

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Sherwood Park School**  
Wallington

LEA area : Sutton

Unique Reference Number : 103025

Headteacher : Mrs R. Bezant

Reporting inspector : Sarah J Mascall  
20536

Dates of inspection : 22.11.99

Under OFSTED contract number: 708297

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Special school for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties
Type of control :	Local Education Authority
Age range of pupils :	2½ - 19
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Streeters Lane Wallington Surrey SM6 7NP
Telephone number :	0181 773 9930
Appropriate authority :	London Borough of Sutton
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs M. Peart
Date of previous inspection :	February 1996

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Vanessa Wilkinson	English	Under fives Curriculum and assessment
Alan Tattersall	Science Art Music	Support and guidance and pupils' welfare
Glyn Essex	Humanities Religious education Physical Education	Efficiency Post 16 education
Michael Holohan	Mathematics Design technology Information communication technology	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Staffing, resources and accommodation
Elaine Parrish		Special educational needs Equal opportunities Attendance Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education development Partnership with parents and the community Integration

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**MAIN FINDINGS**

**WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

Ensures pupils make excellent progress in music therapy and good progress in art when taught by a subject specialist and physical education.

- .Provides good support for new staff ensuring pupils make satisfactory progress overall.
- .Ensures links with parents and the quality of information for them are very good.
- .The contribution made by support assistants to pupils’ education and welfare is very good.
- .Pupils’ attitudes and behavior are good. Their personal development is well promoted.
- .Ensures provision for pupils’ social and moral development is good.
- .Ensures procedures for financial control and day to day administration are good.

**WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES**

The provision for Post 16 students in a number of areas is unsatisfactory and as a result students fail to make satisfactory progress overall.

I. School development planning is unsatisfactory. It does not reflect the long term vision of the head and governors and there are no criteria for monitoring and evaluating the improvements made.

II.Schemes of work for a number of subjects have still to be established and planning does not ensure that a sufficient range of topics is taught in all subjects, particularly information communication technology, humanities and religious education.

III.The monitoring of the curriculum is not effective in ensuring that teachers’ planning reflects what they actually do.

The overall provision for pupils is satisfactory. However there are serious weaknesses in some aspects of the provision for Post 16 students. The school’s strengths outweigh its weaknesses and the governors’ action plan will set out how they intend to tackle the weaknesses, and a copy will be sent to all parents and careers.

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

The school has worked hard to make improvements and has been successful in some areas. It has successfully improved provision for pupils under five and ensured pupils and students are taught a foreign language. The newly appointed curriculum co-ordinator has introduced an accredited course for pupils and students. However, staff shortages and problems with appointing appropriately qualified teachers has had an impact overall on the development of the school. As a result overall improvement has been unsatisfactory. Subject co-ordinators’ roles have not been developed and the rate of pupils’ learning is not yet secure because of the lack of schemes of work. The head teacher is well aware of the weaknesses and the recent appointment of new staff, including an experienced teacher, should ensure that staffing is stable. This will enable the senior management team, governors and staff to focus more closely on planning for school development. As a result the school’s capacity to improve is satisfactory.

**· WHETHER PUPILS ARE MAKING ENOUGH PROGRESS**

	<b>By 11</b>	<b>By 16</b>	<b>By 19</b>
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Targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	C	D	Key	
English:				<i>Very good</i>	A
Listening and speaking				<i>Good</i>	B
Reading				<i>Satisfactory</i>	C
Writing				<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	D
Mathematics	C	C	D	<i>Poor</i>	E
Science	C	C	D		

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

### The best progress takes place in:

Music: the excellent quality of specialist teaching ensures that pupils make excellent progress in music therapy.

Physical education: good use is made of facilities and professional staff, including physiotherapists and swimming instructors to ensure pupils progress well particularly in swimming.

Personal, social and health education: the clear focus by all staff in developing pupils' independence skills is successful and these aspects are well promoted during greeting times, break and lunch time.

Art: pupils make good progress when taught by the specialist teacher.

### The least progress takes place in:

Post 16: in a number of areas of the curriculum there are low expectations about what students can achieve. The work is unchallenging and there are few opportunities for students to develop the skills previously learnt. Students are not well prepared for their next stage of education particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

Information communication technology: Pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 do not have lessons in this subject and there are currently very limited opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding and knowledge of this subject. There have been considerable difficulties in obtaining upgraded hard and software such as touch screens.

## QUALITY OF TEACHING

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
5 - 11 years	Satisfactory	Nursery class, music, physical education, PSHE	Information communication technology
11 - 16 years	Satisfactory	Music, physical education, PSHE	Information communication technology
Post-16	Unsatisfactory	Music, physical education, PSHE	Information communication technology Communication skills Numeracy skills
English	Satisfactory		
Mathematics	Satisfactory		
Personal, social and health education (PSHE)	Satisfactory		

The quality of teaching overall for pupils aged 5 to 16 is satisfactory. During the inspection 9 out of 10 lessons were satisfactory or better with just over 5 out of 10 lessons ranging from good to excellent. For Post 16 students only 7 out of 10 lessons were satisfactory or better. Teaching by specialist staff including music and physical education ranges from good to excellent.

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

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. Pupils work together and show kindness and concern for each other. Those pupils with behavioural difficulties are developing appropriate skills to improve their behaviour.
Attendance	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive to lessons on time.
Ethos*	Satisfactory. For pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4 there is a good ethos. There are appropriate expectations and pupils' attitudes to learning are positive; they clearly enjoy their work. These expectations are not reflected in all the work for Post 16 students.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory. The head and senior management team provide appropriate educational direction for the school. The support given to new staff has been effective. However development planning is unsatisfactory. It is short term and there is no formal approach to monitoring and evaluation. Governors are supportive but not fully involved in developing the school further.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and relevant to the pupils' needs and meets statutory requirements except in the teaching of information communication technology. Schemes of work are not yet effective in ensuring that pupils' subject knowledge develops as they move through the school. The newly established curriculum for Post 16 students has not yet been fully implemented by all staff to allow sufficient opportunities for students to extend their skills.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' social and moral education is good. Pupils' independence skills are well promoted. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. Although the majority of teachers do not have special needs qualifications, the high number of staff ensures pupils' educational and welfare needs are met. The professional development of staff is good. The very good quality accommodation contributes to pupils' progress. Resources are satisfactory.
Value for money	Satisfactory. The school is very highly funded and pupils benefit from high levels of support staff. Teaching and progress are satisfactory, as is the running of the school. As a result the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

## THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Parents feel staff are very supportive and help with problems arising with children at home as well as in school.</li> <li>•Their children are very happy at school.</li> <li>•They feel that their children have made progress since starting school.</li> <li>•It ensures all children are involved in activities such as concerts and sports day.</li> <li>•The parents' support group is valued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A small number of parents were disappointed that the overnight stays had been stopped.</li> <li>•Some parents commented that homework is not always regular and consists only of reading work.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views. Regular meetings with parents suggest that they are kept informed of any arrangements made concerning their children. The head teacher is looking at ways of resuming the overnight stays for Post 16 students. There is some evidence from homework diaries that pupils are given homework. However this is not consistent and has been recognised by the school. As a result a homework policy has recently been established.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to raise standards further the governing body, head teacher and staff should:

### **IV.Improve the quality of provision for Post 16 students by:**

- \*Ensuring all teachers have higher expectations of what the students can achieve.(paragraphs 14,28,100)
- \*Improve the curriculum by ensuring that all teachers follow the planning for the newly established course and create more opportunities for students to improve their numeracy and literacy skills.(paragraphs 40,101,103)
- \*Increase further opportunities for students to develop independence.(paragraph 101)

### **V.Improve the long term planning for the school by:**

- \*Formalising plans and ensuring there are clear evaluation criteria by which the school can monitor the success of developments. (paragraph 72)
- \*Ensuring governors and all staff are involved in establishing the development plan.(paragraphs 68, 81)
- \*Incorporating aspects for development that are long term and reflect the vision the school has for its future.(paragraph 72)

### **VI.Improve the curriculum by:**

- \*Developing schemes of work and overall planning for all subjects that will ensure that pupils have sufficient experiences in a range of aspects to make progress in their subject knowledge as they move from class to class.(paragraphs 33, 41, 44)
- \* Improving monitoring procedures to ensure that teachers' planning is reflected in what they actually do.(paragraphs 36,70)

### **VII.Ensure that statutory requirements are met in the teaching of information communication technology by:**

- \*Ensuring that there is allocated time for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils to develop their skills. (paragraphs 11, 39)
- \*Ensuring that there are sufficient software resources . (paragraph 149)
- \*Providing training for staff so that they are confident in the use of the new equipment. (paragraph 154)
- \*Ensuring that teachers' planning includes the use of information communication technology across the curriculum. (paragraph 11, 154)

In addition to the above key issues the following less important issue should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:-

- Improve targets within individual education plans to ensure that they can be used effectively to monitor pupils' progress in a range of curriculum areas (paragraphs 44,55,148)
- Improve behaviour management by developing individual plans that will identify improvements in behaviour and provide pupils with strategies to manage their own behaviour.(paragraph 57)
- Avoid the use of the internal telephone and tannoy system during the day to ensure that lessons are not interrupted.(paragraph 160)
- Ensure that where pupils are withdrawn from lessons for behaviour management or other therapies that there are



strategies in place to enable pupils remain in class wherever appropriate or to catch up with the work they have missed. (paragraph 42,126)

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

- 1 Sherwood Park is an all age special school for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. There are 76 pupils on roll; this is an increase since the last inspection. The majority of pupils travel by transport provided by the local education authority and come from the London borough of Sutton.
- 2 All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. 30% are eligible for free school meals, which is an increase since the last inspection. 12% of pupils come from families of ethnic background, whilst a very small number of pupils are from families where English is not the first language.
- 3 At the time of the inspection the school had considerable problems with recruiting teachers with appropriate special needs qualifications or experience. As a result two teachers are newly qualified and do not have a special needs background. The school is understaffed in comparison with its permanent teaching numbers.
- 4 There are nine children in the “nursery class” but at the time of the inspection only two were of nursery age, the rest being reception age or older. As a result no judgements can be made on the teaching of pupils under five. The school currently has a list of children under five awaiting admission. Children can be admitted to the school at the age of two and a half. Initially they attend on a part time basis and this builds to full time as they reach statutory school age. There is provision for pupils who stay in school beyond the age of 16 which is referred to within the report as Post 16 provision. Parents and the school also refer to it as the Transition Class.
- 5 The school’s aims are:
  - “To provide a broad and balanced curriculum designed to meet the needs of the individual pupil to enable each one to develop to their fullest potential
  - To provide, as appropriate, access to the National Curriculum
  - To provide a comprehensive support system for parents and carers in order to create a co-ordinated, cohesive approach to the management of each pupil's needs and improve the quality of life for the complete family
  - To prepare our young people for their future lives and role in society
  - To encourage good relations with the community both local to the school and throughout the wider area to foster good two way social and educational contact
  - To realise that our pupils are children first and special second.”
- 6 The school has developed a number of initiatives since the last inspection these include; new curriculum documents, workshops for parents, the reorganization of the parents’ group, the establishment of a school library, reorganisation of department and senior management team, the establishment of new bases for individual therapies and objects of reference.
- 7 The school has set new targets for the Year 2000 which include:
  - Undertaking a moderation exercise to assess levels and ensure that the Equals baseline levels are consistent
  - Re-assessing all pupils in language and literacy using Equals baseline assessment
  - Setting a percentage target based on the Equals baseline.

