

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **COTSWOLD CHINE HOME-SCHOOL**

Box, near Stroud

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115802

Headteacher: Ms. Silla Rieser

Reporting inspector: Mark R. Evans  
OIN 20999

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 188817

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Independent residential
Age range of pupils:	10-18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Box Near Stroud Gloucestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The Board of Trustees
Name of chair of trustees:	Mr. Brian Place
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> July 1996

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20999	Mark R. Evans	Registered inspector	Music Special Educational Needs	The school's results and achievements  How high are standards?  How well is the school led and managed?  How well are pupils taught?
15304	John Fletcher	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?  Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
17546	Chris Wonfor	Team inspector	Mathematics Design technology and Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11239	Sue Flockton	Team inspector	English Geography French	
14596	Tony Fiddian Green	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Art History	
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Cotswold Chine Home-School is an independent approved residential special school that provides for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties that are compounded by other learning difficulties or medical conditions. It is owned and managed by a charity that has as its central tenet, the pursuance of the educational principles of Rudolf Steiner, in a modern context. A range of therapeutic and medical input is available to pupils.

The school is approved by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) to provide education for up to 42 boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 16 years. At the time of the inspection, there were 10 girls and 29 boys attending the school. There are currently 4 pupils above the age of 16. Pupils range in age from 8 to 16 years, but the majority are between 14 and 16. All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs and have a history of unsuccessful experiences in education, many having been excluded from three or more schools. Most pupils (over 60%) are placed at the school for 52 weeks of each year: similarly, more than 75% of the pupils are "looked after" by their local authority. There are no pupils attending the school who speak English as an additional language.

There are 6 class groups, all of which have pupils from more than one year. Pupils live in five separate house groups. Both the educational practice and the residential care provision are based around the ideas of Rudolf Steiner. The school follows the Waldorf curriculum but feels it has developed a more modern approach to ensure that the work pupils undertake reflects the national curriculum programmes study.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Cotswold Chine Home-School is a caring and supportive school that is becoming increasingly effective. It offers a system of education and care that applies the key features of Steiner's educational principles to current legal requirements including those pertaining to the National Curriculum.

#### **What the school does well**

- Teaching is good;
- Pupils are cared for, supported and nurtured effectively;
- The school provides a valuable range of therapeutic input for all pupils;
- Teamwork is of a very high standard;
- The quality of the residential care is high;
- The ethos of the school is distinctive and very positive;

#### **What could be improved**

- Co-ordination of the curriculum and the balance of subjects delivered to all pupils;
- Coherence and use of assessment information and procedures;
- Monitoring of classroom practice;
- The extent of long-term strategic and financial planning;

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, on the issues raised in the previous report. However, the progress made in the last few terms has been very good. Attainment and progress in English have improved markedly. The management structure is now much clearer. Health and safety is a high priority within the school and is well managed.

The breadth of the curriculum offered has improved. Teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection. The headteacher has begun to monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and nearly all lessons have at least two teachers involved, which further encourages the spread of good practice.

## STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	by age 11	By age 16	by age 19	Key	
Speaking and listening	C	C	C	Very good	A
Reading	C	C	C	Good	B
Writing	C	C	C	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	C	C	C	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	C	C	C	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B		

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Nearly all pupils show good attitudes to school: they enjoy lessons and take pleasure from learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in lessons ranges from very good to poor. Where behaviour is poor, emotional outbursts from pre-occupied and disturbed pupils can cause significant disruption. Around the school and in the houses, behaviour is also normally good, but can be very challenging on occasion.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between all in the school - pupils, teachers, care staff, learning assistants and other adults - are good. This has a positive influence on pupils' personal development and on the standards pupils achieve. The pupils trust and respect adults in the school and turn to them readily if they need support.
Attendance	As would be expected in a residential school, attendance is normally satisfactory, although occasionally pupils do run out of lessons if they become agitated or annoyed.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Good	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.*

The quality of teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the week and 69% of the lessons seen were good or very good. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. It is very good in nearly a third of lessons. The school is effective in meeting the needs of the pupils. Teaching in English, science, design and technology, history and physical education is good overall. Teaching in mathematics was satisfactory overall. Some lessons in English, mathematics and science were very good, however. In the limited number of lessons seen in geography, teaching was very good. It was not possible to judge accurately the quality of teaching in information and communications technology, art, French, music or religious education, because the number of lessons observed in each subject was too limited. Literacy skills are better taught than numeracy, although both are satisfactory overall. Teaching in personal, social and health education varies, being good in informal aspects of the subject, but only just satisfactory in lessons, because of the newness of the scheme of work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is developing well: it covers the appropriate subjects, without losing sight of Steiner's educational principles. However, the monitoring of which subjects are actually taught is not yet secure and thus there is no certainty that all pupils consistently receive a balanced curriculum. Some subjects require further development, for example art, music and religious education, to bring them more in line with the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides well for pupils' personal development: spiritual, moral and social development are good. Cultural development is satisfactory. However, within lessons too many opportunities are missed to extend pupils' understanding of the multicultural nature of society, and to explore well known music and works of fine art within the school: this is counterbalanced by very good use of local culture, for example visiting the theatre.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and support are excellent. The pupils are happy and feel safe and secure: they enjoy the education, the care and the therapies provided.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school is complex, but effective. Each leader - headteacher, bursar, heads of care, head of medical/therapeutic department - works diligently and they combine to provide increasingly clear, appropriate and efficient direction, without ever losing sight of the original goals of the charity that supports the school, or the needs of the pupils.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The trustees are very committed to the school and what it stands for - indeed, as trustees, each is personally liable for the finances of the school. Along with the Council of Management, they provide good direction for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good - the school makes use of external advisers and inspectors, and frequently reviews its position as far as statutory requirements. It is beginning to be successful in comparing itself to other similar schools.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is satisfactory.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory, although the school currently has fewer subject specialists (for example in music) than would be ideal. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents/carers express views generally very supportive of the school. Concerns expressed about homework are to some extent justified as there is no formal homework timetable and the practice of setting work is inconsistent across the school. However, there are some good examples of work being set as a logical extension to classwork and this did extend learning and understanding. A very small number of concerns expressed about the school not working closely with parents are not supported by inspectors.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. As would be expected in a school that provides for pupils with special educational needs, overall attainment is below national averages. However, achievement is satisfactory when compared with prior learning and pupils' individual targets. This is especially evident in the core subjects and in those subjects that map most readily onto the Steiner-based curriculum, like history. Nevertheless, lack of coherent records of pupils' work make it difficult to be specific in certain subjects, such as religious education and music. The targets set on pupils' individual education plans are very variable in terms of usefulness: where practice is good, the targets are reviewed regularly, and the review information used to draw up the next plan. However, reviews have only recently started to be recorded regularly, and the targets do not always link to review information. The inconsistency in assessment practice and in recording, makes it difficult to track pupils' progress. Judgements made in this report are based on the records that were available, on pupils' work, on progress made in lessons, on work displayed in classrooms and on teachers' records. Pupils are taught in groups which are linked to ability, rather than to age, and the descriptions in this report reflect this organisation.

2. Progress made in English is always at least satisfactory and this is a marked improvement from the previous inspection. More able pupils often make good progress. Less able pupils express themselves using a limited vocabulary, and with short phrases, rather than developed sentences. They are given opportunities to develop skills, for example, in extending their vocabulary, in both English lessons and in other areas of the curriculum, and some make good use of these opportunities. More able pupils develop good speaking skills that they apply both in English and in other subjects such as history where they discuss the political organisation of the United Kingdom. They are able to answer questions at some length, with well structured sentences and a wide vocabulary. Overall, listening skills are less well developed than speaking skills. Many pupils are able to listen attentively while teachers read stories and these skills are sometimes well supported in the houses when care staff read to pupils. Less able pupils are developing the skills needed to begin to read, looking at picture books and listening to stories. More able pupils are confident, fluent readers and they use a range of strategies. They have good comprehension of what they have read and a number read for pleasure, choosing to read books in their free time. Less able pupils develop pre-writing skills, such as tracking objects and following patterns and many are able to copy over or underneath writing. More able pupils write for a variety of purposes, for example producing stories and poetry.

3. Achievement and progress in mathematics are satisfactory. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of number. The lowest attaining pupils work on basic number recognition, including simple addition of one and two digit numbers up to 20. Higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages including their calculation. They can compute area and angles and a few confidently transfer these skills to other subjects such as their technical drawing designs in design and technology, which have detailed measurements and angles. Pupils use formulae to convert weights and measures, for example imperial to metric, and will often utilise the vocabulary of fractions to explain their understanding.

