books from the school's reading schemes. They recognise many words and use their knowledge of letter sounds and clues from illustrations to help them to tackle unknown words. A small number of pupils recognise and correct their mistakes. The majority of pupils enjoy stories and books, and some can recall the plot of stories. Pupils' vocabulary is developed as they listen to stories, because the teacher takes care to check their understanding. During the reading of 'The Rainbow Fish', pupils learned the meaning of words such as 'scales', 'ocean' and 'emerged'.

- 77 During Key Stage 3, pupils' reading skills develop well. Lower attaining pupils become increasingly able to attempt to read new words. They progress from recognising the sounds of the initial letters of words to reading combinations of letters at the start and then at the end of words. Higher attaining pupils develop their ability to read aloud with expression, and to discuss their preferred reading. Pupils enjoy reading comics, magazines and the television pages in newspapers. In addition to the reading scheme books, pupils are familiar with novels by authors such as Dickens and E. Nesbit. They talk about the plot and the characters in stories, and predict what might happen next. They know how to find information on a particular subject, using the index and contents pages of reference books.
- 78 Pupils in Key Stage 4, make good progress through the use of a structured reading scheme. Lower attaining pupils are still developing their knowledge of letter combinations, and increasing the number of words that they recognise. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and have no need to use early reading strategies. Instead, they are developing their understanding of texts and increasing their vocabulary. Pupils are learning to appreciate humour in literature; to interpret clues in the text – for example, about the characters in books such as 'Of Mice and Men' and to refer to the text in order to justify their views. Although these pupils are able to read and understand a range of literature, some express a preference for authors of books for much younger people, and they need to develop reading habits more appropriate for their age. Pupils' personal development is enhanced effectively by opportunities to read for a range of purposes – for example, to find information from CD-ROM and to complete college application forms.
- 79 Progress in writing is satisfactory. During Key Stage 2, lower attaining pupils begin by writing over dots made by adults. Most progress to writing underneath words and sentences. Some learn to copy from a separate sheet. A small number of higher attaining pupils start to write independently. They know how to spell simple words and they use their knowledge of the sounds made by letters to help them to spell unknown words. They also ask for help when necessary and use their individual word books to check spellings. These pupils become increasingly able to organise their writing into sentences, using capital letters and full stops.
- 80 In the early part of Key Stage 3, lower attaining pupils continue to tell adults what they want to write, and then to copy from their example. Others develop their writing skills so that they can write short sentences, using simple vocabulary. Their spelling improves, as does their handwriting, so that some pupils use a joined script. A small number of higher attaining pupils can write short passages - for example, stories in response to written questions about pictures. Later in the key stage, pupils develop their handwriting and practise punctuating their work. They continue to attempt to spell words independently. They learn to write short poems, following a given structure, choosing descriptive words for their effect. However, the range of pupils' writing is limited during Key Stages 2 and 3, and in particular there are insufficient opportunities for imaginative writing and for higher attaining pupils to write at length, planning and refining their writing.
- 81 During Key Stage 4, pupils develop their ability to spell and to write legibly. Lower attaining pupils are learning to sequence sentences, to tell a story, and the number of words they spell correctly is increased. Higher attaining pupils can generally use capital letters and full stops appropriately, but use commas inconsistently. These pupils can write short passages and letters of thanks or application. Most pupils need significant amounts of support in order to structure their writing and to spell and punctuate correctly.
- 82 Throughout the school, pupils' good progress in English supports their learning in other subjects. They take part in question and answer sessions and discussions, and in annual school performances. Pupils read worksheets and find information from books and CD-ROM. Although they are sometimes required to write independently, pupils' writing is often confined to filling in gaps in sentences or copying.
- 83 Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They behave well and enjoy good relationships with

teachers and support staff. Pupils almost always enjoy English lessons, and they respond very well when their work is praised. They concentrate particularly well when working in small groups with adult support. Pupils in Key Stage 2 concentrate less well during whole class sessions. Throughout the school, pupils become restless when activities are prolonged – for example, when stories or other pupils’ contributions are extended. Pupils in Key Stage 4 work well together as a group during drama lessons at the college. In most classes, pupils respect the views and opinions of others, although a few higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 4 are less considerate. In Key Stage 3, pupils are particularly good at supporting each other and celebrating successes. These pupils also respond well to challenges to improve their work – for example, during a poetry writing lesson.

