

INSPECTION REPORT

THE CLARE SCHOOL

Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121261

Headteacher: Chris Hocking

Reporting inspector: Jed Donnelly
23637

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th June 2000

Inspection number: 188530

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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 School Inspections Act 1996, 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 SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Sensory impaired
Age range of pupils:	3 to 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	South Park Avenue Norwich Norfolk
Postcode:	NR4 7AU
Telephone number:	01603 454199
Fax number:	01603 250736
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr M J. Mc Ewen
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Jed Donnelly	Registered inspector	Art, Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school? The school's results and pupils' achievements? Teaching and learning? Leadership and management? Key Issues for action
Jeanette Reid	Lay inspector	Provision for pupils in the sixth form	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development? Partnership with parents and carers?
Michael Holohan	Team inspector	Science, Religious education	Pupils' welfare, health and safety
Katy Khan	Team inspector	Design and technology, Information and communication technology	
Roger Parry	Team inspector	Mathematics, Geography, History	
Christine Richardson	Team inspector	English, Modern foreign languages, Music, Areas for learning for children in the foundation stage	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

The inspection contractor was:

Capital Inspections
Chaucer Buildings
Canterbury Road
Morden
Surrey
SM4 6PX

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Clare School is a mixed day special school for up to 110 pupils from 3 to 19 years of age, with special educational needs, usually associated with physical disabilities and/or sensory impairments. It is situated in the south of Norwich and pupils attending The Clare School come from the County of Norfolk and parts of Suffolk. Currently there are 96 pupils on roll with a wide variety of complex special needs. Many of the pupils have multiple difficulties and the nature of the intake has changed over the last few years with a significant and growing number of pupils having visual impairments, hearing impairments or multi-sensory impairments.

On admission, most pupils are working towards Level 1 in the National Curriculum and have learning difficulties of varying degrees. There are nine pupils under six years of age, all of whom are in the reception class. Fifteen per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and all pupils have statements of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Clare School is a very successful school. In relation to prior attainment, pupils make good progress in the core subjects of the National Curriculum and some pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 make very good progress. Pupils' progress in personal development and in independence skills is also very good. Pupils benefit from good teaching and often very good teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4. The leadership and management of the school is very good and the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress overall and often very good progress in relation to prior attainment.
- Teaching is good overall and very good at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Very good leadership and management by the headteacher, ably supported by the senior management team.
- A very good and relevant curriculum.
- Overall care and support of the pupils, which includes multi-agency staff, is very good.
- The role of the welfare assistants in teaching and learning is very effective.

What could be improved

- The effectiveness of the upper and lower school subject co-ordinators by extending their role to include monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning across the school.
 - Aspects of the accommodation which include:
 - the mobile classroom for multi-disabled pupils; *
 - toilet facilities for 16+ and Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils; *
 - a covered under-five outdoor play area.
 - increase the number of automatic doors for pupils' use. *
 - the hall is too small for Key Stages 3 and 4 team games.
- * These areas are identified in the School Development Plan.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall the school has made good progress since the last inspection, in particular in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, the sixth form provision and information and communication technology. Although satisfactory progress has been made in elements of design and technology and religious education, the school recognises these subjects are areas for further development as identified in the School Development Plan. The capacity for the school to improve further is very good.

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 11	by age 16	by age 19	Key
speaking and listening	B	B	B	B	very good A
Reading	B	B	B	B	good B
Writing	B	B	B	B	satisfactory C
Mathematics	B	B	B	B	unsatisfactory D
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	A	poor E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B	B	

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

Pupils make good progress against their targets in their individual education plans and some make very good progress. The curriculum is very relevant to the needs of the pupils and builds effectively on each key stage. At the end of Key Stage 4, external accreditation is available in nearly all subjects. A few pupils are working in line with national expectations in science. The sensory curriculum ensures multi-sensory impaired pupils progress very well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy their work and are well motivated. They show interest and respond to the teachers challenge.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall behaviour is very good. Pupils are friendly and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils show a high level of mutual respect to each other.
Attendance	Attendance is good overall. Pupils like coming to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very good	Good

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

Teaching is good overall. Teaching is often very good at Key Stages 3 and 4, where pupils are taught for the most part by subject specialist teachers. This has a positive effect on the progress they make. High expectations by teachers and very good knowledge of the pupils' needs are good features.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides very good curriculum overall with a broad range of interesting and stimulating opportunities for learning. The range of therapies and specialist teaching skills for pupils with sensory impairment make a particularly significant contribution to the curriculum through the level of support provided.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Active participation in the local community extends the experiences of all pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are excellent. The contribution made by the support staff and other multi-agency staff is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher, ably supported by the senior management team is very good. The headteacher and senior management team monitor teaching throughout the school. The current procedures by subject co-ordinators in the upper and lower school is not fully focused on the monitoring of teaching.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The Governing Body is well organised, well informed and know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and meet all statutory requirements. They provide a good direction to the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The procedures for target setting and reviews of pupils' progress are very good. The school improvement plan is very detailed and monitors the work of the school effectively and is a driving force.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of its available resources. The Governing Body have a very good knowledge and understanding of getting best value from the finances delegated to the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's enjoyment of the school. • Pupils' very good behaviour. • The quality of teaching. • The school's expectation that pupils will work hard and achieve their best. • The good leadership and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of more activities outside lessons. • Information from therapists at the annual review. • More information to help parents support their child's learning. • The amount of homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- The characteristics of the pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge their attainment against age-related national expectations or averages. The report, does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do in each key stage. Judgements about progress and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements and annual reviews. References to more and less able pupils and those with additional needs are made within the context of the school's population.*
- For those children in the foundation stage the development of skills and understanding in language and literacy is good. Children effectively develop their interaction and communication, understanding routines, events and activities during the day. Children gain mathematical ideas and an understanding of the language of mathematics appropriately as they sort the different sized combs and straws in the box, feel how small some of the stickle bricks are and how big others are when they try to fix them together. They are developing an understanding and recognition of more and numbers one to five. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well. Children are developing a good understanding of cause and effect. They enjoy their work and show their pleasure with smiles, when they realise that they have some control over what is happening around them. Children are developing appropriately with regard to physical control and mobility. There is very good support from, and liaison with, the physiotherapy and occupational therapists, who work on individual programmes in the classroom, the light room and in the physiotherapy department. This has a clear impact on pupils' learning and levels of awareness. Children's creative development is good and occurs through a well-planned programme of experiences. They have many opportunities to explore materials and develop their sensory and tactile skills.
- In English, pupils' progress in all four key stages, and at post-16, is good and is an improvement on the previous report when it was considered to be satisfactory and sometimes good. The progress is much influenced by the good teaching of the subject, the flexible introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the range of accredited courses for post-16 students. These are supported very well by the teachers of pupils with sensory and multi-sensory impairment and the work of the speech and language therapists. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good overall and pupils improve them as they move through the school. Pupils enjoy using the words they learn. Some pupils contribute to discussions with nods, make eye contact, or use an aid to say, "Yes" to questions. Others watch a teacher who is signing to them very intently so that they join in appropriately. In answer to the skilful questioning of the teacher, pupils in Key Stage 4 express opinions about advertisements, critically and logically. Pupils achieve well in reading in relation to their prior attainment and often make good progress towards their targets. Pupils' progress towards their targets in writing is good over time. Pupils with higher prior attainment write stories and poems, making good use of the computer to present their work. In Key Stage 3 pupils write independently in science and in English lessons. They create lists; write reports or detail information they have found in books. They write for a range of purposes. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate good learning and a very positive response to the subject. They try hard and show interest in the activities provided for them. They take pleasure in their success and want to contribute to discussions, even when this requires much physical effort on their part. Pupils concentrate very well even when there are distractions.
- Standard in mathematics are much improved since the previous inspection in 1996. Pupils enter the school with low attainments, but all achieve well in relation to those attainments and individual targets set by teachers. They make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 4 and the sixth form pupils succeed in gaining GCSE pass grades in mathematics or bronze, silver or gold levels in the Certificate of Achievement in mathematics. Some achieve both. All pupils entered for examinations in recent years have obtained at least a pass grade, and a small number gain distinctions in the Certificate of Achievement. Students following Skillpower and GNVQ foundation level courses in the sixth form continue to improve their numeracy skills as an assessed part of the core provision. By the end of Key Stage 1 higher attaining pupils can identify shapes with four. sides. At Key Stage 2 higher attaining pupils handle money to calculate using addition and subtraction. Their ability to measure substances in litres or centimetres is limited, but they use appropriate operations to solve simple problems. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils use mathematics for investigations with some confidence. They obtain accurate information about each other, for example, by measuring height. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils identify and name a number of three- dimensional objects, such as a *sphere*

and a *cylinder*. They understand the two-dimensional shapes produced when an object is seen from a 'bird's eye view', and they know this is called a *plan*. Lower attaining pupils use estimation to re-organise the classroom so the furniture fits in. Higher attaining sixth form students undertake detailed investigations applying their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills.

5. Overall, pupils' achievements in science are good, for older pupils achievement is very good culminating in their successes at GCSE and in the Certificate of Educational Achievement. Up to the age of seven pupils with sensory difficulties use tactile methods to note changes in the growth of plants and, together with higher attaining pupils, experience the effects of forces such as pushing and pulling. The introduction of the scientific skills of observation and recording enable pupils to make good progress. By the age of eleven, through the use of tactile methods for those pupils with sensory impairment, and by close observation of changes in material and plants for the higher achieving pupils, all are making good progress in the ability to draw conclusions from the observation of changes in plants and animals. Higher attaining pupils are also beginning to be able to record scientific data. By the age of fourteen pupils have developed a scientific vocabulary and are able to recognise cause and effect in areas such as the development of the food chain, realising how they can be effected by pollution. Pupils make very good progress in their ability to analyse data and display it in graphical form. By the age of sixteen pupils make very good progress in areas such as the refraction and reflection of light. Higher attaining pupils are performing at GCSE level and demonstrate this by their ability to plan experiments and to apply the principal of the "fair test" when comparing data. Sixth form pupils make very good progress in their scientific work on health and hygiene showing maturity and insight in their work on healthy living and sex education.
6. In design and technology and art pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 and good or very good progress at Key Stages 3 and 4. In geography, pupils enter the school with low attainment but their achievement is good in relation to prior attainment and they make good progress in meeting their individual targets. Pupils with sensory impairments make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils gain accreditation in two modules of the Certificate of Achievement in geography. This provides continuity for pupils moving into the sixth form when they take a further two modules to gain full accreditation. Their geographical work links with GNVQ Leisure and Tourism. History shows good progress since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment at the end of all key stages. They make good progress, including pupils with additional special educational needs. At the end of Key Stage 4 and the sixth form pupils take the Certificate of Achievement. They are successful and a majority gain merits and distinctions. Pupils also have the opportunity to take GCSE history in addition to the Certificate of Achievement. In information and communication technology, pupils make very good progress overall. All pupils make good progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of French in relation to their prior attainment. Progress in music is good overall and pupils consolidate and extend skills as they move through the school. Pupils' progress in personal development and in independence skills is very good. In physical education pupils make good progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good progress at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form. In religious education, evidence from observations, scrutiny of work and teachers' planning show pupils' achievement to be satisfactory over time although some examples of very good achievement were seen during lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils develop very good attitudes to learning. They show an interest in their work and most are able to sustain concentration. In a Key Stage 4 English lesson where pupils were ordering items from the Internet, the group remained fully focused and showed very good involvement, even when another class passed through the room. Most pupils listen well and are keen to learn. They are very responsive and want to participate. In a Key Stage 3 French lesson where pupils were learning different flavours of ice creams, nearly all very confidently volunteered to name the flavours.
8. Pupils behave very well both in the classroom and around the school. This has a very positive effect on the progress they make. Pupils are aware of the daily routines that create an orderly community. Very little time is lost in movement between lessons. They are friendly and courteous. They respect their own and other peoples' property and the school environment. There have been no exclusions for very many years.

9. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils' relationships with teachers and other adults are very good, and they develop constructive relationships with other pupils; for example, in a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson, where pupils were learning to count using dominoes, there was good collaboration between them to complete the task. Pupils listen to each other's views and respect each other's work. In a Key Stage 3 science lesson where pupils were analysing various foods to demonstrate enzyme action, they worked well together to perform the experiment. Many examples were seen of pupils showing initiative taking responsibility for their own work. In a Key Stage 4 design and technology lesson a pupil was working independently making a box to his own design, applying his creative and intellectual abilities. Pupils feel positively about the school and believe it has helped them in their personal development. As they move up the school many learn the skill of self-advocacy. Pupils of all ethnic groups integrate fully into the school community. Instances of bullying and harassment are very rare.
10. Attendance is good taking into account the complexity of need of many of the pupils. The main reason for absence is medical treatment. Last year unauthorised absence was zero. Pupils arrive punctually to school, and lessons start on time

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. Teaching is very good overall. It is often very good at Key Stages 3 and 4, the sixth form and sometimes excellent.
12. In English, the quality of teaching is good. The teacher and welfare staff understand the needs of young children well and work together as an effective team, planning carefully to provide suitable opportunities for children to learn and develop skills. Individual tasks are planned and organised well with good quality resources and an accurate match of activities to the needs of the child. Staff know the children very well and keep a focus on learning at all times. Full attention is given to each child's targets and individual learning. There is a good balance of activities within the lesson. Therapists work very closely and effectively with the staff and parents. As a result learning is good and Children settle well and enjoy the activities they are offered. They are interested and responsive to adults and are learning to make choices.
13. In mathematics, the quality of teaching is good overall. In eight out of ten lessons teaching is good or better, and in over a quarter of lessons it is very good or better, including excellent teaching in one lesson. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. The best teaching is at Key Stage 4. No teaching was seen in the sixth form but analysis of students' work and discussion with students indicates good quality learning. In the best teaching teachers planned their lessons to include whole class introduction of a topic followed by thoughtfully graded group tasks that engage pupils' curiosity. Towards the end of lessons pupils share and consolidate learning as a class. Homework is part of the lesson planning, especially at Key Stage 4, and this reinforces learning. Teachers use methods that aim to develop independent learning skills. In a lesson with a lower attaining class (Key Stage 4) the teacher used 'legs' to focus pupils' attention on *two* familiar objects. With a jovial and animated delivery the teacher kept pupils motivated and interested. She directed questions personally to each pupil to keep them alert. The class gradually learned that adding by two produces a *two times table*. The teacher placed models of cartoon characters on a table with enough noise for a pupil with visual impairment to count the sounds. In whole class sessions the pace is lively with very good sharp questions. They know pupils' needs and targets very well and work with teachers to meet lesson objectives. Those who sign for pupils with sensory impairment play an important part in clearing the way for pupils to achieve on their own. This underpins the work of all welfare assistants and teachers. Weaknesses occur occasionally in otherwise satisfactory lessons in Key Stage 2. When for instance the teacher fails to share the lesson objectives with a class they remain unaware of the learning goals. Lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils is also seen very occasionally. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to check the accuracy of pupils' methods by listening to them explain their strategies; for example, when they use calculators for addition, asking how they know the answer is correct would reveal the extent of pupils' understanding.

14. In science, the quality of teaching is good overall and very good for secondary aged pupils. All teaching is carefully planned so that each pupil receives a range of experiences during the lesson. To ensure that pupils learn effectively, welfare staff are well informed about their roles and resources are both sufficient and appropriate. Pupils are clear about the purpose of the lessons and questioning is used well to both consolidate and develop learning. Whilst all teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory, the use of a subject specialist in the upper school, ably supported by a well qualified technician, means that the use of questioning and the set work is more challenging and pupils are encouraged to work independently. The staffs' knowledge of the additional needs of the sensory impaired and other pupils with additional needs ensures their full integration into science lessons. A lesson on magnetism for older pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties characterised this approach through the adaptation of the practical work to the needs of each individual pupil.
15. In information and communication technology, teaching is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Most staff are technically competent, plan effectively and set clear objectives which pupils understand. Methods are used which enable all pupils to learn effectively; this is particularly evident with pupils who have additional needs. Support staff are used to encourage pupils' learning and work towards supporting their independence. Visually impaired pupils have programs which are being made accessible through sound adaptation; for example, some pupils are given opportunities to access the curriculum through devising and experimenting with head, hand and body switches.
16. The quality of teaching for children under-five is good. The teacher and welfare staff understand the needs of young children well and work together as an effective team, planning carefully to provide suitable opportunities for children to learn and develop skills. Individual tasks are planned and organised well with good quality resources and an accurate match of activities to the needs of the child. Staff know the children very well and keep a focus on learning at all times. Full attention is given to each child's targets and individual learning. Therapists work very closely and effectively with the staff and parents. As a result learning is good and Children settle well and enjoy the activities they are offered. They are interested and responsive to adults and are learning to make choices.
17. Teaching in the other subjects overall is always satisfactory but often better in the upper school. Teachers' subject knowledge has a significant, positive impact on pupils' learning in the upper school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills throughout the curriculum is a positive feature; for example, in physical education for younger pupils, the re-reinforcement of ordinal number and colour recognition and for older pupils, the use of a tape measure to re-reinforce concepts of measurement and recording. The good use of signs, symbols and objects of references for sensory impaired pupils ensures full access to the curriculum and to the progress they make. Other subjects like science and art contribute to pupils' speaking and literacy skills through discussion and problem solving.
18. The planning of lessons is good and the use of questioning to elicit pupils' response is effective; for example, in art at Key Stage 4 where pupils were challenged about the lives of famous artists. Pupils responded by offering the further knowledge required to satisfy the teacher.
19. As pupils progress through the school they are continually challenged and inspired by the variety of teaching styles used to engage their interest. As a result pupils are stimulated and eager to learn. Good lessons are characterised by pace and enthusiasm for the subject; for example, in humanities, to encourage pupils to question the evidence they handle and ask them to look for clues in black and white photographs of Great Yarmouth to indicate if they are new or old.
20. Homework is used effectively; for example, when pupils were asked to research inventions such as a megaphones and in the upper school in history, to use notebooks to help pupils record and learn new words.
21. Even where lessons are satisfactory; weaknesses in time management where lessons overrun or where the material provided for learning lacks challenge or spark, means pupils are not fully on task.
22. Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The good teaching of pupils with multi-sensory impairment is a feature of the school and pupils' equal opportunities are fully met.

23. Assessment of pupils' work is thorough and used to inform future planning. The use of information and communication technology is particularly effective and contributes to the good progress pupils make.

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

24. The school's curriculum is very good. The school provides a very broad range of interesting and stimulating opportunities for learning. These include a wide range of musical and artistic experiences, going out into the community and very good provision for pupils with sensory and multi-sensory impairment. A range of therapies, including speech and language, physiotherapy and occupational therapy is available to meet pupils' specific needs. These make a significant contribution to the curriculum through the level of support provided. In English and mathematics the use of a coherent, consistent and effective approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy actively promotes good communication skills and fosters very good personal and social development. The school has introduced a modified Literacy Hour very effectively and the Numeracy Strategy is being introduced well throughout the school.
25. The curriculum shows a good balance of subjects and activities, and takes careful account of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, the Desirable Outcomes for Learning for young children and accredited courses for pupils in the sixth form. Statutory requirements, including the provision of religious education, are met. All subjects receive appropriate consideration in ways that allow pupils to build on their previous knowledge, understanding and learning. Themes within the curriculum are planned well so that different subjects may contribute and be fully explored; for example, a text about the Greeks is studied in Literacy, life in ancient and modern Greece is investigated in geography and history, and in art and music pupils learn about Greek culture.
26. The curriculum for the youngest pupils is very appropriately founded on the Desirable Outcomes for Learning. The work is planned carefully to provide a well-balanced, relevant curriculum that takes account of the individual needs of each child. The good range and breadth of activities offers pupils the opportunity to develop a broad range of skills and provides a good foundation for their future learning.
27. The school has been highly effective in responding to the findings of the previous inspections. All of the issues raised have been dealt with effectively. There is now a well-balanced and relevant curriculum for the post-16 group who have good opportunities to study for accredited qualifications. The school makes every opportunity to provide work experience placement in the sixth form, where this is appropriate. Careers guidance is very effectively planned. It is organised in conjunction with the local Careers Service and begins at Year 9. All pupils have career interviews and benefit from a career plan.
28. Pupils with additional difficulties, including those with hearing and visual impairment, have full and equal access to the curriculum because their needs are met through the very good quality of the teachers' planning and the highly effective support provided by the Sensory Support Centre. Pupils with sensory difficulties are very well supported in classes through a combination of skilled teaching and the very effective work of the welfare staff whose work with the pupils is of a very high calibre.
29. The proficient use of signing and of objects of reference to support pupils' communication and understanding ensures that they make good progress across the curriculum and especially in literacy.
30. The promotion and development of pupils' personal, social and health education is at the forefront of the school's work. There are very good programmes for sex, drugs and health education within the curriculum, sex education being taught where appropriate in personal and social education or science lessons. Role-play is a regular feature of formal personal, social and health education lessons and the curriculum is sufficiently flexible to enable issues raised by the pupils to be included. The school's accreditation to the Healthy Norfolk Schools' Award is an indication of the success and strength of this element of the school's curriculum.
31. Equality of access to, and opportunity within, the curriculum has a high priority within the school. The school ensures that the needs of all pupils are met and that they have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and opportunities to succeed in them. They have a high expectation that the curriculum will meet the diverse nature of the special educational needs of the pupils at Clare School. Arrangements and activities which are woven into the basic curriculum, such as school visits, inclusion and therapy programmes are carefully planned, monitored. An appropriate balance is maintained between addressing the individual needs

of pupils and their right to a broad and balanced curriculum which provides the essential special needs support. In these ways, the school reinforces the relevance of its provision for individual pupils very effectively and children feel safe and able to concentrate on their learning.