4. Standards of achievement and progress in science are satisfactory across all ages of pupils, although the majority of pupils find writing difficult and therefore the written records of work are comparatively few. Lower attaining pupils explore scientific developments in history, and classify living and non-living things. They examine substances that will dissolve and have looked at a compost heap to see what lives there. They learn about materials that change their properties such as ice melting to water. Pupils understand about green plants and their need for light and nutrition. Some understand electrical circuits, and others know something about the effects of weather on rocks. They can classify the various kinds of rocks. All pupils learn particularly well when actually doing the work practically: for example, in work about heart rates and exercise, pupils took their pulse resting, and again after running about to raise the heartbeat. They learnt by doing it, rather than merely hearing about it.

5. In one or two cases, the standard of orally presented knowledge is very high and exceeds national expectations, but pupils at this level are unable to write down and record their work to this same high standard. Amongst higher attaining pupils, they discuss genes, DNA, and know about the features that are passed on from parents to children such as eye colour. Pupils know that blood acts as a medium for transporting and exchanging substances in the body. They understand the role of the skeleton as a support, and also know something of muscles and tendons. Pupils make some scientific predictions before they begin work, and then make comparisons with what they find out.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

6. Within the context of the school, the vast majority of pupils show good attitudes to learning, are happy to be at the school and are keen to be involved in the specific learning opportunities provided. All pupils have experienced major difficulties in their lives prior to placement at Cotswold Chine and nearly all respond positively to the safe caring environment, the school routines and the personal encouragement provided by the staff. All pupils require and demand high levels of support and attention: they can find concentration over long periods challenging. In lessons, many pupils nevertheless show good levels of perseverance and genuine interest in subjects. For example, two girls showed remarkable concentration in keeping on task during a badly disrupted mathematics lesson in which one boy became suddenly unco-operative and aggressive. Although all pupils have times when they are emotionally distracted and do not want to be involved, the interest shown and involvement in a wide range of activities is generally high. There are examples of boys talking very positively about making pizza, a girl showing real enthusiasm and ability in the swimming pool and a group of pupils keenly discussing an outing to see a suspension bridge.

7. Pupils' behaviour in lessons ranges from good to poor. In lessons where behaviour is good and supports the learning process, pupils are fully engaged in their work, challenged by the tasks and at ease with their peers and with the teachers. In lessons where behaviour is poor, emotional outbursts from pre-occupied and disturbed pupils can cause significant disruption. In the few lessons seen where behaviour was poor and learning opportunities were restricted, pupils became aggressive and very difficult to manage. In such cases of disruption, the school has clear procedures that are mainly followed consistently by staff: indeed high levels of skill are shown by some staff when dealing with extremely challenging and difficult behaviour. There is some inconsistency amongst staff with respect to tolerance of foul and inappropriate language, however. In most lessons, the verbal exchanges between pupils and with staff are courteous and civilised but in a few lessons pupils overreact and become rude and offensive. Pupils' behaviour around school and in the evenings is generally good. The majority of pupils exchange pleasantries with adults and behave in an orderly manner. Discussions with individuals in their houses revealed a majority happy to enter

conversations in a mature way. There was one delightful example of a boy impulsively apologising to an inspector for the noise in a bedroom located above the inspectors' base. Whilst pupils accept the behaviour expectations at the school and the need for compliance to create a safe and positive environment, many still have violent outbursts which can cause damage to buildings and facilities. The school has good procedures to deal with harassment and bullying and works hard to eliminate incidents by including discussion sessions for pupils to explore the topic. Although no incidents were seen during the inspection, there are documented cases of bullying at the school: these were dealt with quickly and effectively by staff.

8. Relationships between pupils, teachers, care staff and all adults in the school are good and have a positive influence on pupils' personal development and on the standards achieved. Pupils clearly trust and respect adults in the school and turn to them readily if they need support. One of many examples where the strength of relationships in the classroom was influencing the learning and progress made was in a technology lesson where pupils were producing scale drawings of a table lamp. There are particularly strong bonds with the care staff who frequently use humour very positively in their interactions with pupils. There was a good example of a girl happily involved in preparation work for the evening meal in her house exchanging good humoured asides with care staff. Whilst there are strong relationships with all staff, many of the pupils do have outbursts and personal crises which can result in aggressive reactions. Such outbursts can also affect other pupils but generally relationships between pupils are good. There are many examples of pupils working collaboratively, sharing materials and equipment and enjoying healthy rivalries whilst playing games in their houses.

9. The vast majority of pupils make positive progress in terms of social, moral and personal development during their time at the school. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided to get involved in the day to day organisation and routines of their house. At the start of the inspection all pupils were asked to be helpful to individual inspectors as they met up around the site. The inspectors lost count of the number of times they were asked if they needed help or direction by pupils responding proudly to the challenge! Individual care plans effectively incorporate targets to enable pupils to develop independent skills. For example, one boy has been gradually undertaking more of his journey home to London at weekends on his own. He is now successfully organising and undertaking the journey independently. In many lessons and in the houses, pupils take enthusiastic advantage of the opportunities to enhance self-esteem and build confidence, provided through social interaction. Most pupils show a good appreciation of what the impact of their actions is likely to be, but at times of personal and emotional turmoil, outbursts and attacks do still occur.

10. Pupils' attendance at Cotswold Chine is satisfactory. There is very little unauthorised absence and authorised absence is accounted for by illness, medical and therapy appointments, work experience and college visits. Attendance levels recorded at the start of morning and afternoon sessions are rarely less than 95% but during the day this level can fall as pupils absent themselves from lessons usually as a result of an incident or through some emotional trauma that they are finding difficult to deal with. The level of absconding is closely monitored by the school and pupils are dealt with sensitively on a case by case basis. Classroom teaching and learning time is adversely affected by the level of absconding. Punctuality during the school day is satisfactory overall but a few pupils were regularly late back to school after lunch during the inspection.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

11. The quality of teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the week and 69% of the lessons seen were good or very good. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. It is very good in nearly a third of lessons. This high quality of teaching is reflected in the good quality of learning, across the school.

12. All classes contain pupils from more than one year group, as classes are created on the basis of achievement and personality: it is therefore not possible to describe differences in teaching in terms of the age of pupils, rather in terms of higher ability and lower ability pupils, and in terms of subject differences.

13. Teaching in English, science, design and technology, history, physical education is good overall. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall. Some lessons in English, mathematics and science were very good, however. In the limited number of lessons seen in geography, teaching was very good. It was not possible to judge accurately the quality of teaching in information and communications technology, art, French, music or religious education, because the number of lessons in each subject was too limited.

14. Literacy is being developed successfully in many lessons, although not all teachers understand how best to develop these skills: fewer teachers understand how to introduce and develop the skills of numeracy. All develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Whilst all teachers are confident with the pupils, they do not always follow the agreed guidelines for behaviour management and this weakens their effectiveness and limits the development of pupils' understanding of the behavioural boundaries within the school.

15. Where teachers have a more limited knowledge of a subject, they are beginning to receive good support from the curriculum co-ordinator. This enables them to improve their effectiveness, but lack of confidence is still evident, for example, in information and communications technology, when many teachers do not use subject specific vocabulary such as *drag* and *icon*. This places an unnecessary limit to pupils' progress in the development of their technical vocabulary.

16. Cross-curricular links are an increasingly important aspect of lessons. Teachers and other staff make good use of pupils' existing skills and interests, both in other lessons and in the houses. For example, pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed when pupils are encouraged to recount what they have done at the end of each day, during mealtimes and in the evening. All staff engage pupils in conversation, discussing issues which are important to the pupils such as food, and the evening activities planned. Reading activities extend some pupils' learning in the evenings, but is not consistent. Mathematical skills are sometimes extended in the houses because of the important part pupils play in cooking the meals, but again, this is inconsistent. A lack of resources means that pupils have too few opportunities to develop their information technology skills in the houses: there are plans to rectify this.

17. Teachers and support staff work extremely well together and this teamwork is a particular strength of the school. Together, staff provide very good support for pupils and the pupils respond well to being treated with respect and dignity. Very high levels of trust in staff result in pupils developing much improved self-esteem. The security demonstrated by pupils gives them confidence to persevere and to try harder. Teachers generally use a suitable range of strategies to manage behaviour and to maintain pupils' interest. Teachers are aware that the pupils have been isolated and unsuccessful in their previous educational establishments and provide very good opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs or in groups, whenever possible and appropriate. This further improves social skills and self-confidence. Attention is given by all staff to ensure that the girls - significantly fewer in number - have equality of opportunity in questions, activities and discussions.

18. Pupils' behaviour is beginning to be managed consistently in both education and residential settings, though in each, staff demonstrate skills that the other could develop further. Residential staff use their good relationships to jolly pupils along, and often avoid major incidents in this way: teachers are often more able to insist gently that pupils do complete a task, and thus gain in confidence.

19. Teachers plan more effectively for their lessons than they did at the time of the last inspection. Even so, lessons do not always have a good enough structure to enable pupils to really benefit from the long lessons. Most lessons begin with a useful introduction as to what pupils will learn and teachers use a good range of activities to maintain interest. In lessons where teaching is very good, imaginative practical activities fill the pupils with enthusiasm and encourage them to recall their learning accurately. For example, more able pupils learning about the ordering and equivalence of fractions showed great interest in and facility with the white number strips and cards they used for the lesson and their interest in the activity supported their very good behaviour in the lesson.

20. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate great skill in the management of challenging pupils. They have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and this often produces a calm working atmosphere, but the teachers never relax so much that the pupils can take advantage. This was seen in many lessons, for example in food technology, when the apparently relaxed but nevertheless vigilant teachers supported pupils' learning very well. As many pupils flair up very quickly indeed from no obvious stimulus, this vigilance is very important. These management skills combined with the expectation of pupils to complete work set, ensures good progress.

21. Teachers assess pupils' work continuously, using questions mainly, and some give good indications as to how pupils' work might be improved. However, day-to-day recording of achievements is not as well developed in teaching as it might be: an individual's targets are not always used consistently across the school and not always taken into account when further work is being planned. Where teaching is most effective, problems encountered by pupils are used as a basis for planning further work. For example, when pupils were learning the regions of the United Kingdom, their current existing knowledge was reviewed and the lesson adapted suit the pupils. When difficulties did occur, the teachers worked very well together to manage the situation and to keep pupils learning effectively. Many of the most successful lessons end with a useful review to enable pupils to reflect on what they have learned and how they can improve.

22. A few parents and carers expressed concern regarding the amount of work their child receives to do at home or in the houses. Some pupils do receive homework and this is well supervised in residential setting, but more use could be made of it: it would also allow residential and teaching staff to work together more closely in another area of mutual benefit to the pupils.

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

23. A key issue in the previous report was to improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum and so ensure the equal access to it for all pupils. This has in part been achieved although the balance and equality of access for all pupils is less than satisfactory. The headteacher has worked very hard, during the last year, to develop policies and schemes of work for most subjects in an effort to integrate the National Curriculum with an adapted

Steiner curriculum. Whilst this is to be applauded, the speed of these developments has meant that there is little ownership, control or co-ordination of the curriculum by the newly appointed subject co-ordinators or overall management of the curriculum by the headteacher. This is a weakness and does not aid pupils' learning or curriculum planning to ensure pupils make suitable progress during their time at the school.

24. The breadth of the curriculum has improved and now science, information technology, design and technology, a modern foreign language and music appear on class timetables. However, these subjects are not always taught and the balance between subjects and the programmes of study within subjects is not secure. For example, there is very little music but a great deal of design and technology lessons, although no account is taken of the balance between working rigid materials or food technology. As the role of curriculum co-ordinators is so new, there is no system for the headteacher, other than checking teachers' timetables, to ensure that pupils are receiving their full entitlement to the National Curriculum or the school is meeting the requirements of pupils' statements of special educational needs. This restricts pupils' learning opportunities and their progression as they move through the school.

25. Each class has a different timetable: while some include the Steiner inspired "Main Lesson", which is a topic approach, most do not. Timetables do not always clearly indicate what lesson is to be taught or whether all pupils are present for that lesson. For example, some timetables read "Main Lesson or physical education", "French or art extraction", usually for one or more pupils, or "food technology or independent English or mathematics study". In addition, pupils understandably have to attend therapy sessions at various times throughout the week but these are not recorded and pupils often end up missing the same lesson each week. As much of the planning is left to individual teachers, there is no consistency of planning and no monitoring of pupils' progress or entitlement. Teachers themselves decide what subjects to teach and when and this informal approach does not aid consistency across teaching groups or years and in some cases severely restricts pupils' learning. Some lessons are also far too long, for example a two hour lesson for physical education is too demanding for pupils and causes them to lose interest, despite changing activities, which in turn affects their behaviour and their ability to learn.

26. Curriculum planning in its current format has developed very recently and there is still some lack of clarity amongst some teachers as to what the National Curriculum actually is and how it can be planned alongside the agreed Steiner topics. For example, a gymnastics lesson with a higher attaining group of pupils was entitled "nature studies" and planned for Year 2 pupils, yet some were attaining levels just below their chronological age. However, some teachers make good cross-curricular connections between the Key Stage 4 programmes of study, in English, mathematics and science and the history topic.

27. Most pupils are working towards achievement tests in numeracy and literacy, while the highest attaining pupils have the opportunity to take the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) foundation courses in English and mathematics. However, as many pupils have limited literacy and numeracy skills, their progress is restricted especially with the demands of GCSE coursework. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is inconsistent, mainly as teachers have not received sufficient training or have only a partial understanding of the national strategies.

28. Provision for personal, social and health education is also at an early stage of development. A co-ordinator has been appointed to lead the subject and a policy has been written, but in practice, teachers do not yet refer to it when planning lessons. Sex education and drugs' awareness are taught through the science curriculum but only on an ad hoc basis as the situation arises. For example, sex education was taught to two girls in one class while



the boys were excluded. The teacher said she intended to teach the same lesson at a later date to include the boys but this was not planned. A useful discussion emerged from a mathematics lesson about friendship, help and support, but this was not planned and only happened because one pupil became abusive and left the classroom. On an individual or small group basis, the school nurse plays an important and effective role. Overall however, understanding of how the subject will be taught throughout the school is not as clear as it could be, and this lack of clarity restricts pupils' experiences and learning.

29. Opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities are very good. Although most activities are sporting such as skiing, tennis, swimming, and football, other pupils who have shown a desire to learn a musical instrument for example, the piano have been able to pursue this. Most activities take place during evenings and weekends with care staff, and individual requests, such as joining a football team are also well catered for. These activities have a positive impact on pupils' learning and their improving skills are used to good effect during their annual holidays. For example, some pupils' climbing and abseiling skills were used to good effect during their holiday to the Lake District.

30. Careers education and guidance for pupils is good. Pupils have the opportunity to undertake work experience at various locations that include a local garage, the nearby leisure centre, a tyre company and a bakery. Pupils enjoy these experiences and they help them to make an informed choice about their future. These include provision for further education at the school's partner college Ruskin Mill, Stroud College or more specialised residential colleges.

31. The school has good links with its partner institutions, especially Ruskin Mill which supports pupils' learning through work experience placements and visits which include participation in activities such as farming, fish farming and other small enterprises. Good use is made of the local and wider community to support pupils' learning such as leisure activities. Although little use is made of visits to places of interest to support the curriculum, satisfactory use is made of theatres and restaurants although only during pupils' residency. Links with other schools are understandably limited, although the school does have links with a residential school in Kenya where pupils are encouraged to write to each other.

32. In general, all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, whatever their special needs. However, frequent withdrawals for therapy, or other reasons, mean that several pupils do not receive all parts of a given lesson. One or two pupils do not attend many classes due to their own particular needs, and provision is made in other ways for them, usually on a one-to-one basis.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

33. The school's procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and support are excellent and a clear strength of the establishment. Within the context of their special educational needs, the pupils are happy, feel safe and secure and there is good evidence to show that the vast majority are enjoying and benefiting from the education provided at school. Teaching, support staff and care staff enforce effectively the ethos of the school with the support and help they give to the children. The well-being of the pupils is uppermost in the minds of all staff at all times. Procedures to deal with child protection issues are very good and meet statutory requirements. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. The school works effectively with a range of doctors, therapists and support agencies and the benefits of these relationships are evident in the individually tailored care and personal development packages provided.

34. The school has appropriate procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety. There are regular evacuation practices and appropriate records of fire prevention and electrical equipment inspections. Appropriate first aid supplies are available around the site and first aiders hold up-to-date accreditation. The school provides a good range of healthy and nutritious food. The school has clear procedures relating to medicines on site and staff take great care to ensure that children follow their medical regimes. Support for pupils provided by the nursing staff and the doctors is of a very high standard. In lessons observed during the inspection good care was taken to ensure pupils' safety. Staff and adults on site are vigilant in ensuring children follow safe procedures and practices. No incidents occurred during the inspection.

35. The procedures for monitoring children's personal development are good. There are clear targets for pupils' personal development and progress against these is regularly recorded as a result of observation, input from therapy specialists and following formal and informal discussions between teaching and care staff. Targets are regularly reviewed. Teachers and care staff do know pupils and their targets for personal development well. The systems for assessing pupils' academic progress are under developed and unsatisfactory, across the curriculum. It is rarely possible to find coherent long-term records that show evidence of individual pupils' progress over time. With few academic assessment records available, it is not surprising that the use of assessment data to inform curriculum planning and to help plan differentiated work schemes is unsatisfactory. The school has identified itself that assessment and the use of assessment data are key development priorities.

36. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring and promoting attendance. A new system for recording the pupils present at the start of morning and afternoon school provides a good, central record of who is on site in case of emergency. Pupils who frequently absent themselves from lessons often have specific improvement targets that are publicly rewarded if met. The school has very good schemes in place for monitoring behaviour and satisfactory schemes for promoting good behaviour. The behaviour policy outlines clear expectations which are understood and respected by the vast majority of pupils. Care plans and individual education plans contain clear targets for behaviour improvement which are well understood by all staff and pupils. The recording of progress against these targets and of all behaviour related incidents is comprehensive, being based on an electronic system that very effectively makes data available to staff that access the database. Whilst the school does not have one single and consistently used whole school reward scheme, there are many schemes which do recognise and publicly reward good and caring behaviour. Pupils respond positively to the frequent use of praise and encouragement and value public presentation of awards and celebration of achievement. The school has satisfactory procedures to deal with bullying and is effective in reducing all forms of oppressive behaviour.

37. The residential provision at the school is very good. Pupils' welfare is uppermost in the minds of care staff who are well informed about each pupil. All pupils have care plans updated twice a year and arrangements for complaints are clear and understood. Accommodation is adequate although some rooms and living areas could do with new furniture and redecoration. The routines of the school give pupils a good and secure structure for the day providing opportunities to dress casually after school and a comprehensive list of activities to choose to be involved with in the evenings. The school received a positive Social Services report in March this year.

38. The school has a policy on identification, assessment and review, together with a list of planning and assessment which is expected of class teachers and subject teachers. When pupils join the school, the information in their statements of special educational needs

is used to develop targets for their individual education plans. This information is supplemented by tests in literacy, numeracy, and underlying skills, which are carried out by the school's "Remedial Assessor". These tests are repeated prior to each annual review, to inform the setting of future targets. Most pupils are also tested regularly in basic literacy and numeracy.

39. Teachers are expected to assess and evaluate each lesson, but the use of this assessment is dependent on clarity of objectives. Where objectives are clear, the assessments are very specific, but where objectives are confused with activities, the assessment tends to be very general. The link between this and lesson planning lacks clarity because of the inconsistency of the use of the lesson evaluation. At present, different systems are in place for on-going assessment. In some subjects there is still individual target setting, while in other subjects the focus is on National Curriculum statements and, in English, mathematics and science, checklists are used to show which aspects of the National Curriculum have been completed. However, the variability of detail in keeping on going records makes it unclear how judgements are made about how, and when, pupils reach targets.

40. The school has set up a system of writing individual education plans, but there is a lack of consistency with regard to the use of pupils' individual targets in lesson planning. At present, there is also very varied practice in terms of writing and reviewing Individual education plans and the link between these and annual reports. Where practice is good, the individual education plan is reviewed regularly, and the review information is used to draw up the next plan. However, reviews have not always been recorded regularly, and the targets on individual education plans do not always link to review information. The annual report is supposed to review the targets at the end of the year but, in some cases, targets are listed but not reviewed. The inconsistency in assessment practice and in recording, makes it difficult for the school to track pupils' progress.

41. The school provides a wide range of therapies, some though not all, directly related to the Steiner philosophy. The pupils' needs are analysed carefully, before a therapeutic regime may be prescribed: this could involve Steiner-based work like eurythmy therapy, or conventional therapy as in speech and language therapy. These therapies are an integral and vital part of the work that the school does. Two group eurythmy sessions were observed during the inspection and these demonstrated a range of physical and mental benefits that that these exercises can stimulate. The sessions were very well taught. Although it was inappropriate for inspectors to observe art therapy sessions, it is clear from discussions and records that significant and positive improvements have been stimulated through these and other therapeutic sessions. The therapeutic and medical attention that is offered provides very good reinforcement and sometimes crucial breakthroughs in the overall development of the pupils.

42. This concern for the well-being of pupils extends to the food that they eat, in that all food provided is organically grown and of the best quality. Coupled with the dedication and skill of the kitchen staff, the school richly deserves its "Good Food" award from the local authority, and is further evidence of importance within Cotswold Chine, of developing all aspects of the pupils.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. The school has satisfactory links with parents and carers that contribute positively to pupils' learning and development. As a residential school with a very wide catchment area, it is difficult to develop a close and interactive partnership with parents and carers. Nevertheless, responses received indicate a generally supportive view of the school and positive comments about the progress made with their children particularly in terms of personal development. There is broad agreement amongst the parent body that the school is welcoming and approachable. The concerns expressed by a few parents about homework are to some extent justified as there is no formal homework timetable and the practice of setting work is inconsistent across the school. However there are some good examples of work being set which is a logical extension to classwork and does extend learning and understanding. The few concerns expressed about the school not working closely with parents are not supported by inspectors. It is particularly notable how many of the comments received refer specifically to improvements in behaviour, satisfaction with care arrangements, and the help being given to enable pupils to develop into mature and responsible adults. A year ago the school consulted all parents and carers to determine views on and satisfaction with the provision. A good response yielded results which broadly mirror the current inspection consultation but it is unclear how the school has used the information.

44. Formal and informal contacts with parents are effective and ensure that parents and carers are kept informed about the progress and development of their children. Information on academic progress is made available at parents' evenings, annual reviews and through the annual report. Attendance at meetings is disappointing. The annual reports are very readable documents providing appropriate statements on what pupils can do but they do not measure progress against specific academic targets and do not give information on what has to be done to improve. The school does not organise events or send out leaflets to generally promote a broader understanding of what is being taught and so encourage involvement in learning from home. Information on all aspects of personal and emotional development, behaviour, medical treatment and care is made available to parents formally at care reviews and informally by letter or telephone throughout the year. Attendance and involvement at formal care reviews is good and the school is thorough in ensuring a good dialogue with parents and carers over day to day incidents which impact on the care provided and the personal development of the pupils. Because most parents and carers live significant distances from the school, it does not make efforts to involve parents in the day to day life of the school but both teaching and care staff are always available and willing to discuss matters on the telephone and there is a positive partnership particularly in relation to pastoral and care issues.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

45. The school was founded over 40 years ago and in 1963 a charitable trust was registered for it. The management structure comprises of two small teams of people taking responsibilities for particular areas. The school trustees - currently four in number - are the legal owners of the overall assets and the business activities of the charity. They are not responsible for the day-to-day management, although they do oversee the work of the Council of Management who have this responsibility. The trustees employ an auditor and approve the audited accounts and only the trustees can purchase or sell building assets. The trustees meet formally, normally once per school term, and consider the school's termly management accounts as well as reviewing the school's work generally and its future plans.

46. The Council of Management has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of

the school, including the employment of staff. It is responsible to the organisations that place pupils at the school and the fulfilment of the school's statutory obligations concerning its work. The council members are the headteacher, the bursar, the school medical officer and the two heads of care. The headteacher is responsible to the Council for all educational matters. The bursar is responsible for all aspects of financial and resource management and for the school's administration. The school medical officer oversees all aspects of the medical and therapy department. The two heads of care are responsible for implementation of the requirements of the Children's Act, pupil admissions and all matters concerning child care within the school - the head of care (pupils) - and for the management and training of all care staff - the head of care (staff).

47. The charity's trust deed, which defines the Council of Management, requires that the school be run according to the principles of Rudolf Steiner. In practice, the school has a distinctive and very positive ethos, that puts the development of all aspects of the pupils at the centre of what it does. It is increasingly effective in offering a modern system of education that applies the key tenets of the Steiner philosophy.

48. The school is divided into six class groups each with its designated class teacher. Most classes are supported by a second teacher or by a classroom assistant. Specialist teachers and therapists also support the work of the class teachers. Since 1990, the school has responded to the demand for residential placements that provide continuous year round care with a structured programme of activities to meet the social development and emotional needs of pupils. Nearly two-thirds of pupils are now placed at the school on a fifty-two week basis.

49. The school has made satisfactory progress on the issues raised in the previous OFSTED inspection report, although the progress made in the last few terms has been very good. Attainment and progress in English have improved markedly. The management structure is now much clearer. Health and safety is a high priority within the school and well managed. The breadth of the curriculum offered has improved, but the balance within it is still not secure. Assessment procedures are still not consistent across both the teaching and residential provision. Teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection. The headteacher has begun to monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and nearly all lessons have at least two teachers involved, which further encourages the spread of good practice.

50. The school has developed clear aims and these are giving definite direction for the work and development within the school. The school development plan is a full and inclusive document, though it has been created with only minimal involvement from current staff. There are specific plans to ensure greater staff involvement as the plan is reviewed and modified. The monetary aspects of the plan are less clear, in that developments are not fully costed: this makes financial planning more difficult. The school development plan is now beginning to be effective as a management aid to plan strategically for whole school improvement, but the lack of clear fiscal information limits this at present. The Council of Management, the trustees and staff are clear about what needs to be done in the school and are enthusiastic about improvement. Consultants are brought in on a regular basis to input on educational and residential matters. Nevertheless, there have been very limited opportunities for teaching staff to take responsibility for the development of an area of the curriculum, in terms of creating subject development plans, influencing the school development plan, and overseeing what learning resources are available to support teachers and care staff aid pupils' learning. Subject budgeting is done on an "as required" basis, rather than as part of an overall plan. No-one as yet examines the impact of new purchases on pupils' learning and the raising of standards.

