

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BERNARD'S SCHOOL

LOUTH

LEA area: LINCOLNSHIRE

Unique reference number: 120761

Headteacher: Mike Warren

Reporting inspector: Ian Naylor
20906

Dates of inspection: 19 – 23 November 2001

Inspection number: 600143

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Maintained
School category:	Special
Age range of pupils:	2 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wood lane Louth
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Appropriate authority:	Lincolnshire
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend D Williams
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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27243	Ian Tatchel	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Information and communications technology; Humanities.	Attitudes and behaviour.
23300	Lily Evans	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Design and technology; Modern foreign language; Equal opportunities.	Curriculum.
10668	David Walker	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Music.	Teaching.
21713	Chris Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art; Religious education; Personal social and health education; Special educational needs.	SMSC.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Bernard's is a maintained day and residential special school for boys and girls aged 2-19 with severe learning difficulties. There are 43 pupils on roll, of whom 13 are residential. (Most of these board weekly, but three are permanent residents.) The school population has changed since the previous inspection. There are now more pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and more with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The residential accommodation is used for a respite care programme at weekends and holidays by the local authority. The school links with the local education authority (LEA) Portage home-school services. PMLD pupils are integrated into age-appropriate classes in school where possible, but the physical care needs of some pupils are catered for in a specific class. Some ASD pupils are in a single class, but there is planned inclusion back into the mainstream part of the school. Pupils are referred for residential education through their statements of special educational need. All classes have mixed year groups. Higher attaining pupils are those in Classes 2, 3, 4, and 5. Those in Class 1 and 6 are lower attaining pupils. There are only two part-time pre-school children (Foundation Stage).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school in which there is very good teaching, good leadership and management, good levels of achievement and behaviour from pupils, and good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Very good teaching overall leads to the good achievements of pupils.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are of a high quality.
- The general welfare of pupils is very good.
- The spiritual, social and moral development of pupils is very good.
- Leadership and management are good.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The progress of pupils in information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.
- The provision for a modern foreign language at Key Stage 3 and 4.
- Recreational areas for students aged 14 to 19, and specialist facilities for science, music and design and technology.
- The décor and furnishings in the hostel.
- The arrangements for those few pupils who are resident for 52 weeks a year.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made sustained improvement against all of the areas of weakness identified when the school was last inspected in June 1997, and performed well in relation to its own planned developments in the school development plan, which now covers three years. The school now has good assessment procedures for pupils' progress. Senior managers and staff have set whole school targets and these have been met. The headteacher has appointed co-ordinators for all subjects, and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects except modern foreign languages. The headteacher and governors have implemented a Performance Management policy and procedures. They make good use of national funding for staff training. As a result of their extensive in-service training, the staff has responded very well to the changes in the pupil population.

STANDARDS

The table below summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	By Year 6	By Year 11	By Year 13
Speaking and listening	B	B	C
Reading	B	B	B
Writing	B	B	B
Mathematics	B	B	B
Personal, social and health education	A	A	A
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in Imps*	B	B	B

Key	
Very good	A
Good	B
Satisfactory	C
Unsatisfactory	D
Poor	E

The characteristics of the pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge attainment against age-related national expectations or averages

Achievement is very good in personal, social and health education. Achievement is good in English, mathematics and science. It is good throughout the school and in all other subjects except ICT, where it is satisfactory. The school does not teach a modern foreign language and therefore achievement cannot be measured. Whole school targets in writing have been set for this year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show interest in lessons. They co-operate well with staff and sustain concentration for significant periods.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good during lessons, meal times, and in the hostel. Often exemplary when on visits out of school.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships between pupils and staff. All pupils make good progress in their personal development. Pupils are valued by the school and encouraged to make choices and accept responsibility.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 1 – 6	Years 7 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is of a consistently high standard. It is very good in English, mathematics, science and personal and social education. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. There is very good teaching of literacy, communication skills, and of numeracy. Teaching is generally very well planned. Teachers manage behaviour skilfully. The teaching of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), and those with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), is very good. Education care officers are an integral and valued part of the teaching team. Teachers do not plan sufficiently for the use of ICT to support all subjects. The school meets the learning needs of all pupils very well and their learning is good within the limits of their abilities. Teachers address the needs of all groups of pupils very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The quality and breadth of provision have been significantly improved in most areas. There is particularly good planning for pupils with profound learning needs and autism.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development is good. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Many opportunities are provided for experiential visits into the local community. There is a good range of learning activities in the evenings and at weekends.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a very caring community in which there is a good quality of pupil welfare. Child protection procedures are very good. Assessment is now good. Very good opportunities for inclusion are provided, some within school and some with local schools.

The school provides good information for parents. A number of parents work in school alongside staff as volunteers, and support visits out of school. Parents feel that the school does its job very well. A modern foreign language is not taught and therefore the school does not meet the requirement of the National Curriculum in this respect.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. All staff work well as a team, share common goals and expect all pupils to achieve well. Roles and responsibilities are well defined.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The Governing Body has satisfactory arrangements for deciding policy and procedures. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and constantly seek to take action that raises standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Governors are very supportive of all staff, and have good systems in place to gauge the quality of teaching and of the curriculum and to take appropriate action to secure improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The Governors make good decisions about spending. The school administrator operates very good financial procedures and controls. The school office provides very efficient administrative support. The school has satisfactory procedures to ensure that the principles of best value are applied to all spending decisions.

The Governing Body meets all statutory requirements, except for providing a modern foreign language and including all statutory points in the governors' annual report to parents. The staff is well qualified and ratios of staff to pupils are good. There are regular training opportunities for all staff. Some aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory. Facilities are limited for science, design and technology, and music, and for the social and recreational needs of older students. The classrooms for autistic pupils are unsatisfactory. Decoration and furnishings in some areas of the hostel are of poor quality. The placement of those few pupils who are resident for 52 weeks a year is not based on educational criteria, and this is unacceptable.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps for children to improve their social skills. Family environment. Compassion for children. Caring staff. Excellent records of achievement. Good information about progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few parents feel that booking arrangements for respite care are not flexible enough. Some parents thought that there should be provision for an emergency bed for respite care in the hostel.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. Parents can make requests to the school for respite care. Emergency respite care cannot be arranged through the school as this service is based elsewhere by social services.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The characteristics of the pupils for whom the school caters make it inappropriate to judge attainment against age-related national expectations or averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about achievement and progress, and references to attainment, take account of information contained in pupils' statements and in annual reviews.

All classes have mixed year groups. Higher attaining pupils are those in Classes 2, 3, 4, and 5. Those in Classes 1 and 6 are lower attaining pupils. There are only two part-time pre-school children.

1. Achievement is good at each key stage and pupils make good progress over time in almost all subjects. The exceptions are: information and communications technology where achievement is satisfactory, and a modern foreign language, which is not taught as a separate subject. Progress and achievement in pupils' personal and physical development and social skills are very good. Pupils achieve against the targets set in their annual reviews and individual education plans. Judgements are based on lesson observations, pupils' work files, pupils' records of achievement, and teachers' class records.

2. Most pupils are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum in all subjects. Teachers measure their progress against the 'P' levels (Performance indicators of pre-National Curriculum attainment). Staff use the Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting (PIVATS) to record pupils' 'P' Levels over each of the last two academic years. This evidence shows that each pupil makes discernible progress, and some pupils make significant improvements in areas such as language, literacy, mathematics and personal and social education. The data for whole-school results confirm that pupils make good achievement and progress overall in these areas. Further analysis of this data over the next few years will support the school's attempts to have a clearer understanding of individual and whole-school achievement by pupils.

3. The whole school performance targets were linked this year to the PIVATs scheme. Staff have achieved the target to measure and develop pupils' progress in writing skills. They have done this through a combination of careful planning for the National Literacy Strategy, classroom observation, in-service training, the creation of links between the subjects for writing skills, and evaluation of the progress pupils make in individual education plan targets. Data from the PIVATs analysis shows distinct improvement in writing skills across all age groups for those pupils from whom writing is a relevant and realistic target.

4. Achievement in lessons is often very good, but recorded achievement over time falls slightly behind this. This is in part due to the exceptional nature of many pupils' learning and behavioural difficulties, and also the health and care needs of many pupils. The very good teaching ensures that all minority groups of pupils, such as those with PMLD, ASD, and sensory impairment, make overall good achievement and progress.

5. At Key Stage 4, all students follow ten subjects in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Transition Challenge. The higher attaining pupils achieve the Bronze Award at age sixteen. Lower attaining pupils work on the Towards Independence Course Post- 16, whilst others follow EQUALS Moving On. All students

follow the courses, but a few lower attaining pupils do not reach the required level to gain an accredited award. There is strong evidence that pupils are gaining accreditation at higher levels each year. Pupils also have opportunities to gain 'Beaver' awards for swimming.

6. Pupils make good progress in English across all the year groups, with particular success in communication and listening skills. Writing skills are also good. Those pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties make good progress in communication using sensory as well as switching and other information technology systems.

7. There is good achievement and progress over time in mathematics throughout the whole school. This has been well supported by the introduction of the numeracy hour. A relative weakness is that numeracy is not always well promoted in the other subjects.

8. In science, pupils' achievement and progress are good in all year groups.

9. In PSHE, achievement and progress for each year group and across all ability groups, is very good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and there are very good relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves. This helps to promote higher achievements across the subjects, and in personal development. It also represents an improvement since the previous inspection report.