84 The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection, very good teaching was seen in Key Stage 3. These lessons were characterised by the teachers’ high expectations of all aspects of English. In the early part of the key stage, the teacher makes full use of assessments of pupils’ progress and the targets in their individual education plans, to plan work which is carefully matched to pupils’ needs. Otherwise, planning lacks detail; is less well matched to pupils’ individual targets; and does not indicate how the week’s lessons are to develop. The planning format used by most teachers does not provide scope for this degree of detail. When planning is imprecise, the time in lessons is sometimes used inefficiently, with some activities drawn out for too long and others rushed. Most teachers use questions very well, to encourage pupils to communicate and to focus their attention. In the class for pupils in Year 7, the teacher produces very high quality resources. They are closely matched to pupils’ needs and are particularly effective in supporting higher attaining pupils’ independent writing skills. The use of resources such as pictures, toys and other resources to help pupils listen to stories and understand them, is under-developed.

85 The National Literacy Strategy has been modified satisfactorily to meet the needs of the pupils in Key Stage 2. The school has appropriate plans to extend the Strategy to Key Stage 3. Assessment procedures are still developing and are unwieldy at present. The role of the co-ordinator has developed well since the previous inspection, and the subject policy is clear and helpful. The library corner contains up to date reference books and a small amount of fiction, but does not invite browsing or sitting quietly and reading.

## 87 **Mathematics**

86 Pupils make good progress, both during lessons and over time. During Key Stage 2, pupils develop their ability to use and understand mathematical language, such as ‘more than’ and ‘less than’, ‘same as’, ‘bigger than’ and ‘smaller than’. They learn to find numbers between 0 and 100 on a number square, to add on and take away, and to record their work. They become increasingly able to find number patterns, and to continue them, to correctly order numbers, and to use a number line effectively to solve problems.

87 During Key Stage 3, pupils make good progress in topics such the measurement of time. Lower attaining pupils learn to tell the time at the hour and half past the hour. Higher attaining pupils develop their ability, so that they know the time at quarter to and quarter past the hour, and minutes to the hour and minutes past. They learn to solve problems of time past and in the future. For example, they calculate what time will it be in a given number of minutes or a given number of hours. They become able to tackle and solve problems involving clocks which are slow, and ones which are fast, indicating a good understanding of time. Lower attaining pupils recognise and name two-dimensional shapes, and can halve and quarter them. Higher attaining pupils learn to halve and quarter numbers up to 100.

88 During Key Stage 4, pupils develop their practical measuring skills. They understand the need for a standard unit of measurement and use the metric system well. Lower attaining pupils measure their body and record their results accurately. Higher attaining pupils show a secure understanding of angles. They are able to cut out a circle and fold it twice to create a 90 degree template, which

they use to find right angles in the school environment, such as those on doors and their frames. Pupils at Key Stage 4, follow a suitable range of externally accredited courses. They help to run a break-time tuck shop for the younger pupils. This gives them good practical experience of handling money and develops their inter-personal skills as they deal with other pupils.

- 89 Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics. They have good relationships with adults and with each other. They listen well and follow instructions carefully. When encountering difficulties they persevere, concentrate well and complete their work. They use resources carefully, often work co-operatively in pairs to complete tasks. They support each other well, and are quick to applaud other pupils' successes. Pupils behave well, they show enthusiasm, pride and enjoyment in their work. On the rare occasion when inappropriate, challenging behaviour is exhibited, other pupils ignore this and carry on with their work
- 90 Teaching is good across all key stages. The characteristics which are common to good teaching across the school are a good knowledge of both pupils and the subject and a brisk pace to lessons, with well timed changes of activities. Good use is made of mental arithmetic exercises, which provide a lively start to lessons. Teachers use question and answer techniques effectively, allowing a little extra time for lower attaining pupils to respond. Praise and encouragement are used well. There is good team-work between support assistants and teachers. Resources are organised in advance, easily accessible and used effectively. Homework is used appropriately and contributes positively to the progress pupils make. Above all, there is a sense of enjoyment and fun in lessons which motivates pupils and promotes good progress. The weaknesses attributed to teaching and resources in the previous report are no longer apparent and this represents good improvement.
- 91 The curriculum is good, but short term planning and assessment are variable. Where practice is best, in the class for younger Key Stage 3 pupils, there are detailed individual education plans; short term planning is very detailed and comprehensive; and systems to assess, record and evaluate pupils' progress are effective. The information is transferred to pupils' records, which are dated. This enables pupils' progress to be tracked and evaluated over time, and informs future planning. Where this is not the practice, it is more difficult to track progress over time. The school has begun to implement the National Numeracy Strategy effectively, modifying it appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils.