32. The ability of the school to promote extra-curricular activities is restricted by the need for pupils to travel on home-school transport. However, the school makes very good use of the community by using the parks, museums and local facilities. Visits further a field have included residential trips to France, the Lake District and Rotherhithe, where pupils have sometimes stayed in Youth Hostels. These visits provide very good opportunities for personal and social development. All of the visits are carefully planned to reinforce specific areas of the curriculum and the provision is further enhanced by the presence of visitors in the school who come to talk about their interests, their work and their experiences.
33. The school has continued to develop its links with other mainstream and special schools. Some pupils visit other schools regularly; for example, for science activities or social inclusion. All staff have regular contact with members of mainstream schools who teach the same subjects. The school is currently planning to extend its arrangements for inclusion and its contacts with other schools through the Internet. Pupils from other secondary schools come on work experience placements and students from local colleges work in the school regularly.
34. The school's curriculum is greatly enriched by the school's extensive links with the community. Purposeful links with the community make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. The school has sporting, musical and artistic links with groups in Norwich and participation in community events such as the carol service at the cathedral is particularly welcome.
35. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It is much improved since the last inspection when it was a key issue. A senior teacher takes overall responsibility for overseeing routines and provision. It is undertaken with thoroughness and sensitivity, and contributes much to the school ethos. There is a clear school policy and guidance is provided for how each subject may contribute to pupils' development in these areas.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The headteacher gives a weekly theme for reflection. This is displayed on a notice board outside the main hall. It is aimed to focus the thoughts of pupils and adults on a theme such as *courage* or *caring*. During the inspection the theme was *'lost sheep'*. The display included a quotation from Jesus' parable with key words in Braille, and tactile objects such as a shepherd's crook and wool so pupils with visual impairment shared the theme. This theme formed the basis of assemblies during the week. These are meaningful occasions with appropriate opportunities given to reflect on the impact of natural disasters, such as flooding, on people's homes and lives. Lessons also give time for pupils to consider some of the fundamental issues of life. In a sixth form personal and social education lesson students reflected on rights and responsibilities. They believed education and employment were important rights for everyone, and that all people have responsibilities for caring for the less fortunate.
37. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Much of the content of assemblies conveys moral messages; for example, pupils show great generosity towards helping others through charitable donations. Recently they decided to help the children of Mozambique devastated by flooding. The head teacher read a letter of thanks to the pupils in an assembly from the charity organisers that conveyed to pupils appreciation for their compassion. Pupils strongly reflect the school's simple Code of Conduct in their everyday actions, and their sense of right and wrong. This is well supported by a good pastoral team in each class. Pupils behave with much courtesy and consideration for each other and adults. Adults are excellent models of civil and caring people. The school aims to be 'a community that cares for itself' and it is very successful in meeting this ideal. Pupils genuinely celebrate the success of each other. In a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2 the teacher spoke of each pupil's achievement in the lesson. A pupil was seen to turn to another pupil with severe physical and speech impairment, who recognised two dots on a domino, and whisper "Well done!"
38. The school provides many very good opportunities for pupils to engage in social and cultural activities. There are links with the Theatre Royal, Norwich for filmmaking and sporting events arranged by Norwich City Football Club. Teachers arrange numerous visits to support the curriculum such as visits to the Cathedral for historical work, and to Great Yarmouth for geography. These visits provide evidence of Britain's cultural heritage. A long-standing link with the City of London Sinfonia gives pupils the chance to hear top orchestral instrumentalists in the school. Proximity to the Sainsbury Centre at the University of East

Anglia gives pupils experience of world art dating from 4000 BC. These visits also develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures. During a recent activities week the focus was on the culture of North American Indians, and pupils had the chance to make *dream catchers* and *tepees*. A multi-cultural One World Day was shared with the Colman School. Artistes were present from many different cultures, performing music, dance and mime.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school has very good policies for ensuring the pupils' welfare and excellent child protection procedures. Annual training ensures that all staff have appropriate professional knowledge and are alert to signs of possible abuse and know the set procedures. A noteworthy feature is the specialist training provided for staff with responsibility for pupils with sensory impairment. The need to ensure that safety of all pupils is fully understood by all staff. Risk assessments are completed for areas of the curriculum where they are necessary. All staff have received high quality training in the manual handling of pupils
40. Teachers and welfare staff know pupils very well and have a clear understanding of their individual needs. Teaching and other agency staff work together extremely well which means that information relating to pupils needs is discussed and programmes carefully implemented. The school works extremely well with a range of health authority and educational support staff. The work of occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech therapists and sensory support staff plays a significant part in the progress of pupils. Very good support is provided for pupils with hearing and/or visual impairment and has clearly helped these pupils' make good progress in all areas of the curriculum. Care plans are well developed, carefully monitored and regularly updated.
41. The nursing staff provide effective support in relevant areas of the curriculum, such as sex education. Their role in running a "drop in" clinic for pupils is an example of the school's ethos as both caring but also empowering pupils to make decisions for themselves.
42. The in-school Sensory Support Centre is used very well. The role of staff is very well focused on the needs of pupils with hearing or visual impairment. The combination of imaginative management, high quality training and a shared commitment to high standards ensures that the Centre plays a pivotal role in the delivery of the curriculum and the personal development of sensory impaired pupils.
43. The school; provides very good educational and personal support and guidance for its pupils. The emphasis on establishing very good relationships with pupils and ensuring that older pupils are treated in an age appropriate way is a feature of the school and results in pupils showing both increasing initiative and maturity. There is a very good personal, social and health education programme, which is closely matched to the needs of the pupils and is delivered in a sensitive and supportive manner.
44. The school has very good procedures for the monitoring of behaviour. The ethos of the school, characterised by an approach, which places a high value on each pupil, combined with an interest and concern for their welfare, results in very good behaviour. Behaviour management programmes are detailed and implemented well. Staff have received high quality training in the handling of pupils and pupils who may display challenging behaviour are managed consistently. The ethos of the school also ensures that incidents of bullying are very rare. Clear procedures for dealing with such incidents are in place.
45. The school has comprehensive procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic progress. The development of skills sheets for literacy and numeracy enable the setting of high quality targets for the pupils' education plans. This consistency of approach is important in contributing to pupils' progress.
46. The school has been very successful in meeting the judgements of the previous inspection report and provides opportunities for the pupils to successfully develop in a caring and supportive environment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Overall parents are very satisfied with the school. They find the school welcoming and say that the staff are approachable and do an excellent job. Nearly all said that the school expects the children to work hard and achieve their best. They say they are well informed about how their child is progressing, both academically and non-academically. A few parents thought the school could work more closely with them by giving them

formal feedback from therapists at the annual review, and involving them more in their child's learning. The inspection team's findings partially support the first point, but found that very good informal and often formal feedback is given to parents by therapists when they attend the very regular clinics. Overall the team found that it is more difficult for parents of children in the senior school to be involved in their child's work at home. Parents of

Children in the Infants and Junior School receive detailed information about what their child is currently studying. However there is no such regular information in the senior school. There is also no information on how parents can support their child's learning in literacy and numeracy. The school is aware of these shortcomings and has plans to consult with parents in focus groups. A few parents were unhappy about the provision of activities outside lessons. The inspection team's findings did not support this. Within the context of the wide area that the school covers, the school arranges a variety of activities including sailing, various trips out such as to the toy library and animal centre, riding for the disabled, and a residential visit to France.

48. The school has good links with parents. The school provides clear and detailed information to parents about their child's progress, particularly in English and mathematics, at the annual review and open meetings. Parents are involved in setting the targets for the next year, and the next phase of learning is clearly identified. The headteacher follows up those parents who do not attend the annual review by holding a telephone discussion. Parents have copies of their child's termly individual education plan. The home/school books are used effectively. The quality of general information is good. Since the last inspection the school has introduced a regular newsletter, which tells of achievements and social events clearly and concisely.
49. The impact of parents' involvement with the work of the school is good. Parents help in the school if they are able. Parental participation in the annual review, open evenings and school events is good. They were consulted about the home/school contract and ideas for the school improvement plan. The Parents, Staff and Friends Association has recently been reformed and provides a full programme of social events for parents and children, which are well attended.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management by the headteacher is very good. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in improving teaching, learning and achievements of pupils. Very good progress has been made in pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and in information and communication technology. Very good leadership by senior teachers including the deputy head together with the good learning environment, have a positive impact on the pupils' very good attitudes to school. There is a very good commitment to further school improvement by the current staff team.
51. The headteacher and senior management team monitors teaching across the school and formally meets with teachers to discuss the lesson and agree strategies for further development. All staff have personal development plans which are regularly reviewed and together with subject action plans have helped to raise standards. Currently the upper and lower school co-ordinators do not monitor the quality of teaching in their subject across the school and this is a shortcoming.
52. The School Management Plan brings together in one impressive document the school's planning over a three-year period. It includes the School Improvement Plan for developing the curriculum, resources, and fabric of the school. The Plan includes costs, and staff and governors monitor and evaluate progress and outcomes. It is the culmination of extensive consultation between the senior management team, governors, and parents. The Governing Body is effective and delegates regular monitoring of the budget to a Finance Committee, but is kept fully informed of decisions. Governors meet all statutory requirements and fulfil their duties in a highly responsible way. They receive up-to-date computer generated financial statements from the head teacher. With this information they ask probing questions of the school's management and have a clear knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
53. There is a very good programme for the induction of all staff in the school. Learning support assistants have specialist training in restraint, first aid and often multi-sensory impairment. There are staff who are able to use Braille and British Sign Language to promote pupils' learning within the school. The appraisal system

for teaching staff incorporates both monitoring and evaluation in conjunction with personal development plans which the headteacher reviews on a termly basis.

54. The school has an appropriate match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Subject specialists in the upper school make a significant contribution to pupils' progress.