11. Pupils arrive at school each day with an enthusiasm for learning, clearly looking forward to the day and to starting work promptly. They enjoy lessons, work purposefully and concentrate on their work, knowing that their personal achievements will be valued. Pupils' good attitudes to work are supported by their very good relationships with staff. Pupils are interested and involved in their lessons and want to learn. They actively engage in a range of activities both in and out of the classroom.

12. There is very good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils behave very well in class and most have an understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They respect their environment and handle books, equipment and resources with care. Pupils show due regard for each other, their teachers and all adults. They respect others' feelings well. There is no oppressive behaviour, bullying, racism or sexism. There were no exclusions in the last recorded year. Pupils with behavioural difficulties respond very well and make good progress in learning to control their behaviour. They respond well to their individual behaviour programmes and are helped by the consistent actions of all staff.

13. Relationships between pupils, with teachers and other adults are very good throughout the school. Pupils work well individually, and also co-operatively in pairs, in groups and in the whole class. There is good collaboration. Older pupils show great care for the younger ones, often helping them in the playground and in the classroom.

14. There is good personal development. Inspectors saw many examples of increased pupil confidence and real progress, as when pupils made their own way to their classrooms or when they chose an activity from a selection offered by the teacher. Pupils work independently and in small groups with a minimum of supervision, as was seen at Key Stage 2 during a mapping project in geography.

15. The school encourages older pupils to become involved in the day-to-day events of the school. For example, pupils collect registers and some pupils with PMLD use a *Big Mack* communicator to take part in registration and 'welcome' activities. Pupils involved in a recent outward-bound trip to Ullswater worked alongside pupils from two local schools including a grammar school. Pupils welcome visitors; they enjoy showing their work and take pride in their achievements. However, the school has yet to involve pupils in determining wider areas of responsibility.

16. Behaviour in the residential areas is of the same high standard as that in the school setting. Relationships between pupils and education care officers are very good.

17. The school has sustained the good attendance reported at the previous inspection. Registration procedures are satisfactory. Most pupils are brought to the school by a variety of contracted transport. This is not consistently punctual and lessons at the start of the school day can be affected. Punctuality throughout the remainder of the day is satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching is very good overall. Inspectors observed 58 lessons or parts of lessons. Teaching was excellent in six lessons, very good in 29, good in 20 and satisfactory in 3. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. There is high quality teaching across all year and ability groups.

19. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics, science, art, physical education, PSHE and religious education. It is good in design and technology, history, geography and music. Teaching is satisfactory in ICT. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in a modern foreign language.

20. In general, teachers have a very good understanding of the subjects they teach, even where they are not subject specialists. They know how best to teach pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties. Teachers and education care officers have very good knowledge of the individual needs and abilities of each pupil. Teachers are particularly skilled at selecting teaching methods that interest and enthuse pupils. For example, in a very successful music lesson, the teacher involved pupils in listening to 'rap' music before they worked in groups, helping one another to write their own short lyrics for a later performance. This motivated pupils and caused them to marvel at their accomplishment.

21. In a food technology lesson for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), staff brought every ingredient to the attention of each pupil to smell and hold, and listen to the sound when shaken. In this way each sense could be stimulated, with the result that the pupils' attention (looking) and reaction (smiles or head turning) were skilfully brought into play. In mathematics, teachers made good use of mental arithmetic sessions at the start of lessons to increase pupils' mental agility. Also very effective use was made of rhymes, such as *five currant buns*, to give the pupils practical experience of paying for goods, as well as learning to count backwards from five. This secured the pupils' interest, and the practical activity kept them involved.

22. Teachers' planning is generally of high quality. The activities to be tackled and the resources to be used are clearly described. What is to be learnt, both from the lesson in general and by each pupil specifically, is clearly identified. Teachers plan tasks so that they are well matched to pupils' abilities and needs, ensuring plentiful opportunities for success, whilst offering a suitable challenge. Often, objectives are directly focused on individual education plan targets. In many lesson plans, the key vocabulary to be emphasised is given.

In all subjects teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their speaking and listening skills. However, they do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to read and write, practise their computer skills, or use their understanding of mathematics.

23. Teachers use the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) very effectively as an important element of communication for many pupils. Teachers' displays of pupils' work and of information have prominent symbol and text captions that help pupils' reading skills.

24. In the best practice, teachers review lesson objectives at the end of the lesson so that pupils are clear about what they have learned. Teachers also successfully plan their lessons so that different groups of pupils do slightly different tasks and receive varying degrees of support. Generally, the individual needs of pupils are met very well, so that they work hard throughout lessons and make clear improvements in skills. For example, during the class teaching of mental arithmetic at the beginning of a numeracy lesson, the teacher posed different questions to each pupil according to ability. In the main body of the lesson, three groups of pupils were developing the concept of mass. Higher attaining pupils used balances to weigh familiar objects. Another group compared similar looking objects to learn about heavier and lighter. Lower attaining pupils were experiencing the different texture and weight of thick and thin paste made from corn flour.

25. Staff manage pupils very well. Pupils with challenging behaviour are managed skilfully by well-trained staff. As a result, there is very little disruption to lessons, and pupils with challenging behaviour are engaged in tasks for a high proportion of the time. There is a consistent whole school approach to encouraging pupils to behave well at all times. Teachers often comment on behaviour, as well as an effort and achievement, at the end of each lesson.

26. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils and highly effective teamwork between teachers and education care officers. All staff use their knowledge of the pupils well and are quick to respond to signs of lost concentration or motivation. Education care officers give well-judged support, often by encouraging pupils to do what they can on their own. This has a significant impact upon pupils' learning.

27. Pupils' learning is generally good and often it is better than this. Teaching in most lessons has high expectations of pupil participation, effort and behaviour as well as a brisk pace, with the result that pupils' interest, attention and continuing effort contribute strongly to their learning. Pupils respond very well to these expectations, and in most lessons they work hard at tasks for relatively long periods. In some classes older pupils begin to work independently. The well-judged use of praise encourages pupils to take part in the activities and take a pride in their achievements. All this makes an important contribution to learning.

28. Teachers use a good variety of resources to help pupils develop their knowledge and understanding. Video-recordings are used well in literacy, numeracy and personal and social education to illustrate teaching points and give information. Recorded music is often played as a planned part of lessons to create a relaxing atmosphere and help concentration. It also has the effect of calming those pupils who tend to become distressed.

29. Teachers use visits out of school as an important part of the direct learning opportunities they provide for the pupils. For example, in humanities, a class of pupils visited two churches to compare new and old. A digital camera was used extensively to record both the important features of the visit and also pupils' responses, as evidence of learning. Teachers also use photographs well to prompt pupils' memory so that earlier learning may be recalled. They use homework appropriately to prepare for a future lesson, extend pupils'

learning or to provide reinforcement. Good use is made of photographs, symbols and objects to help those with complex learning and communication difficulties understand the sequence of activities during the day. This also helps pupils with autism to make the transition from one activity to another.

30. Teachers use a variety of methods to assess pupils' learning. They keep very good records of pupils' achievements and progress in literacy, numeracy and personal development, in particular using 'P' Levels. (Performance Indicators of pre-National Curriculum attainment). They use the information from assessment well to guide their planning of subsequent lessons. However, there is a need to develop similar recording procedures in other subjects.

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

31. The curriculum is good overall. It is good at all stages except Key Stages 3 and 4, where it is only satisfactory because of the absence of a modern foreign language. It is clear that, since the last inspection, the Key Issues have been very well addressed. The school has made very good improvements in the curricular provisions for design and technology, English, mathematics, art, history, geography, physical education, religious education, and PSHE. Improvement in science and in ICT is satisfactory.

32. The breadth, balance and quality of the curriculum have improved since the last inspection and are now good. All subjects are supported by suitable curriculum policies that have been ratified by the governing body. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, except that, at Key Stages 3 and 4, the school does not meet the requirement to teach a modern foreign language. In religious education, a weakness is the absence of a third religion from the programmes of study. There are sound procedures for reviewing policy, setting out development priorities in each subject, and auditing resources to match pupils' needs.

33. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced for all pupils from the age of five to fourteen and this is giving more range and quality to planned literacy experiences. Across the subjects, there is planning for the special words used by each subject. There is a good focus on speaking and listening, but the reading and writing of key words could have more emphasis. Both these strategies are strengthened by the close link made by staff to pupils' individual educational plans (IEPs). They also give good support to pupils' learning.

34. The developmental curriculum (for those pupils with the lowest attainment) has been broadened with the use of 'P' levels (Performance indicators of pre-National Curriculum attainment), symbols, and signing. A new feature of provision is the approach to communication skills guidance using the Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS).

35. The staff has put a great deal of effort into devising policies and schemes of work. Co-ordinators have devised topic webs for long-term plans, and have written detailed medium-term plans that ensure rigour in subject coverage, continuity between key stages, and progression in pupils' acquisition of skills. Learning objectives are set in lesson planning and the teachers carefully monitor progress towards them in each lesson. The amount of teaching time within the week was considered unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Senior staff have now increased this time so that it falls within the levels recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. It includes the time for lunchtime feeding

programmes for pupils.

36. Since the last inspection, the curriculum at Key Stage 4 and Post 16 has been broadened to give more opportunities for pupils to gain vocational skills and accreditation. No students are currently undertaking work experience because it is not considered appropriate to their abilities. However, work experience opportunities are provided as and when required, mainly on site, but also in the community. Annually, Year 10 students spend a week at a residential college that specialises in providing good opportunities for work experience. Students join in social activities with pupils from other special schools who share the same programme.