93 **Science**

- 92 Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in science, though they make good progress at Key Stage 4. Generally, pupils make satisfactory progress because they show interest in, and attend well to the science activities provided for them. Higher attaining pupils build upon what they have learned in previous lessons. Lower attaining pupils need individual support to enable them to make progress in their understanding of science.
- 93 Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. They do not plan their own experiments to test out their ideas but, when learning about magnets, the higher attaining pupils are able to predict successfully which objects and materials are likely to be attracted to the magnet. Pupils develop their understanding of the requirements of green plants for growth and they learn the names of some parts of flowering plants. They become aware that seeds grow into new plants. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their ability to group materials according to various properties and in their understanding that materials can be changed. They have learned the position of the planets in our solar system.
- 94 During Key Stage 3, pupils acquire satisfactory knowledge about the requirements of green plants. They demonstrate this by growing and caring for plants in their classrooms. They learn to identify most major bones in the human skeleton and confirm their progress by correctly assembling and labelling their own diagrams. Pupils consolidate their knowledge about how materials can be changed and classified. Although they engage in practical activities - for example, measuring the

forces needed to stretch elastic bands, pupils do not make their own observations and test them out by planning and carrying out their own investigations.

- 95 During Key Stage 4 pupils make good progress in science, including in their skills of investigation, by working towards learning objectives set out in their accredited course. They become increasingly able to plan, carry out and explain the result of experiments relating to forces, humans as organisms, the maintenance of life, and materials. Pupils make progress in their knowledge of the human body, so that they can successfully answer questions which link previous lessons about organs of the body with their current work on harmful substances. They learn to sort and classify rocks, describe features of crude oil products, examine the effects of forces on motion and investigate the effects of stretching forces on solids and compressing forces on liquids.
- 96 Pupils throughout the school display good attitudes to learning in science lessons and involve themselves actively in their work. Their behaviour is good and they enjoy good relationships with each other and the staff. At Key Stage 2, pupils take turns at a game and generally enjoy the activities they are given to do. Higher attaining pupils become able to achieve their tasks with increasing independence, whereas the lower attaining pupils require support. At Key Stage 3, pupils carry out their practical tasks with enthusiasm, taking turns appropriately to use apparatus. Pupils in Key Stage 4 are attentive and interested in their lessons. Their relationships with the teacher are appropriate to their age and most lessons are interspersed with good humour. Pupils listen well and make some useful and astute comments.
- 97 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stages 2 and 3, and good at Key Stage 4. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when some lessons were unsatisfactory. At Key Stages 2 and 3, the teachers' knowledge of the subject is satisfactory, and it is good at Key Stage 4. Teachers have a good awareness of the individual needs of pupils, including those with autism. Lessons are planned satisfactorily, with a suitable mix of whole class and group activities, but there is inconsistent assessment and recording of pupils' progress. Support assistants are fully involved in lesson planning. They make effective contributions to pupils' progress, including providing very sensitive support for pupils with autism. In Key Stage 4, explanations are clear and are linked well to pupils' existing knowledge. The content of lessons and the materials and resources provided are appropriate to the age of these pupils. Lessons are well planned to fulfil the requirements of the accredited certificate in science.
- 98 Good quality specialist accommodation for science has been developed since the last inspection. This age-appropriate provision, which raises the status of science in the school, is particularly suitable for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4.

## 100 OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### 100 Information technology

- 99 Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. They often make good progress in lessons, but the recently introduced scheme of work and the improved provision of computers have not yet had a significant impact on progress over time. However, progress has improved since the previous inspection, when there was little evidence of pupils' work.
- 100 During Key Stage 2, pupils become familiar with a number of programs, such as a picture dictionary. They learn to use the mouse to start the program, and to select icons, pictures and letters. Pupils become increasingly able to follow instructions given by the computer, either verbally or on the screen. They develop basic computer skills and gain confidence.

