

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEEN ELIZABETH II SILVER JUBILEE SCHOOL

Horsham

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126160

Headteacher: Lesley Dyer

Reporting inspector: Charles Hackett
21081

Dates of inspection: 4th to 7th June 2001

Inspection number: 191548

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Type of school: | Special |
| School category: | Community Special |
| Age range of pupils: | 2 to 19 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Comptors Lane Horsham |
| Postcode: | RH13 5NW |
| Telephone number: | 01403 266215 |
| Fax number: | 01403 270109 |
| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs. M. Millson |
| Date of previous inspection: | 7 th October 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| Charles Hackett 21081 | Registered inspector | Physical Education | The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils or students taught? |
| Eric Langford 19727 | Lay inspector | | How well does the school care for its pupils or students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Alan Tattersall 20466 | Team inspector | Mathematics Information and Communication Technology Design and Technology | |
| Bob Thompson 10781 | Team inspector | English Art and Design Modern Foreign Language | How well is the school led and managed? |
| Jenny Hall 14691 | Team inspector | Science Music | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students? |
| George Davies 1987 | Team inspector | Geography History Religious Education | Pupils' attitudes values and personal development Equal opportunities Special |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------------|
| | | | educational needs. |
|--|--|--|--------------------|

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Inspection Quality Division
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London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School caters for pupils aged between 2 and 19 years, all of whom have severe, complex or profound and multiple learning difficulties. A small number of pupils also have other special educational needs, including autism. Many pupils have disabilities such as sensory impairment, physical difficulties, epilepsy and challenging behaviour. As a result of their special needs pupils' levels of attainment on entering the school are very low. Currently there are 42 pupils on roll (8 of these are students in the post 16 unit). All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The school is the smallest of its type in the county and small in comparison with similar types of schools across the country. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language currently on roll. There is only one pupil from a minority ethnic background.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School is a very good school where considerable attention is given to each individual pupil. The overall quality of teaching is very good and as a result pupils throughout the school make very good progress. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management. She and her senior colleagues are very good at ensuring that all staff feel valued and are able to work successfully as a team. The governing body offer very appropriate support and meets all its legal responsibilities. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Plans teaching very effectively to ensure that all pupils make very good progress; this is particularly so for the development of their communication and numeracy skills.
- Constantly seeks to do its best for all pupils. The impressive leadership and management of the headteacher and her senior colleagues ensure that the school is always seeking ways to improve on what it already provides.
- Ensures that arrangements for the care and management of pupils are very good; this helps to create a very warm atmosphere where pupils are enthusiastic to work and learn.
- Provides a curriculum that is very interesting and well matched to pupils' special needs.
- Links very well with the majority of parents and the local community. There are also very good opportunities for a lot of pupils and students to attend mainstream schools and colleges.

What could be improved

- Outside playground facilities for pupils.
- The planning of physical education lessons to ensure that pupils' progress is as good as in other subjects.
- The teaching time available to pupils aged between 7 and 16. This is well below that expected for pupils of this age.

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 very good improvements since its previous inspection in October 1996. Statutory requirements are now met in science and French. Policies and planning for all subjects (schemes of work) are in place. Resources and accommodation, especially for the post 16 unit, have been improved and the management of pupils' behaviour, particularly for those with challenging behaviour, has also improved. Subject co-ordinators have developed their roles, although for physical education there is still scope for further development. A number of aspects judged to be satisfactory or good in the previous inspection are now very good. These include teaching, the

leadership and management of the school, the information provided for parents and the use of assessment in planning work for pupils.

PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENTS

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

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

The school has set itself challenging targets and these have been achieved. Pupils' progress is very good and they achieve the majority of the targets within their individual education plans. Particular strengths in their achievements are in communication and numeracy. Effective strategies are used to ensure pupils' levels of communication are very good and learning number skills is well promoted in all subjects. Achievement and progress in personal, social and health education, music and art are very good and reflect the high quality teaching of these subjects. In science, design and technology, history, geography, information and communication technology (using computers), swimming, horse riding and religious education achievement and progress are good. They are satisfactory in other aspects of physical education and French.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils enjoy coming into school, are very enthusiastic in lessons and keen to listen and talk to the staff. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. Pupils behave very well both in school and when taking part in activities out of school. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils relate very well to each other and towards staff. Pupils' progress within personal, social and health education makes a significant contribution to their very good personal development. |
| Attendance | Good. For a school of this type the attendance records are impressive. |

Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour make a significant contribution to the atmosphere that exists within the school. The positive relationships pupils have with staff help ensure that the school is a relaxed, homely environment where adults and children show considerable respect towards each other.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged 5-11 | Aged 11-16 | aged over 16 |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Lessons seen overall | 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.