37. The careers and vocational education programme is good and forms part of the teaching for PSHE from Year 7. However, links are not developed because of the lack of suitable courses offered by the local college for the students involved. Supported by the recently appointed careers advisor, the school has planned a 'Moving On' careers convention in March 2002, in which local schools and colleges will be involved.

38. Personal social and health education (PSHE) is planned effectively across the school. There are separate lessons as well as a continuous programme of support and guidance for the development of social skills and independence.

39. Overall, the provision for the two pre-school children is good. Appropriate targets and programmes of work are set in individual education plans. The Early Years co-ordinator monitors the curriculum for, and the progress of, the two children in all aspects of the Foundation Stage.

40. There are good opportunities provided within school for the inclusion of pupils. Staff carefully consider the needs of pupils in terms of timetable and support arrangements, so that as far as possible, all pupils can join in activities with other pupils of similar abilities and aptitudes. For instance, pupils in the class for autistic pupils can spend time in other classes to promote their social integration. A number of pupils have integrated sessions in local schools and there is an excellent partnership with a local primary school.

41. An illustration of good inclusion is the ongoing programme whereby pupils from the primary school join pupils at St Bernard's to work alongside one another for a music workshop. Next term pupils from St Bernard's will visit the primary school to share in their music lessons. Secondary age pupils from local schools have work experience placements at St Bernard's in which they work alongside staff to give support to pupils less able than themselves.

42. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils from Key Stage 4 have the chance each year to take part in an outward-bound course at Ullswater in the Lake District. There are also many visitors to the school and visits out in relation to the courses that pupils and students follow. For example, linked to the unit of work on the environment and energy, there is visit to a local windmill and also to the hostel to identify gas and electrical appliances. Pupils visit theatres, art galleries, local supermarkets, garden centres and other localities as well as the social education centre.

43. The residential experience extends the classroom curriculum and enhances the overall quality of education provided by the school for resident pupils. The 24-hour curriculum is satisfactory. It is currently being reviewed and it features in the school development plan. There is a good range of evening activities provided on site. Many use the school's facilities, such as the swimming pool, soft play area or bouncy castle. Some

opportunities to visit locations in the local community, such as those for horse riding, are also available.

44. The provision spiritual, moral and social development is very good. That for cultural development is good. Pupils have good opportunities to sing and sign their thanks to God in the weekly school assembly. Prayers are held before lunch everyday. In religious education, a number of well-selected artefacts are used effectively in lessons to give pupils hands-on experience of the Christian and Hindu faiths. Pupils also have opportunities to visit old and new churches and they gain a sense of awe and wonder in their science lessons when recreating a moonwalk in soft play. All pupils are given opportunities to visit the countryside and to absorb and appreciate the patterns and sounds of nature. The Chairman of Governors is a local minister who visits the school regularly and conducts assemblies linked to different celebrations such as Thanksgiving Day in America.

45. The very good relationships that exist in the school, and the work in PSHE and in religious education lessons, successfully promote the moral development of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of other people and honest with themselves, and to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils' self esteem and pride in their learning are raised by the praise and support of staff. This encourages honesty, appropriate behaviour and moral development. They are also encouraged to show initiative and accept some responsibilities. Pupils are given the opportunity to discuss the meaning of right and wrong in lessons. They know that fighting and damaging other people's property is wrong. Older, higher attaining pupils are able to make decisions about themselves and understand the meaning of responsibility.

46. The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils make many visits outside school to shops, local churches, and a neighbouring gym, and they also see theatrical productions. Pupils from mainstream schools come into the school to work with pupils at all key stages. Work experience is provided for older pupils. Pupils interact well and socialise out of school hours at the hostel, either when they visit for respite care or as weekly boarders.

47. The school gives its pupils good experiences to enlarge their cultural understanding. The provision for studying local culture is good. There are visits to the Castle Museum in York, and to the ballet in Hull, and visits by percussion bands to school. The works of Monet, Leonardo Da Vinci, Van Gogh and Picasso are used as starting points for artwork. Wider cultural experiences are made available to some pupils with reference to Divali and Eid. However, pupils have too few opportunities to learn about a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. Since the last inspection, the school has improved in its support, guidance and welfare for pupils and these are now good. Educational and personal support and guidance for all pupils are very good. In line with its stated aims, it is a very caring school that has realistic expectations for each pupil. The positive welfare agenda contributes significantly to pupils' good learning and development.

49. The headteacher and staff have a thorough knowledge of all their pupils and show an enthusiasm for and dedication to promoting their well-being. Parents greatly appreciate the school's sensitive and caring environment.

50. There are good procedures for assessment. Staff keep comprehensive formal records of each pupil's personal development. The record systems order data and allow

trends in behaviour and personal development to be reviewed. Staff use this information in their contact with outside agencies, and also with parents at the Annual Review meetings. Parents interviewed by inspectors comment that they can recognise their children's key strengths and weaknesses in subjects of the National Curriculum and in their personal development. Pupils' individual educational plans include attainable targets. These are agreed with parents, and are subsequently used well to plan teaching. Records of achievement are produced annually. These raise the self-esteem of the pupil as they present an excellent photographic and work record of their year at the school. A weakness is that teachers' recording of progress for the pupils' annual reports, for some subjects, does not give enough clear information about what pupils know, understand and can do.

51. Induction procedures for pupils are effective. They provide high quality information for parents and this helps pupils to make a confident start. The school's home-based Portage programme is effective in establishing links and support for parents and children of pre-school age. Pupils have very good opportunities for inclusion, both within school and within the local school.

52. Policies for support, guidance and welfare are implemented consistently across the school by well-trained staff. This is good provision. The staff handbook consolidates information for new staff, so they can quickly contribute. All staff receive good training in the movement and handling of pupils. Staff have a good understanding of many communication techniques, so that all pupils are included in the school's activities. Residential pupils experience a consistently high level of care between the hostel and the school.

53. A full-time school nurse co-ordinates efficiently the work of staff in caring for, feeding and attending to the medical needs of pupils with profound multiple learning difficulties, and also in caring for the residential needs of pupils. The school is further supported by the local medical practice. A nurse assists teachers in providing sex and drugs education. Parents are well briefed regarding the content of sex education lessons and there has been no withdrawal of pupils.

54. Procedures for child protection are very good, under the guidance of the headteacher and a designated governor. The school is very vigilant, and all staff know the correct procedures. Senior staff receive a four-day annual training course and all staff are given refresher training.

55. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting the behaviour of all pupils. It gives a high priority to the establishment of a calm and relaxed community, through appropriate responses to each individual pupil and situation. Staff are well trained through behaviour strategy workshops and are equipped with techniques for most situations. The school has adopted the principles of Strategies for Crisis Intervention and prevention (SCIP), which helps staff to manage the challenging behaviour of pupils effectively. Individual behaviour support plans provide consistent support from the all staff. The culture of good pupil behaviour helps the development of a very good teaching and learning environment, and a calm residential provision.

56. Staff involve pupils in making rules for behaviour. These rules are displayed in classrooms and around the school. Good relationships foster strong mutual respect between adults and pupils, and adults use praise effectively. The severely challenging behaviour of many pupils with autistic spectrum disorder leads to a high level of recorded incidents of attacks on staff. These are suitably recorded.

57. Attendance recording procedures and systems to promote attendance are good. They have produced a consistently high attendance level over the last four years.

58. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory, but no governor has responsibility for this area, and the school's risk assessments are too infrequent to focus staff on key issues of health and safety. The school is generally a safe environment for all pupils and staff, but there is a number of minor health and safety points which were brought to the attention of the headteacher during the inspection.

59. Recording procedures for incidents are efficient and most staff are given training in first aid. Pupil accidents within the school are at an average level, but staff injuries are high. Most of these are incurred when dealing with the behaviour of autistic pupils or pupils with challenging behaviour. The school reacted well to the problem, identified earlier in the year, of the health risks associated with the feeding of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. The correct procedures are now in place and guidelines issued to staff.

60. Residential provision is good. Day-to-day residential care is very good. It offers a stable and caring environment with a good variety of evening and weekend activities. Together they extend and promote the self-confidence, interests and experiences of the pupils. They foster constructive behaviour and attitudes and enable pupils to start and complete the day in a positive frame of mind. Pupils feel safe and secure within the hostel. Staff ensure that pupils have the opportunity to take part in some stimulating activity each evening. For a very few pupils, however, the boarding experience is unsatisfactory, as they are resident for 52 weeks a year and do not have enough opportunity to come into contact with life outside the school environment.

61. Care and teaching staff record and pass information between them about the personal development of resident pupils. A key worker informally monitors this process, but formal written care plans, with a target for further development, are not yet in place.

62. The school makes very good provision for pupils' additional special educational needs. The headteacher is effective in gaining additional professional resources for the school, and is very welcoming to outside agencies who support the pupils on a routine basis, and when there are specific problems. Regular visits by a range of supporting professionals, including physiotherapy and speech and language therapy, enhance the pupils' educational progress, physical development and health. There is, however, currently no occupational therapy support available to the school.

63. Pupils with a loss of hearing are supported by the local education authority's visiting teacher for the hearing-impaired and by a "teacher/intervener" from "Sense". Pupils who are visually impaired and those registered as blind are well served by an appropriately qualified member of the teaching staff.

64. The pupils' varied medical needs are well met by a range of professionals that includes a consultant paediatrician who visits monthly, the school medical officer, who runs regular clinics, and two dietitians. All of these advise and support staff on matters such as the oral and naso-gastric feeding of pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. The school achieves good working relationships with all parents. However, the problems of dealing with parents who live at some distance from the school remain, and the school experiences difficulties in relating to and communicating with a small minority of parents.