## Key indicators

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year :

		%
Authorised Absence	School	7.3
	National comparative data	8
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	1.0

### Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year :

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

7

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	10
Satisfactory or better	94
Less than satisfactory	6

Percentage of teaching for Key Stages 1,2,3 and 4 observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	9
Satisfactory or better	98
Less than satisfactory	2

Percentage of teaching for Post 16 observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	13
Satisfactory or better	73
Less than satisfactory	27

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

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

- 8 It is inappropriate to judge the attainment of pupils for whom this school caters against age related national expectations or averages. The report does however give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about progress and references to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' statements, annual reviews and individual education plans.
- 9 Overall pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4 make satisfactory progress. Progress for Post 16 students is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make better progress overall because teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved. In all areas of the school pupils make satisfactory progress against the targets set in their individual education plans. These are effective because they are based on English and mathematics through an assessment programme (Equals). Evidence shows that pupils do build on their skills although the targets set in teachers' planning do not always reflect a broad range of objectives within all subjects of the curriculum.
- 10 In the previous inspection, pupils' achievements were considered to be good in the majority of subjects. There is little doubt that the large turnover of staff has affected the progress pupils are making as teachers no longer have the same level of experience in special needs. It is recognised by the head teacher that the standard of education offered to pupils is not as high as three years ago although the support provided by the senior management team has ensured that pupils' progress is satisfactory.
- 11 In nearly all subjects pupils make satisfactory progress. In music pupils make excellent progress whilst in physical education and personal, social and health education progress is good. In art progress is good when it is taught by a specialist. In English, mathematics, science, art, design technology and modern foreign language progress is satisfactory. It is also satisfactory within the limited programme of study offered in history and geography. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on progress in religious education. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in information communication technology. There are no specific lessons in information communication technology in Key Stages 3 and 4 and the subject is not well promoted in other areas of the curriculum.
- 12 Where progress is best there is a clear link to the good quality of teaching and planning. In Key Stages 1 and 2 effective planning ensures that pupils make good progress in relation to the learning objectives established within teachers' plans. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills which is appropriate for this age range. In music very good subject knowledge and an equally good understanding of pupils' special needs enable pupils to make excellent progress. In physical education, the good facilities and teachers' expectations ensure pupils make good progress, particularly in swimming. Where teachers are less confident in subject areas this results in pupils making unsatisfactory or limited progress. For example, the school has recently received new computers but staff have not yet had sufficient training to use them. As a result pupils' skills are not being developed.
- 13 The involvement of support assistants in planning is effective in all areas of the school and ensures that they are clear about what is to be done in lessons. As a result they provide good levels of support which ensures that pupils make progress during lessons. Where there is a whole school approach, for example at the start of each morning session, pupils make good progress particularly in their personal, social and health education. There is an effective focus on communication, encouraging all pupils to contribute to the sessions and learn to take turns when communicating.
- 14 Better progress is prevented in a number of subjects because schemes of work are not fully in place. Where they have been established they are not yet effective in ensuring that pupils' knowledge is built upon systematically as they move up to the next class. For Post 16 students progress is unsatisfactory in a number of areas because of the low expectations of some teachers and the lack of demanding and interesting tasks.
- 15 In English pupils make satisfactory progress in communication (speaking and listening). During Key Stage 1 pupils develop their signing skills well, whilst higher attaining pupils gain confidence in their speaking skills such

as when talking about their activities at the weekend. During Key Stage 2 they sign good morning and are increasing their knowledge in the use of communication aids. Higher attaining pupils increase their vocabulary and provide words to describe a character in a book. In Key Stage 3 those pupils with profound and multiple difficulties respond by eye contact and smiles to teachers' greetings. Higher attaining pupils are confident in speaking to visitors and answer teachers' questions appropriately. By the end of Key Stage 4 higher attaining pupils use vocabulary well across the curriculum. For example, in a lesson about the 1960s there was much discussion about the difference in appearance between a teacher then and as she is now. Those pupils with profound and multiple difficulties show understanding and make choices, for example, asking to wear a hat during a lesson on "the wind, the rain and the sun".

- 16 In reading and pre-reading skills pupils make satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 1 higher attaining pupils develop an interest in books and enjoy turning the pages becoming involved in the pictures. Lower attaining pupils express preferences when exploring the pages of a tactile book. During Key Stage 2 pupils become aware of a variety of stories such as "The three little pigs" and explain what happens to each of the pigs. In Key Stage 3 pupils are developing their skills and higher attaining pupils are able to read back what they have written; a few can read familiar stories with support. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils are confident in their recognition of symbols. Higher attaining pupils have increased their word recognition skills and recognise words such as "he" and "is". Those with profound and multiple difficulties track objects and respond to stories.
- 17 Progress in writing and pre-writing skills is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop their fine motor skills and improve their pencil control. By the end of Key Stage 2 higher attaining pupils can copy simple sentences or write over teachers' words. Lower attaining pupils can draw a line to connect two pictures. During Key Stage 3 they develop their skills. Higher attaining pupils write simple sentences of their own, whilst others trace or copy the sentences they have dictated. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils continue to make progress and are able to find words within a text and write short sentences. Those pupils with profound and multiple difficulties use their hands to explore materials and objects. They enjoy opportunities to be involved in sensory stories.
- 18 In mathematics pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 1 they develop their understanding of number and can count with confidence to three. Pupils identify numbers and can count, with support, the number of children in the class. During Key Stage 2 pupils count to five and higher attainers are confident in counting to 10. They are developing their knowledge of different shapes and the concept of bigger and smaller. In Key Stage 3 pupils use an increasing range of mathematical language with higher attaining pupils knowing the meaning of "take away". By the end of Key Stage 4 higher attaining pupils recognise numbers up to 20 and record data using a tally chart. They show an ability to recognise coins and know their values. Those pupils with profound and multiple difficulties are aware of different objects and can place bricks in a tower. They show an awareness of different sized objects.
- 19 For the majority of pupils, progress is satisfactory in science. However for a small minority who are withdrawn for support for behaviour, progress is unsatisfactory because they do not have opportunities to catch up with the work they miss. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop an understanding of using their senses to explore materials. They recognise that they can effect changes such as when turning a bottle containing different coloured shapes. By the end of Key Stage 2 they can make comparisons between objects such as different types of fruit. Lower attaining pupils improve their observation skills. During Key Stage 3 pupils investigate the properties of materials including cloth, plastic and metal and this work is continued in Key Stage 4. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils are able to identify whether materials are waterproof. Lower attaining pupils progress in their understanding of cause and effect through the use of switches.
- 20 Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. In morning sessions pupils talk about what they did the previous evening with all pupils being involved in recalling the activities for the day. Pupils extend their numeracy skills in nearly all sessions when they count how many are in the class and explain who is missing. These tasks are appropriate although for older and higher attaining pupils they are not always extended or made more challenging. In lessons such as food technology, pupils read directions for cooking a meal, explain their choices and describe what they will do next. In art when painting a large picture of the three little pigs house pupils talked about their own houses and how many windows and doors they had.

## 20 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 21 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development remain good, as they were in the last inspection, ensuring that Sherwood Park School is an orderly community which provides an effective and happy learning environment.
- 22 Pupils in all key stages enjoy school and show enthusiasm for a wide range of activities. Whether building a tower of bricks in Key Stage 1, swimming in Key Stage 2, wheelchair dancing in Key Stage 3 or composing music in Key Stage 4 the pupils' attitudes are positive and interested. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils concentrate well and show interest and enthusiasm for a wide range of tasks. Many lessons are characterised by displays of humour and a willingness to participate in role-play, for example being a pirate, or volunteering to undertake practical tasks, like operating the video recorder. Pupils' positive approach to their work is shown by their ability to switch from a practical task, such as the use of the sensory room, to listening to a story with minimum fuss. Lower attaining pupils are keen to respond to the teachers through eye contact, signing and speech. Pupils respond to excellent teaching, such as in music, with a developing maturity and confidence that is reflected in their willingness to compose and perform in front of others.
- 23 The previous report judged pupils' behaviour to be good and this judgement remains valid. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing the ability to work together and by Key Stage 4, pupils are able to work collaboratively, for example when composing music together or entering into discussions about other peoples' emotions and feelings. Pupils show kindness and concern for each other, which is reflected in the pleasant atmosphere at lunchtime and the ability of pupils to play together safely and constructively. Examples of bullying or deliberately unpleasant behaviour are rare and there have been no exclusions in the last ten years.
- 24 Relationships within the school are good. They are based upon a positive environment of friendship and mutual regard. The staff's role model of patience and humour encourages pupils to understand each other and be aware of the needs of others. The confidence that pupils have in the staff is reflected in the very positive relationships between staff and pupils.
- 25 Pupils' personal development is good. They willingly volunteer to undertake classroom tasks, such as displaying the timetable or amending the calendar. Their self-confidence is boosted through their participation in tasks such as returning registers, delivering milk or carrying messages. Higher attaining pupils begin to show personal initiative in their use of equipment and their responses to questions and tasks. Pupils also demonstrate an increasing ability to make choices and express their likes and dislikes, for example, when performing tasks such as selecting colours or materials in design technology. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and staff alike.

## **Attendance**

- 26 Attendance is good. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils enjoy coming to school and those travelling with parents arrive promptly. Pupils arriving by transport provided by the local education authority are sometimes delayed in traffic, but generally arrive in good time, allowing lessons to start promptly.

## 26 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

- 27 Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection, teaching for pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4 was satisfactory or better in almost all lessons. It was good or better in just over 5 out of 10 lessons and very good or excellent in one out of ten lessons. Teaching has remained consistent since the last inspection and as before, there are some outstanding examples particularly within music. This stability is particularly creditable as the majority of teachers are new and not experienced in the special needs of the pupils.
- 28 For students in Post 16 teaching overall is unsatisfactory. During the inspection only 7 out of ten lessons were satisfactory or better. Where it is good or better students benefit from the teaching of specialist staff such as

for music, physical education and food technology. There has been a marked deterioration in the quality of teaching which, three years ago, was considered to be good or outstanding in over half the lessons seen. The low expectations and constant reinforcement of areas the students have already experienced prevents them from making better progress.

- 29 Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. In Key Stages 1 and 2 there is more secure teaching particularly with regards to literacy. This is most evident for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 where the teacher is experienced within this particular age range and there is a clear focus on developing pupils' communication and language skills. In other areas where subject knowledge is secure, for example in music, art and physical education, pupils make good or very good progress. However in some subjects teachers lack confidence. This is particularly evident in information and communication technology because the computers have only recently been installed and teachers have yet to become familiar with their use.
- 30 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of pupils' special needs varies. Although new staff are developing their knowledge of the special needs of pupils this is still not sufficiently secure to ensure that the range of varying needs of pupils are consistently met. However teachers clearly benefit from the support they have been given particularly in meeting the needs of those lower attaining pupils. This is very evident in the senior class for Key Stage 4 pupils. Staff ensure that all pupils are involved in activities and that sensory work supports the work being done in class.
- 31 Teachers' expectations are satisfactory. They are good in Key Stage 1. Tasks are set that will challenge the pupils and enable them to make progress. For example in the morning sessions an appropriate range of activities are laid out for pupils to undertake and all pupils are expected to contribute to the greetings songs. Where expectations are less effective it is for the higher attaining pupils. For example in one mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2 all pupils were set the same tasks but there was no extension work provided for the higher attainers when they had completed the work. There are high expectations of teachers with regards to pupils' behaviour and as a result lessons are orderly and calm.
- 32 Teachers' planning is satisfactory. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' skills through their individual education plans and this is successful in terms of developing literacy and social skills. However teachers' planning in other aspects of the curriculum does not always meet individual needs. As a result higher attaining pupils are not always challenged in a range of subjects. Regular planning meetings between support staff and teachers are very effective. During the week of the inspection several lessons, planned by teachers, were taught by support staff. In these sessions pupils were well managed and the aims of the lesson were achieved. However on some occasions planning is not strong enough to ensure support staff can take over. Where this happens for example in a Key Stage 2 science lesson, the lesson deteriorates and staff are unclear about what to do.
- 33 The methods and organisation of lessons are satisfactory. Where they are most effective teachers provide a series of activities which enable pupils to develop their skills gradually. This is evident in both numeracy and literacy where teachers use a range of strategies to ensure that pupils remain interested and on task. For example in Key Stage 1 pupils have become familiar with a story through the use of a "big book" and many resources such as models and puppets are also used to reinforce what happens. The work is then developed through other subjects for example art and design technology where pupils make or draw aspects connected to the story.
- 34 The management of pupils overall is good. It is most effective in Key Stages 1, 3 and 4. The school's systems for behaviour management have a positive effect on most individuals. Praise is used well and staff are aware of the different strategies needed to support pupils who have challenging behaviour. Support staff are particularly effective in their work with these pupils. Pupils are treated in an age appropriate manner and there are clear expectations that they will behave well. In visits out of school and assemblies pupils behave well.
- 35 The use of resources is satisfactory overall. There is a wide range of resources which are used well to maintain pupils' interest and support learning. For example in French musical instruments and art were used to develop the work based on a French song. In English, particularly for younger pupils in Key Stage 3, teacher-produced resources are of a very high quality. In other subjects, for example mathematics, teachers ensure

that the resources are laid out before the lessons and they match a range of ability.