51. Teachers do evaluate the success of the targets set for pupils in their individual education plans, but these are completed on a termly basis and have little direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning or future planning. Staff do not meet on a regular basis to discuss, plan or evaluate the school's curriculum needs. Teachers do meet together before school, but whole school staff meetings, as part of directed time, do not take place for all staff to communicate with each other. The trustees are strongly committed to the school, to the pupils and to the philosophy of the organisation. They provide appropriate support to the school as a critical friend. Members of the Council of Management also will challenge and questions one another, to find the best way forward. However, the school does not set clear targets for itself, which limits the effectiveness of the monitoring that can be done by either body of people. For example, although trustees visit the school regularly, these visits do not necessarily relate to any targets or initiatives in the development plan.

52. The number of teachers and learning support assistants is sufficient to meet the requirements of the curriculum, and to provide support in meeting pupils' needs. Teachers are experienced and most are qualified in teaching pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties, including those who exhibit very challenging behaviour. The teamwork demonstrated by staff, including residential workers, is a strength of the school. However, further training for all staff in numeracy and information technology, to match national expectations would be very advantageous. The staff training programme is determined by the school development plan. However, there are no systematic procedures in place for identifying the individual training needs of all staff and producing a fully costed staff development programme. As there are no systems to identify targets for training, the effectiveness of the training programme cannot easily be measured. Procedures for appraisal within the school are limited to informal support, with little attention given to performance management. However, the induction procedures for new staff are excellent, in that they provide a very effective system of support for teaching or support staff.

53. The school's accommodation is spread over four separate locations. It is well maintained by a small group of staff, who are dedicated, enthusiastic and provide invaluable support to staff and pupils alike. In all, it is adequate for its purpose, but there are many variations. Some of the houses in which the pupils live are rather shabby in appearance and some furniture is in need of replacement. For example, in one house the piano is completely broken, in another house it is in good working order. Some of the teaching rooms are cramped and facilities for some subjects are problematical. Physical education takes place either in the small hall or has to take place off site, including on the common. Limited lighting in the hall does not easily support good learning of certain skills, like catching. There are no facilities for the pupils to change easily at the school, necessitating a journey back to their houses for some, if they get muddy playing a game outdoors, for example. There is not specialist facility for the teaching of science or music. Design and technology lessons have to be taught in very small groups because of the size of the room used. Some parts of the main school building are very awkward indeed for wheelchair users, although improvements have been made since the last report.

54. The quality and quantity of learning resources are satisfactory overall. In some areas, for example English, they are improving as a result of recent spending on schemes, but books generally are not in ample supply, given the wide range of interest, age-range and needs within the school. The policy of directing funds to teachers rather than to a subject area or to subject co-ordinators has resulted in varied provision, some of which is inadequate. There is limited practical apparatus available for the teaching of mathematics. In history and religious education, there are few artefacts available to support the pupils' learning. In art, resources are limited to a narrow range of drawing and painting materials. Musical resources are limited in number and range. Hardware for the teaching of information technology is of good quality, especially the integrated learning system, but software to

support other subjects is lacking.

55. As the legal owners of all the school's assets, the trustees have delegated responsibility for financial and resource management to the bursar. Regular details and accurate information is presented to the chair of the trustees by the bursar: financial control is excellent. The bursar is supported by efficient and hardworking staff who add to the overall effectiveness of the school administrative systems. The bursar has developed a ground-breaking and very effective database, on which is stored much of the information generated by the school: for example, residential reports, key worker data and pupils' past histories. The school devotes significant time to making this system work and plans to implement it for teaching staff, too: this will have resource implications which the Council of Management will need to address. The school strives to offer the best value to pupils, parents and the local education authority: for example, when tenders are sought locally, there are always a number of tenders sought, which means that competition ensues and the prices paid are fair. However, the school is only just beginning to be success in comparing standards within the school with other similar institutions or in measuring the effectiveness of money spent on resources.

56. Given that the school offers high quality residential care, good teaching, and very good support for pupils' individual needs, but still has to ensure balance within the curriculum, develop assessment procedures further and improve long-term strategic and financial planning, it provides satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to build on the improvements already made and to raise standards further the headteacher, trustees and council of management need to:

- (1) be more rigorous in planning the timetable and monitoring its delivery, to ensure curriculum balance for all pupils, across all curriculum subjects;  
*(See paragraphs 24, 25 and 26)*
- (2) improve the provision of all the National Curriculum aspects of art and music, and extend and embed the provision of religious education, information and communications technology and personal, social and health education;  
*(See paragraphs 24, 28, 96, 115, 120 and 126)*
- (3) develop coherent assessment procedures to determine pupils' academic progress in all subjects, ensuring that they are applied consistently to inform future teaching and make certain that targets on pupils' individual education plans are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time specific so that each individual pupil's progress can be monitored effectively;  
*(See paragraphs 38, 39 and 40)*
- (4) make certain that trustees, council of management members and curriculum co-ordinators are actively involved in scrutinising and improving the work of the school further by evaluating classroom practice on a regular basis and by investigating the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.  
*(See paragraph 51)*
- (5) extend long-term strategic and financial planning, including monitoring the effectiveness of spending on raising pupils' achievements, involving all staff;  
*(See paragraph 50 and 55)*

Other issues to be considered:

- ◆ training in and the resourcing of information and communications technology;  
*(See paragraphs 115, 116 and 117)*
- ◆ improve consistency amongst all staff as to the tolerance relatively low level negative behaviour, such as inappropriate language.  
*(See paragraphs 18 and 20)*



## RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

58. The residential provision is very good. It has a significant impact on the good social and personal development of pupils. The previous inspection report commented on the positive effect of clear and consistent routines in the houses. Since that time the routines have been maintained and improvements made to the accommodation. The residential provision is a strength of the school, with high staffing levels providing good quality care and support for the vulnerable pupils that attend the school.

59. Pupils show good progress in the development of independence skills. They are encouraged by staff to take increasing responsibility for their own well-being. This includes personal cleanliness and the preparation of meals. During the week of inspection three pupils made vegetarian curries in their Food Studies lesson and took the meals to the house to share with particular friends and staff. This type of activity makes a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' personal skills. Teaching staff as well as care staff visit the houses and make a valuable contribution to the good development of pupils' social skills and self-confidence. Pupils are given opportunities to make personal choices in selecting their clothing, participating in activities and personalising their own bedrooms. Part of the school philosophy is to get pupils to think for themselves and this is evident when pupils consider and decide who is to be named as the best mannered pupil in the house. The family atmosphere created particularly during meal times successfully encourages the development of good behaviour and cordial relationships.

60. Staff carefully monitor the needs of pupils in terms of managing their behaviour. They prepare and implement care plans based on pupils' individual needs and are fully aware of the strategies required for managing the challenging behaviour sometimes presented by the pupils, the majority of whom have severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. Care staff make valuable contributions to pupils' annual reviews and maintain well co-ordinated care plans. The regular staff meetings ensure that staff in the school and at the homes are well briefed and kept up-to-date about potential difficulties. These procedures make a very good contribution to improvements in social and personal development of pupils. Staff not only make consistent use of praise and encouragement, but also have a reward system which reinforces and matches the progress made by pupils in learning new skills such as tying shoelaces or relating well to other people. Rewards include books, magazines, shower gels and visits to friends in the other houses.

61. Staff work hard to provide pupils with a wide range of purposeful educational and social activities based on the principles of Rudolf Steiner. These include playing samba music, attending local guides, going to an internet café, a variety of theatre visits, and a regular favourite of playing torch-tag after the evening meal. These activities make a valuable contribution to social development.

62. Special emphasis is given to important festivals of major religions, for example Christmas, Easter and Divali. Respect for the traditions and beliefs of others is encouraged and it was reported that in one of the houses the pupils chose to all eat Halal food so that one of their group should not feel different or isolated. Opportunities are taken in the houses to cook meals from different cultures and pupils who are vegetarians are also well catered for. Pupils heard about the life of the street children in Romania and held a special day when they wore ragged clothing, no shoes and ate cabbage soup so they could empathise with children who are so much worse off. Supported by a local food outlet pupils have raised funds for 'Children in Need' by making and selling pizzas. This rich range of activities makes a good contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of resident pupils.