66. Overall, parents express a good level of approval of the school, and they respect the efforts of the headteacher, staff and governors. The latest parents' questionnaire shows there are no significant levels of parental dissatisfaction. The views of the small number of parents, who attended the parents' meeting, together with conversations with a few parents who access the school daily, indicate high levels of satisfaction, but there are some concerns about access to respite care.

67. Staff are proactive in telephoning parents with information or advice, and the home-school contact record is particularly effective in keeping parents informed of each day's events. The school makes effective links with all its parents. Its open door policy encourages parents to come to school to talk to staff at any time, or to come and play a role within the school. As most pupils are brought to school by contracted transport, opportunities for face-to-face informal conversations with parents are few.

68. The impact of parents' involvement in the school is satisfactory. A number of parents help in the school. The three elected parent governors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and have good access to information and all aspects of the school. The school has made unsuccessful attempts to sustain a parent-teacher association, and there is some confusion with parents as to the role of the parent support group. Although this raises some funds for the school, it looks to have had greater relevance for the parents of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties pupils than for the majority of parents.

69. The quality of information for parents is good overall. The prospectus is a good quality document that represents the school well. Other written communications are of good quality, friendly, adequate and respectful to the role of parents, and they give parents enough time to react. The annual governors' report to parents is unsatisfactory, as it lacks many statutory points; is over complex in its financial detail, and sketchy in the areas of significant parental interest. Staff collaborate closely with the parents at the Annual Review meeting. Parents receive good advice on their child's transition from school.

70. Overall, the contribution of parents to their child's learning at school and in the home is satisfactory, but dependent upon their access to the school and overall levels of interest. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement, and want to comply with both the spirit and the letter of the agreement. School social events such as the Christmas Concert are usually well supported.

71. The school holds workshops for parents, together with parents from mainstream schools, on many topics such as autism and communication. The wider community sees the school as a centre of expertise.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

72. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by other senior members of staff, together provide good leadership and management. All members of staff are aware of the school's goals, and have high expectation of achievement for all pupils. Staff have well-defined roles and responsibilities, and clear job descriptions. The statutory requirements for performance management have been introduced well, and several teachers have been awarded 'threshold' payments under the School Teachers' Pay Review. The governors have set performance targets for the headteacher, with the support of an external adviser.

73. The headteacher and deputy head have satisfactory procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and these include visiting classrooms regularly to observe lessons. The turnover of staff reported at the last inspection has been substantially reduced, as has staff absence because of sickness. The result is a committed and hardworking team of staff who work together to sustain high quality teaching and learning.

74. All the key issues arising from the last Inspection report have been addressed satisfactorily, except for the one relating to pupils' progress in a modern foreign language (MFL). Here, not enough has been done to ensure that the full requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The curriculum has been improved. This is shown by the greater emphasis on the requirements of the National Curriculum and reflected in the good schemes of work and very good lesson planning.

75. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced. A specialist teaching strategy has been introduced effectively for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Subject co-ordinators have been appointed to all subjects and roles have been more clearly defined. They have been well supported through training and by strategies identified as part of the performance management process. Consequently, there has been an improvement to pupils' progress in all subjects, except in MFL.

76. The school development plan (SDP) has also been improved and is now a very comprehensive document. It embraces all the school's priorities for the next three years, including curriculum organisation, the aims and values of the school, and residential education. It has suitable arrangements for evaluation and review. Each subject has its own subject development plan which links to the overall SDP. All developments take into account cost implications. Whole-school targets are set and progress towards meeting them is evaluated by the headteacher and governors. The school has recently been awarded Investors in People Status, and this is a further reflection of the good system for management and administration.

77. The governing body has good arrangements for deciding policy. It meets regularly and has sub-committees, each with terms of reference, to discuss issues such as finance, personnel, premises and the curriculum. The governing body meets all statutory requirements, except for those relating to a modern foreign language, and the governors' annual report to parents. Governors receive regular written and verbal reports from the headteacher and these cover a wide range of subjects. There are satisfactory arrangements for individual governors to visit the school regularly and to report back to the governing body. Governors are made well aware of the strengths of the school and advised by the headteacher about suitable actions to redress any weaknesses.

78. There are good financial procedures and controls. School expenditure is carefully monitored and accounted for by the school administrator. Satisfactory attention is given to ensuring value for money in all financial transactions. The school's office staff are very well organised and provide very efficient administrative support to teachers and other staff. The

governors, headteacher and school administrator make good decisions about spending and have sound procedures to ensure that the principles of best value are applied to all spending decisions. The very good teaching, good achievements of pupils and average costs per pupil mean that the school provides good value for money.

79. There is a divergence of view between the school and the local education authority (LEA) about admissions to the school. Governors and staff are concerned about the increasing numbers of pupils being admitted with autism. These now account for a quarter of the number on roll, and there are no additional funds to support their very specific needs, nor the type of facilities to ensure an effective curriculum. They are also concerned that the criteria for admission of residential pupils do not give priority recognition to the educational needs of pupils, as opposed to their care and social needs. There are now three resident pupils, for whom the school and hostel are their home for 52 weeks per year. The joint funding arrangements with health and social services to provide respite care for pupils on roll, and for other pupils within the local community, have led to a blurring of the distinction between the educational and care needs of the school's resident pupils. Inspectors agree with governors and staff that this is not in the best long-term interests of these children.

80. Most teachers and full-time care staff have appropriate qualifications. There is a good ratio of teachers to pupils, and also an adequate number of education care officers whose duties combine support to teachers in classrooms along with residential child-care activities. There is good provision of one-to-one staffing for pupils with particular physical, care or behavioural needs. Staffing for the residential aspect of the school is good and the number of staff on duty is sufficient, including night staff. There are satisfactory induction procedures for staff. Good arrangements are made for the training of staff, and an extensive programme of in-service education is linked to priorities identified in the SDP.

81. Most classrooms provide satisfactory accommodation, some being quite large. However, the teaching areas for autistic pupils are unsatisfactory. They are sited in a converted house and garage separated from the school by an access road and a car park that pupils have to negotiate to get to the main building. These facilities do not provide suitable teaching spaces for pupils with this form of learning and behavioural difficulty.

82. There is a very good hydrotherapy pool, and soft playroom. There is a satisfactory food technology room, but no separate areas for science, design and technology, art or music. Therefore, classrooms have to double for these subjects, which is unsatisfactory. Space in some classrooms is already restricted by the use of large equipment such as wheelchairs and hoists. The lack of these specialist facilities has an impact on the quality and range of the curriculum provision. For example, they limit work with resistant materials in design and technology. Students at Key Stage 4 and Post 16 have no areas for leisure and recreation, and this too is unsatisfactory. The library area is limited because of its location and use as a way through to a classroom. Also access to the sensory room is through a classroom, which is unsatisfactory. Outside areas are good, with adequate space for outdoor activities and a large grassed area.

83. Classroom resources are now good for the majority of subjects and satisfactory in the rest. This is an improvement on the last inspection.

84. The residential hostel accommodation is adequate for its purpose, although very outdated both in provision of facilities and in appearance, and there is an impact upon overall efficiency. For example, having separate kitchen areas for each of the three units entails an inefficient use of resources and staffing. Internal decoration and furnishings are variable in standard in different areas of the hostel. The rooms used by autistic pupils have deliberately been kept plain to avoid over-stimulating these children. The residential accommodation for

the PMLD pupils is very good, but that for other pupils is functional, basic and lacking in homeliness and warmth. All pupils have individual bedrooms of good size, and ready access to both personal and nursing care and attention. There are communal televisions with video facilities available for all pupils. A telephone is accessible to the pupils and calls in and out may be made with reasonable ease and privacy. Resources are satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

85. When considering the Action Plan, governors and staff should address the following to further promote standards:

- Extend and improve the planned use of ICT across all subjects and in particular create more opportunities to support both literacy and numeracy.
- Introduce the teaching of a modern foreign language at Key Stages 3 and 4, and support this with a scheme of work.
- Improve specialist facilities for science, design and technology, and music. Provide recreational facilities for students at Key Stage 4 and Post 16.
- Improve the décor and furnishings in the hostel.
- Review the arrangements whereby some pupils are resident in the hostel for non-educational reasons for up to 52 weeks a year.

86. The following minor points also need to be addressed:

- * Introduce a third religion into the syllabus for religious education.
- * Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements.
- * Establish formal care plans for resident pupils by collating the information already gathered.
- * When writing the annual reports to parents, teachers need to give more detailed information about what pupils understand and what they can and cannot do in each of the subjects.
- * Involve governors in carrying out risk assessments of the premises and facilities.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	29	20	3	0	0	0
Percentage	10	50	34	5	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	43
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	7.4	School data	0.6

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	41
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes:**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6
Average class size	6

Education support staff:

Total number of education support staff	27
Total aggregate hours worked per week	999

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	877,000
Total expenditure	853,480
Expenditure per pupil	19,848.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	23520.00
Balance carried forward to next year	23520.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out
Number of questionnaires returned

43
19

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	21	0	0	11
My child is making good progress in school.	32	58	11	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	53	0	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	11	47	16	0	26
The teaching is good.	63	32	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	58	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	26	5	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	26	63	5	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	47	37	16	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	47	42	5	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	47	0	0	16
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	58	16	0	5

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

ENGLISH

87. There has been good improvement overall in the subject since the previous inspection. The introduction in September 2000 of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) has had a positive effect on the language development of non-verbal pupils in particular, and has raised standards in communication, reading and writing. Pupils with speech also make good use of the symbols, accompanied by text, to build up personal vocabulary for writing and reading. The introduction of the literacy hour has been successful in giving a very good focus to the enrichment of pupils' experiences of literature and to raising overall standards in English. Higher attaining pupils often make very good progress in reading and writing, but opportunities for practice within other curriculum subjects are not yet fully exploited.