- 36 Time is not used well by some teachers. Although timetables are well established and teachers have plans in place, lessons do not always take place according to the timetable. Lessons over run or are changed and as a result teachers cannot ensure that all aspects of topics and subjects are covered. On occasions during the inspection inspectors went to see lessons that had been changed or did not happen. For example one group of pupils were due to have design and technology after horse riding but were delayed and went out to play on their return.
- 37 The quality and use of day to day assessment is satisfactory. There is a range of procedures for teachers to record what pupils have done and for some pupils, particularly at Key Stage 1, there is a clear focus on recording pupils' achievements. However this is not always used well by teachers to plan future lessons. There was evidence in pupils' files of repetitions of the same task even though records showed that pupils had already achieved in that particular area. Where assessment is used effectively support staff take notes of areas of progress or difficulty and planning meetings consider how the pupils should move on. Teachers evaluate their lessons and they focus in on monitoring learning within different areas of the curriculum on a daily basis. This is good practice but the outcomes of this monitoring are not being used effectively to support and inform curriculum planning and development. Lesson evaluations sometimes result in the appropriate alteration of planning to better meet the needs of pupils but this is inconsistent.
- 38 The provision of homework is inconsistent and some parents expressed concern about this. The majority of pupils are given reading homework and there was evidence during the week of the inspection of pupils completing unfinished work at home but there is no specific planning by all teachers for this aspect. The introduction of the recently established homework policy should address this lack of consistency.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

- 39 The curriculum for pupils up to the end of Key Stage 4 is satisfactory. The school provides a broad curriculum that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and includes a modern foreign language for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 as well as Post 16. The addition of French for younger pupils is an improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is relevant to the needs of pupils and prepares them adequately for the next stage of education. There is a specific focus on developing their independence and social skills and this is successfully done through the personal, social and health education programme within registration, break and lunchtime sessions. The curriculum for pupils up to the end of Key Stage 4 meets statutory requirements in all subjects except information communication technology. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to study this subject particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4 where there are no specific information communication technology lessons.
- 40 The curriculum for students between sixteen and nineteen is unsatisfactory. It does not provide them with the opportunity to make progress across a sufficiently broad range of learning experiences and does not fully prepare them for the next stage of education. Students do not have appropriate opportunities to have their learning accredited by an external body. There is insufficient emphasis placed on the teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics and there is an over emphasis on learning that is related to leisure skills. The school is appropriately planning to implement the Equals 'Moving On' curriculum. This will ensure that students have opportunities to learn and make progress across a more balanced curriculum. It will also enable their achievements to be accredited by an external body. The school has begun to implement elements of this curriculum but it is not fully in place.
- 41 The curriculum for pupils up to the end of Key Stage 4 is planned to be balanced. The school has appropriately addressed some of the concerns raised during the last inspection concerning the balance of the curriculum particularly the considerable amount of time spent on the 'mobility via education curriculum'. There is now an appropriate emphasis on the time allocated to the teaching of English and mathematics. As in the last inspection a large percentage of time has been allocated to the teaching of physical education and personal, social and health education. Although these areas of learning are considered by the school to be core subjects it results in an insufficient focus on other subjects such as humanities and religious education. For all pupils the limited amount of time allocated to these subjects restricts the range of learning opportunities planned. Although pupils have some appropriate opportunities to develop their understanding, the experiences they are

offered are generally limited.

- 42 Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is satisfactory. However a significant number of pupils are withdrawn from classes for therapies and on occasions this results in them spending time out of lessons such as mathematics and science. Provision for pupils with additional special needs is satisfactory. The school has implemented an appropriate foundation curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. They share similar experiences as all other pupils and where appropriate they are withdrawn for sensory and therapy work.
- 43 The school has effectively implemented elements of the National Literacy Strategy and curriculum planning for mathematics appropriately reflects the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The Equals access curriculum, which has been specifically developed to meet the needs of pupils with severe learning difficulties and provides steps to the National Curriculum, is being implemented to support the planning of learning objectives across the key stages. This is a positive development.
- 44 Planning to ensure that pupils make progress as they move up through the key stages is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning for all subjects of the curriculum is planned through an agreed and appropriate rolling programme of topics. However, this does not result in learning opportunities and experiences that are significantly different for pupils in each key stage. This is because schemes of work which would ensure progression for pupils' learning have not been developed. There are schemes of work for English, mathematics and religious education but these are unsatisfactory. For example the English scheme of work guides teachers in setting appropriate learning objectives for lessons and setting learning targets for individuals. However it does not identify what pupils will learn in relation to the National Curriculum programmes of study for each key stage or what they will learn in relation to the National Literacy Strategy. The focus for planning is through pupils' individual education plan but these are not sufficiently related to the curriculum to enable teachers to ensure that higher attaining pupils cover work at a more challenging level. The learning planned for pupils at Key Stage 4 is often too similar to the learning opportunities and experiences planned for pupils at Key Stage 3. This is unsatisfactory. Planning for progression was an area identified for development in the last inspection report. The school has made little progress in this area.
- 45 The school has developed a satisfactory programme of personal, social and health education that appropriately includes drugs awareness and sex education. There is a satisfactory programme of careers education and guidance and the careers services is appropriately involved in providing information and support.
- 46 Satisfactory provision is made for extra curricular activities. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to take part in sporting activities with other local special schools and there are opportunities for them to take part in a music club during the lunchtime.
- 47 Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has developed a new assessment and recording policy. All pupils and students in the school have recently been assessed using the Equals assessment materials. This has given the school information that can be used to measure progress over time and set targets for the improvement in standards. The school is appropriately planning to re-assess pupils' attainment against the same criteria as part of the annual whole school targets process. The school is aware of the need to have a consistent approach to assessment and a shared understanding of what each level of attainment looks like in term of pupils' achievement and responses.
- 48 The use of assessment to inform curriculum planning is satisfactory. The targets set within pupils' individual education plans are generally appropriate, particularly when they are drawn from the Equals assessment materials. The school has recently implemented some appropriate recording procedures that will enable teachers to build up a picture of pupils' achievement over time. Teachers keep records of pupils' responses to activities and achievements in lessons. These relate well to the targets in pupils' individual education plans and will provide good information to support the planning of 'next steps'. These records are satisfactory but they do not provide enough information about what pupils have learned or provide information about what pupils can do in relation to the different subjects. In order to ensure consistency, the school has implemented appropriate moderation procedures that will build consistent practice and shared understanding.

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



- 49 Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The good provision made for pupils' moral and social development is reflected in the good attitudes and behaviour of pupils throughout the school and the good opportunities for pupils' personal development. Overall there has been an improvement in provision particularly with regards to social and moral development.
- 50 Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There are regular assemblies which are used appropriately to bring pupils together and celebrate achievements. However there is not a consistent approach to providing opportunities for prayer and reflection although the time is used well to promote social and moral issues. There is a prayer at lunchtimes, thanking God for the meal and this provides an appropriate moment for pupils to reflect. During the inspection there were several awe-inspiring moments when pupils gasped out loud. They were clearly enthralled when listening to Blues music and they experience a real joy of participating in singing, pottery, music therapy and swimming. Pupils are aware of different Christian festivals, for example Easter and Christmas and the school ensures that other religious festivals such as Diwali are celebrated. Religious education lessons make some contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths, but most deal mainly with attitudes of caring, understanding and respect for others.
- 51 Provision for moral development is good and this makes a strong contribution to the caring and secure atmosphere of the school. The school gives clear messages about moral values and staff take care to explain rules and teach pupils the difference between right and wrong. All adults in the school provide good role models, setting good examples of the behaviour they expect from pupils. There is gentle yet positive reinforcement of simple codes of conduct and strong emphasis on praising what is good whilst handling firmly what is not. Parents believe that the school's attitudes and values have a positive effect on their children.
- 52 There is good provision for social development. The school actively promotes the importance of good relationships and pupils are encouraged to show consideration to adults and each other. They learn at an early stage to wait their turn, to push back their chairs to make it easy for others to pass, and help the staff by clearing away after lessons. They are readily praised when they act fairly and kindly and are encouraged to help their classmates, for example, by clearing the plates at lunchtime. During the inspection, several pupils helped less able classmates to recognise their names in registration and giving eye contact and smiling. The school helps pupils to extend their social skills by mixing different groups in shared lessons. Some Post 16 students get the chance to mix with mainstream peers at Wallington School but further opportunities for younger pupils to integrate are very limited. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents commented that their children were encouraged to improve their social skills and be polite and helpful.
- 53 Provision for pupils' cultural development is sound overall. Pupils are taught to appreciate many of their own cultural traditions, but opportunities to increase their awareness of life in a multi-racial society are limited. Music and some aspects of art and literature make a very positive contribution towards enriching pupils' experiences. The school provides some opportunities for pupils to enrich their knowledge and experience with visits to the theatre in Wimbledon, and Interplay, a special needs theatre, has visited the school. There is a story teller from Hong Kong who reads to pupils as well as a French assistant whose influence is seen around the school with various signs and posters in French. There are a few members of staff from ethnic minority groups who have helped to raise pupils' awareness of black history during humanities lessons .

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

- 54 The overall provision for pupils' support and guidance is satisfactory. The arrangements to promote attendance are very good. These findings reflect those of the last inspection.
- 55 The provision to monitor pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. Individual education plans are in place for each pupil and overall the targets within them have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' achievements and their progress in relation to the targets identified in these plans are effectively reviewed through the annual review process. New targets are established for the coming year at the annual review meeting and teachers develop small step targets from them. Pupils' progress in relation to the individual targets set for them can be monitored but the school does not have an effective way to measure pupils' progress in relation to subject understanding. The school keeps detailed records on each pupil and guidance has been issued recently as to

the content of each pupil's profile. Consistent practice has not yet been achieved across the school and pupils' files do not always contain the same range of information. A copy of the medium term curriculum plan, in the form of the topic web and an evaluation of the topic in terms of the pupils' responses and experiences is kept in each pupil's file. This provides appropriate information on the opportunities and experiences they have had.

- 56 The provision for monitoring pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss their needs. Pupils have appropriate individual plans for personal development. These include good plans for personal, health and social education for pupils to follow at registration, lunchtime and break times. The plans actively promote appropriate conduct and independence. The arrangements for the annual review process are usually good.
- 57 The procedures to promote discipline and good behaviour are good for the majority of pupils. Teachers and support staff are successful in ensuring that the behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils receive regular praise and encouragement and this reinforces their good conduct. They also receive rewards to celebrate their academic success and good behaviour, receiving certificates in assembly. For those pupils who display difficult behaviour the school has drawn up behaviour management strategies and procedures are satisfactory. Although the strategies are detailed they lack clear targets for pupils to improve their behaviour.
- 58 The arrangements to promote attendance are very good. Registers are marked and managed well to enable attendance to be monitored effectively. This represents good progress since the previous inspection. The close liaison between the transport staff, the school secretary, the school nurse and other staff ensures that the school is vigilant regarding pupils' attendance and reasons for absence. There is good contact with pupils' homes to provide support and advice regarding illness and to ensure good attendance.
- 59 Procedures to promote health and safety and child protection are satisfactory. The arrangements for pupils' arrival and departure by organised transport are good. Pupils receive a warm greeting and health and safety arrangements are observed well. Supervision is good at lunchtime and breaks and pupils receive a good standard of care. There are good arrangements to monitor when pupils are out of school on visits and pupils are encouraged to use the signing out book themselves to promote further independence and responsibility. The arrangements for medical support and the management of pupils' health are good. The provision of therapists, including a music and aroma-therapist is good and promotes pupils' health and well being. The provision of hoists and moving and handling arrangements by therapists are also good. The school has arranged good staff training in moving and handling. Not all pupils have moving programmes and the school is appropriately endeavoring to obtain suitable assessments for all pupils who require this.
- 60 The school undertakes a significant amount of appropriate risk assessment to promote safe conditions for pupils in school. The school undertakes sufficient recording of incidents, accidents, and child protection concerns and instances of restraint. However, the systems used do not always ensure that recording is completed and filed in an appropriate way to enable incidents and action to be monitored effectively.
- 60 **Partnership with parents and the community**
- 61 The school shows good commitment to providing a close partnership with parents and this makes a positive contribution to the progress pupils make and the quality of life within the school. At the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires, parents registered their strong support for the school and expressed no significant concerns. This reflects the good practice in the previous inspection.
- 62 The quality of information provided by the school is very good. Parents are well informed about school activities by a good system of letters, and parents are encouraged to share any concerns they may have with teachers. Home/school diaries promote good communications and are used effectively by staff and most parents. Parents are very appreciative of the helpful advice and support given by everyone attached to the school. Termly reports are sent to parents to tell them about the targets their children have achieved and annual reviews are well conducted and very informative. The majority of parents who replied to the questionnaire believe the school gives them a clear understanding of what is taught and feel they are well informed about their children's progress.
- 63 Parents' involvement in their children's learning is good. The school provides a warm and welcoming

environment for parents and gives them every encouragement to participate in their children's learning. Many parents co-operate to help their children and take an active interest in targets that have been set. Nearly all parents agree that the school encourages them to play an active part and that the school is easy to approach with problems. Parents are fully involved in the review of their child's individual education plan targets and in the setting of targets at the annual review meeting. There are appropriate opportunities for parents to come into school to talk about their child's progress on a formal and informal basis. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and this reflects the findings of the last inspection. School policies encourage teachers to involve parents and some parents make a regular commitment to help in school, particularly by accompanying children on outside trips. The help that parents give is highly valued and their contribution positively enhances the range of activities open to children.