The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is very good in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education, music and art. Teaching is good in science, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography, music and religious education. Over time it is only satisfactory in physical education because the planning of what will be taught in lessons for each different age group is unsatisfactory. During the inspection 7% of lessons observed were excellent, 54% were very good, 37% good and one lesson was satisfactory. It is not possible to make a judgement on the teaching of French because no lessons were seen during the inspection. Literacy and numeracy are taught very well and are major strengths in the work of the school.

A key factor in the quality of teaching is the very good planning for lessons. This ensures that all pupils take part and make progress. There is very good use of resources which are well prepared before lessons. Additionally teachers and support staff work effectively together as a team responding to different situations in positive and appropriate ways. The teaching of pupils with additional special educational needs is also very good. This includes those pupils on the autistic spectrum whose work and involvement in lessons is very carefully planned.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good. The curriculum is interesting and appropriate for all pupils. For pupils aged between 7 and 16 the length of the teaching day is below that expected and, therefore, the time to study some subjects is reduced. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. It is particularly effective for pupils' spiritual and moral development where very good opportunities exist for collective worship and for pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Social opportunities are limited by the lack of a playground. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Very good. Child protection procedures are exemplary and the school gives very careful attention to ensure that the individual needs of all pupils are addressed in a sensitive and careful manner. |

The curriculum is very good for the youngest pupils and those in the post 16 unit. The school works very effectively with the vast majority of parents; the home-school diaries provide a very good means of passing information between school and home. A number of parents are actively involved in their child's learning by coming into school and helping in lessons. There is also a very effective parent-partnership group where parent representatives can make contributions to how the school is being developed.

The lunch break of an hour and a half is too long. With the exception of a few clubs no structured learning activities are organised during this time. This is a missed opportunity to increase teaching time and develop further the curriculum offered to pupils. Residential experiences provide good extra-curricular opportunities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management. She and her senior colleagues are very successful in supporting and encouraging other staff to carry out their duties effectively. |

| | |
|---|--|
| How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities | Good. The governors play an active part in the management of the school. They take their responsibilities seriously and monitor the work of the school effectively. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Very good. The school has considered pupils' progress in literacy, numeracy and personal, social and health education and used the information to set itself appropriate targets. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. Resources are well used and the school seeks to provide best value for money in all its purchases. Money given to the school direct from the government (Standards funds) is used well to train staff and increase their expertise in a wide range of subject areas. |

Staffing levels are very good. The large number of support assistants is appropriate given the wide range of special educational needs of pupils. Resources are very good and are being well developed, particularly in relation to the number of computers and their use across the school. The accommodation for teaching is good; classrooms are of a good size and display areas are very appropriate and well used. However, there is only a very small playground for the very youngest pupils and no outside playground for older pupils; this is very poor and has an impact on their social skills as well as making it frustrating for them at lunchtimes in not having the opportunity to engage in free play.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school • They can comfortably approach the school with questions and concerns • The teaching is good • The school is well led and managed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information provided on their child's progress • The amount of homework children receive • The activities provided outside of school hours |