88. Pupils achieve well and make good progress over time in English at each key stage and Post 16, particularly in communication and listening skills, including the use of signing, symbols, objects of reference, text and speech. Drama lessons effectively support communication skills. Higher attaining pupils by the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are confident in their social communications. In this respect, the school makes a very significant, positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Staff give good emphasis each day to the language of greetings and social courtesy phrases. Pupils are confident to perform duties within class that involve communicating with others, such as taking the register to the office, or greeting people in the corridor.

89. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils answer questions in one or two-word utterances. They recall words beginning with 't' such as 'toothbrush' and 'toothpaste' from a video they have watched. Autistic pupils make selections when asked to choose from pictures of sandwich fillings and show their dislikes of certain foods. They then compose their selection on a sentence strip; for example, "I like tuna"

90. By Year 11, pupils engage, with increasing confidence and maturity, in discussions about the foods in their lunch boxes. They know why food has to be packaged in a certain way; for example, that foil will help to keep it cold. At the start of the day, they offer to call the register and do so efficiently. They ask questions about an impending visit to the ballet. They explain what they are doing when they are cooking. For example, pupils grease the tray to "stop food sticking". Lower attaining pupils and those with autism use PECS efficiently to indicate their choice of lunch in the dining room.

91. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties use switching systems effectively to respond with prompting by staff to greetings and 'hello' songs. A few pupils have personal electronic communicators. By the end of Year 11, pupils enjoy listening to a story accompanied by sensory experiences, and some react by vocalising. When they have food technology lessons, they respond by directional looking, smiling and chewing when they smell, touch and taste foods such as chocolate whip. Students in the post-16 group listen with concentration to the caretaker and show interest in photos of the jobs she does. They make choices by head pointing or by facial expression.

92. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in reading by Year 6 and Year 11 and have positive attitudes to books. Lower attaining pupils like to hold favourite books, look at pictures and turn pages. By Year 6, pupils read simple texts using picture, whole word and

initial sound recognition. By the end of Year 9, pupils read simple stories and recipes with confidence, such as those for making 'Chocolate buns' in food technology, and are increasingly aware of sounding unfamiliar words.

93. Some lower attaining pupils read simple sentences from their reading books by memorising the words, but find it difficult to concentrate for more than a minute or two. By Year 11, many pupils sign and point to text and pictures in their personal reading books. Higher attaining autistic pupils read more complex texts, recognising many words, but have difficulty talking about the text, other than repeating that which they have just read.

94. Achievement in developing writing skills by the end of Year 6 and Year 11 is good. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in pencil control. By the end of Year 6, they can write their own names independently from memory and can copy-write words. Lower attaining pupils, who have difficulties holding writing instruments, make good progress by finger writing in sand and copying over the teacher's writing. They write over the teacher's handwriting in daily practice with a special initial letter focus each week.

95. Pupils with autism, by the end of Year 6, can copy independently or with support. A few copy over the teacher's writing of their sentence that they have put together with captioned symbol writing.

96. Pupils with profound and multiple difficulties, by Year 11, enjoy grasping objects or feeling objects on their hand, especially after a hand massage. Post 16 students indicate choices by eye-pointing and staff type up what students wish to say in captioned symbol writing, accompanied by a picture to assist their word-association and memory.

97. The use of ICT is not well developed to help overcome writing difficulties. The promotion of literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum is good. There is a good focus in teaching on subject specific key words in listening and communicating. The support for reading and writing by teachers in other subjects across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

98. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was very good across all key stages. Out of 9 lesson observations, six were very good and one excellent, whilst the remainder were good or satisfactory. The evidence from the analysis of pupils' work shows the quality of pupils' learning over time is good, rather than very good as was indicated in lessons. This is because of the learning difficulties of the pupils, and problems of memory and retention.

99. Teachers use 'Story bag' resources widely as well as video-recordings, tape recordings and computer generated materials, to assist pupils' understanding. Good use was made of digital cameras to systematically record responses from pupils with profound and multiple disabilities. Teachers' planning is detailed and learning objectives are matched exactly to pupils' individual education targets. Staff diligently record progress towards these targets at the end of each lesson. In this way, learning tasks are well matched to the pupils in order to increase their understanding and support their progress.

100. The teaching of pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities has a wide range of sensory experiences, such as smelling bread baking in the oven for the story of the 'Little Red Hen', and then feeling the heat from the bread straight from the oven.

101. Teachers and education care officers form a good working partnership and are highly sensitive to the needs, care, and comfort of pupils. Teachers plan their use of the PECS system very well and make it an effective tool to help overcome communication

difficulties and develop expressive skills. This has largely superseded the Makaton signing system used at the time of the last inspection. In some cases, pupils are using their PEC files well at home and are requesting specific vocabulary from teachers. Teachers cater well for the needs of pupils of all abilities.

102. There were no overall weaknesses in teaching. In lessons that were less successful, the pace was slow because the teacher had planned an activity where turns took a very long time and pupils became restless as they waited with nothing to do. When watching a video, the screen was set too high and at a difficult angle for one or two pupils to view. Similarly in another two lessons, the Big Book was not always clearly visible to all pupils so that their attention could not be guaranteed. In a further lesson, the use of information technology software was less successful because there were too many pupils to share it and opportunities for pupils to manipulate the program were very limited.

103. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning; as a result pupils' attitudes are at least good and often very good or excellent. All staff have been trained in the literacy strategy and there has been good focus by senior staff on monitoring the standard of teaching and learning. However, still more could be achieved to promote literacy in the other subjects. For example, by teachers including in their lesson plans the need to promote key words, opportunities for speaking and listening skills to be developed and for writing to be encouraged.

104. Good schemes of work are in place to suit the needs of pupils whatever their difficulties. A library has been created, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Resources are good. Big Books, and reading books have been increased in number and are held in the library. Although the books are colour coded, the labelling around the library is too small and does not incorporate picture symbols.

105. Assessment in English is very good. Following initial baseline assessment and annual assessment, each pupil's achievement is assessed against the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 's 'P levels'. All pupils have records of achievement in which examples of work show pupils' progress. However, many of these need better written descriptions by staff of the degree of pupils' independence and the level of the work. Teachers keep very good reading records.

106. The curriculum co-ordinator has been very effective in implementing the changes since the last inspection. Appropriately a co-ordinator for Key Stages 3 and 4 is now in place to focus specifically on carrying forward identified developments in the School Development Plan as well as monitoring and planning tasks. The curriculum in English and drama makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through raising self-esteem, working co-operatively together, nurturing imagination and experiencing stories from different cultures.

MATHEMATICS

107. Overall, the promotion of mathematics throughout the school is good. The main strengths of the subject are the quality of the teaching, teachers' knowledge of the pupils, the pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships, the regular assessment and monitoring of pupils' performance, and the leadership of the subject. A relative weakness is that not enough use of mathematics is planned in other subjects. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

108. Standards of achievement and progress in mathematics are good throughout the school. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils can sort a range of objects such as cars or animals and count in sets of five, labelling them with the correct numeral. With prompting they can count to ten. They can use a balance and compare heavier and lighter because they know that the balance is lower on the heavy side. Lower attaining pupils develop an understanding of cause and effect. They begin to gain an awareness of the permanence of objects and to experience number rhymes.

109. By Year 11, higher attaining pupils can count by rote to 100, in two's to 20 and in tens to 100. They can add to ten and identify numerals to 100. They correctly subtract a single digit number from 20 by using a number line and sometimes can do the sum mentally. They understand the mathematical use of *shorter* and *longer* or *taller*, and *more than* and *less than*. Lower attaining pupils show good eye contact and, with support, can discard an object from a group placed in front of them, in rhymes such as ten green bottles.

110. No mathematics lessons were observed for pupils at Post 16, but examination of pupils' files and discussion with staff confirm that they achieve well and make good progress. For example, pupils complete practical assignments that help them to understand the value of money by choosing ingredients to purchase with a given sum of money. They know the difference between hard and soft and sweet and sour. In recipes they count out two eggs and four tomatoes. They complete the mathematical sections of the Youth Award Scheme to obtain the Nationally Accredited Certificate of the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN).

111. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good. Of the 6 lessons observed, two were good and four were very good. Teaching is very good at all key stages. From teachers' records, the analysis of pupils' work and from discussion with them, it is clear that the quality of learning over time is good. This is good improvement since the last inspection. In the best lessons, teachers are enthusiastic, using their secure mathematical knowledge and a range of mathematical activities to the benefit of the pupils. There is a spirited start to lessons, with a well-thought out and executed mental exercise to focus the pupils on the day's tasks. For example, in one Key Stage 3 group, pupils were required to subtract a single digit number from a number between 11 and 19 using a 'washing line' for support. After a few good attempts the higher attaining pupils were challenged to do this mentally, which they managed successfully most of the time.