- 64 There is an active parent, teachers and friends association which makes valuable contributions to school funds and which cements good relationships between parents and staff at social events. Pupils benefit both from the funds raised and by the quality of the relationships formed between home and school. There is also a parents' group which meets once a week to give practical help and support to all parents as well as arranging monthly talks from outside speakers. One mother said that the support she received from this group went a long way to ease her sense of isolation.
- 65 The school benefits from a wide range of links with the outside community which make a good contribution to the life of the school and the progress pupils make. Links formed have raised the school's profile in the wider community and are helping to break down barriers of ignorance and prejudice about disability. Pupils benefit from the funds that are raised on their behalf and the school highly values the generous donations of local businesses and charities. There are links with the local police who visit to talk to pupils about personal safety and 'stranger danger', as well as with the local fire station and the RSPCA. There are good links with various local authority day and activity centres who allow the school to share its resources. The whole school benefits from the Licensed Hackney Carriage charity which arranges trips to Disneyland Paris. There is a long-established and much valued link with Wallington Boys' School where pupils enjoy shared drama lessons and take part in school productions.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

- 66 Overall the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. This is different from the previous inspection which was very positive about leadership. The head teacher has worked hard to maintain standards of education for pupils despite considerable staff changes, however there are now weaknesses in the provision which have yet to be effectively addressed. These include the quality of education for Post 16 students, aspects of the curriculum provision and long term development planning. There have been changes to the structure and staffing of the senior management team since the last inspection and together with the head teacher the team provide clear educational direction for the school. There has been a specific focus on developing and improving links with parents and this has been very effective.
- 67 The head teacher is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the school's provision and has used her senior management team well to improve and develop teaching skills. The senior management team is well balanced in the skills they provide. Their roles are clearly defined and the deputy and two senior teachers provide effective role models for teaching staff. There is a shared commitment in improving the quality of education for the pupils. The day to day management of the school is good. Meetings are held regularly, including staff meetings, departmental meetings and class meetings. These have been effective in ensuring that teachers are well informed, and planning meetings between teachers and their support staff ensure that the latter are kept up to date.
- 68 The governing body is very supportive and has established appropriate committees to ensure the work of the school is monitored effectively. Minutes of meetings show that they are well informed, however there is little evidence that they are proactive in developing the school and long term planning is a weakness. Governors visit the school regularly and new governors are very aware of their responsibilities. They are beginning to focus on areas that interest them and are looking at the school's provision critically. There is not yet a formal structure

to visits in school that would provide governors with a basis from which to work. For example, although governors visit lessons and have discussions with staff there is no formal feedback to the rest of the governing body.

- 69 The support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development are satisfactory overall. There are strengths particularly in the support given to new teachers. This has clearly been effective in improving teaching for the high number of new staff, many of whom are not trained to work with pupils with special needs. The senior management team has been involved in regular meetings and team teaching with these staff and as a result teachers are gaining confidence in their ability. There has been monitoring of teaching both by the senior management team and the advisor, which has provided a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of teachers. However it has not been effective in ensuring that weaknesses have been resolved in areas where more established teachers are involved.
- 70 The monitoring of the curriculum has not been effective in ensuring that teachers use their time well and cover all aspects of the planned curriculum. Curriculum planning, and an evaluation of the topic when it has been taught, teachers' lesson planning, timetables and pupils' individual education plans are all appropriately monitored. In addition non-contact time has been recently re-established to enable co-ordinators to monitor the teaching of their subjects. However these procedures have not been effective in ensuring that what is in teachers' planning and timetables is being carried out and evidence shows that these do not always reflect what actually happens.
- 71 The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is satisfactory. The aims of the school are well reflected in the work of the staff. There is a clear focus on using the skills of professionals and good relations with the community. These reflect well the values the school places on a "child focused team approach". However preparation for life after school for Post 16 students is unsatisfactory in a number of areas and the school does not meet this important aim for these students. Most policies that are relevant to aspects of the school are in place or are due to be presented to governors. However there is no clear system for monitoring and recording which policies need to be reviewed and when.
- 72 Development planning, monitoring and evaluation are unsatisfactory. Planning is only short term and there is no clear formal structure in planning for the development of the school over a period of time. There is a good understanding of the areas for development but these are not all evident in the school plan. For example the development of individual education plans and the recognition of the weaknesses within the Post 16 provision have been recognised and action taken, but there is no formal planning to address these. Although staff are involved in subject developments these are not linked to whole school issues or resourced appropriately. The lack of formal monitoring and evaluation does not enable staff and governors to be involved in planning effectively and in ensuring that developments are underway. Although the head teacher keeps a record of how the plan is progressing, this together with ideas for development, does not have a formal structure.
- 73 Although the school has worked hard to make improvements since the last inspection, the impact of shortages in staffing has resulted in the school concentrating on issues around training new teachers. As a result progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The school has been successful in improving the provision for pupils under five and pupils are now being taught a modern foreign language. However, the standards of teaching although satisfactory are no longer as high and have deteriorated for Post 16 students. Curriculum co-ordinators do have subject development plans however there is no prioritising for resources and they do not yet monitor teaching within their subjects.
- 74 The school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory. The head teacher and senior management team are very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how these should be addressed. The recent appointment of an experienced teacher together with the fact that staffing is now more stable will enable staff and governors to focus more clearly on development planning. There are informal structures for monitoring and evaluating progress within the development plan and the head teacher and senior management team recognise the need to formalise their procedures.

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#### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 75 The school has a satisfactory number of teachers. However, a high turnover of teaching staff combined with

difficulties in recruitment has resulted in a significant proportion of the staff lacking special needs qualifications and/or substantial experience in teaching pupils with severe or profound learning difficulties. The school does have a high number of support staff, many of whom have substantial experience. This enables them to provide very effective support in a range of subjects, notably literacy and numeracy, and to make a very positive contribution to the social needs and development of the pupils.

- 76 Arrangements for staff induction and professional development are good. The head teacher and the senior management team are aware of the need to support and assist the development of those teachers who are new to, or lack experience in, this field of education. A detailed induction pack has been prepared and a programme of support by senior staff gives new and inexperienced teaching staff opportunities to observe or work with more experienced colleagues. Similarly, effective support is provided to assist teachers in the planning of lessons. The school also has a good staff-training programme. Appropriate emphasis has been given to the enhancement of teachers' skills in the teaching of literacy and numeracy as well as working with pupils with profound learning difficulties. All members of the teaching and support staff undertake relevant training.
- 77 The school has good quality appraisal procedures, which effectively support the professional development of the teaching staff through identification of their training needs. However, there is a lack of formal procedures for the professional development of support staff.
- 78 The school's accommodation is of very good quality. The classrooms are spacious and there is a very good range of specialist provision for subjects such as art and food technology. The swimming pool is of very good quality and enhances the teaching of physical education. The school is very well kept, being both clean and well maintained. This, combined with good quality wall displays and pictures, makes a pleasant and comfortable working environment. The exterior play areas have a very good range of play equipment, which gives pupils valuable opportunities for imaginative play and the practice of social and communication skills.
- 79 The school's learning resources are satisfactory overall, although there are variations within subjects. The school has a good range of books and equally good facilities for music and art. However, whilst the school now has a good number of new computers, only a limited range of software has been provided to support their use across the curriculum. The teaching of humanities and religious education is hampered by a lack of books and artefacts; the current level of learning materials is insufficient to support the curriculum.
- 80 The previous report judged that the school had an experienced teaching staff with a broad range of teaching expertise. The subsequent high turnover of staff has effected this provision but the school has made good progress in the development of procedures for induction and professional support. The 1996 report also identified a lack of teacher expertise in art, music and design technology. The school has effectively rectified some of these shortcomings through the use of specialist music and art teachers. However, the need for further staff development in design technology remains. The previous report also judged that resources were adequate and relevant. This judgement remains valid. However, the earlier judgement that there was a wide range of computer software is no longer valid. The recent acquisition of computers through the local education authority has not been supported by appropriate software.

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

- 81 Financial planning is satisfactory overall. Despite very high levels of expenditure on support staff, planning has enabled funding to be found for several developments which have had a positive effect on the quality of provision. These include the appointment of additional part-time staff for art and movement therapy, the purchase of additional resources for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and the development of a sensory area in the transition class area. However, it is unclear how governors make decisions regarding priorities for development funding. Budget planning is limited to the following financial year and there is no strategic plan for the longer-term financial issues which face the school. There has been some improvement since the last inspection in financial planning with the Management and Development Plan for 1999-2000 now including the cost of proposed developments. The purchase of new resources is included in the plan to support educational developments. However the lack of a bidding system and clear prioritisation of subjects' needs have sometimes resulted in inefficiencies, for example, in the limited availability of resources for history, geography and religious education.

- 82 Planning has been effective in ensuring that the large surplus from previous years has been used to offset an overspend incurred in the last financial year and forecast for the current year. However forecast balances are reduced to the low level of approximately 1.5% of the allocated budget. It is not clear from current documentation what priorities will be followed to stabilise this situation. For example whether the school will be able to continue to maintain the levels of individual pupil support which it funds from its base budget. It is clear from discussions with the head teacher and chair of the governors' finance committee, however, that thought has been given to several possible options, if not recorded in a formal plan, and that the issue will be debated at meetings in the Spring Term. The budget process is based on good quality financial data and projections of future commitments.
- 83 Satisfactory use is made of staffing and learning resources. Support staff, the number of which is well above the average for schools of this type, are effectively deployed and make a major contribution to the quality of provision. Expenditure on teaching staff is at an average level. Four members of senior staff are without a class responsibility in order to broaden expertise throughout the school through support and monitoring. Although this has been successful with new staff it has not been effective in ensuring other areas of the curriculum are effectively monitored.
- 84 Accommodation is effectively used. Careful consideration is given by the re-assignment of rooms and the timetabling of others for multi-purpose use, to improving its effectiveness. Good use is made of the school's swimming pool in evening sessions for the local community. Residential accommodation in the Post 16 area, however, has been unused for a considerable period of time. There is sound use of learning resources in most areas of the school.
- 85 There are good systems of financial control. Regular printouts of profiled budget expenditure are produced, monitoring is effective and there are sound procedures for day-to-day financial administration. There is a very helpful manual of financial procedures, which clearly sets out the allocation of responsibilities for functions such as virement, the ordering of supplies and the administration of petty cash. A recent audit by the local authority found good practice and the minor weaknesses which it reported have been addressed by the school. Day-to-day administration provides effective support to the management of the school, although the frequent use of the school tannoy system for announcements and messages can have a disruptive effect on lessons.
- 86 The school enjoys very high levels of funding. Teaching and the progress made by pupils are satisfactory. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. The efficiency of the school is satisfactory. As a result the value for money provided is satisfactory. This finding represents unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection when value for money was found to be good.
- 86 **Post 16 provision (The Transition class)**
- 87 The provision made for students in Post 16 is unsatisfactory. Although their progress in some areas of the curriculum, such as creative development and physical education, is satisfactory or better, their progress towards the school's declared aim for them "to live as confident, able and informed citizens" in the wider community is unsatisfactory. In some key areas, such as communication skills, progress overall is unsatisfactory.
- 88 The lack of progress is a direct result of the low expectations of some teachers. Pupils benefit from the teaching of specialist staff in music, physical education, science, food technology and some aspects of personal, social and health education. However in the important areas of literacy and numeracy pupils' skills are not extended; the work is unchallenging and often repetitive with little scope for extending and acquiring new skills.
- 89 In their speaking and listening skills, students of higher attainment make good progress. Many are talking confidently and with a growing vocabulary in a variety of situations and they listen carefully and with appropriate levels of understanding to spoken instructions. However for lower attaining students progress is poor. They are given insufficient opportunities to extend the range of skills needed to improve their communication. Although their level of understanding is sufficient for them to make progress, their ability to respond using a wider range of skills such as the use of symbols or other methods of communication as well as

signing is very limited and is not developing as it should. Higher attaining pupils make unsatisfactory progress in their basic literacy skills. They are not improving their ability to use books or other printed materials, either for information or for pleasure. This unsatisfactory progress is particularly noticeable in the difficulties they continue to have in reading and writing for practical, everyday purposes such as understanding or filling in simple forms or worksheets.