- 101 During Key Stage 3, pupils develop their word processing skills. They use the keyboard and become increasingly able to select letters quickly and accurately. They learn to highlight areas of text and to change the style of font and the size of letters. Pupils investigate the toolbar and become familiar with functions such as the spellcheck. They learn to save their work and to shut down the computer. They become more confident and higher attaining pupils attempt to solve problems independently.
- 102 The work done by Key Stage 4 pupils leads to external accreditation. They are more independent in their use of computers and can save, print and retrieve their work. Pupils learn to use information technology to display data they have collected – for example, in the form of pie charts showing people’s leisure activities. They use CD-ROM to support their learning in subjects such as mathematics and history. During the inspection, pupils throughout the school were developing word processing skills. However, teachers’ planning and pupils’ records show that they do learn about the full range of information technology applications. Pupils are increasingly able to use information technology to help them to make progress in other subjects, although this is largely restricted to English and mathematics.
- 103 Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They enjoy information technology lessons, are well motivated and concentrate hard. Pupils behave well and relationships are good, both with adults and with other pupils. Higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 3 give patient help to pupils who are making slower progress. Most pupils are able to ask for help when necessary, and some higher attaining pupils try to solve problems such as how to insert capital letters at the beginning of sentences. Pupils use the computers sensibly, and some are confident to experiment and to explore programs. When prompted, some pupils in Key Stage 3 can identify what they have learned during lessons and are beginning to evaluate their own progress.
- 104 The quality of teaching is good. Ongoing staff development is proving effective in enhancing teachers’ information technology skills. Lessons are carefully structured, so that pupils gradually make progress. Teachers make good use of praise, helping to raise pupils’ self-esteem and giving them confidence. Good use is made of the time in lessons – for example, by having programs loaded and ready for younger pupils to use. Support assistants are fully involved in lessons and make good contributions to pupils’ progress. Teachers make effective use of information technology to create good quality resources such as work sheets and games, to support learning across the curriculum. The computers are almost all accommodated in the specialist teaching room. The room was not in constant use during the inspection, despite a timetable designed to ensure its efficient use.

### **Religious education**

- 105 Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress, though their progress is good in Key Stage 4. There has been improvement since the last inspection, when progress was unsatisfactory across the key stages. During Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and over time. Within this group of pupils who have a wide range of special educational needs, some find listening to and understanding the spiritual aspects of stories about Jesus quite difficult. Higher attaining pupils become increasingly able to respond to the stories - for example, the parable of the loaves and fishes. They answer and ask relevant questions and understand how these stories link with previous learning.
- 106 During Key Stage 3, the lower attaining pupils make less progress when teachers present a body of knowledge to the whole class but do not present tasks at different levels of ability. Higher attaining pupils are able to benefit from such lessons, because they can make connections between the things they have learned in lessons over time. Pupils learn about places of worship, as part of their project on ‘Special Places’. For example, they consider the architecture of churches and the artefacts usually found in them, and visit the local parish church to see for themselves. Pupils are able to name various items in a church and most can contribute ideas about the uses of these items,

confirming that they are aware that churches are special places. Pupils also learn about Divali as part of an ongoing project about major world religions.

107 During Key Stage 4, pupils build upon their previous knowledge and can link work from previous lessons to the current lesson. For example they can relate the story of Moses' life to their lesson on the Feast of the Passover. They understand what slaves are by drawing upon previous learning. Pupils learn about Judaism through their study of the feast of the Passover. They show a good understanding of the story and the reasons for the various events, which occur. They build upon and are able to demonstrate their previous knowledge gained during earlier lessons on Judaism.

108 Overall, pupils demonstrate satisfactory attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour in lessons is satisfactory; they enjoy positive relationships with each other and with staff; and in most lessons show that they are very interested in the subject material. Pupils co-operate well together when taking part in practical activities. They give appropriate answers to questions, for which older, higher attaining pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 are able to draw upon their own experiences and previous learning. Younger, lower attaining pupils at Key Stage 2 find it quite difficult to maintain their concentration on stories. Older, higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 3 are very attentive to the teachers' explanations and to a video which introduces the lesson.