112. Pupils respond well to their success and it encourages them to work well. In the main body of the lesson, activities are included which interest and help all pupils in the class to learn. Smooth pupil management routines enable the lesson to proceed without disruption. Education care officers make a very positive contribution. They know the pupils very well, and often anticipate pupils' behaviour, thus avoiding confrontations or problems in class. Teachers time changes of activity well, so that pupils are highly motivated and involved in their work. They explain all tasks clearly and have all the necessary resources readily available.

113. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff. Learning is reinforced at the end of the lesson by a concluding session, when pupils are praised and rewarded for their efforts. Although pupils sometimes have the opportunity to enhance their mathematical skills by using the computer, these facilities were not fully exploited during the inspection. All staff are good role models, and the many activities that require working together and thinking about the needs of others ensure that mathematics contributes well to the moral and social development of pupils.

114. Although pupils use mathematics during the day in other subjects, teachers do not plan and use these opportunities well enough to ensure that they support and extend mathematical learning effectively. However, a few examples were observed, such as measuring liquids in food technology and counting the pupils present during registration.

115. The co-ordinators lead the subject effectively and a revised scheme of work has been introduced and is being successfully used. Teachers have been supported constructively with the introduction of the numeracy hour throughout the school. Accurate records of pupils' attainment are kept against 'P' and National Curriculum Levels, and Teachers use assessments methodically to determine new learning targets for pupils and when planning future lessons. Resources are good and have been improved since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

116. Standards of achievement and progress in science are good overall and at the end of each key stage. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection, when progress for most pupils was limited. Pupils have good opportunities for the development of investigative skills and this makes a significant contribution to their understanding of science. They make good progress because of the good, very good and sometimes excellent teaching of science.

117. Very good lesson preparation helps some of the youngest pupils with severe learning difficulties to experience darkness and light. They watch and reach out at the different sources of light within the sensory-light room. The stimulating activities with light help them to vocalise, smile and reach out as they begin to notice the difference between light and dark. Teachers deploy educational care officers very well and they help in assessing pupils' achievements.

118. By Year 6, pupils learn to work in groups and many are able to conduct simple investigations with some assistance. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes. They are able to name materials and sort them in relation to their properties, finding different types of materials around the school. Pupils extend their knowledge of materials by predicting which will sink or float before conducting tests, and enjoy the challenge of making a boat that will float. Using plasticene, pupils produce boats of different types, testing their prototypes. Higher attaining pupils work independently, whilst lower attaining pupils and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those on the autistic spectrum disorder need support to succeed.

119. By Year 11, pupils are studying the earth and the solar system. Very good resources, such as the school's light room, are used to demonstrate the different phases of the moon. The pupils use the school's bouncy castle to experience the sensation of walking on the moon. Teachers use a video recording and a question and answer session to help pupils consider how men who have travelled to the moon experienced real weightlessness. They set a challenge for pupils of making a space rocket with the ability to 'take off'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the practical activities and work co-operatively with the teacher to launch their rockets. Pupils are proud of their achievements and learn through investigation and experiment the correct sequence to ensure lift off. With help from the teacher and education care officers; they use the digital camera to record many of their achievements.

120. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and autism learn about materials and their properties. In and around school they explore sounds, scents and textures. Very good teaching and support help the pupils to smell, feel and sometimes taste different materials. Teachers use every opportunity to make these lessons interesting, giving all pupils the chance to see and feel the materials, capturing pupils' achievements with the digital camera. The pupils respond and achieve well, showing what they like and dislike by eye pointing, smiling and moving their hands in reaction to the sensory elements of the different materials offered. With the assistance of staff, pupils operate the food mixer to change hard pieces of chocolate to soft chocolate mousse prior to tasting!

121. At Post 16, pupils continue to improve their scientific knowledge and basic skills through the use of computers, CD ROM, and the Internet as part of the externally accredited Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) course. With support they can use computers to word-process lists, and write about their investigations as part of the ASDAN course.

122. The teaching of science is very good and learning is good. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and the curriculum. Six lessons were observed during the period of the inspection; of these, one was excellent and four very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Behaviour is very good because teachers have high expectations and manage pupils' behaviour well. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop scientific language, asking appropriate questions to extend their knowledge. They praise pupils for concentrating well and give them time to respond. Resources are used very well. For example, a digital camera is used to record pupils' achievements. Good use is made of switches and communication aids to support pupils' progress. However, there was less evidence of pupils using ICT to describe and record the results of their scientific investigations. One-to-one staff play an important part in supporting the learning needs of those pupils with autism or complex needs.

123. The subject is well managed by the science co-ordinator, who has regular meetings with staff to review the impact of the science scheme of work on pupils' learning. She monitors the delivery of science by examining teachers' planning and assessing the standard of pupils' work from each key stage. Even so, monitoring of science lessons is still at an early stage of development.

124. Science is taught in the classroom, and the concerns that were raised at the last inspection about the lack of a specialist science laboratory to support the curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 are still valid.

125. Resources are satisfactory and currently being improved to support the new science scheme of work. Good use is made of the school and surrounding facilities to extend pupils' learning. Pupils visit places such as garden centres, a local windmill and a builders' merchant.

126. Science lessons provide good opportunities to improve communication skills and contribute to pupils' social and moral development. However, accreditation in science is limited to aspects of vocational courses accredited through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). This is an area for further development

ART AND DESIGN

127. Since the last inspection, good improvements have taken place in the teaching of art across the school. Work in the subject has been extended and modified to meet the needs of pupils with more complex learning difficulties. During the inspection, the teaching of art was seen in the classes with primary pupils. Records, reports and pupils' work were analysed from the remaining classes. The displays of art throughout the school illustrate well the good quality of work by pupils.

128. Achievement, learning and progress over time across the school are very good. By Year 2, lower attaining pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are able to focus on various objects. These have to be presented by staff at very close range due to visual and perceptual difficulties. Pupils respond to the colour and texture. Some pupils can signal their choice of colour in an art activity through eye pointing. Others are helped by staff to mix textured colour onto a contrasting background. Higher attaining pupils roll clay with help from staff and use it to shape a cylindrical candle burner. They cut holes in the clay with a specially prepared tube to release the light, and they inscribe patterns on the clay.

129. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 produce black and white tactile pictures. They select materials and choose the nature of the contrast. They had also re-produced some superb plates in painted clay in the style of the *Willow Pattern*, to illustrate the ancient Chinese story. The teachers' record of pupils' work, together with evidence of pupils' work recorded by digital camera, reveals good progress in art achieved by pupils up to Year 11, of all abilities up to Year 11. Higher attaining pupils and autistic pupils made papier-mâché boats as part of a project. Others used wind power to paint with straws. Some studied Renaissance paintings in Lincoln cathedral and produced their own copies of these portraits, some with great detail such as earrings. Some older lower attaining pupils had made paint patterns on paper with the wheels of their wheel chairs. Older pupils studied copies of Leonardo Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and made their own self-portraits after looking at themselves in the mirror.

130. The quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are well planned. They follow the recommended programme of study but they are well adapted and modified to meet the differing needs of the pupils. Pupils' attitudes are always positive and the behaviour of the majority of pupils is very good. Teachers' imaginative and enthusiastic approach to the teaching of art captures pupils' imagination. The result is that pupils co-operate very well and concentrate for very significant periods of time. Despite some challenging behaviour, pupils are able to achieve well in this subject. Teachers observe health and safety rules well in art lessons. Pupils wear aprons to protect clothing. Staff check art materials to ensure that they are non-toxic and safe for pupils to use.

131. The subject is effectively and imaginatively managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. Schemes of work relating to the National Curriculum are in place and the governing body has ratified an appropriate policy. The work of the teachers is monitored by the co-ordinator through a review each term. This is good practice. The teachers' recording of pupils' progress is informal, with pupils' work being collected in the Record of Achievements folders. Teachers' records have satisfactory information on the progress pupils make, but some detail is lacking. The annual reports to parents reveal what work has been undertaken during the year but do not comment on the pupils' progress. No enough subject specific in-service training has been available for the co-ordinator. Art is a continuing strength of the school's curriculum and contributes well to pupils' cultural and social development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

132. There has been very good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Under the very competent leadership of a specialist design and technology teacher, curricular planning is good and opportunities are now wide and varied.

133. Pupils make good achievement and progress in design and technology in developing and making in paper, cloth, wood, plastic and clay. Throughout school, pupils experience and work with support and guidance, the degree of which depends on the individual's skills and abilities. They build skills in cooking and food preparation in Year 3, when they make pancakes, biscuits and scones. In Year 4, they try different curries and say which one they like best. By Year 6, they are making clay models, painting and choosing decorations, and making percussion instruments and teddy bears out of fabric.

134. In Year 7, pupils choose what to design and make for a baby's room, such as a tactile mat or a mobile. They learn how to use a sewing machine and they design and make toilet bags. By Year 8, pupils experience at second hand the cutting of metal, but make for themselves a whistle from wood and plastic. They visit a recycling plant and observe materials sorted into types. They plan a lunch-menu for themselves, make and eat it. They help to design, prepare and plant up a sensory garden. By Year 11 and at Post 16, pupils are designing and making their own attractive waistcoats, choosing the style, the colour, and the fabric.

135. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection and the quality of teaching was excellent in one and good in the other two. In one lesson, the planning for three quite distinct groups of pupils highlighted the skilful interpretation of the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with severe autistic spectrum disorder, profound and multiple learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties. A strength of the lesson was the range of sensory opportunities within it. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties were given learning experiences and stimuli so effective that they evoked spontaneous babbling, good eye contact and smiling. In preparing chocolate whip, pupils were alerted to each step of the preparation. They heard the chocolate rattling on the plate, smelled it, looked at it and held the chocolate before it melted and then saw it drip off the spoon, tasted it and smelled it again. Staff noted pupils' preferences by their reaction to tasting the flavourings.