- 90 Progress in numeracy is unsatisfactory. Students spend an insufficient amount of time on their basic number skills and the quantity of work which those of higher attainment produce on calculation and everyday mathematics is very limited. For example when asked about their use of money on a shopping trip, three students were unable to talk in any detail about the comparative costs of the items which they had bought or the amount of change which they had received.
- 91 In science progress is satisfactory. One group of students attends a weekly session at a local college of further education. Although they continue to have difficulties in recording information, their knowledge of physical processes such as friction are developing at an appropriate rate and most are able to talk about cause and effect in experiments with increasing understanding. Satisfactory progress is made by lower-attaining pupils in their work in school on exploring and responding to various stimuli such as lights, bubbles and smells.
- 92 Students make satisfactory progress in art. They develop their skills in three-dimensional work and creating pattern on textiles and make good progress in ceramics. However, they make unsatisfactory progress in using paint. This is because teachers' expectations are too low. Planning is ineffective and promotes the naming and application of colour to paper rather than creative work. Students are not encouraged to build upon what they already know. Responses to lessons in art are good and students are co-operative. They are careful with their work. Students lack sufficient information to use initiative sufficiently when they paint. A minority of teachers lack sufficient subject knowledge to provide opportunities for pupils to develop an individual response to art, or acquire sufficient skills in using the materials.
- 93 Post 16 students generally make satisfactory progress in French. For higher attaining students progress is slow, as there is little evidence that the work is made more challenging for them. Lower attaining students are developing their confidence in counting and respond well to bingo in French. Most are able to identify the numbers as they are called. They know the names of some fizzy drinks and ask for them in role play activities. Higher attaining students are more confident and enter into role play with enthusiasm. They can identify different fruits and ask for and respond to questions about them. They understand that the French use a different currency and are able to participate well in number games. Some have clearly gained a good grasp of the subject and have the ability to learn at a faster rate than lessons allow.
- 94 Students at Post 16 make very good progress in music, recognising rock and roll rhythms and remembering that they are studying the blues. Higher attaining students recognise the differences between styles, selecting notes to play the blues. They play instruments, keeping the beat and understanding that music can be sad. Students make further good progress associating music with the styles of dress in the 1950s and 1960s. They recognise the differences in tempo, dancing appropriately to the music.
- 95 Students make good progress in swimming and water skills and, in athletics, photographic evidence and the certificates won by students show good development of their performance in a variety of competitive events. For example Post 16 students extend their swimming skills, with several swimming up to 400 metres. Post 16 students practice their football skills and have clearly made good progress in their ability to play in a team and to display good sporting behaviour. Students are keen to talk about their success in these competitions which clearly do much for their confidence and self-esteem.
- 96 All students make satisfactory progress in developing their independence in cooking. They can recall the items for which they have shopped. With support they can follow instructions and they can use a cooker. Students are making good progress in developing independent skills in cooking and have an appropriate awareness of healthy eating.
- 97 It was not possible to observe the group of students who attend the local college for a weekly session of information and communications technology. Very little evidence of the use of computers at the school by Post 16 students was seen. One group of students was observed using word-processing facilities to produce

captions for photographs from newspapers but they required significant levels of support from staff to do this. In a free-choice session, three lower-attaining pupils were very keen to use computer games but they were unable to access the software and have clearly made unsatisfactory progress in the basic skills required to do this.

- 98 In the key area of knowledge and understanding of the wider community, students make satisfactory progress. Opportunities for pupils to have experiences in the work place are appropriate. However their ability to travel independently is not well promoted and very little of their academic work makes use of resources in the local community. As a result, their progress towards greater independence in life after school is not being fully developed.
- 99 Students' attitudes and behaviour are good. They respond positively when the teaching provides challenges, which they find interesting and exciting. On those occasions students are fully involved and participate with enthusiasm to taking part in a mime, performing music or learning French. However, when the set tasks fail to engage their interest students can be bored and lose concentration. Students clearly enjoy activities which involve practical work and an element of performance. Relationships are good. Lower attaining students are often helped by their peers. They respond very well when asked to use their initiative, for example, in music and drama but few instances of them working independently were noted during the inspection week.
- 100 The teaching within the Post 16 provision ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent. Overall, it is unsatisfactory. It is good in those sessions where students are challenged and a lively pace is achieved, both of which are features of lessons involving creative development, such as music and drama, and practical activities such as cooking. The common weakness of unsatisfactory teaching is the low expectations of what students can do. This is particularly evident in lessons focusing on language and communication skills where teaching sets undemanding or uninteresting tasks for pupils, with a slow pace and excessive use of repetition and reinforcement. A limited range of resources is used, variety is lacking and insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use their initiative or tackle new areas of experience.
- 101 A new curriculum has recently been adopted and is appropriately balanced with a range of activities. However it is not yet being effectively implemented in practice. Planning and assessment do not relate consistently to its units and modules and arrangements have yet to be made in securing external accreditation for students on the course. The curriculum as currently delivered is not sufficiently broad or balanced. A large proportion of students' time is taken up by physical and leisure activities and by meal preparation but there are inadequate opportunities for students to improve their communication, literacy and numeracy skills for everyday purposes. Low attaining pupils have very restricted opportunities for learning outside the school environment, particularly for work experience and integration. There is a good programme of sex education, students' cultural development is well provided for through the curriculum's creative development modules and there is sound application of moral education across the curriculum. However opportunities for pupils to demonstrate initiative, to take responsibility and to develop some insight into spiritual values receive insufficient attention. These deficiencies in curriculum planning are compounded by inadequate learning resources. There is a lack of interesting and varied resources, in particular books and visual materials, relating to life in the community.
- 102 Support staff are used well and students benefit from the teaching of specialist staff for example in music and physical education. The accommodation overall is satisfactory. However it is not used well and does not display material such as art, pupils' work or posters which they have chosen and none of the classrooms provide a stimulating learning environment.
- 103 The management of the provision is unsatisfactory. There are low expectations of what students can do and as a result there have been few initiatives to develop the curriculum and overall provision for the students. These weaknesses have been recognised by the senior management team and there has been a great deal of support provided. This has been effective in improving some aspects including work experience and increasing opportunities for students to develop independence. However there is recognition that the development of a more appropriate curriculum is a priority. Progress since the last inspection is poor. The previous inspection found provision to be good. There are now significant weaknesses in the progress made by pupils, in the quality of teaching and in the breadth and balance of the curriculum. Taking into consideration the unsatisfactory progress and teaching the provision for Post 16 students provides unsatisfactory value for money.



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

104 In response to criticism in the last inspection report the school now has a designated nursery class that is part of its early years provision. Appropriate procedures have been implemented to support children's entry to school and there is a good emphasis on building relationships with parents. There is a nursery teacher who is appropriately qualified and experienced and sufficient, experienced support staff. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection and is now appropriately planned from the areas of learning recommended for children under five. Curriculum planning indicates that children now have sufficient opportunities to develop play, cognitive and communication skills. Learning experiences are now planned appropriately to reflect the needs of young children. The Equals special access curriculum is being used appropriately to ensure that the learning objectives identified in teachers' planning and the learning targets set for individual children reflect their needs. The nursery accommodation and the learning resources are good. There is a large classroom that is suitable for a wide range of nursery activities and there is a safe outdoor play area. A good range of suitable resources has been developed to support teaching and children have appropriate opportunities to use the specialist facilities available in the school.

### **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

#### **English**

105 Pupils at all key stages make satisfactory progress in relation to their past learning and the targets set for them in their individual education plans. The last inspection report identified English as strength of the school; pupils' progress was good in speaking and listening, and ranged from satisfactory to very good in reading and writing. These standards have not been maintained to the same extent since the last inspection and pupils' progress over time is now judged to be satisfactory in communication (speaking and listening), pre-reading and reading and pre-writing and writing. Pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 often make good progress in relation to the learning objectives identified in the teachers' lesson plans.

106 Pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of communication (speaking and listening) skills. Across all key stages they demonstrate an appropriate range of skills. During Key Stage 1 many pupils develop their use of signing confidently and others make good attempts to sign familiar songs. Pupils are effectively supported by the teachers' confident and consistent use of signing. For example pupils use the signs for green and blue spontaneously to describe the colour of the salt dough whilst a higher attaining pupil uses clear speech to tell the group about a visit to the shop at the weekend, remembering to tell them that he bought sweets. Pupils listen carefully to each other during the news session and some accurately retell what others did at the weekend. At Key Stage 2 pupils develop their skills through signing familiar words from the "big bad wolf" song. They sign "good morning" to everyone during the registration and greeting session, and where appropriate use a single switch communication aid to join in appropriately by using a pre-recorded greeting. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate an understanding of turn taking and know at what point in the routine to press the switch. Higher attaining pupils show an appropriate growing vocabulary. For example they produce a list of words to describe the character of 'Elmer' the elephant, describing him as "funny" and "happy". With a prompt they use these words appropriately in a sentence "I like Elmer because...". Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties enjoy the interaction of adults and will often initiate communication.

107 At Key Stage 3 pupils listen carefully to stories and respond appropriately, for example a pupil puts his hand up and reaches out for the money bag when asked "Who will hold the money" during 'The book seller' story. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties respond to good morning by smiling and turning to the teacher, others wave spontaneously during a familiar greetings routine. At Key Stage 4 pupils are confident communicators. They talk about a book they have made and what it is about. Pupils copy or spontaneously use signs that are associated with their work, one copies a sign for good morning and another, without a prompt signs breakfast. They clearly demonstrate that the book is about "getting up". Pupils who are capable of higher attainment learn the words for the song "A dedicated follower of fashion'. Pupils describe

the material used in a picture of fashions in the 1960s as “spotty” and one says that it is “polka dot”. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties initiate communication during a sensory story about ‘the wind, the rain and the sun’. A pupil points to his head, clearly indicating that he would like to wear the hat.