109 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In Key Stage 3, the use of a whole class introduction followed up by common practical tasks is successful with the older pupils who mostly have moderate learning difficulties. In Key Stage 2, teaching about religion by telling stories to the whole class is not very successful. This is due to the wide range of pupils' abilities, the very low attention and concentration levels of some pupils, and difficulties with lesson timing and pace. Resources to hold and maintain the interest of pupils are limited. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 4. Pupils at this key stage, who mostly have moderate learning difficulties, are able to benefit from discussions interspersed with the use of appropriate questions to amplify details or prompt responses from their previous learning. Follow-up tasks are common to the class but suitable extension activities are provided for higher attaining pupils.

111

#### 111 Art

110 Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Progress is good in Key Stage 4, because pupils follow a GCSE course and higher attaining pupils achieve pass grades. At Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils now make better progress than at the time of the previous inspection, because teaching and the curriculum have both improved. During Key Stage 2, pupils learn a range of skills, using a variety of media and working in two- and three-dimensions. For example, they apply papier mache and plaster of Paris to frameworks prepared by adults, to create sea creatures for a class display. They develop their skills with textiles as they stitch felt fish shapes together. Through such activities, pupils make good progress in developing their fine motor skills. They make less progress in their ability to respond imaginatively using art media, because their activities are generally closely directed by the teacher or support assistants.

111 During Key Stage 3, pupils continue to learn new skills and to practise ones they have already acquired. They use papier mache to make the head of a stick puppet, and they use collage, printing and painting techniques. With support from a professional sculptor, older pupils produce very effective life-sized plaster of Paris heads. As in Key Stage 2, there is less evidence of pupils having opportunities to apply their skills in less structured contexts, where they have more freedom to choose materials and tools.

112 No lessons were observed in Key Stage 4. However, evidence from their records of work shows that pupils use the skills they have learned as they explore subjects such as bridges. They use photography and sketches to record what they see, and they collect interesting images from magazines, building up design notebooks. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate an appreciation of

colour, line and texture, which they are able to apply to their own work. Pupils become aware of the work of a wide range of artists and types of art. They have opportunities to use their observational skills – for example, in careful drawings of everyday objects; and to be more imaginative in their responses. For example, they focus more closely on particular shapes, colours and textures, develop their ideas and incorporate them into paintings or collage.

- 113 In the two lessons seen, pupils' responses were good. They concentrate on their work and persevere with tasks, even though these are sometimes repetitive. Pupils use resources sensibly, follow instructions carefully, and help to clear away at the end of lessons. Pupils make choices from the limited range of resources provided, but have few opportunities to be more independent.
- 114 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stages 2 and 3. Skills are taught carefully, but there are only limited opportunities for pupils to use their imagination. A similar criticism was made in the previous inspection report. Some activities present insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils, and it is not always clear what they are to learn from activities such as torn paper collage or the use of templates and frameworks made by adults. Support staff are deployed effectively and make good contributions to pupils' progress. The curriculum now provides a sound basis for teachers' planning, and the provision for three-dimensional work has improved.



116

116 **Design and technology**

116

117 Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Progress in practical making skills is better than in designing, planning and evaluating. During Key Stage 2, pupils learn to assemble components such as metal tubes and salt dough shapes to make wind chimes, or recycled materials to make model vehicles. They develop a range of skills for food production – for example, weighing and mixing – and they follow instructions to make items such as Christmas cakes. During Key Stage 3, pupils learn how to make functional objects such as a notepad from card and picture frames using salt dough and wood. Pupils become increasingly able to investigate existing products, and they develop their awareness of how things are made and how they work. They continue to prepare food, and they learn about basic nutrition and the importance of healthy eating. A small number of pupils are starting to attend lessons at a mainstream school.

117

118 During Key Stage 4, pupils' work in food technology is externally accredited through a unit awards scheme, and pupils have opportunities to gain certificates in basic food hygiene and in health and safety. Pupils' knowledge of nutrition increases, and they practise food preparation skills. They become aware of systems of industrial food production, and of the importance of controls within these systems – for example, concerning storage temperature and portion size. Pupils take part in an engineering course at the local college, where they gain experience of the use of powered tools and work with materials such as metal, which the school is unable to offer. The Key Stage 4 curriculum makes a good contribution to preparing pupils for their lives beyond school, as it is firmly rooted in the workplace and further education.

118

119 In the small number of lessons seen, pupils' attitudes were good overall. They enjoy practical activities, follow instructions carefully, and try hard to succeed. Pupils in Key Stage 4 are confident to answer questions and they listen well to other pupils' responses. Pupils' behaviour is good and they use resources responsibly. Some would benefit from opportunities to be more independent – for example, by exercising more choice over the resources they use.