The inspectors agree with the very many positive comments made about the school. They do not support the view of a few parents who consider that the school does not provide them with sufficient information about their child's progress. Home-school books and the governors' annual report provide parents with good information about what their child is doing in school. Homework is difficult given pupils' special needs, but the school should seek to clarify its policy and procedures for homework. Transport and staffing arrangements make after-school clubs difficult to organise but the school does provide a good range of visits, including the recent trip to America.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The achievements of pupils throughout the school are very good. All make very good progress in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. The school has analysed the progress of pupils in aspects of English, mathematics and personal, social and health education through using 'P' scales. The evidence of this analysis shows the considerable progress they have made. Pupils, also, achieve the majority of the targets set in their individual education plans. These results demonstrate an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has set targets for pupils' achievements and these have been achieved.
2. Pupils' communication and literacy skills are well developed in all lessons. The youngest pupils in the school have gained a very good understanding of symbols used to represent words. In the secondary part of the school and post 16 unit, the more able pupils are beginning to make use of dictionaries, whilst the lower ability pupils are developing their understanding of separate sounds. Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties in the post 16 unit are able to match pictures of animals and everyday objects. All pupils show a good understanding of books. Pupils develop their language skills as they move through the school. Whether through pictures, symbols, using sign or speaking they make choices and follow the routines of the classroom. The more able post 16 students independently write simple sentences or word process using a computer.
3. Progress in mathematical skills is very good. The youngest pupils show a good understanding of number order and by the age of 11 higher ability pupils are able to count sets of up to five objects. By the time they leave school pupils are using mathematical skills to go shopping, plan meals and work out bus timetables. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties show increased ability to recognise shapes and colours, such as when selecting different pegs from a group.
4. All pupils make good progress in science and achieve a good level of knowledge of the way the body works, and how plants and animals grow. Pupils also develop a good understanding of the properties of materials and how they react when mixed together. Pupils with more complex learning difficulties respond positively to sensory stimuli. They react when they come into physical contact with different materials and experience changes in light and sound.
5. Pupils' achievements are very good in music and art. Both play a prominent part in the life of the school and pupils respond positively to opportunities to

take part in both. Almost all perform in the school concerts, playing a variety of instruments, and the displays around the school are examples of pupils' achievements in producing line drawings, wax crayon pictures, textile patterns, collages and printing.

6. Achievements and progress are good in history, geography, using computers, and religious education. Progress in swimming and horse riding is good, but for other aspects of physical education progress is only satisfactory; partly because teachers do not plan and record what pupils achieve as well as they do in other subjects. Progress in French is satisfactory.
7. Pupils have made very good progress in personal, social and health education (PSHE). This is reflected in the progress made in working with each other and increases in their levels of independence. An example of this was seen during the inspection in a PSHE lesson in the post 16 unit. Here students were developing their skills of conversation, showing their ability to listen, have eye contact with the person talking and understand the idea of body language and being polite. They were able to respond appropriately to questions.
8. The achievements of pupils with complex learning difficulties and those on the autistic spectrum match those of their peers. These pupils are making gains in following the example of others in listening to teachers' instructions and joining in with whole class activities. A good example of this was in the early years class where an autistic pupil was able to communicate, with the support of a learning support assistant, her choices effectively when asked to pick out different shapes. Similarly in a games lesson a girl with very significant difficulties was able to take her turn in hitting the ball and running with others around the posts.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

9. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to their learning and the progress they make. They enjoy coming to school and demonstrate enthusiasm and interest in their lessons and other activities such as assemblies, acts of collective worship and off-site visits. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have significantly improved since the last inspection.
10. Younger pupils quickly develop very good attitudes to being in school. They arrive in the morning smiling and follow well-established routines so that very little time is lost in lessons. They listen carefully to staff and, despite the excitement shown when new or favourite activities are undertaken, they concentrate very well for increasingly longer periods of time. This was clearly demonstrated when they were observing the effect of static electricity in a science lesson or continuing with their painting of a surfboard. As pupils progress through the school they have a better understanding of the need to wait their turn and show that they appreciate and enjoy the successes of their peers. In a religious education lesson, pupils acknowledged a very good

response by a younger pupil with complex language difficulties. In the same lesson the concentration displayed by a peer with significant attention difficulties was commented upon. Older pupils work independently for longer periods of time and, as their ability to share improves, they work co-operatively at a wide range of projects.

11. A strong feature of pupils' development is the very understanding attitudes they display when another pupil is having an "off" day. They help staff by disregarding an incident and get on with their work. Older pupils are more able to express their enjoyment of school. They take pride in their work and are happy both to show and discuss it with visitors. Feedback from work placement employers confirms that these positive attitudes students show in school are also present when they are on work experience.
12. The behaviour of pupils and students is consistently very good in lessons, around the school and when off-site. Pupils relate very well with each other and excellently with staff. The significant majority of pupils behave very well because they accept that such behaviour is the desired norm. They know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Pupils work harmoniously together in physical education, they help each other when exploring sockets and plugs in science and they know how to behave when working in pairs in history or mathematics or independently in art. The promotion of self esteem and mutual respect that is at the heart of the 'Pupil's Charter' is fully realised in practice, with the result that the school presents as a purposeful, positive, and well ordered community. Pupils who have very challenging behaviours are making very good progress in their understanding of what is acceptable behaviour.
13. Pupils' personal development is very good. As they progress through the school they show that they are more capable of accepting responsibility for themselves, their work and for others. During their early years in school they choose drinks and clothes to suit the weather and as they move up the school they respond very well to the increased opportunities to be independent. Younger pupils regularly help to tidy up classes after lessons while older pupils, without prompting, put cups and plates away after their drink breaks. Older pupils offer help to their more disabled peers and those in the post 16 unit show significant independence as they buy, cook and eat a meal in their unit. Pupils enjoy the responsibility of being on register or on dinner numbers duty. Increases in pupils' independence is also demonstrated as pupils move around the school with increasing confidence and very young pupils strive to change for swimming and physical education without help. Pupils also take on their responsibilities as representatives of the school council and a recently developed house system very well.
14. Pupil attendance levels are good throughout the school and have been maintained at this level since the previous Ofsted inspection. The level of authorised absence is acceptable given the medical health condition of a number of pupils and there is a very low level of unauthorised absence. Effective pupil transport arrangements provide for a