- 108 Pupils at all key stages make satisfactory progress in developing pre-reading and reading skills. At Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to take a pleasure in books. They look carefully at the pictures in interactive books. They lift up the flaps to find the hidden pictures underneath. Pupils handle books appropriately, they turn the pages and look at the pictures and comment on what they see. Most remember significant parts of the story of “The three little pigs” and some join in with the familiar phrase “he huffed and he puffed and he blew the house down”. By the end of Key Stage 1 many pupils know that symbols carry information. Pupils are beginning to understand how the school library works, they choose books from the shelf with confidence and take them to the librarian to be stamped. At Key Stage 2 pupils are able to match animal pictures and name the animals in the pictures using the appropriate signs. Many pupils recognise the symbols used in the symbol timetable. They know that the symbols tell them what activities they will be doing during the day. By the end of Key Stage 2 higher attaining pupils talk about the characters and events in books they know, for example in the ‘Elmer’ the elephant story. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties make simple choices using objects of reference. A pupil chooses to take part in an activity involving the sense of touch by pointing to a card with a piece of cloth. A pupil interacts positively with photographs smiling when shown a picture of himself.
- 109 At Key Stage 3 higher attaining pupils are developing their reading skills and recognise and name the letters in the words of a simple sentence. Some read back what they have copied. Others, with support, read from a simple and familiar book. At Key Stage 4 pupils have made their own individual books and recognise the simple sentence “I wake up”. They are becoming confident to read aloud. Pupils attempt to read other sentences that are transcribed into symbols, they look to the teacher for support with symbols that are unfamiliar to them. By the end of Key Stage 4 higher attaining pupils identify the phrase “Oh yes he is” in the text for the song “A dedicated follower of fashion”. They read it out of context, others recognise simple words such as ‘is’ and ‘he’. They find these words in the text without support.
- 110 In pre-writing and writing across all key stages pupils demonstrate a range of skills. During Key Stage 1 pupils have good opportunities to develop the fine motor skills they need for writing. They thread cotton reels and some independently thread plastic shapes on to a lace. Higher attaining pupils make deliberate marks on paper, they hold the pencil with an appropriate pincer grip and demonstrate good pencil control. One pupil pretends to write his name scribbling on the paper. At Key Stage 2 some pupils are developing the ability to copy a simple sentence about ‘Elmer’ the elephant and others ‘write over’ a dictated sentence. Pupils develop their fine motor skills further by drawing a line connecting two pictures.
- 111 At Key Stage 3 higher attaining pupils capable make deliberate marks on paper and some form letters appropriately. Others copy write or write underneath simple words and sentences. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties hold and explore the resources they are given from the story box and they touch the different materials that represent the pages in ‘the book sellers’ storybook. By the end of Key Stage 4 some pupils use a pencil confidently to ring or underline the word they have been asked to find in the text. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties respond appropriately to touch, using their hands to explore materials and they grasp and release the objects they are given.
- 112 The promotion of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to use texts and copy write. There is an appropriate focus on ensuring that those pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties focus on people and objects. They track objects that are moved across their field of vision and respond positively to the stories or the sensory stories they are involved in. Pupils capable of higher attainment understand that words and pictures carry meaning. Some read familiar words and simple sentences and some know a range of symbols. A few pupils read simple sentences that have been transcribed into symbols.
- 113 Pupils’ attitudes to learning and their responses in lessons are good overall. They confidently make choices. For example a pupil chooses what will be written in his news book and a pupil with profound and multiple learning difficulties chooses which activity he wants by touching a symbol card. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate pleasure, particularly when they talk about their ideas and about the activities they are doing. Pupils take turns and wait patiently during activities such as matching games that involve three or four pupils. Many pupils are interested in the contributions made by others and demonstrate a good awareness of the

group. Relationships with adults are good. Pupils are polite and will often say thank you, hello or good bye spontaneously, particularly when they are withdrawn from lessons for therapies. Pupils are keen to take part in activities and confident to use resources. They listen carefully to instructions and follow them accurately. Pupils' concentration and their participation in activities is generally good. They concentrate on the teacher and settle well to their work. In some lessons where the pace of teaching is slow, pupils' attention and concentration is more variable.

- 114 Teaching is satisfactory and is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and they plan a good range of activities to support learning. Lesson planning at all key stages is good and learning objectives for individual pupils are clearly identified in teachers' planning. Work is appropriately planned to meet the needs of individual pupils and is informed by the targets set in pupils' individual education plans. Lessons are effectively organised and meet the needs of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties particularly well. In most lessons there is a good balance between teaching and between the activities planned to support learning. Where teaching is less successful introductions are overlong and pupils' attention wanders. Some lessons particularly for older pupils at Key Stage 2 and pupils at Key Stage 3 are not sufficiently focused, the pace is slow and pupils, particularly those with challenging behaviour become restless.
- 115 There are good classroom relationships between adults; teachers and support staff work effectively together and this creates a motivating atmosphere. In most classes there is a consistent and positive approach to the management of behaviour. However, not all teachers have an appropriate range of strategies to manage the challenging behaviour of some pupils and as a result these pupils often spend considerable amounts of time out of the classroom. Resources are usually well selected, age appropriate and matched to pupils' learning. Support staff are well deployed and effectively support teaching and pupils' learning, making a significant contribution to the progress pupils make. Most teachers and support staff use signing confidently and consistently. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and effectively supports pupils' understanding and participation.
- 116 There is a satisfactory subject policy and a scheme of work has been developed and implemented. The scheme of work is a good document for guiding teachers in the setting of targets for lessons and for individuals but it is unsatisfactory in guiding teachers' planning and ensuring progression for pupils' learning. It does not reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum or the National Literacy Strategy and does not identify for teachers what will be taught and what the expected learning outcomes will be. As a result pupils' progress in relation to the curriculum is not assured and the procedures implemented to guide the planning of work does not result in learning that is significantly different for pupils at different key stages. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy have been implemented and are appropriately reflected in teachers' lesson planning. The recent implementation of the 'Equals' access curriculum will help to ensure progression for pupils' learning and the co-ordinator has already identified the development of a scheme of work as a priority for the future.
- 117 Pupils all have English targets in their individual education plans. These are appropriately developed from the 'Equals' assessment criteria and for pupils capable of higher attainment from the level one criteria of the National Curriculum. Assessment of pupils' attainment and their progress against these individual targets ensures that they make progress in relation to past learning. Pupils' individual education plans do not always contain targets that are related to all three areas of the English curriculum. The learning targets currently identified for pupils are not sufficiently related to the National Curriculum programmes of study or to the National Literacy Strategy to ensure that pupils develop subject understanding that relates to the curriculum.
- 118 The subject co-ordinator effectively manages and monitors the subject. An annual review of the policy and an audit of the curriculum are undertaken and this results in a subject development plan. This appropriately guides the co-ordinator's work over the year. Accommodation is good and there are sufficient suitable resources to support teaching and learning. Book resources are good and there is a large library, which is used effectively by some classes to teach basic library skills. The lighting in the library area is unsuitable, particularly for pupils who have visual problems.

## **Mathematics**

- 119 Progress in mathematics is satisfactory in all key stages. Staff changes and the lack of a co-ordinator for

mathematics has inhibited progress made since the previous inspection and, as a consequence, some of the positive judgements that were made then are no longer valid. This is particularly in reference to the quality of teaching and progress which was previously good for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.

- 120 During Key Stage 1 higher attaining pupils have a concept of number, recognise number sequences and groups up to 3 and write numbers with assistance. They identify numbers and, through the medium of songs and games, can count by rote. Similarly, all pupils can match by shape and colour. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have the ability to work in matching and constructing three dimensional shapes and are also developing a sense of time and an awareness of events in the school day. Those pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties recognise changes in their surroundings and different lighting, for example when in the sensory room. During Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in a broad range of mathematical skills. They are developing an awareness of sequential patterns in numbers and can recognise wrongly placed numbers. By the end of Key Stage 2 many count accurately up to 5 with higher ability pupils counting up to 10. They have knowledge of basic mathematical shapes such as circles, triangles and squares and are able to match them accurately. Those pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are developing a concept of size and some classify objects as bigger and smaller.
- 121 Key Stage 3 pupils develop their knowledge of number and handle figures with increasing confidence. They are aware of number bonds up to 10 and count in reverse order. All pupils have consolidated number naming skills and higher attaining pupils form object groups up to 5. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils are developing a mathematical vocabulary and use words such as “before” and “after.” Higher attaining pupils know the meaning of “take away.” By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils undertake simple addition and subtraction by the use of number lines and recognise numbers up to 20. They are also beginning to use mathematical games, such as rolling a dice or throwing a ball, to generate data, which can be recorded in tally chart form and analysed into “biggest” and “smallest” quantities. Similar practical exercises with money, such as the loading of a vending machine, demonstrate Key Stage 4 pupils’ ability to recognise coins and establish their values.
- 122 The use of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils clap to a rhythm and those in Key Stage 4 recognise the length of gaps and pauses in music. All classes are involved in counting and sequencing as a regular part of the start of the school day when marking the register and the calendar. However, there is a lack of co-ordination in developing numeracy and the tasks carried out each morning are similar for all pupils regardless of their age and ability.
- 123 Pupils’ response to mathematics is good. They listen carefully and are willing to participate in the lessons. Some show an ability to work with growing independence and all respond with interest, particularly to lessons, which involve games or music. Behaviour is generally good and pupils settle well to tasks especially those where they are actively involved.
- 124 The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of numeracy and of the pupils. Their expectations are closely linked to the pupils’ targets. Whilst this is appropriate in the majority of cases, termly targets are not extended enough for higher attaining pupils and lack sufficient challenges. Teachers’ planning is good. Groups are well organised and good use is made of support staff who make a very effective contribution to the success of lessons. Appropriate time is allowed for the consolidation of skills and some interesting methods, involving the use of music and games, are used. In some classes, questioning is used well to encourage pupils’ independent thinking. However, whilst the pace of the lessons is often good, time is often lost due to the late start and early finish of mathematics lessons. This loss is further compounded by the withdrawal of pupils for therapy from the same weekly lessons, which results in their loss of a significant element of mathematics time.
- 125 The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced and has relevance to the pupils’ needs. The introduction of a new scheme of work and of assessment for pupils when they start school will effectively focus development on pupils’ individual needs. Whilst the subject is well resourced, the use of information communication technology is under developed and there is a lack of appropriate software.

## Science

- 126 Throughout the school the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in science. A small minority of pupils makes unsatisfactory progress when they miss significant parts of lessons, being withdrawn for support with their behaviour. The lack of a co-ordinator for the subject and the level of staff turn over has had an impact on the quality of provision for science. As a result standards have not been maintained since the last inspection when both progress and teaching were considered to be good.
- 127 During Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress exploring materials. They explore using their senses a variety of resources. Pupils manipulate resources to examine the effect of change, for example moving a bottle containing different coloured shapes and textured materials to observe the effect. They react to changes in colours in water when mixed with dye. Pupils investigate light and reflections in Christmas decorations, attempting to focus on the image. At Key Stage 2 pupils study wildlife, beginning to understand the habitats that animals prefer. They examine the similarities and differences in fruit when they prepare a fruit salad. However, by the end of Key Stage 2 progress is less secure for some pupils because they repeat work completed on previous occasions and do not build sufficiently upon their prior learning. Lower attaining pupils observe the difference when dye is mixed with the water. They respond well to the stimulus to explore, feeling the water and observing the way that dye mixes.
- 128 Pupils in Key Stage 3 make satisfactory progress investigating the properties of materials such as metal, plastic and fabric and they talk about differences between them. They understand that they can describe an object by feel for example they describe metal as being cold to the touch. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils begin to identify different fabrics and understand that some are waterproof. Lower attaining pupils consolidate their knowledge of cause and effect, using switches in the sensory stimulation room. During Key Stage 4, pupils make satisfactory progress, continuing to explore a variety of materials such as metal, plastic and wood and beginning to understand that objects can be classified by properties. They experiment with a range of materials designed to repel water, insulate and to be hard wearing. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils plant seeds and investigate their essential requirements such as water and light. They make good evaluations. Lower attaining pupils make progress in examining the feel and appearance of different fabrics.
- 129 Pupils' responses to lessons in science are usually good. They are interested in their work and enjoy handling resources, treating them with respect. Pupils are pleased to take responsibility such as giving out resources, showing initiative when they ask the teacher to take a turn in exploring materials. They concentrate well on their tasks and consider the problems that they are set, looking for a solution. Lower attaining pupils reach out to investigate and respond positively to encouragement. Relationships are very good and pupils are polite to each other and adults. They wait patiently for their turn. Behaviour is usually good in lessons. However, behaviour deteriorates in a small minority of lessons when pupils receive insufficient direction. As a result they are unsure about what they are required to do and talk and move about, not concentrating on the lesson. A minority of pupils have identified difficulties with behaviour. They are unable to concentrate on the lesson, and are withdrawn so that they do not disrupt the lesson. This reduces the progress they make.
- 130 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall across the school. Where teaching is effective, the lessons have a good pace, with resources deployed well to maintain pupils' interest. Adults have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject to promote progress. Although there is generally good planning for all pupils, on a minority of occasions there is insufficient challenge provided for higher attaining pupils. There is appropriate planning for pupils to investigate, with good promotion of language associated with science. Support staff play a strong role in leading parts of lessons and this has a positive effect upon the progress that pupils make. However, this is not consistent and in a minority of lessons, support staff have insufficient direction to match the activity with pupils' needs. Teachers ensure that most pupils behave well and participate in lessons. However, the arrangements to manage the behaviour of a minority of pupils are not satisfactory. The pupils do not behave well in class and spend too much of their time being withdrawn, missing part of lessons.
- 131 Planning for science is appropriate and ensures that pupils receive lessons in all the areas of study. Although there is limited time allocated for science lessons pupils learn about science in other subjects. For example they learn about sound in music. However, there is not a scheme of work and on occasions classes repeat work without sufficiently planned opportunities to build upon their earlier learning. There is appropriate planning to promote literacy in lessons both for pupils to use scientific terms and to describe what they see. Lessons provide good opportunities to promote numeracy through counting and matching objects. There is no co-ordinator for science to monitor the provision to ensure that all pupils receive full access. Accommodation is

very good within classrooms. Resources for learning are satisfactory but there is insufficient provision of resources for information communication technology to support pupils' learning in science.