119

120 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well prepared and teachers and support assistants go to great lengths to acquire necessary resources. However, the purpose of activities is sometimes unclear: what particular skills or knowledge are teachers intending pupils to learn? Very good attention is paid to safety and food hygiene. Lessons and activities often provide little scope for pupils to go beyond assembly tasks or the development of practical making skills. There is insufficient attention paid to teaching skills of designing, planning and evaluating. This was also a criticism in the previous inspection report.

120

121 The facilities for food technology have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.

121

**Geography**

115 It was possible to see very few lessons during the inspection. However, there is sufficient evidence to show that pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 2 and 3. Geography is not taught to pupils at Key Stage 4.

116 During Key Stage 2, pupils learn about the weather and some of its effects, such as weathering of the landscape. They become aware of the effects of erosion caused through wind, ice and rivers. They learn that rubbish can pollute the environment and they start to understand the effects of pollution and, in particular, how industrial pollution affects rivers. They also know that rubbish and waste can be recycled and used positively.

- 117 During Key Stage 3, pupils study settlements, and learn how the introduction of the railways allowed the population to be more mobile and led to the development of railway towns, seaside towns and ports. This knowledge is reinforced through a study of public transport and pupils' involvement in a traffic census. Their understanding and knowledge of maps increases and pupils develop their ability to interpret maps, use simple map references and understand and describe map symbols. Older pupils use their skills to study the tourist regions of Italy. They learn facts about the different regions of the country, so that they can describe some of the geographical attributes of each.
- 118 Although pupils at Key Stage 4 are not taught geography at school, they successfully follow a 'Leisure and Tourism' course at a local college, which enhances their geographical skills and their knowledge, including that of their own locality.
- 119 Pupils' attitudes toward geography are good. They are interested, well behaved and concentrate for long periods of time. They listen carefully and follow instructions well. When faced with difficulties, they persevere to complete their work, and if necessary, they ask for help in an appropriate way. They work at a good pace, offer sensible ideas, and take pride in their work.
- 120 In Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers are well prepared, have good knowledge of their subject and pupils, and ensure work is graded to match pupils' attainment. Questions are used well to draw out, and extend pupils' knowledge. Teachers praise and encourage pupils, motivating them effectively. Learning support assistants are targeted effectively at those pupils with most need. Teachers and support assistants work well together, creating an effective working environment.

## **History**

- 121 During the inspection, only one lesson was observed, but there is sufficient evidence to judge that pupils make satisfactory progress in history. History is not taught to pupils at Key Stage 4.
- 122 During Key Stage 2, pupils learn about the Ancient Egyptians. They find out about the age of the pyramids, how they were constructed, the materials used and why. They make useful links with their work on three-dimensional shapes in mathematical lessons. Pupils learn facts such as that the Egyptians wrote in hieroglyphics on papyrus. They reinforce their knowledge by using pictures and symbols of their own to write a story and by modelling masks of Tutankhamen.
- 123 During Key Stage 3, pupils study the North American Indians. They learn the skills needed to compare aspects of their lives, such as food, housing, clothing, and family life, with white Americans of today. Through learning about Victorian England, pupils come to appreciate that many children had a hard life – for example, working as chimney sweeps, and that this did not improve until the law was changed. They become increasingly aware that the introduction of steam engines, steam ships and railway engines, had a positive impact on the life of the Victorians. They learn the names of famous engineers, such as Brunel and Stephenson, and about examples of their work.
- 124 Pupils' attitude to history are good. There are good relationships in classes. Pupils sustain their efforts and concentration. They ask relevant questions about their topics and older pupils in Key Stage 3 respond sensitively to some aspects of their work. For example, when watching a video about conscription in the First World War, pupils expressed their concerns about the unfair treatment of some men when applying to the tribunal to be considered for exemption, and discussed the issue of being a conscientious objector.
- 125 In the lesson seen in Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching was good. Teachers have a sound subject knowledge and work is well matched to the attainment of pupils. There is good use of learning support assistants, who are targeted effectively to work with pupils with most need. Question and

answer techniques are used particularly well with lower attaining pupils, who are allowed more time to answer. Similarly, there is effective use of work sheets matched to pupils' needs.