punctual start to the school day. Punctuality within the school is very good, enabling lessons to start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is particularly impressive in English, mathematics, music, art and personal, social and health education. Teaching is good in science, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography, music and religious education. It is satisfactory in physical education. Pupils' learning is very good. They are keen to be in the classroom and listen well to the instructions of teachers; this has a significant positive impact on their progress. During the inspection teaching, with the exception of one lesson that was graded as satisfactory, was always good or better. In 7% it was excellent, 54% was very good and 37% good. Both teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection.
16. A key strength of teaching is the way in which teachers plan for all pupils to be involved in lessons and for all to make progress. An example of this was seen in a mathematics lesson for pupils aged 12 and 13 years. The teacher provided a wide variation of tasks, which were allocated to pupils according to their levels of ability. This high level of planning meant that all pupils could make progress. Higher attaining pupils developed an understanding of the properties of a square and cylinder. Less able pupils consolidated their knowledge of shapes by matching simple shapes such as triangles and rectangles. English lessons for the youngest pupils in the school are examples of very good planning improving pupils' skills. In one lesson pupils, after reading about 'Barney and Bob going camping', went outside to experience camping. They put a tent up and took part in activities similar to those in the story. Planning also ensures that those pupils on the autistic spectrum are able to join in with lessons. For example, in an art lesson for Year 10 pupils an autistic pupil was able to be fully involved in cutting out and matching shapes of fruits and flowers because resources were well prepared and the planning for the lesson had considered carefully how she could be involved.
17. Teachers use assessment well to help them in their planning of lessons. On pupils' initial entry to the school, very good use is made of any records of prior learning in order to plan individual work programmes. Provision begins with very good links with parents who complete an entry profile of their child. These profiles of pupil information improve the efficiency with which precise programmes can be planned for each pupil. There is a well-planned gradual, leading to full time, pattern of attendance. Young pre-school children from mainstream settings join lessons for part of the week. They provide very good role models for learning, whilst also benefiting themselves from the very good whole class, group and individual learning opportunities provided.
18. Within the classroom all the adults work effectively as a team. They make best use of each other's skills. For example, in swimming one of the learning support assistants is a swimming coach and, therefore, she appropriately takes

the lead role in these lessons. In the class for the youngest pupils in the school, learning support assistants and the teacher integrate well together to meet the needs of each individual pupil. As a consequence each child can join in with activities, such as when involved in practical science work.

19. Resources are very well prepared prior to lessons and made effective use of during them. In a PSHE lesson for pupils, aged 12 and 13 years, photographs specifically chosen for the session were very effective. In an English lesson where pupils read a poem 'The Train to Glasgow', their understanding was greatly increased by staff using pre-prepared flags and a whistle. They thoroughly enjoyed the session. Likewise in a religious education lesson, having bread and fishes available helped pupils gain a better understanding of the Bible story.
20. Teachers ensure that their instructions and explanations are very clear. For example, in a science lesson for older pupils, clear and uncomplicated explanations helped pupils understand the role electricity and batteries have in providing power. The use of resources, including motorised toys, was very effective.
21. Expectations for all pupils to achieve are high. As an example, a 15 year old, higher attaining pupil, was encouraged to write simple text making use of full stops. Similarly lower ability pupils are given positive encouragement to take small steps forward from their already acquired skills. This is so in the case of pupils extending their ability to communicate through using symbols. When the teacher feels a pupil fully understands a symbol new symbols are carefully introduced. This is done well in that pupils are challenged but not in a way that confuses or demoralises them.
22. Teachers and support staff respond very well to the changing needs of pupils. In a mathematics lesson for the youngest pupils, the teacher showed great flexibility to make changes to the planned lesson to deal with a pupil with autistic problems, who reacted to the lesson in an unexpected manner. The carefully timetabled programme for teaching pupils with complex learning difficulties is particularly effective as it supports internal inclusion and the provision of specialist approaches within subjects. The organisation of each classroom is excellent and accommodates the needs of all pupils.
23. There are no significant weaknesses in the overall quality of teaching but there are a few aspects that could be improved. A small number of subjects do not make full use of computers and are not clear how they will develop them in their teaching. In a few lessons for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties the pace of the lesson could be increased to improve pupils' involvement; waiting time could be reduced when these pupils are using the hydrotherapy pool. Whilst activities in the multi-sensory room are good, teachers' expectations of pupils whilst in there are not always written clearly and precisely enough for progress to be readily monitored against teachers' expectations of what pupils might achieve. Although appropriate homework is