## 131 OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### Art

- 132 Pupils' progress in art is satisfactory overall. Their progress is good throughout the school in lessons led by the specialist art teacher. Overall standards have been maintained since the last inspection through the use of a specialist teacher.
- 133 During Key Stage 1, pupils develop their skills to use paint carefully, mixing to consolidate their understanding of colour. They create individual pictures, spreading the paint by moving the paper and applying brush strokes. They show increasing control, painting to represent animals. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress, adding the finish to house templates to illustrate the story of the "The three little pigs". They make more progress in applying skills than developing individual responses because the lesson is too short. When the lesson starts late, pupils do not have time to make further progress or have the opportunity to introduce their own ideas. Pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 make satisfactory progress creating work that builds upon their class topics. They investigate textures and patterns in material, consolidating skills in cutting and fixing. They make good progress printing on material and using Batik techniques. Lower attaining pupils feel the textures of different papers and art materials. They create pictures, moving their hands freely to paint.
- 134 Pupils receive lessons from the specialist art teacher and this is very effective in developing pupils' skills. They work in a variety of interesting mediums, often linked to class topics. For example, pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress creating ceramic leaves, furthering their study of the topic of autumn. Pupils at all key stages make good progress when they apply surface finishes to pottery. They respond well to opportunities to observe and handle pottery reflecting African and Maori traditions. This enables pupils to make good progress in understanding artists' intentions and promotes their cultural awareness. As pupils move through the school they build upon skills of handling and preparing clay to form pots and bowls using a range of techniques.
- 135 Pupils have a good attitude to lessons in art and respond well to opportunities to work with a variety of mediums. They rise to the challenge to produce their best work in ceramics, concentrating well to create original responses to providing surface pattern on pottery. Pupils take care of their work and show a sense of pride since they associate it with the high standard of work exhibited by the specialist art teacher. They value each other's contributions very well, admiring each other's work on display. Pupils behave well and are obedient, following instructions. When given the opportunity, they make good efforts to create original responses to their tasks in art lessons.
- 136 The quality of teaching is good in lessons taken by the specialist teacher; elsewhere it is satisfactory. Where teaching is most effective, pupils have good opportunities to talk about their work and discuss their style. The tasks chosen provide a good level of challenge. Lesson planning provides a good balance of practical skills and opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas. Teachers and support staff manage most pupils' behaviour effectively. Pupils are encouraged to help each other and to help in class by distributing resources and clearing away. This promotes their social development well. Where teaching is less effective, the planning and management of time provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop independent skills and responses to art.
- 137 Lessons in art provide a good range of work in different mediums over time. In ceramics lessons, the teaching promotes pupils' cultural development through opportunities to appreciate traditional patterns such as African and Maori ceramics. Although there are limited examples provided for pupils to experience the work of local and famous painters, the provision for art makes a good contribution to spiritual and cultural development. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. However, much of the floor area in the specialist room is used to store

materials, limiting the space available for teaching. There is insufficient storage for ongoing work and this limits the range of work provided. The school kiln is a valuable asset and promotes pupils' learning in providing the finish to ceramics. Resources are adequate, overall. However, there is insufficient provision and use of information communication technology to support learning in art.

137

### **Design and technology**

- 138 Progress in design technology is satisfactory in all key stages. The previous report judged that there was an over emphasis on food preparation and that work on resistant materials was limited. The lack of a scheme of work means that this is still the case and the curriculum, whilst relevant, lacks breadth and balance. Previously progress was good and this is no longer the case. However, the quality of teaching has remained consistent since the last inspection.
- 139 In Key Stage 1 pupils develop making and designing skills through work with a range of construction kits and materials. Models have been constructed of garages and an airport, which develop pupils' manipulative and joining skills. Pupils practice the use of small tools for working with resistant materials such as card and paper. They are aware of the need for mixing and whisking of ingredients in food technology and can use simple tools such as whisks and spoons to achieve this. At Key Stage 2 pupils use small tools with increasing confidence and accuracy to produce paper patterns. Their developing design skills are illustrated by the ability to produce a template outline of a house to their own design and the use of a range of construction materials such as straw and paper. Pupils with additional special needs can, with assistance, make use of scissors to produce a range of model shapes of animals and insects, such as a snail, ladybird and lion. By the end of the key stage pupils demonstrate the ability to measure materials in food technology by using scales and can undertake food preparation by slicing a range of vegetables. Mixing skills are sufficient for pupils to blend ingredients to effectively produce play-dough. Higher attaining pupils have developed the ability to design and produce shapes of some complexity by using kneading techniques.
- 140 In Key Stage 3 pupils are able to construct three-dimensional models, such as a pyramid based on the Egyptian pattern, through using large construction blocks. Pupils use tools with increasing confidence and have extended their design skills to enable them to decorate candles and work with pottery in a range of shapes and designs. The emphasis that is placed on food technology ensures that pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 can help with the preparation of a simple meal, such as beans on toast. Pupils in Key Stage 4 continue with the emphasis on food technology and have consolidated the skills of spreading, pouring, and kneading and, in some cases with support, weighing with reasonable accuracy. These skills are used, for example, in the preparation of pizza bases and toppings. Their knowledge of healthy foods is such that they can identify ingredients such as butter, salt and margarine which enables them to classify foods into healthy and less healthy varieties. They have also worked with materials to produce Christmas cards and, in the recent past, have produced plant boxes.
- 141 Pupils enjoy design and technology. They are enthusiastic, especially about food preparation, and are keen to do well. They co-operate well together and contribute to questioning and discussion with increasing confidence. Resources are used carefully and pupils volunteer to help clear up after the lesson.
- 142 The teaching of design and technology is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned with a range of interesting tasks. The expectations of the pupils are high and there is an appropriate emphasis on the pupils' development of skills and their ability to evaluate their work. The good relationships that exist with pupils ensure both an effective learning environment and due consideration for health and safety issues. Support staff are well deployed and make a very effective contribution to the success of the lessons. However there is not a clear focus on ensuring that pupils receive a range of experiences particularly with regards to work with resistant materials and this has an effect on pupils' progress.
- 143 Currently, the subject is under resourced. The need to share the budget with art means that design technology lacks sufficient funds for development. The use of information communication technology is also currently under developed.

### **Geography and history**

- 144 No specific work on geography was seen during the inspection week. Teachers' planning indicates that the subject will feature in topic work in the spring and summer terms of the current school year. Pupils' progress overall in both subjects is satisfactory in the reduced range of areas of study and key skills selected from the programmes of study and in the limited time made available for them.
- 145 Pupils' folders contain evidence of some of the work they have covered. For example, pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 show an understanding of where France is through their work on the 1998 World Cup. They are developing their knowledge of other countries at an appropriate rate. In discussion, Year 11 pupils knew that Sutton was part of London and were able to identify the British Isles on a globe.
- 146 In history, pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 are developing an understanding of past and present. They recall past events from their own lives and use simple historical terms to sequence the events which they describe. They have studied several historical periods such as Ancient Egypt and in discussions pupils recall aspects of the work they have done. Key Stage 3 pupils show good awareness of the changing fashions of recent decades during a technology lesson and are learning about changes in popular music over a similar period.
- 147 Schemes of work for geography and history are not yet complete and planning to ensure pupils' knowledge develops as they move through the school is inadequate in both subjects. This issue and the need to improve the assessment and recording of pupils' progress have been identified by the co-ordinator in development planning. The purchase of new resources is also included as a priority for development. Learning resources for both subjects are inadequate and severely limit the scope of what can be attempted. Both the quality and quantity of books, artefacts and audio-visual materials are poor. The storage and organisation of the current stock of resources make them difficult to access.
- 148 There is no evidence of improvement of standards, planning or resources in either subject since the last inspection but the targets identified by the co-ordinator provide a sound basis for development.

148 **Information and Communication Technology**

- 149 Pupils' progress in the use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory in all key stages. There is little evidence of pupils' past work and although the school has recently been provided with new computers, this has not included the appropriate range of software or training to ensure teachers' subject knowledge is secure.
- 150 Currently, information technology does not appear on the timetable as a discrete subject and the lack of a scheme of work makes it difficult to measure pupils' progress. Statutory requirements for the teaching of this subject are not met. The subject is under resourced and the allocation from the school budget is insufficient to ensure its development. The subject has made unsatisfactory progress since the previous inspection. The judgements made in 1996 of sound pupil achievement and teaching are no longer valid.
- 151 Pupils' knowledge of computer skills in all key stages is restricted to basic control movements, which rely on teacher support. In Key Stage 1 pupils can use the mouse to get a response from the computer and pupils are aware of the connection between the two. By the end of this key stage higher attaining pupils use the mouse to stop and start the computer. During Key Stage 2 pupils use the mouse to build pictures and move shapes. Their skills are not built upon from the previous key stage although pupils remain aware of the connection between the mouse and the computer response. There is no evidence to show that pupils move beyond this basic level in Key Stages 3 and 4. Although they use switches and communication equipment to make verbal responses.
- 152 Where information communication technology is used pupils are interested and enthusiastic. They show high levels of interest and pleasure in using the computers.
- 153 From the limited evidence available teaching is unsatisfactory. The basic skills that are taught indicate that the teachers' knowledge of the subject is not secure and lessons do not move beyond basic response levels. The recording of progress is unsatisfactory and places an emphasis on pupils' language skills and their response to the subject rather than their performance.



154 Whilst the level of resources available to the subject has recently been improved through the acquisition of nine personal computers, information communication technology does not yet have a central place in the school curriculum. The use of information communication technology in subjects such as English, mathematics and science is under-developed and does not form a regular part of teachers' planning. In part this is due to the lack of relevant software and equipment, such as touch screens and concept keyboards which inhibits its use. There is also a need for further staff training to develop both their confidence and their expertise in the use of information technology.

154

### **Modern Foreign Language**

155 Pupils make satisfactory progress at present. The subject has been established for only a short time and has greatly benefited from a French assistant. This is an improvement since the last inspection and the school has been effective in addressing the key issue related to the subject.

156 Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 make satisfactory progress in lessons. There is very little evidence to make a judgement over time. During Key Stage 3 pupils start to develop an understanding of a foreign language. They understand greetings such as "Bonjour". Higher attaining pupils will also add "toute le monde" and work hard to imitate the accent. They are developing an understanding of the different foods and way of life in France. They repeat phrases such as "je m'appelle" and can add their name into the sentence. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils are developing their vocabulary and confidence. They show an understanding of some of the words in the "Sur le pont d'Avignon" song and can act out the parts of the soldiers and musicians. Higher attaining pupils can identify where France is on a globe and recognise a map of France. All pupils try hard to imitate the French accent when speaking.

157 The attitudes of pupils to this subject are good. They enjoy the challenge of a different language and enter into games and activities with enthusiasm. Pupils rise to the challenge of role play activities and listen carefully for when it is their turn to join in. They behave well, sitting still and waiting to participate. Although enthusiastic they respond to instructions and settle quickly. Pupils are supportive of each other and are patient with those who are less confident.

158 Teaching overall is satisfactory. All lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4 were led by the French assistant. This is appropriate at present, as she is confident in her knowledge. There is a good mix of French and English, which ensures that pupils develop an understanding of the language without being overwhelmed. Lessons are focused on practical activities giving pupils a sense of fun in learning. However there is no planning for developing the curriculum for higher attaining pupils and tasks are similar for both key stages. There is a good focus on developing pupils' knowledge of the geography and music of France. There are no procedures for assessing pupils' progress and ensuring that lessons develop the skills learnt.

159 The management of the subject is satisfactory. A scheme of work is in place although it is newly established and untried. Although there is a progression of skills there is no clear structure to ensure that the pace of lessons is maintained for higher attaining pupils. No assessment or external accreditation have yet been established. As a non-specialist the co-ordinator has taken appropriate advice from the local education advisor however there is an over reliance on the French assistant whose post is only temporary. Apart from in Post 16 teachers did not assist in the teaching of the subject and there is no subject specialist available to the school after May. There is little evidence in planning to show how the school will address this issue. The subject is well promoted within school. There are French days that focus on the different aspects of France including food and sports and pupils benefit from the opportunity to go to Disney World in Paris on an annual basis.