### 132 **Modern foreign language**

126 Pupils make good progress in French at Key Stages 3 and 4. During Key Stage 3, pupils learn to greet each other in French and to respond appropriately, introducing themselves by name. They develop a basic social vocabulary and are able to use words and phrases such as 'S'il vous plait', 'Merci', and 'Bonjour' in an appropriate way. Higher attaining pupils are very quick to recognise spoken words, are improving their accent, and can express their likes and dislikes of school subjects in French.

127 During Key Stage 4, pupils make progress in their ability to order food and drink, describe the weather, express their opinions about school subjects and describe someone's home, in French. They are motivated to make progress by being assessed for an accredited certificate of achievement in French.

128 Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy their French lessons and take part enthusiastically in the spoken activities. They behave well and practise their language sensibly in pairs, showing interest in each other's conversation. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and each other and are confident in their attempts to speak.

129 The teaching of French is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory, sometimes good, enabling an appropriate use of French in the lessons. Visual aids, especially television programmes, are used to good effect to prompt question and answer sessions. The expectations of pupils are high, but they are enabled to respond at their own level of ability. The management of pupils is good. All pupils are included in the activities provided for them by being asked to respond in French only at their own level of ability. There has been some improvement in the teaching of French since the last inspection and in the progress of pupils at Key Stage 3, some of whom were reported to be underachieving.

### 136 **Music**

130 Progress is satisfactory at Key Stages 2 and 3. Music is not taught to pupils at Key Stage 4. During Key Stage 2, pupils learn to sing action songs, and to join in singing willingly and with enthusiasm. They develop their ability to sing rounds, begin to identify musical instruments, naming them and describing the sounds they make. During Key Stage 3, pupils improve their ability to clap to a beat or rhythm, responding to instructions to clap quickly or slowly, loudly or quietly, and to play a percussion instrument to taped musical accompaniment. They learn to identify a range of different types of music – for example, popular, orchestral or brass. Pupils become increasingly able to listen to and discuss music, by composers such as Holst, Gilbert and Sullivan and Copland. They are beginning to describe music in terms of pitch and tempo.

131 Pupils' attitude to music is always good. They are keen to participate, enthusiastic, pleased to demonstrate and willingly perform to their class or to the whole school. There are good relationships in classes: pupils support each other and are quick to celebrate each other's successes.

132 Teaching at Key Stage 3 is good. It is effectively planned, with clear objectives. Lessons are well organised and enthusiastically taught. Pupils are managed well. A brisk pace is maintained, through well timed changes of activities. The quality of the teamwork between teachers and support assistants is good and has a positive effect on the progress pupils make. Music makes an effective contribution to pupils' cultural development – for example, the Irish music concert during the inspection week.

## 139 **Physical education**

- 133 Pupils make good progress. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop a range of climbing, balancing, jumping, bouncing and crawling skills using the gymnastics equipment in the school hall. Higher attaining pupils are able to extend their skills and make further progress by using the apparatus in increasingly creative ways, such as adding a forward roll to a jumping activity. Lower attaining pupils progress by making increasing use of the apparatus with adult support.
- 134 During Key Stage 3, pupils make good progress in developing their ball skills from throwing and catching exercises through to playing in a ball game using the techniques they have learned. Higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 3 have attainments in line with national averages for their age group. These include four Key Stage 3 pupils who make good progress in physical education lessons at a local mainstream primary school. Their achievements in a range of fitness exercises, are within the range expected of pupils of their age, and they join in all activities with enthusiasm.
- 135 No physical education lessons at Key Stage 4 took place during the inspection. Skill checklists and pupil records suggest that pupils make good progress and that some pupils' achievements are within national expectations for their age.
- 136 Pupils at Key Stages 2 and 3 demonstrate good attitudes to learning in physical education lessons, which they all enjoy. All pupils are suitably dressed for the lessons and are enthusiastic to take part in all activities. They wait sensibly for their turn to use apparatus and show patience with each other's efforts in team games. The behaviour of pupils is good and, in Key Stage 3, pupils demonstrate good sportsmanship in team games.
- 137 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, with appropriate warm-up and cooling down sessions. Clear instructions enable pupils to build up their skills progressively throughout lessons. There is an appropriate level of challenge for the pupils, who are encouraged to develop skills at their own level. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with appropriate support when trying out new gymnastics activities. Teachers and support assistants provide good positive reinforcement to encourage pupils to make progress. The management of pupils is good, with suitable concern for their safety.
- 138 Pupils follow a programme of work that provides a good range of gymnastics, games and dance activities. Swimming lessons, using facilities at a local leisure centre, take place in the summer and spring terms. The school hall acts as a gymnasium and provides satisfactory accommodation for indoor physical education. There are good playing field facilities for outdoor games and athletics. The changing facilities, particularly for boys, are barely satisfactory for the numbers of pupils using them.