136. In the lesson with autistic pupils, the teacher had thought through her preparation very well so that pupils could achieve the success of 'making a whistle' within with each pupil's attention span. Pupils were taught good basic skills of sawing and sanding. However, because of the distractions within the class from another group having a music lesson, pupils were off-task for some of the time. This highlighted the need for a separate class base for design and technology.

137. The teaching in a lesson with higher attaining pupils in Years 8, 9, and 10 was challenging, involving good discussion and exemplification of ingredients for a packed lunch. Materials for storing a packed lunch were discussed and pupils took part well in discussion. In the cooking part of the lesson, the teacher had planned good opportunities for small groups of pupils to use and apply skills they had learned in mathematics as well as their skills in cooking. A less successful feature of the lesson was the planning of instructions to match the lower attaining pupils in the group.

138. The subject is very well led, but it suffers from the lack of specialist facilities for work on resistant materials, although it has a satisfactory food technology room. In order to teach woodwork, the teacher has to transport a portable bench and tools around school, and this is unsatisfactory. The need for better facilities has been recognised in the school development

plan. Although pupils have good opportunities to experience different materials and make a good range of artefacts, opportunities for generating their own designs and evaluating products are areas for further development. Design and technology makes a very good contribution to the development of independence, and of moral and social skills. There are too few planned opportunities to promote literacy and numeracy.

HUMANITIES

HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY

139. Pupils in all key stages make good progress over time in geography and history, and their achievement is good at each key stage. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Resources have been improved to support the revised geography and history curriculum. Additionally, the curriculum provides many opportunities in which pupils enjoy a wide range of interesting practical experiences, and this enhances the quality of their learning. Eight lessons were observed; only two of them were in history.

140. By Year 6, pupils have experienced a rich variety of field trips and skills have been developed carefully. The younger pupils explore their immediate environment and all the adults help them to learn about what happens in different parts of the school. Those with more severe learning difficulties respond well to sensory stimuli, especially when on 'Treasure Hunts' or sensory trails around the school. They look and listen attentively for familiar sights and sounds to identify known routes inside and outside the school.

141. On a history visit to Louth, pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties had an opportunity to respond to people and places. They responded with eye movements and smiles and enjoyed the sensory experiences of touching prayer books, seeing candles lit, and light shining through stained glass windows.

142. Teachers organise lessons effectively so that pupils make suitable progress. For example, pupils learn first about map outlines and compass points before moving on to the use of atlases, compasses and an awareness of physical features. Pupils' records of achievement show that they have completed topics on different periods of history and have some understanding of the past. They understand what 'prisoner of war' means after visiting a local former Second World War prisoner of war camp. From visits to a local windmill, watermill and farm, pupils learn about the use of various types of power before the invention of electricity and how, because of this, people's lives were very different from how they are now.

143. By Year 11, the higher attaining pupils understand and know that there are significant differences between the United Kingdom and other countries across the globe that they have studied. They know that India and Germany have their own unique characteristics. They are aware of places beyond their locality, and can talk about what gives places their character. This is helped by visits to the Louth area and the skilful use of videos to show, for example, how India is different from Louth. Pupils show interest in their local area. For example, older higher attaining pupils visit Louth town centre to look at the main points of interest. They record these on a large map of the town and talk knowledgeably about what they have seen. Photographs of Louth, which stimulate them to think and ask questions, capture pupils' interest. Lower attaining pupils follow simple routes around the school between different areas. In history, they listen to stories about famous people such as Christopher Columbus, and react to the sensory experiences offered by teachers, by feeling objects such as a model boat and water.

144. Post 16 students continue their studies of different countries and cultures through a 'world awareness' course, and have the opportunity to include community projects as part of the ASDAN accredited course, 'Towards Independence'.

145. Teaching is good. Planning and preparation are detailed and show appropriate expectations of what pupils will learn. As a result, those with greater difficulties respond to the one-to-one staff support and engage with the tasks and experiences offered. For example, pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties responded well to sensory experiences on a visit to two local churches and, in another class, they were able to become aware of aerial views, using maps of their classrooms. Pupils' good behaviour reflects the teachers' good planning and ability to manage pupils with a range of difficulties, including pupils with challenging behaviours. Education care officers make a significant contribution to the quality of learning: they work effectively and discreetly. For example, they ensure pupils are well positioned and respond to any of their personal and medical requirements so that lessons can proceed briskly. Relationships and classroom management are very good; this enables clear physical and emotional boundaries to be established so that pupils can explore ideas and places safely. There are good resources and teachers make good use of video recording, CD-ROM and the Internet to reinforce pupils' learning. Teachers plan activities creatively, for example, when Class 3 pupils enjoyed a multi-sensory approach to a visit to the seaside by feeling sand and experiencing the sea.

146. The subject is well led and the curriculum for both geography and history follows the National Curriculum. It features a wide range of visits to local places of historical and geographical interest so that pupils can have direct experiences of what is being taught. The subjects make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. In order to improve the subjects further, there needs to be sufficient time for the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

147. The school has made satisfactory improvement in terms of developing pupils' communication skills and enabling them to access a wider range of curriculum experiences using ICT. Little direct teaching of ICT was seen during the period of the inspection, but pupils were observed using a range of ICT tools including computers.

148. Standards of achievement and progress over time are satisfactory overall and at the end of each key stage.

149. By Year 6, pupils have participated in a variety of ICT activities such as listening to story tapes and using computers to create interesting changes on computer screens. They are aware of different devices such as *touch screen*, *roller ball* or a *mouse*. They are learning the position of keys on the keyboard and higher attaining pupils type their own names complete with capital letters. They use, with adult help, multimedia software to support work in other subjects, such as the program, *My First Dictionary*, to discover words beginning with letters they have chosen. Several pupils have their favourite talking stories on audiotape or CD ROM.

150. By Year 11, pupils continue to develop their keyboard skills and write their news or record their findings in other subjects using a program that adds symbols to the words that they type. This helps them develop reading skills and it is a very good stimulus for them when discussing their news. They use CD ROMS on some occasions and are learning to find their way about these by clicking on symbols, pictures and words. Higher attaining pupils, produce covers for books using a desktop publishing program. They become

increasingly independent in their own use of technology, such as audio and video players. Good use is made of technology to support pupils' access to communication and to the curriculum. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties use switches to indicate preferences and answer questions. In science lessons, a range of equipment is used to enable pupils to experience the feel of different materials at different temperatures. Teachers compile good records of achievement for higher attaining pupils and these show good progress over time in their ability to use computers, when, for example, they record their news and create covers for topic books.

151. Post 16 students continue to improve their basic skills through the use of computers, CD ROM, and the Internet as part of their vocational courses, including the externally accredited ASDAN course. With support they can use computers to word-process lists, letters and reports as part of the ASDAN units of work.

152. Overall, the teaching of ICT is good. During the period of the inspection only two examples of the direct teaching of ICT were observed. In these lessons, teaching has clear objectives showing high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Teachers understand pupils well and prepare lessons carefully to motivate pupils to complete tasks set. They organise their classes effectively so that pupils can work together, and in this respect the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' social development. An example of very good use of ICT to support other subjects was seen in a lesson in physical education at Key Stage 1. The teacher used a midi-audio system connected to computer-aided sensors. Pupils responded well to the different sounds they created by interacting with the sensors when moving different parts of their body. This was an isolated example, however, and there was little evidence in teachers' planning or in lessons observed in other subjects to show where ICT was used to support pupils' learning.

153. Teachers assess pupils' progress by careful observation, questioning, and recording achievements against the individual learning objectives. Teachers' knowledge of the subject enables them to meet the needs of pupils, including those with complex needs. Teachers use good quality resources such as digital cameras to good effect. Their planning and assessment of activities ensure that pupils' achievements are recorded. Staff work well as a team and have high expectations. As a result pupils respond well, enjoying both the subject and their own success.

154. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who, through recent and ongoing national ICT initiatives, has raised staff skills and has been instrumental in the purchase of new computers and associated equipment. The use of ICT in other subjects is not always planned, nor is there a consistent approach. Opportunities for pupils' work to be accredited at Key Stage 4 and Post 16 are under-developed. Curricular planning and procedures for pupils' assessment are satisfactory and improving.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

155. There is neither direct teaching of a modern foreign language at Key Stages 3 and 4, nor a planned curriculum. This is unsatisfactory provision and does not meet statutory requirements. No pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum. There has been no improvement since the last inspection.

156. There are references to a modern foreign language in planning for 'World awareness'. Pupils enjoy learning about different cultures in their study of countries of the world. By Year 11 and at Post 16, they have cultural days when they use greetings in the language of the country being studied, and meet someone from that country, for example Spain.

157. There are outline plans in the school development plan for extending the provision for a modern foreign language. As part of the support for this, through the Comenius Project, the co-ordinator and headteacher have made links with special schools in both Germany and France. Staff have made reciprocal visits with exchanges of ideas and common topics of study.

MUSIC

158. The subject has developed well since the last inspection. Difficulty in recruiting of a suitable specialist teacher has resulted in a school decision that class teachers will instruct this subject. Nevertheless, the music curriculum and pupils' achievements are good. The strengths of the subject are the breadth and balance of the scheme of work and its relevance to the needs of the pupils. A weakness is that objectives in lesson planning are given in terms of personal and social development rather than improved musical awareness.

159. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils are familiar with pulse and rhythm. They play percussion instruments and show pride in their music making. Lower attaining pupils beat a rhythm with support and begin to show recognition of some familiar songs and carols.

160. By Year 11, higher attaining pupils sing in unison and perform a short rhythm. They express their feelings for a piece of music through dance and movement. Lower attaining pupils display smiles or turn their head away to show likes and dislikes when choosing between the sound of a rain stick or tambourine.

161. Overall, the teaching of music is good. Of the five lessons observed, four were good and one was very good. Teachers' preparation and planning are good and ensure that pupils learn and practise musical skills that build on previous learning. Their energy and enthusiasm infect the pupils, with the result that a good amount of work is covered in lessons and pupils are inspired to work hard and react to a range of musical experiences. The effective methods used in teaching ensure that all the pupils have opportunities to improve their skills of listening, playing, turn taking, and expressing preferences and feelings. When pupils create their own music, they are encouraged think about their performance. Teachers make very good use of time.

162. Learning is also good. Pupils maintain a high level of interest and concentration. They respond very well to high expectations, showing good behaviour and attention.

163. Pupils respond appropriately to the teaching they receive and to the music they create and listen to. Sometimes they respond with spontaneous body movements and obvious pleasure. At other times with a reflective quietness that shows developing attentiveness. Attitudes and behaviour are good.

164. The subject is well co-ordinated and further development is planned. The resources for music are good and include ICT in the form of a midi-creator, which enables all pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to make music. There has been good

improvement since the previous inspection in curriculum planning. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. There is no dedicated music room, and the general classroom environment in which music is taught places restrictions on teaching and does not enhance the status of the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

165. There has been a significant improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Teaching is greatly improved and consequently pupils' achievement and progress over time are also better. A new co-ordinator has improved the overall administration and monitoring of physical education across the school.

166. Achievement is good overall, with good progress over time at each key stage. In swimming in Year 6, higher achieving pupils entered the school pool confidently and moved around unaided. They used buoyancy aids to practise floating and for leg-kicking exercises. One pupil retrieved an object from the bottom of the pool by diving under the water. Pupils built their skills towards achieving swimming awards for basic floatation. Lower attaining pupils learnt to relax in the water, and to float with adult support. Autistic pupils achieved their targets of entering the water, working alongside one another and co-operating with staff. In gymnastics, higher attaining pupils recognised and achieved different ways of travelling across a series of obstacles such as mats, benches, tunnels and wall-bars to complete a circuit. They ran, hopped and crawled. They chose how they would perform tasks. All pupils achieved the learning goals set for them by staff. In a movement lesson, pupils moved to the differing tempos of music and showed awareness of how their movements interacted with a sound machine. They understood key words such as *up/down*, *forwards/backwards*, *fast/slow*, and increased their awareness of how their bodies move.

167. By Year 11 and 13, lower attaining students showed awareness of names for parts of the body during exercises in the swimming pool. They floated on their fronts and on their backs with floatation aids and adult support, stretched their limbs and kicked their legs. In dance, students recognised different musical rhythms and tempos and moved their arms and legs to follow the beat.

168. Progress and learning in all lessons are good. Pupils understand the routines in physical education and swimming, such as the need to help with undressing and dressing themselves, showering, and entering the pool safely. They follow instructions well, work hard and enjoy the sessions. Their behaviour and attitude are always very good and they co-operate fully with staff, wait patiently and take turns with one another. Some examples of more able pupils helping those who are less able were seen.

169. Teaching is very good at each key stage. Very clear planning of what pupils will learn, careful selection of activities and an extensive knowledge of pupils' individual physical, social and learning needs make lessons relevant and challenging. Very good teamwork between teachers, education care officers and physiotherapists ensures a consistent approach. There is good attention to health and safety. For example, hoists are used correctly to position pupils in the water, or to help when dressing. Teachers are also aware of information technology and use it to support certain lessons. Teaching supports the development of literacy skills very well, particularly speaking and listening skills. It also enables pupils to grow in confidence by developing social skills and self-awareness and contributes successfully to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

170. The subject is well managed. Planning is efficient and carefully matched to pupils' needs, abilities and age. There are procedures in place to ensure a consistent approach is by all who teach physical education. Day-to-day assessment and evaluation of performance are very good. Pupils have extensive opportunities to take part in a variety of adventurous and physical activities, such as in the ball-pool or bouncy castle and at venues off the school site. There is very good liaison with physiotherapy services to ensure that the physical needs of pupils are met.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

171. Improvements in the delivery and planning of religious education have taken place since the last inspection. The work in this subject has been well adapted to meet pupils' needs. Pupils' records of achievement and the displays of work in school illustrate well the work undertaken. The Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for the teaching of religious education is used appropriately throughout the school as the basis for planning work, but the curriculum at present is too narrow.

172. In Year 6, pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties listened to stories about Noah's Ark that were illustrated by touch, sound and the feeling of textures. Water was sprayed onto pupils' feet to represent the flood as well as to help stimulate pupils' physical responses. Higher attaining pupils at Year 2 made Indian sweets, with support from staff, for a Divali festival. Pupils tried on Indian shawls and shoes during the activity. They made Indian chalk patterns; played bells to accompany Asian music, and helped to count the sweets before they were wrapped up as presents. Pupils with autism in Years 3 to 9 listened to the story of David and Goliath in groups of two. They were able to re-tell the story, with prompts from the teacher, and then made up sentences using symbols on their picture boards. Their understanding was good and they understood Goliath's size in relation to David's, as well as saying how the story ends. The pupils also helped to construct a tactile picture of Goliath by sticking textile strips onto a previously drawn template.

173. Higher attaining pupils in Years 6 and 7 answered questions about what it means to be good or bad. Pupils talked openly and honestly about bad things they had done. For example, tearing up a brother's work and fighting. Several pupils knew this was wrong and caused unhappiness. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties in Year 11 and at Post 16, listened with interest to the story of Jesus going to the church as a boy. They listened to church music, felt a minister's garments and smelled incense. They concentrated well over significant periods of time.

174. The teaching of religious education to pupils of all ages and abilities is very good. Lessons are well planned. Staff adapt them very imaginatively to meet the differing needs of pupils in the school. Co-operative work between teachers and the education care officers ensures very good learning opportunities that pupils respond to well. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and constantly strive to develop pupils' learning skills in other curriculum areas. These include independence, numeracy and literacy. Teaching challenges pupils well.

175. All staff manage disruptive behaviour and keep pupils concentrating on their work for considerable periods of time. In general, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are very good across the age and ability range in the school. Relations between pupils and staff are very good. As a result, pupils' learning is well focused and successful.

176. The co-ordination of religious education is satisfactory. However, the programmes of study need to be extended to include one other religion. Good in-service training has given the co-ordinator confidence to plan the curriculum with staff. An appropriate policy exists, and the teaching of the subject is monitored through a review each term of teachers' planning and pupils' work. This is sound practice. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of visits to local churches and the cathedral at Lincoln. The recording of pupils' progress is satisfactory. Good use is made of a digital camera to record activities and pupils' work for the pupils' records of achievement file. Pupils' progress is not recorded in enough detail. Reports to parents state what pupils have done but do not reveal their progress in the subject. Religious education contributes well to the spiritual and moral education of the pupils in the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

177. PSHE is well planned and delivered throughout the school. The curriculum is broad and includes relevant areas of sex and drugs education. The programme encourages healthy living and independence. It fosters good relationships in the school. Work is appropriately adapted to pupils' needs, and regular targets are set and monitored for individual pupils. At present, there is insufficient use of information technology to support this subject although it draws on and develops pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well. PSHE has been identified and timetabled as a separate subject area since the last inspection. This has resulted in considerable improvements.

178. Distinct lessons of PSHE were not observed with pupils up to the age of seven. However, from analysis of pupils work and individual education plans, achievement and progress for each year group and across all ability groups, is very good. More able SLD pupils at the ages of 11 and 12 are able to say which adults we can trust when we are crossing the road and wanting a cuddle. They also know whom they should turn to if they are feeling ill. At the age of 14 and 15, pupils of similar ability read and understood a questionnaire prepared by the teacher about smoking. They investigated individual views and recorded them. They expressed their views clearly about smoking, saying it is a dirty habit that is expensive and bad for you. They also talked about members of family and friends who smoked, and recorded who can give up the habit and who cannot. The subject was not observed being taught to lower attaining or autistic pupils, but the targets set in the pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) for PSHE, whilst they are engaged in other subjects, reveal the good standard of work undertaken and pupils' progress. Examples of this were seen in art and drama where lower attaining pupils were making choices by eye pointing as well as turn taking and higher attaining pupils used independent working skills in geography and religious education.

179. The teaching of the subject to higher attaining pupils is very good. Teachers and education care officers use the PSHE targets in all areas of the curriculum, both in and outside lessons.

180. Teachers use the Drugs Education in Primary schools Initiative, designed by Lincolnshire, to deliver some of the programmes of work in PSHE. Vigour and patience characterise the teaching approaches to this subject. The staff's skilful questioning elicits positive responses from pupils who make progress in their independent learning. It also helps improve relationships with other children. Teachers' planning of appropriate vocabulary for the lesson, and the use of IEP's, ensure good development in the teaching of speaking and listening skills in PSHE. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the lessons are very good. Staff handle the challenging behaviour of some individuals very well, ensuring a calm atmosphere and good opportunities for learning.

181. The subject is well managed. The school has made an early move towards incorporating citizenship into the teaching programmes with students at Post 16.