### **159 Music**

160 Pupils throughout the school make excellent progress in individual and group music therapy sessions. They respond to the excellent atmosphere in lessons to give their very best effort. Pupils make remarkable progress in appraising music, playing an instrument and following instructions. They receive such a high order of encouragement that they make a supreme effort to improve their performance. Pupils build up their concentration during therapy through carefully planned activities and highly skilled teaching. It is unfortunate

that this extreme level of concentration is broken because of the inappropriate use of the intercom system.

- 161 During Key Stage 1 pupils develop the ability to play in time to music using percussion instruments including drums, tambourines and cymbals. They are beginning to appraise their own efforts and are making excellent progress in understanding of timing. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' confidence in playing instruments and keeping time has improved. They are confident in their ability and enjoy opportunities to work together to produce a piece of music. Pupils have a good understanding of rhythm and sing in tune both as part of a class and as individuals. Lower attaining pupils listen attentively and use eye contact to follow instructions.
- 162 At Key Stage 3 pupils join in a song of greeting. They make good progress taking part in ensemble playing, following simple musical notation. Pupils make good progress in performance to an audience. They understand how to use a microphone, developing confidence in singing a solo. Lower attaining pupils make the same progress as others because of the good support that they receive. Pupils at Key Stage 4 make excellent progress, building upon their previous performance, playing an instrument to singing and piano accompaniment. They use pictorial information to compose music for percussion and wind instruments, understanding the need to play with varying pace.
- 163 Pupils' responses to music lessons are very good overall. Pupils like music and are highly motivated by resources and teachers' methods. They enjoy using instruments and listen well to follow instructions to improve their performance. Pupils develop very good co-operation, playing in time with the teacher and increasingly with each other. They develop a high level of confidence because they receive strong support and encouragement. They are delighted with their success and this inspires them to try to make further progress. Where responses are excellent, pupils show confidence and maturity to enable them to perform in front of the class and interact constructively with other pupils' contributions. They show a high degree of interest in music and choose favourite pieces of music to hear and play.
- 164 The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is very good overall. Where teaching is most effective there is excellent subject expertise and knowledge of pupils to design lessons to meet pupils' needs. Lessons are challenging, with pupils encouraged to use their imagination and develop their own responses. There are extremely high expectations for pupils to attain with effective lesson plans to ensure that pupils achieve well. Relationships are excellent to build up pupils' trust and confidence to promote performance. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour in an effective, age appropriate way. They prepare and manage support staff well to provide pupils with good support.
- 165 Although the scheme of work is not yet in place for the whole school, pupils receive a good curriculum in music to promote their progress in all the required elements. Pupils sing during the day to support the morning greeting and to accompany counting. This further promotes their progress. Effective discussion and questioning during music lessons promotes pupils' communication skills. Lessons in music and movement enhance pupils' understanding of rhythm and following instructions. There is good attendance at extra-curricular lessons in music. This promotes further progress in music and provides pupils with additional opportunities to enjoy listening and performing.
- 166 Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The specialist music room provides a valuable resource for individual and class lessons. However, it is not soundproof and there is only a thin partition between this room and the art room. The intercom operates during lessons and irrelevant messages disturb music lessons significantly. Resources for learning are satisfactory and used effectively.

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

- 167 Pupils make good progress in their personal, social and health education. It is promoted through a number of aspects of the curriculum. Morning greeting sessions, break and lunch times are used well to extend pupils' social and independence skills. All staff contribute effectively to this. Pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons. There is no scheme of work to support teachers' planning and ensure that pupils' skills are built upon. Planning covers a range of topics but all pupils study the same topics each term and there is no clear structure to ensure that the work is extended for older and higher attaining pupils.

- 168 During Key Stage 1 pupils develop skills in communication learning to greet each other and staff through sign and voice. They start to recognise the importance of turn taking when communicating and listening to each others' contributions. They are keen to take on responsibilities and make good progress in developing their knowledge of the school. In Key Stage 2 pupils become more confident in making choices for example when choosing drinks at break time. This aspect is also promoted at lunchtime and lunchtime assistants work well with all pupils encouraging them where appropriate to choose what they want to eat. Higher attaining pupils will ask their peers what drink they want.
- 169 During Key Stage 3 pupils develop their knowledge about themselves, learning about their bodies and awareness of safety. For example, understanding the need to say no to strangers and safely crossing the road. They are becoming confident individuals and communicate well with visitors as well as peers. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils have made good progress in becoming independent and confident communicators. They are keen to help and undertake tasks such as washing up and offer to help. They have an understanding of healthy eating and can say which foods are healthy or not. They discuss emotions and explain why people's expressions change and the reasons behind the changes. Those pupils with profound and multiple difficulties develop their skills in communicating, recognizing staff and using eye contact to show pleasure and response.
- 170 Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided during the day. They enjoy working together and taking on roles such as delivering the register or counting how many are in the group. Older pupils show maturity in their responses to adults and communicate well, discussing topics that are of interest.
- 171 Teaching overall is good in the greetings sessions and registration. It is satisfactory in lessons for personal, social and health education. Teachers know the pupils well and this together with good relationships gives pupils confidence to talk and discuss a range of issues. Teachers use a variety of methods to encourage pupils to contribute and maintain interest. For example, in a lesson for Key Stage 4 pupils photographs were used of people with different expressions. Knowledge of pupils enables staff to discuss events in their lives where they felt different emotions. However planning for personal, social and health education lessons is not effective. Often the lessons do not take place or are more focused on other subjects such as literacy or numeracy. There is no clear focus on developing pupils' skills and at times pupils repeat the same tasks for example counting how many are in the group without extending this skill such as how many girls or boys. Assessment is not used by teachers to plan their lessons.
- 172 Management of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is no one responsible for the subject although the senior teacher has taken on the role temporarily and is working hard to develop planning. Currently the school has no way of ensuring that pupils make progress except in relation to the targets set for them in their individual education plans. This is unsatisfactory particularly as a significant amount of the curriculum time available is focused on the teaching of this subject. It is also unsatisfactory that in teachers' topic web planning personal, social and health education and religious education come under the same area. Teachers link the two subjects together which results in an insufficient focus on either of them.
- 173 There has been little change in provision since the last inspection and judgements are consistent with three years ago. However it is unsatisfactory that, as at the time of the last inspection, there is only a temporary co-ordinator for a subject which is of such importance to the pupils.

### 173 **Physical education**

- 174 Progress in physical education is good. This can be seen not only in the significant gains which pupils make in their performance in activities such as games, swimming and in their therapy programmes but also in their attitudes to the subject and their self-esteem. Pupils with additional or multiple learning difficulties show good development in functions such as tracking movement and responding to music and in their body awareness. In the soft play and "white tower" areas and in the swimming pool, their progress towards their targets, such as moving from a sitting position to standing, improving their head control and floating in water with decreasing support, is good.
- 175 In Key Stages 1 and 2, higher attaining pupils show an increasing ability to follow instructions in gymnastic activities. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to display more confidence in varying their movement on apparatus, for example moving backwards up an inclined bench. There is a wide range of ability, with some pupils

continuing to have difficulties with co-ordination and balance. By the end of Key Stage 2, however, many pupils are varying their movement with increasing control and precision. Some are beginning to put together a sequence of movements and in games their understanding of the importance of rules in competition is rapidly emerging.

- 176 It was not possible to observe higher attaining pupils of Key Stages 3 and 4 in physical education lessons during the week. However it is clear from the records kept on their performance, from the certificates which they have been awarded and from photographs of their participation in a variety of activities that they continue to make good progress. In swimming, for example, the distance-awards recorded show a steady increase in performance from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.
- 177 A good deal of enjoyment of physical activities by pupils is apparent. Four pupils with multiple difficulties from classes Key Stages 3 and 4 for example, showed great pleasure in a wheelchair-dancing session, looking at their partners, laughing and very much enjoying being part of the group. Pupils try very hard to improve their performance and they persevere despite difficulties. Two Year 2 pupils, for example, climbed and balanced on apparatus with determination despite their obvious apprehension. Behaviour is good. There is occasional over-excitement but pupils quickly calm down when reminded. They take pleasure in the success of other pupils and applaud and encourage each other. The ability of the younger pupils to work independently and use their initiative remains limited but, throughout the school, the positive effect of pupils' success in a variety of activities on their confidence, self-esteem and social skills is apparent.
- 178 The teaching of physical education is good. It is particularly effective in the challenges it sets for pupils and in the pace and organisation of lessons. The use of the soft-play area sometimes lacks sufficient focus on pupils' targets and in one instance, in gymnastic activities in the hall, time was not well used. Pupils waited for each other to complete a task in turn but in general teachers plan well and lessons are very well matched to the range of pupils' needs and abilities. Encouragement and individual support are very effectively used both by teachers and support staff to promote confidence and positive attitudes among pupils. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good and some sessions also benefit from the expertise of therapists and specialist instructors. The daily monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress in physical activities adds much to teachers' knowledge of pupils and to the planning of lessons. In swimming and hydrotherapy, in particular, the notes made by staff are very useful and specifically suggest strategies for each pupil's improvement.
- 179 The curriculum is broad and balanced and addresses all the areas of activity of the subject's National Curriculum programme of study. There is no whole-school scheme of work, however, and neither planning nor assessment, for which there is no standard format, ensure that, as pupils move through the school, the curriculum builds systematically on what they understand and can do. There is some good provision for competitive sports in school sports days, and in county schools athletics meetings.
- 180 The good standards in physical education reported in the previous inspection have been maintained.

### **Religious education**

- 181 No religious education was seen during the inspection week and pupils' folders revealed very limited evidence of work in the subject. In conversation, pupils were able to talk about major festivals such as Christmas and Diwali and photographs show them preparing for the half-termly assemblies which take religious festivals as their theme. It is not possible, however, from the evidence available to make a secure judgement on their progress in this subject.
- 182 The subject's outline scheme of work concentrates mainly on "attitudes of caring, understanding and respect for others rather than any particular creed or faith". Teachers' planning for the "topic webs" reflects this emphasis although there is reference also to the use of Bible stories and aspects of several religions when appropriate. Planning indicates that there are satisfactory opportunities for the promotion of pupils' moral and cultural development through the subject but that it makes insufficient provision for their spiritual development. The curriculum only partly addresses the local agreed syllabus for religious education.

182 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

**183 SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

A total of 24 inspection days were spent in school. During this time 82 lessons or parts of lessons were observed for a total of 46 hours.

All teachers were observed on several occasions.

Discussions were held with the Chair of governors and members of the governing body.

Discussions were held with all staff including support staff.

Discussions were held with professionals involved in the school, including the speech therapist and physiotherapist.

A visits was made to one of the colleges attended by Post 16 students.

Pupils were observed attending a Day Centre and horse riding for the disabled.

Pupils' statements of Special Educational Need, annual reviews, individual education plans and records as well as reports to parents were examined. A sample of pupils' reading was undertaken and a representative sample of pupils' work scrutinised.

Other observations of break and lunchtimes, assembly and other activities were carried out.

Informal discussions were held with pupils at break and lunch times.

These activities occupied inspectors for a further 35 hours

School policies and documentation including the development plan, minutes of staff meetings together with teachers' plans and records were examined before and during the inspection.

Prior to the inspection, a parents' evening was held attended by 7 parents or carers.

Responses from 16 questionnaires were analysed.

184 DATA AND INDICATORS

**Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y13	74	76	76	26

**Teachers and classes:**

**Qualified teachers (YR – Y13)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.2

**Education support staff (YR – Y13)**

Total number of education support staff	25
Total aggregate hours worked each week	785

184 **Primary and secondary**

Average class size:	2
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## Financial data

Financial year:

98-99
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	£
Total Income	947067
Total Expenditure	980701
Expenditure per pupil	12573.09
Balance brought forward from previous year	73400
Balance carried forward to next year	38766

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

78

Number of questionnaires returned:

16

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	37	56	6	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	62	31	6	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	47	33	20	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	37	37	12	12	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	37	37	6	19	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	37	37	25	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	50	19	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	20	33	40	0	7
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	44	50	6	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	44	50	6	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	81	19	0	0	0

### Summary of responses

Parents expressed full support for the school and appreciated the support they received. A small number of parents were concerned that the over night stays for Post 16 students had stopped.