## 145 **Personal, social and health education**

- 139 Pupils make good progress. Although there is a well structured programme of timetabled lessons, few of these were observed during the inspection. Additionally, a number of subjects contribute to pupils' progress. In science, pupils learn more about their bodies and the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs. Their work on healthy eating is supported by activities in food technology, where, for example, pupils in Key Stage 3 choose items for a packed lunch. Further, there are now choices on the lunchtime menu, so pupils can practise making decisions about the food they eat. Pupils learn about the importance of personal hygiene and they become increasingly independent as they shower after physical education lessons. All adults encourage pupils to form appropriate relationships and to adapt their behaviour and speech to different social situations. A weakness in the provision is the lack of opportunities for pupils to develop independence – for example, in lessons such as science and design and technology.

- 140 In Key Stage 4, pupils' work is accredited, at levels appropriate to their needs and attainment. The curriculum is highly relevant to their age. For example, pupils are learning to run the school tuck shop; to set up and pack away the goods; to be polite in their dealings with customers; and to handle money. College courses, with opportunities for pupils to interact with students; and work experience placements, further enhance pupils' social skills and personal development. Careers education and guidance are good quality and help to prepare pupils for their lives after school.
- 141 The provision of a good range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to pursue their interests and allow them to develop qualities of responsibility and commitment. During activities such as touchball and in inter-school sports, pupils develop their ability to play as part of a team and to accept rules and decisions.

148      **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

148

**SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 142 A team of four inspectors spent a total of 15 days in the school, gathering first hand evidence. Before the inspection, the inspectors scrutinised many documents provided by the school, and held a meeting to discuss their initial views. The registered inspector met the headteacher, staff and chair and vice-chair of the governing body on a pre-inspection visit.
- 143 A pre-inspection meeting was attended by 19 parents or carers. Their views were taken into account, and responses to the questionnaire were analysed.
- 144 During the inspection, further documents were scrutinised, including teachers' planning, attendance registers, pupils' records, individual education plans, statements and annual review information. Pupils' work, in all subjects, was examined. Displays and the fabric of the building were examined.
- 145 Observations were carried out in 49 lessons. Pupils were heard to read by inspectors. Observations were made during a physical education lesson at a primary school and during lessons at a local college of further education. Pupils were seen at registration, at breaks and arriving and departing, and during lunchtimes. School assemblies were observed, and a video recording of a school performance. A singing practice, lunchtime clubs, and a concert were observed by inspectors. Speech and language therapists were seen at work with pupils.
- 146 Discussions were held with the teaching staff, learning support assistants, the administrative officer and the caretaker. The chair of the governing body was interviewed, as were a speech and language therapist and an educational psychologist. Informal discussions took place with tutors and the deputy principal at the college, and with a parent helper.

153

## **154 DATA AND INDICATORS**

153	<b>Pupil data</b>				
		Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
	Y2 – Y11	45	46	46	15
153	<b>Teachers and classes</b>				
153	<b>Qualified teachers (Y2 – Y11)</b>				
		Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):			5
		Number of pupils per qualified teacher:			9
153	<b>Education support staff (Y2 – Y11)</b>				
		Total number of education support staff:			9
		Total aggregate hours worked each week:			247
		Average class size:			12
153	<b>Financial data</b>				
		Financial year:			1998-99
					£
		Total Income			327303
		Total Expenditure			330716
		Expenditure per pupil			8479.90
		Balance brought forward from previous year			92649
		Balance carried forward to next year			89236



Number of questionnaires sent out: 47

Number of questionnaires returned: 38

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	74	26	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	82	18	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	53	39	5	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	63	37	0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	76	21	0	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	68	26	3	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	76	24	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	53	45	0	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	68	26	3	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	76	18	3	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	79	18	3	0	0

**153 Other issues raised by parents**

Parents are worried that the uncertain future of the school might affect their children's education.