63. Child protection procedures are very thorough and carefully followed by all staff. The head of care (pupils) is the responsible person named by the school. A complaints procedure is in place and pupils make appropriate use of this to sort out situations they perceive as being unfair. There is a sensitive approach to encouraging family links. Telephones are installed in the houses and pupils have direct access to outside help if they should need it. The previous inspection criticised the staffing levels but the houses are now generously staffed. At the moment, there is no requirement at night for waking staff though this is regularly reviewed in view of the changing needs of the pupils. Childcare and teaching staff liaise well on a twice-daily basis to ensure that handover procedures are useful in ensuring pupils have consistent and supportive care throughout the whole day. The school provides good nutritious food and takes advantage of the availability of organic vegetables from Ruskin Mill Further Education Centre. Pupils' health and medical needs are well provided for by the principal medical officer and his assistant. They are supported by the full time nurse who also supports care and teaching staff in providing sessions for pupils on personal health care. The quality of care is such that pupils feel secure and valued during their time at the school

64. The residential accommodation is adequate. The school is making great efforts to improve the internal appearance of the houses. Pupils have their own rooms and their wish for privacy is respected: they are able to arrange and decorate their rooms and personalise it with their own possessions. There has been some recent reorganisation of the houses and some alterations such as the provision of a shower as well as a bath for male pupils still need to be completed. The communal areas are comfortable and provide sufficient space for pupils to live together in a happy and secure environment and learn to become more independent.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	28	41	31	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	39
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	39

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	5	School data	1

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stages 2, 3 and 4**

The number of pupils in each of the three years at the end of key stages is less than 10, so results of nationally administered examinations are not reported.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	35
Any other minority ethnic group	1

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	2
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: Y5 – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.25
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	2.9
Average class size	6

#### **Education support staff: Y5 – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	2,659,219
Total expenditure	2,430,606
Expenditure per pupil	63,323
Balance brought forward from previous year	189,282
Balance carried forward to next year	228,613

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	120
Number of questionnaires returned	10

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	10	70	10	10	0
My child is making good progress in school.	30	40	20	10	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	0	50	20	20	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	0	0	0	50	50
The teaching is good.	30	40	0	0	30
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	40	10	20	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	30	10	10	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	20	60	10	10	0
The school works closely with parents.	20	30	10	30	10
The school is well led and managed.	20	30	10	10	30
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	50	10	10	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	40	0	0	20

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

### **ENGLISH**

65. At the last inspection, one key issue was to improve attainment and progress in English. A considerable amount of effort has been put into addressing this issue, and good improvement has been made. Judgements in this inspection are based mainly on lesson observations in which progress is always at least satisfactory. For more able pupils it is often good. Judgements are also supported by a limited amount of work available for scrutiny, by some work on display, by records of work such as lesson evaluations and reviews of individual education plans, and by pupils' reports. Pupils are not entered for national tests at the ends of key stages, but there is regular standardised testing of literacy, which also shows sound progress for those able to participate. Where appropriate, pupils may work towards the Certificate of Achievement examination and it is anticipated that a small number may take GCSE English this year.

66. Less able pupils have limited skills in speaking and listening. They are able to express themselves simply, often using a narrow vocabulary, and with short phrases, rather than developed sentences. They are given opportunities to develop skills, for example, in extending their vocabulary, in both English lessons and in other areas of the curriculum: some make good use of these opportunities. Drama sessions also support this language development, with pupils in the lowest ability group taking part in plays, which they perform to others in the school. Others also take part in drama as an optional subject, but not all pupils have this opportunity. More able pupils have developed good speaking skills which they apply both in English and in other subjects such as history where they discuss the political organisation of the United Kingdom. They are able to answer questions at some length, with well structured sentences and a wide vocabulary. Overall, listening skills are less well developed than speaking skills. This is often linked to behaviour with many pupils having difficulty in turn taking and in accepting the opinions of others. Many pupils are able to listen attentively while teachers read stories. Within the curriculum, they have many opportunities to listen, for example to myths and legends linked to topic work. This is well supported in the houses when care staff read to pupils.

67. Less able pupils are developing pre-reading skills, looking at picture books and listening to stories. Those at the early stages of reading recognise letter sounds and begin to use this knowledge to decode words. Others learn some sight vocabulary. These pupils are beginning to work their way through books in a reading scheme. More able pupils are confident, fluent readers, using a range of skills, including predicting, to decode new words. They show good comprehension of what they read and enjoy reading a variety of books, both fiction and non-fiction. For example, they read books such as "A Tale of Two Cities" and "Oliver Twist", poetry of different cultures and periods, and plays such as "Twelfth Night" as part of the English curriculum. A number also read for pleasure, choosing to read books in their free time. Pupils are encouraged to keep diaries of their reading.

68. Less able pupils develop pre-writing skills, such as tracking objects and following patterns and many are able to copy over or underneath writing. Pupils of average ability are able to write and punctuate sentences with full stops and capital letters. Some also know how to use speech marks and apostrophes. They write information about activities, for example, about visits which they have made, and brief descriptions of pictures. The vocabulary which they use in writing tends to be limited because their spelling skills are often not well developed. More able pupils write for a variety of purposes, for example, letters,

newspapers, stories, poetry, and journals. They record work in other subjects, for example, geography, history, and science. They learn drafting and redrafting. Good use is made of word-processing, especially by the more able pupils. This enables them to produce work of which they are proud, even when they have poor handwriting, and encourages some to write at considerable length.

69. Teaching in lessons seen was good or very good, as a result of which pupils' learning was also good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when there was a high proportion of unsatisfactory lessons. The best lessons are well planned with clear objectives which enable clear assessment to be made of pupils' learning. Where objectives are less clear, assessment is made more difficult. There is limited use of individual education plan targets in lesson planning, so that these objectives are not always followed up in lessons. Good management of pupils' behaviour, linked to high expectations, means that pupils are enabled to concentrate on their work and to make progress. Good relationships with pupils encourage them to make an effort with their work, and good support is given when needed. Pupils respond well to questions which are well targeted to ensure that all are involved. Praise and encouragement are used appropriately, so that pupils know when they are deserved, and these, together with good use of humour, motivate pupils and help them to stay on task. Homework is very limited and is mainly provided for the few who request it. This means that pupils do not always follow up on class work, or have time to complete work of greater length, for example, for GCSE course work.

70. A considerable amount of work has been done by the English co-ordinator and by the teacher of the lower ability group in developing the curriculum in English. The curriculum for the lower and middle ability pupils is based on the Steiner topic-based curriculum, and this has been linked, wherever possible, to National Curriculum targets. This has given a sound basic curriculum, although in some cases, the links between the two are tenuous and further development is needed to include more details from the new National Curriculum. For the more able pupils at Key Stage 4, the curriculum is linked to the Certificate of Achievement and to GCSE. Whilst the school has not adopted the National Literacy Strategy, many of the features are built into the scheme of work. Literacy is being developed in many lessons, although not all teachers understand how best to develop these skills.

71. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped as, at present, it is focused on having responsibility for writing policies and developing schemes of work, on which the co-ordinator has worked very hard. He is able to give advice to colleagues about teaching strategies and resources, and has also provided some training. As yet, there is no monitoring role attached to being a co-ordinator, so he does not monitor the work of pupils or teachers' planning. Similarly, there is no opportunity to observe lessons, so he is not aware of teachers' needs for further training or developments. Resources for teaching English are being well developed, although there are limited opportunities for seeing videos linked to the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

72. Mathematics has made only limited improvement since the previous inspection. However, pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, while some higher attaining pupils are making good progress towards a GCSE at Foundation level. Although many pupils do have targets written for mathematics in their individual education plans, such as "experience three-dimensional nets", there is little evidence of teachers' using these targets in their planning: this restricts pupils' learning.

73. Throughout the school, pupils have an increasing understanding of number. The

lowest attaining pupils are working on basic number recognition, including simple addition of one- and two-digit numbers up to 20. Most have an awareness of basic two-dimensional shapes and a few add one penny coins up to 12p. Many pupils confidently add and subtract three digit numbers. They have an understanding of basic co-ordinates while a few use maps to find the co-ordinates of where they live. Although the use of mental mathematics strategies is rare, when given the opportunity many pupils calculate numbers up to 50 and give a clear explanation how this was achieved. Higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages including their calculation. They compute area and angles and a few confidently transfer these skills to other subjects such as their technical drawing designs in design and technology, which have detailed measurements and angles. Pupils use available data and formulae to convert weights and measures for example, imperial to metric and will often utilise fraction and decimals to explain their calculations.

74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although a few lessons with the highest attaining pupils were very good. At their best, teachers plan lessons that take account of pupils' abilities and make lessons exciting, age-appropriate and fun. One lesson on weights and measures was planned to reinforce pupils' understanding of metric and imperial measures and was greeted with a comment that maths is "Cool!". Most teachers carefully prepare their work for pupils, often on the board before pupils arrive, which supports the smooth running of the lessons and aids pupils' concentration and learning, although it is not always appropriately different for the range of abilities within the class. There is also an over-reliance on repetitive work especially for the lowest ability pupils, for example pages of similar additions without any practical activities to reinforce pupils' learning.

75. Most teachers have very good strategies for dealing with pupils' behaviour including the positive use of humour, where appropriate. For those pupils with the most challenging behaviour, teachers work very well together, supporting each other and pupils. Teachers enforce the need to respect each other and this often encourages pupils to concentrate on their work for longer periods of time which also supports their learning. However, few practical activities take place, which is a weakness, and would be helped by an understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy.