55. The school has satisfactory accommodation to deliver the full curriculum. Strengths include the new Christine Johnson physiotherapy facilities, the sensory garden and a separate block for the 6th form pupils. Areas, which need to be considered for development, include the lack of a specialist design and technology room and the condition of the senior toilets. The turning circle is satisfactory at present but will need enlarging if the school roll increases to maintain the health and safety of pupils. The mobiles on site are inappropriate for pupils in such a school. The ramps are facing the wrong way and there is a lack of covered walkways for pupils who get cold as a result. The lack of automatic doors has an impact on the independence of pupils. There is no hydrotherapy pool or covered outdoor play area for the under fives which has an impact on the physical aspects of their development. Handrails are placed along all corridors with markers for visually impaired pupils. All radiators have protective guards on them. There is a separate area for recharging wheelchairs and a food technology room with adjustable sinks and cookers in some bays.

56. Resources in the school are good. There are several computers, communication aids, a colour photocopier which assists in the production of differentiated materials for the visually impaired pupils and a library located in the sensory block for staff which is well stocked. The digital cameras have had a significant impact on pupils' access to the curriculum in school. There is a sensory room with opti-kinetic projector, bubble tubes and vibrating waterbed. Good use is made of the kiln. The library has Internet access and is stocked with books. Many books are kept in classrooms in order to facilitate ease of access for pupils. There are plans to increase the number of books 'on screen' and extend the use of video taped stories for pupils. The school makes very good strategic use of resources.

57. High staffing costs continue to dominate the expenditure of the school, but the governors believe strongly that the particular needs of pupils at Clare School benefit from this level of teaching and welfare staff. Governors monitor the outcomes in terms of pupils' development and levels of independence, and continue to see staffing levels justified. This leaves a very tight budget for other areas of provision. This is very prudently managed by the head teacher to give an appropriate surplus to meet capital items and contingencies. He receives very good support in aspects of financial control and administration from the school secretary and subject co-ordinators. The last local authority audit was at the time of the previous inspection. The few minor recommendations are now in the school's procedures. The school conducted its own self-audit in preparation for this inspection and all areas are satisfactory. The school is to receive a grant this school year to develop inclusion strategies. Its expenditure to date on preliminary work, and its budget for the year, indicate that its plans are appropriate and the grant will be spent wholly on this initiative. The school community is proactive and ambitious in raising funding for specific improvements through its 'Care for Clare' campaign. The splendid new physiotherapy suite is a tribute to considerable effort by many people in raising the required finance.

58. Despite the tight budget there are good levels of staffing, resources, and accommodation. The library provides a satisfactory resource for learning and the School Improvement Plan allows for upgrading of its book and software stock. The provision of books, computers and software in classrooms is good.

59. There is good application of the principles of best value in expenditure decisions. Through the local education authority structure of bidding for income the school is fully aware of its position in relation to other special schools. It challenges itself to improve its provision; for example, by seeking to develop inclusion, and widen the range of accreditation available to pupils. There is wide consultation with governors, staff and parents. The head teacher is seeking to refine this process further through the school's self-evaluation in which he is trained. Governors obtain quotations from three suppliers for any items over £500 where this is possible. They monitor the benefits of such purchases. An example is the installation of automatic doors that have given pupils with mobility problems increased independence.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. The headteacher and Governing Body should:

- (1) Extend the role of subject co-ordinators to include effective monitoring of teaching.
(paragraphs: 51.

Other weaknesses the school and LEA should consider.

- Aspects of the accommodation which include:
 - the mobile classroom for multi-sensory impaired pupils; *
 - toilet facilities for 16+ and Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils; *
 - a covered under-five outdoor play area.
 - increase the number of automatic doors for pupils' use. *
 - the hall is too small for Key Stages 3 and 4 team games.
- * These areas are identified in the School Development Plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	10	70	100			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	96
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	14

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
0	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	8.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y13

Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.2
Average class size	7.1

Education support staff: YR – Y13

1	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	742

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year 99 2000		
Total income		1191359
Total expenditure		1174749
Expenditure per pupil	12700	
Balance brought forward from previous year		54183
Balance carried forward to next year		70793

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	110
Number of questionnaires returned	21

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	33	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	43	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	52	5	0	19
The teaching is good.	57	38	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	52	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	0	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	29	5	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	48	43	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	29	5	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	43	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	19	19	5	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. The quality of provision for the nine children under-five in the nursery and in the early years is good. Children attend on a part-time basis and make good progress. This prepares them effectively for the next stage of their education
62. The development of skills and understanding in language and literacy is good. Children effectively develop their interaction and communication, understanding routines, events and activities during the day; for example, they recall the walk around the sensory garden when feel the hard shell of the snail or the quick movements of the beetle they brought back to the classroom. Children share books and language games with adults and this leads effectively to improvement in their sitting, listening and concentration skills. They turn pages in a book; feel the different letters and objects there, finding a similar object, for example, a comb, in a box. They demonstrate they know what to do with a comb when they attempt to comb their hair. Regular reading of this particular book provides the children with an expectation of the routine of reading this story and leads to some spontaneous actions, turning over the page, trying to feel the word on the left-hand side or the picture on the right hand side. Children are developing awareness that these letters have to be touched in a particular way. They enjoy listening to the story of “The Hungry Caterpillar” and tasting the fruit he eats on each day of the week. Some identify pears and orange, and, with support, glue pictures of the fruit in sequence to make their own book. The multi-sensory support for reading and language activities is effective and very appropriate for the children. Picture vocabulary symbols reinforce children’s association of words with objects and, as they take toys from a bag, they identify the objects and show understanding of language instructions such as “wash the doll’s face.” The Speech and Language Therapist gives valuable support in developing individual programmes for the children.
63. Children gain mathematical ideas and an understanding of the language of mathematics appropriately as they sort the different sized combs and straws in a box, feel how small some of the stickle bricks are and how big others are when they try to fix them together. They count how many oranges or strawberries the caterpillar eats his way through each day and how many are left when they sing a range of number rhymes. Children develop an understanding of the time and order of the day when they know what is first, next and last, or recap on the activities of the morning. Children make sets with objects and animals, and, with support, sort objects into two sets on their trays. They are developing an understanding and recognition of more, less and the numbers one to five.
64. Children’s knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well. They participated in a very well planned and prepared treasure hunt in the sensory garden after listening to a story about what they may find there. Before they leave the nursery, children with visual impairment are prepared well for their outing by questions such as, “Can you hear your buggy?” They find objects such as “a sunflower”, “a butterfly”, which are on their pictorial worksheets and hunt under bricks for insects. When they return to the classroom they look through a magnifying glass into a container and feel the insects they have found when they are placed on a tray. Children like to use the computer and are learning to use a range of switches to answer “Yes” and “No” or ensure that the music begins to play again. They have many valuable opportunities to use touch screens and overlays, and switches, in the nursery and light room. Children are developing a good understanding of cause and effect. They enjoy the work, and show their pleasure with smiles, when they realise that they have some control over what is happening around them. Children enjoy building with construction materials and make deliberate choices of size and shape to fix pieces together.

65. Children are developing appropriately with regard to physical control and mobility. There is very good support from, and liaison with, the physiotherapy and occupational therapists who work on individual programmes in the classroom, the light room and in the physiotherapy department. This has a clear impact on pupils' learning and levels of awareness. Children benefit from opportunities to move around the room and enjoy moving independently across the floor to find a favourite toy. Children enjoy sessions outside when they learn about large toys, hoops and use the small toys. Some look forward to riding on the specially adapted tricycles or in a vehicle, which is designed to hold more than one child. The outside play area is used well and the trees provide good shade on very sunny days, although there is no covered area for outdoor play on wet days. Good use is made of visits to the local park and these provide further opportunities for physical and social development. Regular opportunities to develop body awareness and relaxation are provided through use of movement and music programmes, some of the sessions taking place in the light room. Fine motor skills develop gradually as children learn to hold crayons, pencils with grips, paintbrushes, glue sticks and scissors through a high level of encouraging support.
66. Children's creative development is good and occurs through a well-planned programme of experiences. They have many opportunities to explore materials and develop their sensory and tactile skills. Children learn to print with their hands to make bright butterfly prints and make dragon faces with a range of textures and shapes. Some paint carefully with a large brush, using deliberate strokes and careful selection of colours. Children create interesting collages connected with their topic on insects by cutting, sticking and decorating shapes. Their work is displayed well for other children to look at as they pass by and answer the "how many?" questions. Children listen well to music and participate in songs and activities that develop their awareness of their own bodies in an enjoyable way. In one-to-one sessions with an adult, children develop their role-play well and increase their understanding of language.
67. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher and welfare staff understand the needs of young children well and work together as an effective team, planning carefully to provide suitable opportunities for children to learn and develop skills. Individual tasks are planned and organised well with good quality resources and an accurate match of activities to the needs of the child. Staff know the children very well and keep a focus on learning at all times. Full attention is given to each child's targets and individual learning. There is a good balance of activities within the lesson. Therapists work very closely and effectively with the staff and parents. As a result learning is good and Children settle well and enjoy the activities they are offered. They are interested and responsive to adults and are learning to make choices.
68. The curriculum is broad and balanced and has full regard for the desirable outcomes for learning. It is highly relevant for the specific needs the pupils, which are very carefully assessed. Individual programmes are planned and delivered in such a way that they promote children's learning and build on developing skills. Partnership between parents and the school ensures that parents are fully aware of their child's targets and progress in the school. This has a beneficial effect on the progress made by the children and prepares them effectively for the next stage of learning. The quality of the provision has at least been maintained since the previous inspection and pupils' progress in some areas has improved.

ENGLISH

69. Pupils' progress in all four key stages, and at post-16, is good and is an improvement on the previous report when it was considered to be satisfactory, and sometimes good. The progress is much influenced by the good teaching of the subject, the flexible introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the range of accredited courses for post-16 students. These are very well supported by the teachers of pupils with sensory and multi-sensory impairment and the work of the Speech and Language Therapists.

70. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good overall and pupils improve them as they move through the school. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop their listening and concentration skills as they all listen carefully to the message that has come to school on one pupils' Big Mac and show interest in his proposed holiday. These skills are developed further as they look at books together in the Literacy Hour and comment on the pictures or volunteer to answer a question such as, "What does squabble mean?" or "What is an author?" They recognise the teacher's expectations that hands should go up to answer questions and they are not to shout out their answers. Key Stage 1 pupils who have a range of sensory impairment respond by stilling when the chimes are played at the beginning of the lessons. The teacher focuses on particular words and objects and pupils listen to sounds that they are able to associate with everyday objects, such as the zip opening on a cool bag, a ball bouncing on a surface. In Key Stage 2 pupils ask relevant questions about the Greeks and Turks when looking at maps and a non-fiction text about the Ancient Greeks. They respond thoughtfully to the open-ended questions of the teacher. At drinks time they have a good discussion about what happened at playtime and recall the characters from the story they are reading together. Pupils with multi-sensory impairment indicate their response or choice by gesture, eye contact, or by making the correct choice of switches. In drama during a religious education lesson, pupils demonstrate good use of descriptive language when talking about their feelings were, for example, "I felt far away and very relaxed in the music".
71. In Key Stage 3 pupils extend their vocabulary when researching information by looking up meanings of compound and complex words. When assessing what she has learnt, one girl was able to confirm that she now understands the meaning of "camouflage" as "when you blend into the background." Pupils enjoy using the words they learn. Some pupils contribute to discussions with nods, make eye contact, or use an aid to say, "Yes" to questions. Others watch a teacher who is signing to them very intently so that they can join in appropriately. In answer to the skilful questioning of the teacher, pupils in Key Stage 4 express opinions about advertisements, critically and logically. They can present their own product clearly with good choice of vocabulary and careful thought. Some pupils can explain the process of ordering items on the Internet in detail and another pupil learns the stages necessary with the help of signing from a skilled Teacher of the Hearing-Impaired. The skills of the specialist teacher for Hearing-Impaired pupils enable a sixth form student to join in the discussions about the qualities necessary to become a gardener or radio announcer. Students with higher prior attainment prepare a talk for pupils who move into the post-16 provision in September, talking together as they reorganise and edit their work on the computer. In personal and social education lessons these students engage in interesting and positive dialogue with adults as they discuss issues and their own response to them.
72. Pupils achieve well in reading in relation to their prior attainment and often make good progress towards their targets. In Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils are learning that several words begin with the same initial sound. They are aware that there are capital and small letters and that names need capital letters. Pupils follow the words and symbols on the calendar and read what comes next. They begin to anticipate who comes next by giving the names of the animals in "Mr Grumpy's Outing" when the teacher hesitates as she turns over the page. Pupils enjoy the repetition of phrases. They know why there are contents pages at the beginning of a book and try to use their knowledge of initial sounds when working out words. Pupils can read a passage and insert missing words in the correct place to show that they understand what they have read. Those with higher prior attainment have an increasing sight vocabulary and read their books confidently. In response to the skilful questions of the teacher, pupils can show that they understand what they have been reading and sometimes predict what will happen next. Pupils with a range of sensory impairment learn to spell three-letter words by listening to a rhyming tape and spelling, for example, b-a-g to the rhythm of the chimes.

73. In Key Stage 3 pupils learn the use of a glossary and use their knowledge of the alphabet to order words in a list. They can read “The Highwayman” and create speech and thought bubbles for the main characters. Pupils learn that there may be a difference between what people are thinking and what they are saying. Key Stage 4 pupils use their skills in reading well when they read information off the computer screen. They are able to pick out relevant information and follow instructions. When reading books pupils show a willingness to work out words carefully, using their phonic knowledge and building up compound words effectively. Pupils read back what they have written and look up references in books in most subjects. During their course work pupils study a wide range of literature, including Shakespeare, and learn quotations from these works quickly and enthusiastically because they enjoy the language used. Pupils appreciate the wide range of reading books available for them and complete good critical reviews of their reading. In the sixth form, pupils with higher prior attainment use their reading skills consistently well in their course work and read materials; for example, cards in a game accurately, so that they are able to sort them correctly. Other students develop a suitable social sight vocabulary and benefit greatly from the skilled signing and adult support given to them. This support, and the very appropriate, well-adapted resources made by staff, helps them understand what is written; for example, on a flash card, and enables them to work out other words for themselves.
74. Pupils’ progress towards their targets in writing is good over time. Key Stage 1 pupils progress from making marks and colouring in before they practise letter formation, some pupils having good pencil control and others requiring hand-on-hand support. In Key Stage 2 some pupils insert words in spaces with clearly legible writing. Others, with support, cut and paste the words into the spaces as they discuss the text. Pupils find words beginning with a particular initial sound and write them in their books. Pupils with higher prior attainment write stories and poems, making good use of the computer to present their work.
75. In Key Stage 3 pupils write independently in science and in English lessons. They create lists; write reports or detail information they have found in books. They write for a range of purposes. Pupils write in speech and thought bubbles and write what they think is happening in a story by following the sequence of pictures. They produce interesting and accurate versions of episodes in the story. Some Key Stage 4 pupils are still trying to form letters correctly, whereas more able pupils write in a joined script, with good sentence structure and answers to questions in complete sentences. They complete forms and reinforce their understanding of this by further work on the computer. Pupils write descriptions of a product they are going to market and read them out to the rest of the group. They follow the teachers’ instructions well. Pupils practise spelling regularly and have learned the system well. In the sixth form, pupils complete their course work appropriately, some with adult support and others independently. They read scripts of their prepared written work competently.
76. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate good learning and a very positive response to the subject. They try hard and show interest in the activities provided for them. They take pleasure in their success and want to contribute to discussions, even when this requires much physical effort on their part. Pupils concentrate very well even when there are distractions, as; for example, when a group were working on the Internet in the library and a number of children were taken through to lunch. Not one pupil lost concentration or interest in the English activity and they were all totally focused on the screen and the teacher. Pupils work well together and praise each other. They value the discussion at the end of the lesson when they review what they have learned that day. It may be a specific point, or it may be, as one boy said, “We make mistakes!”
77. Teaching is consistently good across the key stages and is, at times, very good or excellent. Staff are confident in their use of the Literacy Strategy and this is enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning. Teachers make very good use of resources and objects in their lessons to ensure that they maximise opportunities for pupils’ learning. All pupils are included in the lessons and teachers wait for pupils to make their contribution if they need support to respond. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve at all levels of ability and whatever their sensory impairment. The support of other teachers and sensory specialists in lessons ensures that all pupils are included in the lesson and have the opportunity to contribute. All staff work well together and welfare assistants give high quality support at all times. The lessons where the Speech and Language Therapist works alongside the teacher are of great benefit to the pupils and this has been a very good joint development to enhance the teaching of specific groups in English. Teachers use the high quality technical and sensory aids very well and prepare stimulating and exciting resources to support their lessons very thoughtfully.

78. There is good use of information technology in English. Pupils word-process their writing, and use skills learned in information technology lessons to improve the display and presentation of their work very competently. The school has worked hard to ensure that skills in English are used well across the curriculum and that there are good links between subjects; for example, there is good use of subject vocabulary in mathematics and the use of verse to promote adding in two's when pupils learn "Bananas in pyjamas." Science poems are displayed around the classroom in the upper school and in the lower school the text in English links well with studies in history and geography. Drama makes a strong contribution to the development of pupils' communication skills and is used well in other subjects and for role-play in personal and social education lessons.
79. The curriculum, with the adapted literacy hour, is good and enables teachers to respond to the individual needs of the pupils. The subject is managed well and teaching has been monitored very effectively by the lower school co-ordinator. There are good resources for use in English lessons and the school makes very good use of the colour photocopier and worksheets with enlarged print. The library is a good size and has a wide range of books. The school is aware of the need to extend the range of specific subject books and books and other resources for pupils with visual impairment. In Key Stage 4 and at post-16, pupils have a good range of accreditation opportunities that are appropriate for pupils and students of all abilities

MATHEMATICS

80. Standards in mathematics are much improved since the previous inspection in 1996. Pupils enter the school with low attainments but all achieve well in relation to those attainments and individual targets set by teachers. They make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 4 and the sixth form pupils succeed in gaining GCSE pass grades in mathematics or bronze, silver or gold levels in the Certificate of Achievement in mathematics. Some achieve both. All pupils entered for examinations in recent years have obtained at least a pass grade, and a small number gain Distinctions in the Certificate of Achievement. Students following Skillpower and GNVQ foundation level courses in the sixth form continue to improve their numeracy skills as an assessed part of the core provision.
81. By the end of Key Stage 1 higher attaining pupils identify shapes with four sides, and consolidate their knowledge of the shape. They recognise *four* as represented by objects such as cans. Lower attaining pupils and those with sensory impairments identify *four* using tactile and sensory materials such as leather, silk, and musical instruments.
82. Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their number skills. Higher attaining pupils handle money to calculate using addition and subtraction, and by the end of the key stage their ability to measure distances in metres and estimate weights greater or less than a kilogram is secure. Lower attaining pupils add three numbers to make 10 using number lines and squares. Their ability to measure substances in litres or centimetres is limited, but they use appropriate operations to solve simple problems. Pupils with visual impairment learn numbers effectively by touching raised numerals. They use touch to sort different shapes into piles of the same shapes. Pupils with hearing impairment achieve number understanding through signing. Pupils with multiple impairment give answers by touching or eye pointing to a number on a stand.
83. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils use mathematics for investigations with some confidence. They know that one method of obtaining data is through questionnaires. They obtain accurate information about each other, for example, by measuring height. They decide whether a tape measure or a metre rule is most appropriate. Higher attaining pupils explain the advantages of the tape measure for obtaining the height of a pupil in a wheelchair, while lower attaining pupils opt for a rule. Pupils' understanding and use of subject vocabulary, such as *estimation* and *centimetres*, is more evident in their answers at this stage. Pupils without speech contribute actively using an electronic *Liberator* to give their answers.

84. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils identify and name a number of three- dimensional objects, such as a *sphere* and a *cylinder*. They understand the two- dimensional shapes produced when an object is seen from a 'bird's eye view', and they know this is called a *plan*. Lower attaining pupils use estimation to re-organise the classroom so the furniture fits in. They use a sketch plan of the room and cardboard shapes for the furniture for this task, and make independent decisions about the layouts. They show good judgement in allowing space for the movement of wheelchairs. Higher attaining pupils check through the instructions to candidates for imminent GCSE examinations. They undertake independent investigations; for example, planning an overnight visit to London to visit the Millennium Dome. This involves using train timetables, and calculating travel, accommodation, refreshment, and entrance costs. Pupils often use word-processing and graphics programs to present their work to a high standard. A blind pupil counts by listening to the sound of objects banged on a table. Pupils without speech indicate good knowledge of counting in twos by eye pointing or sound as the teacher indicates numbers in a visual display.
85. Higher attaining post-16 students undertake detailed investigations applying their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills. Students clearly derive much enjoyment from researching topics of interest such as football. Students' analyse data from a questionnaire with computer generated frequency graphs; for example, the price people most often paid to watch football matches and the price people preferred to pay. Lower attaining students with sensory impairment improve their knowledge and understanding of mathematical operations but lack precision in using units of measurement. They lack sufficient skill in some everyday mathematical applications such as giving and receiving change in money transactions.
86. Apart from mathematics pupils use their numeracy skills in other subjects. In science and geography they use bar graphs and pie charts securely to display and analyse data; for example, they use tables to record experimental data on pH values, and tally charts to record traffic survey information. In music they count in songs, and sing; for example, "is this number 7?"
87. The quality of teaching is good overall. In eight out of ten lessons teaching is good or better, and in over a quarter of lessons it is very good or better, including excellent teaching in one lesson. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. The best teaching is at Key Stage 4. No teaching was seen in the sixth form but analysis of students' work and discussion with students indicates good quality learning. In the best teaching teachers planned their lessons to include whole class introduction of a topic followed by thoughtfully graded group tasks that engage pupils' curiosity. Towards the end of lessons pupils share and consolidate learning as a class. Homework is part of the lesson planning, especially at Key Stage 4, and this reinforces learning. Teachers use methods that aim to develop independent learning skills. In a lesson with a lower attaining class (Key Stage 4) the teacher used 'legs' to focus pupils' attention on *two* familiar objects. With a jovial and animated delivery the teacher kept pupils motivated and interested. She directed questions personally to each pupil to keep them alert. The class gradually learned that adding by two produces a *two times table*. The teacher placed models of cartoon characters on a table with enough noise for a pupil with visual impairment to count the sounds. Teachers skilfully analyse topics into small learning steps appropriate to each pupil's level and targets. In whole class sessions the pace is lively with very good sharp questions in the best lessons. Teachers keep pupils alert and motivated by asking for explanations, and insisting they use mathematical words like *faces* and *vertices* when describing a four-sided object. Teachers push pupils appropriately to think through problems and they develop intellectually and personally through such effort. Teachers use the skills of welfare assistants to benefit pupils' learning very effectively. They know pupils' needs and targets very well and work with teachers to meet lesson objectives. Those who sign for pupils with sensory impairment play an important part in clearing the way for pupils to achieve on their own. This underpins the work of all welfare assistants and teachers. Weaknesses occur occasionally in otherwise satisfactory lessons in Key Stage 2. When for instance the teacher fails to share the lesson objectives with a class they remain unaware of the learning goals. Lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils is also seen very occasionally. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to check the accuracy of pupils' methods by listening to them explain their strategies; for example, when they use calculators for addition, asking how they know the answer is correct would reveal the extent of pupils' understanding.
88. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The upper and lower school co-ordinators collaborate successfully. Lower school mathematics is co-ordinated by the deputy head teacher, who monitors teaching quality. The upper school co-ordinator does not have time to monitor teaching across the school. As the specialist mathematics teacher the school would benefit from such an overview of teaching and learning. The National Numeracy Strategy is successfully used by teachers in lower school teaching, and is gradually being incorporated into the upper school. This initiative benefits from good training and thoughtful choice of book and other resources.

SCIENCE

89. Overall, pupils' achievements in science are good; for older pupils achievement is very good culminating in their successes at GCSE and in the Certificate of Educational Achievement. This is achieved through teaching, which is also good overall with very good teaching for secondary pupils.
90. Up to the age of seven pupils with sensory difficulties use tactile methods to note changes in the growth of plants and, together with higher attaining pupils, experience the effects of forces such as pushing and pulling. The introduction of the scientific skills of observation and recording enable pupils to make good progress. By the age of eleven, through the use of tactile methods for those pupils with sensory impairment, and by close observation of changes in material and plants for the higher achieving pupils, all are making good progress in the ability to draw conclusions from the observation of changes in plants and animals. Higher attaining pupils are also beginning to be able to record scientific data. By the age of fourteen pupils have developed a scientific vocabulary and are able to recognise cause and effect in areas such as the development of the food chain, realising how they can be effected by pollution. Pupils make very good progress in their ability to analyse data and display it in graphical form. Pupils with sensory impairment also develop experimental skills and, through the careful structuring of lessons, are able to make very good progress in practical skills such as their work on enzymes.
91. By the age of sixteen pupils make very good progress in areas such as the refraction and reflection of light. Higher attaining pupils are performing at GCSE level and demonstrate this by their ability to plan experiments and to apply the principal of the "fair test" when comparing data. Pupils with sensory and other additional difficulties are also able, through well-structured practical work, to make comparative studies of blood pressure both before and after exercise as well as identifying sources of light.
92. In the sixth form pupils make very good progress in their scientific work on health and hygiene showing maturity and insight in their work on healthy living and sex education.
93. The quality of teaching is good overall and very good for secondary aged pupils. All teaching is carefully planned so that each pupil receives a range of experiences during the lesson. To ensure that pupils learn effectively, welfare staff are well informed about their roles and resources are both sufficient and appropriate. Pupils are clear about the purpose of the lessons and questioning is used well to both consolidate and develop learning. Whilst all teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory, the use of a subject specialist in the upper school, ably supported by a well qualified technician, means that the use of questioning and the set work is more challenging and pupils are encouraged to work independently. The emphasis on older pupils formulating their own explanations for experimental results through the use of questions such as "What would happen if...?" and "How can we find out?" play an important part in the development of experimental skills. The staffs' knowledge of the additional needs of the sensory impaired and other pupils with additional needs ensures their full integration into science lessons. A lesson on magnetism for older pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties characterised this approach through the adaptation of the practical work to the needs of each individual pupil. When teaching is most effective, such as a lesson on sexually transmitted diseases in the sixth form, activities are presented in an age appropriate way and, through the very good relationships that exist between pupils and staff, result in mature discussion and a confident approach by pupils.
94. Science is managed by the upper and lower school co-ordinators and the implementation of assessment procedures based on pupils' skills has effectively addressed the previous report's judgement that some pupils were insufficiently challenged. Similarly, the use of equipment and facilities from the local high school has ensured older pupils full access to the GCSE curriculum. However, the school needs to consider the current system of two co-ordinators for the subject. The establishment of a clear focus on the subject content, together with the ability to provide training for non-specialist staff, will raise standards even further.

ART

95. Pupils' achievement in art at Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory and at Key Stages 3 and 4 and the sixth form good and often very good.
96. At Key Stage 1 pupils explore colours and texture and some pupils create a collage or a model made out of everyday items, paint and different coloured crepe paper after the style of Archimbaldo. Other pupils explore the feel of the textures available and make large gross motor arm movements to make a contribution to their work. At Key Stage 2 pupils investigate primary and secondary colours they have made and mixed together. Some pupils with hand-on-hand assistance create patterns on the paper with freehand expression. In another lesson, pupils use artefacts like shells and seaweed to develop their topic of a 'Seaside Summer'.
97. At Key Stages 3, 4 and the sixth form, pupils' achievements are good and often very good. Pupils' achievements are as a result of consistently good or very good teaching and the specialist art provision, which incorporates information technology. Displays of pupils' work across the school and in and around the art room, demonstrates the breadth of curriculum experiences. Pupils know about the lives of many artists and, in discussion, relate their particular styles of working to a project they have been working on themselves. In these discussions, very good use is made of the opportunities to discuss social and moral issues of the time of the artist's life. Pupils know about cubism, experimental and impressionist art work. Other pupils benefit from the very links with a local supermarket and visit their local visual art centre, which is supported by extension work and an artist visiting school and challenging and supporting pupils artistic development. For some pupils with fine motor ability the use of information technology purpose built furniture contributes to the very good progress made.
98. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2 and good and often very good at Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form. When teaching is satisfactory, features including effective teamwork, management of pupils' sensory needs and classroom organisation, weaknesses include a lack of subject knowledge at times and some teaching lacks spark and imagination. At Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form, art is taught in a specialist provision with a teacher secure a knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. The teacher is so able to challenge pupils' assumption about the life of different artists and the development of information technology to support teachers' contribution to pupils' good progress. Pupils learn effectively as a result of this challenge and breadth of curricular opportunities.
99. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory and is shared between the upper and lower school co-ordinators. The upper school co-ordinator is the subject specialist and this input into the lower school would raise standards further for the younger pupils. There is as yet no monitoring of teaching of art across the whole school. Resources range from satisfactory to good and the specialist accommodation in the upper school is satisfactory. Progress since the last inspection is good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. In design and technology, pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 and good or very good progress at Key Stages 3 and 4. At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils follow the content of the Qualification, Curriculum and Assessment Units published by the DfEE. This has recently been introduced and included work on playgrounds and Joseph's coat. They are able to cut fabrics, sew, assemble, join and combine materials with significant support. Pupils also cover aspects of food technology. However, they are given little opportunity to generate their own ideas, often following a prepared formula and are not given reflective time to think about how they could improve their products. Most progress was seen in pupils working in the multi-sensory class who experienced a variety of textures and materials when exploring the local playground. Some pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 are attaining elements of Levels 4 and 5 of the National Curriculum. They are able to attempt step-by-step plans, can clarify ideas through discussion and work with a range of tools, materials, equipment, components and processes with some precision. Examples were seen of various artefacts, which they had made including bridges, cranes and gliders. Standards in food technology at Key Stages 3 and 4 and the sixth form are a strength. Some pupils were able to make a sausage casserole with little or no help from the staff.

101. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils name and mix ingredients and saw wood into lengths. They can consider appropriate shapes and materials and they can design and make transport vehicles. Higher attaining pupils can write accounts of what they have done and evaluate what they can do. Pupils with physical disabilities are given opportunities to develop their skills through the excellent use of support assistants who act as pupil advocates. All pupils in the upper school are able to use graphic techniques to develop their designs and are given frequent opportunities to do so.
102. Teaching and learning are good overall with variations across the key stages. All pupils have subject specific individual education targets which are monitored on a termly basis. In the best lessons, teachers are imaginative in the way they help pupils to understand the subject and, as a result, pupils' outcomes are successful. Pupils are proud of their efforts. Teachers plan and prepare their work well to address several levels of ability. Pupils are encouraged to learn about materials through all their senses. Those with additional special needs are given equality of opportunity through the use of competent signers and staff trained to work with multi-sensory impaired children. Pupils are engaged in lessons as a result of good pace. At Key Stage 2, where some teaching is weaker, pupils' behaviour is variable due to lack of challenge and slow pace of lessons.
103. The curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 is a strength. It is broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' needs. There is ongoing assessment by teachers and pupils with opportunities for self-evaluation in lessons. The Qualification, Curriculum and Assessment Scheme of Work was introduced this year at Key Stages 1 and 2. It will be fully implemented from September 2000. There is a progressive skills list, which is used in conjunction with the records for the core subjects. This is passed on at different key stages. Cross-curricular links are strong in literacy and mathematics. The use of different schemes of work for lower and upper school may need to be addressed in the future if continuity and progression are to be maintained.
104. Progress since the last inspection has been good with particular strengths at Key Stages 3 and 4. However, there is still no specialist room for design and technology in the upper school. Currently subject co-ordination is satisfactory overall. The school is aware of the shortcomings and the subject development plan prioritises training for all staff.
105. At present, lack of expertise in the subject has impact on pupils' progress. The school is aware of this and appropriate training has been planned. The use of the art room in the upper school also affects the extent to which resources can be used to further pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. Generally, resourcing for the subject is good.