76. Pupils' response to mathematics often depends on the quality of the teaching and the type of activities planned. When taught well, pupils learn easily and with enthusiasm. Some pupils respond very well and are motivated by lessons: others find it very difficult to concentrate and the slightest mistake sends them into a negative and occasionally violent reaction. Most activities are planned for pupils to work individually, although on the few occasions when pupils are given the opportunity to work together they do so co-operatively.

77. The headteacher currently co-ordinates the subject but the role is neither clearly defined nor effective. For example, no monitoring of teachers' planning or pupils' learning takes place and only limited attention has been given to evaluating the success of targets written for pupils within their individual education plans. Although there is now a policy and scheme of work for mathematics, teachers do not take account of this in their planning and no check is made of the balance of attainment targets across the subject. As no training has taken place on the National Numeracy Strategy, opportunities are missed to reinforce pupils' numeracy skills across other subjects, and where this does happen, for example weighing ingredients in food technology and calculating the angles of road junctions in geography, it is sometimes more by accident than design. There is an over-reliance on an old commercial scheme to support teachers, and this does little to move the subject forwards. Learning resources are limited, despite money being made available, especially for practical mathematics equipment.

## **SCIENCE**



78. A very limited range of lessons was available for observation and so this report draws heavily upon discussion with teachers and pupils, on scrutiny of teachers' planning documents and on analysis of some pupils' work.

79. Standards of achievement and progress are satisfactory across all ages of pupils. In one or two cases, the standard of oral knowledge is very high and exceeds national expectations, but pupils at this level are unable to write down and record their work to this same high standard. Progress of some pupils is hampered by acute emotional or behavioural difficulties, and they sometimes find it difficult even to remain in the classroom. In a class of higher attaining pupils, they discuss genes, DNA, and features that are passed on from parents to children such as eye colour. Pupils know that blood acts as a medium for transporting and exchanging substances in the body. They understand the role of the skeleton as a support, and also know something of muscles and tendons. Pupils make some scientific predictions before they begin work, and then make comparisons with what they find out.

80. Lower attaining pupils work on such topics as gravity, and magnets. They explore some of the scientific developments in history, and classify living and non-living things. They examine some substances that will dissolve, and at a more practical level, have looked at a compost heap to discover what lives and goes on there. Some pupils have studied the universe and the solar system, sources of light, and the cycle of day and night. They learn about materials that change their properties such as ice melting to water.

90. Pupils understand about green plants and their need for light and nutrition, and some have studied life cycles. They understand electrical circuits, and others know something about the effects of weather on rocks. They can classify the various kinds of rocks.

91. The majority of pupils find writing difficult and therefore the written records of this work are comparatively few. There is a practical approach to much of the science. For example, in work about heart rates and exercise, pupils were seen in the hall, taking their pulse resting, and again after running about to raise the heartbeat. They learnt well by doing it rather than merely hearing about it.

92. Teaching and learning are overall good with some satisfactory and some very good. In very good lessons, the pace and challenge for pupils captures their attention and they learn very well. In one lesson, the teacher introduced the key words by asking pupils to spell them and look them up. In this way all were immediately involved and were keen to understand fully. A very good discussion followed. In lessons that are less successful, even though satisfactory overall, the pace sometimes slows, and pupils become less interested, behaviour can deteriorate and result in less learning. Planning and the methods used in lessons are generally good, and involve pupils in appropriate activities which hold their attention. For example, in the lesson about genes, pupils completed a chart, having worked out which were the dominant genes, and from which parent.

93. Teachers and support assistants work very well together and they have established very good relationships with their pupils. This usually results in good behaviour from pupils in many lessons. In some lessons behaviour is a problem, but where staff adopt a consistent approach, reminding pupils of their obligations as well as their rights, they usually settle quickly. Humour and respect for pupils are key attributes in many lessons, and these enable pupils to learn well. All teachers write an evaluation after each lesson and this helps when considering pupils' progress. There are also assessment tests, which are, overall, satisfactory.

94. Improvement since the last inspection is generally satisfactory, with improvements specifically in teaching and learning. Schemes of work are in place and there is reference to the national curriculum. However, these schemes are in their infancy, and there is no monitoring of the curriculum or of teaching and learning.

95. Science does much to promote the school's general philosophy and pupils learn about their environment and about themselves. In particular, they are taught to appreciate the natural world and often use their environment and surroundings for this. This promotes pupils' spiritual awareness well.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. Only one lesson was seen during the week, which makes judgements about teaching and learning difficult. Displays around the school and in the houses demonstrate that a number of pupils have a particular gift for painting and drawing, and examples of clay modelling also support this view. The teacher works closely with the headteacher, to provide a sound curriculum, though the curriculum in areas other than drawing and painting is underdeveloped. There is too little cross-curricular co-ordination, for example in linking together work that pupils do in history and geography (during the main lesson), with a clear scheme of development of pupils' skills and understanding in art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

97. Pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, although some pupils' design skills in design and technology and making skills in food technology are good. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection.

98. Pupils can only attend practical lessons for design and technology in pairs, due to the size of the workshop and for food technology, mostly in small groups of two or three. Higher attaining pupils produce three-dimensional technical drawing plans to design projects such as a table lamp. One pupil wanted to transfer his drawings onto the computer and used a paint program to successfully achieve this. Pupils then go into the workshop to make their lamps, following their designs for measurements and angles. Most pupils work with wood and range of hand tools, although other rigid materials are occasionally used.

99. Pupils use the food technology room well to make a range of meals and snacks such as vegetable curries or pizzas. They select appropriate ingredients and use knives and graters safely to prepare the food. Most pupils are aware of the health and safety implications of a kitchen such as a hot oven and hob. Although pupils produced pizzas, which showed an awareness of taste and colour, using tomatoes, sweetcorn and ham, these were made without any reference to a previous design and little evaluation took place during the making phase. However, pupils were given the chance to not only make their pizzas but also to design and make a box to carry their pizzas back to their house for supper.

100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although occasionally very good, especially when teachers work together with their own classes to manage pupils' behaviour and keep them focused on the task. This dramatically improves their concentration and interest and they learn well at pace. A subject specialist teaches design and technology lessons while most food technology lessons are taught by individual class teachers. Lesson

planning and assessment are inconsistent and teachers do not assess what pupils' have actually learnt during the lesson and use this valuable information to inform future planning. Tasks are almost entirely similar, irrespective of pupils' ages or abilities.

101. There is a co-ordinator for rigid materials but not for food technology and the amount of time pupils spend on each aspect of design and technology is not known. This not only affects pupils' entitlement and their equality of opportunity, but also restricts pupils' progress in the subject over time, as assessment of what pupils have experienced and learnt is limited. Learning resources are adequate, despite the co-ordinator and teachers being able to request purchases of whatever they want. This open-ended approach does not seem to aid development of the subject: for example, the co-ordinator would like a computer-aided design program to support the work he is doing with the highest attaining pupils, but no program has been identified or ordered.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

102. As at the time of the last OFSTED inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching and learning in geography. Evidence from displays and pupils' work is limited, but shows that less able pupils deal best with the immediate situation, and have had experiences linked to local geography and have visited local sites such as Clifton Bridge, Minchinhampton Common, Box village, the church, and the hospital and have recorded information from these visits in pictorial form. Some have produced useful maps and diagrams, and have been able to use these to suggest the best sites, for example, for a supermarket or a hospital. Some pupils recall the names of the countries of the United Kingdom and are able to name the capital cities. They mark both on a map. More able pupils have looked at a range of geographical features, for example, rivers, mountains, seas and valleys. Some have learned about the ways in which rivers are formed and the causes and effects of flooding. They have linked this to recent flooding in the Severn valley. In recording their work, they use written work, diagrams, and word processing skills to produce charts. They learn about developing and developed countries and are able to name some of these and describe their features.

103. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and, in this, the teaching was very good. The lesson was well planned, and good use was made of pupils' previous knowledge. Relationships were very good and pupils received praise and encouragement which enabled them to complete the tasks. Expectations of behaviour were made very clear by the teacher, and the pupils responded by being polite and concentrating well. They took pride in their work and were pleased to discuss it.

104. A new geography co-ordinator is in post, and he has made good progress with developing a policy and a scheme of work for the subject. The scheme of work combines the Steiner curriculum with many elements of the National Curriculum, although this requires further refinement. He is in process of acquiring a range of up-to-date textbooks, atlases and maps to support pupils' learning. The role of the co-ordinator is not yet fully developed as, although he is able to give advice to colleagues about methods and resources, he is not yet able to take a role in monitoring the subject. Assessment and recording in geography are inconsistent, so that it is not always possible to track pupils' progress, and this is an area for further development.

## **HISTORY**

105. The findings of this report are based on a limited number of lessons observed, planning documents, discussions and some analysis of pupils' work.

106. Pupils' achievement and progress in history across all ages are satisfactory. Some pupils visit museums and places of interest, such as Gloucester cathedral. In one lesson, they were trying to recall such a visit, talking about the crypt and the bells. They remembered that monks used the crypt in times gone by but found difficulty in remembering much detail.