GEOGRAPHY

106. Pupils enter the school with low attainment but their achievement is good in relation to prior attainment and they make good progress in meeting their individual targets. Pupils with sensory impairments make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils gain accreditation in two modules of the Certificate of Achievement in geography. This provides continuity for pupils moving into the sixth form when they take a further two modules to gain full accreditation. Their geographical work links with the GNVQ Leisure and Tourism course.
107. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a sense of the different characteristics of places, and how to find places by following routes. They recall their journey to school, and visits to the park and to farms. They recognise features of play areas that they find attractive and know that some places are unattractive. In Key Stage 2 pupils use atlas maps to locate places they visit on holidays, and the nearest seaside resort to Norwich. They acquire a broader understanding of places and distance as they reach the end of this key stage. This is supported by family holidays and improved understanding of maps. They know; for example, that Greece is a long distance from Britain, and that travel is quickest by aeroplane. Pupils study photographs to gain the knowledge that Greece is mountainous and has many islands. They know an island is land surrounded by sea. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils with sensory impairment develop good understanding of place and distance; for example, pupils with visual impairment know routes around the school by identifying points of reference to find the place where milk is stored. They know different types of weather by listening to the sound of wind and rain on a computer program. Using various sound statements pupils predict the weather. Sighted pupils benefit from accompanying screen symbols. Pupils with multiple impairment use head

switches to move a 'spider' around a computer screen to gain understanding of moving in particular direction.

108. By the end of Key Stage 3 higher attaining pupils use research skills to find information from books and CD-ROMs about various European countries. They photocopy particular articles and illustrations for their investigations. A pupil with physical disability, who achieves well, was able to summarise an article using word-processing. A lower attaining pupil without speech uses a mouse to identify pictures and the flag of Holland. The pupil shows recognition of the country's name by pointing to the letter 'H' and making its sound. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 collect evidence for certain geographical topics; for example, to gauge the volume of traffic on certain local roads they conducted a traffic survey. From their knowledge of mathematics they understood a number of graphical methods for representing the data collected. Higher attaining pupils calculated skilfully how to construct a bar graph but lower attaining pupils struggled. Graphs produced on a computer by pupils to show the results of the traffic survey have appropriate headings and labelled axes.
109. The quality of teaching is good overall. In lessons, good and satisfactory teaching was observed equally, but more lessons were seen in Key Stages 1 and 2 than in Key Stages 3 and 4. On balance teaching is better in Key Stage 4. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of geography. They use this effectively to ask questions to challenge and assess pupils' learning, for example, of places, capital cities, and the use of atlases to locate the courses of rivers. Teachers work very effectively with welfare assistants as a class team. Welfare assistants know pupils very well, and understand their function to support pupils' acquisition of independent learning skills. Pupils learn to use book and computer materials to access information. Welfare assistants who sign give pupils with sensory impairment opportunities to make good progress. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good, and pupils respond with very good attitudes and motivation to geography. In a majority of lessons teachers extend pupils basic skills. They introduce new vocabulary and give opportunities to use number when counting vehicles for a traffic survey for instance. On rare occasions, even when teaching is satisfactory, pupils become unmotivated when the teacher reads material that lacks interest, or when no activity is planned for them other than discussion. They respond well when tasks involve purposeful activity such as independent research that gives them responsibility.
110. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There are two co-ordinators overseeing lower and upper school geography respectively. Neither is given time to monitor teaching across the school and this is a weakness in the structure. The subject benefited from improvement to resources last year, and progress since the last inspection is good.

HISTORY

111. History shows good progress since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment at the end of all key stages. They make good progress, including pupils with additional special educational needs. At the end of Key Stage 4 and the sixth form pupils take the Certificate of Achievement. They are successful and a majority gain Merits and Distinctions. Pupils also have the opportunity to take GCSE history in addition to the Certificate of Achievement.
112. Pupils in Key Stage 1 begin to develop a sense of time. They know the days of the week, and what days come before and which days follow. The daily routine of school helps them order events in a sequence. A blind pupil knew the day of the week when questioned, and which subject followed. They learn about 'long ago' by comparing what people used at bath time in the past with what they use today. Pupils know how technology changes people's lives over time by tracing the way beds are heated: rubber hot-water bottles replaced stone hot-water bottles, and now electric blankets are common. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop the skill of careful observation of evidence such as photographs. They look for clues in dress and architecture to date seaside resorts as 'old' or 'new', and sort the photographs into appropriate piles. They sequence family holiday photographs dating from the nineteen fifties to the present day on a time-line. They note that older photographs are often black and white images.
113. Pupils in Key Stage 3 acquire an understanding of how people lived in Ancient Greece by sampling music and food, and listening carefully to a Greek myth. Pupils show interest through the questions they ask, and the knowledge they recall. Older pupils discover the derivation of many English words from Greek and

thereby extend understanding of vocabulary. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils have good historical skills for research using artefacts such as coins and pewter plates representing Tudor England. Higher attaining pupils write extensive answers on topics relating to the history of medicine for a GCSE short course. Answers show attention to detail and care in presentation whether in handwriting or word-processing.

114. The quality of teaching is good in six out ten lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Over a period of time the quality of teaching is good. Teachers understand the principles of developing good historical skills in pupils so they learn how to examine evidence to discover facts about the past. Planning is generally good and when weaknesses occur they relate to inappropriate management of time. When insufficient time is allowed for pupils to clean up after one activity; for example, the time for the next activity is reduced. Teaching is good where it develops pupils' basic skills. In the upper school the teacher provides notebooks to help pupils to record and learn new words in history. In one lesson pupils learnt the Greek origins of some English words. The teacher used homework effectively to develop this further by asking pupils to explain inventions such *megaphone* using the Greek meanings. Teachers encourage pupils to question the evidence they handle. They ask them to look for clues; for example, in black and white photographs of Great Yarmouth, to indicate if they are new or old. Pupils learn to study people's dress and building styles to find their answers. Welfare assistants work very well with teachers, being especially helpful to pupils who need signing to participate fully in lessons. Pupils learn much from visits by observing evidence first hand; for example, a visit to Norwich Cathedral provided Key Stage 4 pupils with a wealth of information on church history. Teachers expect pupils to develop appropriate methods for recording historical information and making their own judgements. Pupils make good use of information and communication technology and a digital camera to create and store their work.
115. There is good co-ordination of history. Since the last inspection the provision of resources has improved. There is good collection of artefacts in the upper school. History was identified in last year's School Improvement Plan and lower school will be enhanced as a result. The upper school humanities room provides a focus for history teaching and display of artefacts and pupils' work. Neither of the two co-ordinators receives time to monitor teaching so it is difficult to gain an overview.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology is very good. Pupils in the sixth form achieve elements of level 5; for example, selecting information for different purposes and understanding how information and communication technology devices with sensors can be used to monitor and measure external events. Pupils are able to use multi-media resources for GNVQ assessment modules; for example, tourism and leisure. High attainers use spreadsheets to analyse data they have collected when exploring food choices. Progress over time, in lessons and on pupils' individual education plans is very good.
117. At Key Stage 1, pupils are becoming technologically aware in identifying elements of a keyboard and understanding simple rules for using a computer. Pupils are able to use dictation machines and switches to control a variety of machines working towards cause and effect. By Key Stage 2, high attaining pupils are using graphics programs such as 'Paint and Draw'. Low attainers have opportunities to explore how information and communication technology is used in the work place, for example, the Post Office. Control technology is seen at Key Stage 3 where use of the Roamer was seen. High attainers are able to put five or more instructions together in correct sequences. At Key Stage 4 examples of use of the Internet were seen; for example, ordering goods during an English lesson. Pupils were also able to draw and shade three-dimensional shapes. In the sixth form, there was extensive evidence of pupils using information and communication technology across the curriculum. The use of the Roamer to visit different geographical places was recorded in a pupil's individual file.
118. Since the last inspection, progress in the subject has been very good. Deficits in control technology and lack of specialist knowledge have been addressed. There is evidence of modelling programs at Key Stage 3. Staff have been given opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology, which now makes it a real strength of the school.
119. Pupils respond very well to the use of information and communication technology both in formal and cross-curricular aspects. Use of information and communication technology was seen in most subjects across the

curriculum. Pupils' behaviour is very good as are relationships. Information and communication technology is used to promote independent learning of all pupils through the use of switches and communication aids.

120. Teaching is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Most staff are technically competent, plan effectively and set clear objectives which pupils understand. Methods are used which enable all pupils to learn effectively; this is particularly evident with pupils who have additional needs. Support staff are used to encourage pupils' learning and work towards supporting their independence. Visually impaired pupils have programs which are being made accessible through sound adaptation; for example, some pupils are given opportunities to access the curriculum through devising and experimenting with head, hand and body switches.
121. Leadership and management of the subject is very good. Digital cameras have had a significant impact on pupils' learning as well as the use of video-conferencing facilities. The school has worked hard to restructure its use of information and communication technology and succeeded. There is a comprehensive subject development plan, which ensures delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum and detailed assessment for each pupil.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

122. All pupils make good progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of French in relation to their prior attainment.
123. Pupils in Key Stage 3 extend their vocabulary and begin to use simple greetings with increasing confidence. They show understanding when the teacher asks them, in French, to hand in their "papers" and confidently say "I've finished" in French. Pupils show that they have learned the names of basic colours and some items of clothing well when they divide into two teams to play "noughts and crosses". Staff encourage a good spirit of friendly competition between the two teams and the pupils discuss their choices in French within their groups. They are working out how to win the game as well as how to ask or answer a question. The pupils' developing confidence makes them volunteer to speak additional phrases and those who are not able to express themselves clearly use symbols and gestures to show that they understand what is being asked of them.
124. The older pupils in Key Stage 3 says a confident "Bonjour" when they enter the room and correctly interpret the meaning of a phrase as, "Do you want an ice-cream?" They identify the small differences between English and French words, the *a* and *e* differentiating "vanilla" from "vanille". Pupils volunteer to answer questions individually. Pupils who need to use symbols or technical aids to contribute are given time to work out their answers so that they participate fully in the lesson. Pupils read phrases from their textbooks with the reader on a tape and answer the questions about flavours of ice cream correctly. They improve their production of the word for mint, "*menthe*", in the lesson because they keep trying to say the word and do not attempt to avoid it because it is difficult. At the end of the lesson one pupil is able to name correctly all of the ice creams on the pictures presented by the teacher.
125. At Key Stage 4 pupils find places on a town plan quickly and play a more sophisticated version of "noughts and crosses" as they answer questions about the purpose of each building and location. They can speak confidently and are aware that they need to improve their listening skills so that they may understand more and improve their pronunciation. Pupils are developing a good accent, following the good models of their teachers. They clearly understand what is said to them during the lessons and have an enthusiastic, confident approach to the subject which gives everyone the opportunity to participate at his or her own level. Pupils enjoy role-play and they benefit greatly from opportunities to order food in a French café from a menu written in French, paying for it in francs, whilst French music is playing in the background. Pupils sing "Frere Jacques" with gusto, the ringing of the bell-adding atmosphere to their song.

126. Pupils really enjoy the subject and express pleasure at the activities offered, particularly the range of interesting games the teachers have prepared for them. They work well together and maintain their concentration and motivation very well because they have developed positive attitudes to the subject. When homework is given out they realise that it is something they can do because the teachers make it clear that those who can do more challenging work are given something more difficult, but homework is always matched carefully to the pupils' abilities. At the end of each lesson pupils review what they have learned effectively, making very sensible and relevant observations.
127. Teaching is consistently good or very good and enables pupils to build on their learning and make progress towards their individual targets. Teachers know the pupils well and enable every pupil to join in and enjoy the lesson. There is a very good balance of activities in the lessons so that pupils have opportunities to speak, listen, read or write in all lessons and homework. Staff work very well together and the delightful relationships in the groups give pupils the confidence to speak in French and the desire to improve the quality of their pronunciation.
128. The subject has been planned and developed thoughtfully and all aspects of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are taught at an appropriate level. Resources, designed and made by the teachers, are of a high quality and motivate the pupils well. The co-ordinators work very well together and the monitoring of the subject by the headteacher makes a valuable contribution to the continuing development of the subject. In previous years pupils have enjoyed day-trips or a week's visit to France and the school plans to re-introduce these visits because they are excellent opportunities to learn more about the French culture and language whilst pupils develop their own personal and social skills. French lessons give pupils in the upper school the opportunity to acquire an enjoyment and appreciation of the language. The quality of provision has improved since the last inspection.

MUSIC

129. Progress in music is good overall and pupils consolidate and extend skills as they move through the school. At Key Stage 1 pupils join in with "Hello" songs, responding with voice, smile or gesture to their names. Pupils are stimulated by the music. Staff work hard to encourage them to touch the correct parts of their bodies so that they match actions and words. In the number song about the frogs, pupils follow the movement of the frog as it goes "from high to low." All the adults know the songs well and they prepare pupils for the actions and ensure that everyone participates. The pupils enjoy the rowing song, many developing a sense of time and move well to the rhythm of the music. Pupils choose their own instruments to play along with a song and some, with gentle hand-on-hand support, are able to play quickly or slowly, which they find fun. Many show that they are able to play in time with the piano and play loudly and softly.
130. Pupils at Key Stage 2 create a simple graphic score to tell the story of the storm. The teacher involves them well in the decisions of where to place the symbols on the score. One pupil says, "I agree" when another pupil suggests where the wind should come into the story. Pupils choose which instrument they want to play, one girl smiling eagerly when she sees the cymbal. They practise reading their score once and show how much they have learned when they give a much-improved performance the second time. Pupils show that they are learning to handle their instruments carefully when they place them gently on the floor after playing them. They clap strong rhythms played on the piano well and some demonstrate an ability to clap a rhythm perfectly after it has been played on the piano. Pupils listen thoughtfully to music from Carnival of the Animals, the teachers' descriptions of what could be happening causing them to think of the fish swimming and the rippling water.
131. At Key Stage 3 pupils listen carefully to music, which is used as a background for a cartoon and identify the sounds heard during the action. They listen to the classical music, which accompanies some advertisements on television and show recognition of the tunes. Pupils describe the music very appropriately, as "calming, relaxing, swaying and happy," and all want to work on a composition that could be used with an advertisement. Pupils plan their advertisement and start to think about the instruments they could use. One pupil creates a percussion line on the computer, changing the balance of the instruments regularly as he learns what they sound like when too many are played together.

132. Secondary age pupils concentrate well when they practise rhythms and sounds. They work hard to produce drum kit sounds in three parts, keeping the rhythm going well. Pupils make astute comments and ask relevant questions as they listen to an interesting range of vocal sounds. Two pupils play a chime bar rhythm whilst the remainder of the group sing and develop a round very well. They sing and play at the same time very successfully.
133. Pupils enjoy listening to and creating music. They try hard and listen carefully to music and instructions, responding thoughtfully to the teacher's open-ended questions.
134. The quality of teaching is good, with tasks that are matched well to pupils' abilities, but also challenge pupils to achieve at a higher level. All the lessons take place in one day and the efficient organisation and planning by the teacher ensures that lessons follow each other smoothly and the correct resources are always available. This ensures that pupils make the most of their lessons and the musical experiences offered to them. Welfare staff give very good support in the lessons, ensuring that pupils are comfortable, positioned well and understand what they have to do, as well as singing enthusiastically. The music chosen for each group is age-appropriate and the teacher liaises well with class teachers to maintain good links with other subjects; for example, a class who are learning about Greece in history and geography are to learn some Greek music and dances, their work culminating in a Greek show at the end of term.
135. There have been improvements in the provision for music since the last inspection. All elements of the National Curriculum are taught in all year groups. Although not ideal, the use of the hall is effective because the resources are readily available and the teacher does not have to move from room to room between lessons. Information technology is used wherever possible and this is an area the co-ordinator is rightly to develop further. Resources for music are satisfactory and include some instruments from other cultures.
136. During the year the school is involved in several visits connected with music; for example, playing the gamelan and participating in the Special Schools' carol service. Visitors, including the London Sinfonia, bring a range of stimulating musical activities for pupils that offer good quality challenging and interesting experiences for the pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. In physical education, pupils make good progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good progress at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form.
138. At Key Stage 1 a group of sensory impaired pupils learn to experience travelling along over, under and through basic gymnastic equipment. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their fine and gross motor skills and some pupils develop their ability to direct their wheel chairs through a row of cones. Other pupils support their literacy development through the naming of equipment by colour. All pupils make good progress against their individual education plan targets.
139. At Key Stage 3, pupils enjoy jumping, skipping and running, other some non-ambulant pupils benefit from specialist walking frames as they can take an active part. Pupils enjoy and respond to the challenge of moving through a small toy tunnel, practising balancing on inclined benches and experience bouncing on a mini-trampet. All pupils are supported well by all staff and safety is a paramount feature of teaching. Pupils make good and often good progress through teachers' high expectations of learning and their active enthusiastic approach to the lesson.
140. At Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, pupils make very good progress. In athletics, some pupils practise and improve their throwing skills. Using indoor safe athletics equipment whilst working outside, pupils learn to develop the correct technique prior to releasing the javelin. Other pupils learn to throw small indoor balls from their wheel chairs following approach work along the floor. All pupils take a turn at using the tape

measure and pupils' scores are recorded. Safety rules are re-inforced very well. In another lesson, one pupil is able to demonstrate his table tennis ability from his wheel chair whilst benefiting from some good individual coaching by the teacher. Others take a part in a skittles match and very good use is made of the opportunities to re-inforce literacy and numeracy skills.

141. Teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and 2 and often very good at Key Stage 3, 4 and in the sixth form. A major feature in the quality of teaching is the teamwork, high expectation of pupils, well planned and prepared lessons with good pace. Where teaching is very good, it is because of the specialist technical subject knowledge of the teacher. Consistently good teaching ensures pupils are very interested in their work and make good or better progress. The good use of signing, sensory equipment and pupils' individual education plans contribute to pupils' gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils respond to these high expectations and for the most part work physically hard.
142. The leadership and management of the subject is very good and the co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject. The subject is very successful in making full use of the wider community and has been successful at a local and national level in many areas particularly for example, in table cricket. Resources are good overall however; the school hall is too small for team games at Key Stages 3 and 4. Progress since the last inspection is good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. There were limited opportunities to observe pupils in religious education during the inspection. However evidence from observations, scrutiny of work and teachers' planning show pupils' achievement to be satisfactory over time although some examples of very good achievement were seen during lessons. Teaching is also satisfactory but some examples of very good teaching were observed which dealt with areas such as child abuse in a way which was sensitive and thought provoking, involving older pupils in mature consideration of the issues
144. By to the age of seven pupils are able to compare contrasting emotions such as happy and sad as part of their developing understanding of the relationships of families and friends. By the age of eleven pupils have developed an understanding of a range of Christian stories and can relate them to daily life. The use of discussion enables pupils to consider the importance of special places and people as well as being aware of the functions of prayer. Pupils with additional learning needs experience the same activities and also join in prayers and the singing of appropriate songs. By the age of 13 pupils are aware of the world's major religions' such as Hinduism and Judaism, their understanding being supported by the effective use of a wide range of artefacts. Pupils up to the age of 16 consolidate this work and also consider a range of social issues, such as child abuse and poverty, which involve them in discussion and consideration of the problems and feelings of others.
145. The previous report drew attention to the lack of religious education in the 6th form. This has been resolved and students consider topics such the effect of religion on their lives and are aware of the important milestones such as baptism, weddings and funerals. Students are equally aware of the variations between the major religions. Higher attaining pupils consider the impact of major personalities, such as Mother Teresa, and the reasons why their work is necessary.
146. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, there are occasions when teachers need support in ensuring the subject is presented in a stimulating and engaging way. When teaching is at its best lessons are well paced and the teacher uses a range of activities, such as stories and meditation, to maintain the pupils' interest and ensure their full participation. Such a successful lesson took place with Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils when, as a consequence of the teacher's strong subject knowledge, there was a clear focus to the lesson and pupils knowledge and understanding of the subject was very well developed. The very good relationships between staff and pupils enable the effective discussion of sensitive topics.
147. The previous inspection was very critical of the provision and teaching of religious education. Despite the long term absence of one of the co-ordinators the school has put much effort into improving the provision. Teaching has improved and a comprehensive scheme of work has been adopted. However, there is a need for further staff training to improve its delivery. Similarly, the current provision of two co-ordinators needs to be reviewed to improve the effective overall management of the subject and to ensure that the monitoring of teaching takes place. Religious education has been identified by the school as an area for development in the School Improvement Plan.