107. Pupils of higher attainment have studied the French Revolution, and there is good work linked to English, when they read a "Tale of Two Cities." Pupils often expand a topic to think about issues that have followed on from the part of history they are studying. For example, when they heard about the slave trade, they went on to think about race related issues and civil rights. Some have studied the causes of the Industrial Revolution in this country, and across Europe. They understand some of the events of the world wars.

108. Lower attaining pupils study a broader set of topics such as the Egyptians, or the Vikings. They look at hieroglyphics, study the Greek alphabet, and understand about the Roman invasion of Britain. When covering Anglo-Saxon times, they used the local church and settlement as examples, visiting the church and hearing from the clergy about furnishings and how a priest spends his time. They have carried out extended work about dinosaurs and visited a museum to see the display about them. Pupils have visited Longleat and examined the periods of history to be found represented there. They have seen the Victorian museum in Gloucester and visited a woollen mill.

109. Higher attaining pupils have studied the holocaust of the last world war, and something of the British Empire. Another example of good cross-curricular work is to be found here when they find the words that we took into our language at that time, such as 'bungalow' or 'jodhpurs.'

110. One class was observed doing work about the Native American Indians of the plains. Pupils entered into the spirit of this lesson, suggesting what might be brave things to do, defending to the death. This encouraged very good discussion and pupils learnt much more through their own efforts, as well as hearing what others had to say.

111. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers try to take pupils out as often as possible in order to bring history alive. In this way pupils learn well, such as their visit to Goodrich Castle, or to Hereford to see the 'Mappa Mundi.' Where teachers manage lessons very well, pupils learn very well, maintaining concentration and interest. Teachers and assistants have established good relationships with their pupils, and they create a good atmosphere for pupils to enjoy history. Where management of pupils' behaviour is less successful, pupils do not learn as well, and lose interest.

112. The schemes of work are linked to National Curriculum aspects but they are very new and there has been no opportunity for monitoring either teaching, or the history curriculum as a whole.

113. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, because there are new schemes of work, and overall, progress is satisfactory across all ages. Assessment and evaluation of pupils' progress is satisfactory, but not fully developed yet.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

114. There was insufficient evidence of pupils' work to reliably make a judgement about their progress in information and communications technology.

115. Whilst good use is made of information and communications technology in the form of an integrated learning system which supports literacy and numeracy, the provision of software is limited and does not offer full access to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Recent purchases include reference CD-ROMs, but as yet, these programs are not always readily available to staff or pupils. There are few programs that support pupils with a wide range of special educational needs. In one lesson, a pupil struggled with inadequate tools to complete a given task related to drawing a motorway system in support of a geography topic. Other commonly found art packages, word-processing and desktop publishing programs that give speech feedback are not available. This limited provision has an adverse effect upon progress made by pupils.

116. Good use is also made by staff of digital cameras to record the work done by pupils, although the use of this technology needs to more readily extended to use by the pupils.

117. Whilst overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, previously identified weaknesses remain. The school appropriately plans for all pupils and staff to have internet access and e-mail addresses. Training has been highlighted as an issue by the school, although the precise focus for training has yet to be identified. An "acceptable use" policy has yet to be drafted, although the co-ordinator is aware of relevant issues, such as pupils' access to the internet to support their learning across the curriculum. In addition to the training needs of staff, the school also lacks adequate resources such as appropriate programs and equipment to facilitate modelling, monitoring and control.

## **FRENCH**

118. There was no report on French or any other modern foreign language at the last inspection, as the subject was not being taught. It is difficult to reach any judgement about teaching and learning in the subject, as two classes began the subject only at the beginning of the term and a third class had their first lesson during the inspection. Pupils, who have been learning the subject for only half a term, are able to respond appropriately to greetings, and show some knowledge of colours and numbers. Display also shows that they have learnt about colours and months of the year.

119. The scheme of work shows that there is an appropriate emphasis on oral work and that the target language is used whenever possible. There is a specialist French teacher who took up post at the beginning of the term, and he is developing the scheme of work in line with the National Curriculum, as well as the Steiner curriculum. There is some attempt to use the target language when appropriate. Timetabling of the subject on only a once-a-week basis does not allow for the gradual build-up of skills and knowledge.

## **MUSIC**

120. A few days before the inspection started, the only teacher of music left the school. It

was therefore not possible to observe any lessons and there was insufficient planning and record keeping available to make a secure judgement about the achievements of pupils and how well they learn. It is clear, however, that they enjoy music, whether as part of therapy, for example in the lyre orchestra, during the daily hall sessions, when the whole school sings together, and for some pupils, when they have access to modern music such as that of Eminem.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

121. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and very little evidence of pupils' previous work was available for analysis. Although the physical education teacher has started to write targets for pupils within their individual education plans, this is also too new to evaluate securely. It is therefore not possible to make a judgement on pupils' learning, which is a similar finding to the previous report.

122. Pupils do experience a very wide range of physical education activities, although the majority of these are outside of school and mostly extra-curricular. For example, they participate in skiing, climbing, abseiling, swimming, tennis, football, basketball and hockey. Other activities do take place during the school day such as horse riding, walking and mountain biking. Of the two lessons observed, one was a games lesson and one a gymnastics lesson, both taught by the physical education co-ordinator. Pupils' learning in both these lessons was good overall. The highest attaining pupils have an understanding of basic attack and defence strategies and some use the space available very well. Although not timetabled or known as a rugby lesson, pupils do nevertheless show good handling and passing skills using a rugby ball during a modified game of touch rugby, taught just outside the school on the common. In gymnastics, some pupils are able to demonstrate flight using a trampette and cross-box. Pupils have an understanding of different types of flight such as a tuck, pike and straddle jump, while the highest attaining pupils show good control over the cross box to complete a long-arm overswing with support from the teacher. From the limited notes available on pupils' progress, it is possible to ascertain that some pupils have attained national swimming awards, including life saving awards, while in skiing others have achieved complex skills such as parallel turns.

123. During the lessons observed and in conversation with pupils, it appears that pupils of all ages enjoy their physical education activities. Most pupils, of all abilities, show good levels of concentration and interest. However, some lessons are far too long at two hours, and pupils' interest does wander and their frustration increases which leads to inappropriate behaviour. Most pupils' treat equipment and resources with care showing a good awareness of health and safety procedures. However, some pupils are allowed to participate wearing unsuitable footwear which is hazardous to themselves and damages equipment. Occasionally some equipment is not used properly, for example, jumping back onto the trampette from the box, is hazardous and inappropriate. The highest attaining pupils do listen very well to their teacher and are developing appropriate skills such as tactical awareness, when given the opportunity.

124. The quality of teaching during the two lessons observed was good. The physical education co-ordinator is a confident and knowledgeable teacher, whose lessons are taught at pace and with interest that maintains pupils' concentration which has a positive impact on their learning. However, as some lessons are two hours long and despite a change of activity, it is extremely difficult to maintain pupils' interest and inevitably some pupils simply cannot maintain this level of concentration and their behaviour suffers. Opportunities are often missed to reinforce pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, although the frequent use of

good questions does ensure that pupils' evaluate their own work. The physical education teacher is also often called upon to cover for absent colleagues or support other teachers when pupils' behaviour breaks down and as such many timetabled physical education lessons do not take place. For example, during the last half term she has only been able to teach a handful of physical education lessons. This is unacceptable as it causes pupils to miss out on their taught physical education entitlement.

125. Although a new policy and scheme of work has been written, the subject is not formally co-ordinated and there is little assessment or monitoring taking place. This is a significant area for development, especially as some classes do not receive their physical education lessons and there is no way of evaluating pupils' learning. This obviously impacts on pupils' learning during their time at the school. Pupils are also not afforded the dignity of playing recognised games, such as football and rugby, but must practice these same skills under a different guise. Learning resources are adequate, although facilities are very poor. The hall is very small and poor lighting makes it extremely difficult for many pupils simply to develop their basic hand-eye co-ordination skills, as it is so difficult to follow the flight of a ball or shuttlecock. There are no outside facilities at school for physical education.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

126. Religious education is underdeveloped, which is a similar situation to the time of the previous inspection. At that time, it was reported that procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting in the subject were not in place. During this inspection, it was not possible to observe any lessons, as only one lesson in this subject appeared on the whole school timetable. The newly appointed co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and written a new policy for the subject. This co-ordinator plans to submit the draft policy to staff for consultation and agreement. The co-ordinator who is enthusiastic about developing religious education with cross curricular links, is already building up resources for the subject and is preparing to write schemes of work based on the locally agreed syllabus and national documents. The small sample of work available shows that pupils in one class are learning about Ganesh, the Hindu god. Pupils' understanding of religious beliefs and tolerance of the rights of others to have these beliefs is well supported by out of school activities such as a half term visit to Bristol to see the celebrations associated with Divali.