provided on occasions, there is no consistency across the school as to when it is to be provided.

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

24. The school has got the overall balance of the curriculum right by providing a very appropriate emphasis on communication, literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. The quality of the curriculum is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. A full range of subject policies has been approved by the governing body and curriculum plans now provide staff with the guidance they need to plan their work effectively. These developments have had a significant impact on the very good progress pupils now make. The relevant learning opportunities provided meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, religious education, collective worship, sex and drugs education and for careers education and guidance education.
25. The length of the taught day is, however, short in comparison with similar schools nationally, a situation compounded by the very long lunch break of an hour and a half. The time after eating lunch is not well structured to enrich pupils' play and learning opportunities. There is some compensation to the short teaching week in that an interesting range of good quality extra-curricular activities is provided, on and off site, covering, for example, theatre trips, sports, horse riding, dance festivals, church services, and the opportunity for pupils to participate in residential activities in England and abroad. Additionally, pupils of all ages have very good opportunities to broaden their timetables by working in mainstream settings at schools and colleges in the area.
26. Curriculum plans for each subject, and for each class, together with annual and termly targets for each pupil, match well to the wide range of learning needs present in each class. For the youngest pupils there is a well-established 'Foundation curriculum'. There are currently no under-fives on roll but the Foundation curriculum is highly relevant, being focused on the development of communication skills, literacy, numeracy, and personal and social development, with opportunities for creative and physical development and for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The programme is highly effective in preparing them for access to the National Curriculum at age seven.
27. For pupils aged seven to fourteen the curriculum is effectively planned using the National Curriculum subjects. Up to the age of eleven it is taught through topics and as a subject-based timetable for eleven to fourteen year olds. This method of curricular organisation is entirely appropriate given the pupils' various stages of development. There is an improved emphasis on science, which had been criticised at the last inspection for not having a high enough profile as a National Curriculum core subject. Throughout the school, though, the amount of time allocated to physical education is higher than in similar schools.

28. For pupils aged fourteen to sixteen opportunities to gain certificates are provided through a Youth Award Scheme programme, the 'Transition Challenge'. This programme is suitably different from the curriculum planned for younger pupils and helps older pupils begin to prepare for leaving school. Fourteen-year-old pupils receive their statutory entitlement to careers education and guidance.
29. The post 16 curriculum is especially effective in preparing students for the next stage in their education. It retains a very relevant focus on literacy, numeracy and communication skills but is distinct from the rest of the school curriculum by having a very effective emphasis on life skills training and independence. Residential experiences extend opportunities for pupils' personal and social development and independence. The very high quality of the accommodation in the post 16 Independence Unit significantly enhances the curriculum for these students. Very effective links with local colleges, the Careers Service and with local employers broaden students' experience of work and vocational education. Great care is taken in the planning of work experience so that it is well matched to students' various stages of development. Provision is either off site, with very regular links with the employers, or through more sheltered provision on site. The overall provision for careers and vocational education is very good.
30. There has been good improvement in the provision for pupils with additional special educational needs since the last inspection. Provision for pupils with the most complex and profound learning difficulties and for pupils on the autistic spectrum is very good. In all classes access to sensory development is very good through well-planned opportunities to touch, taste, smell, listen and observe. The use of picture symbols /and picture exchange procedures is especially effective in helping pupils without speech to communicate, participate, recognise and anticipate when lessons are beginning and ending.
31. Very effective provision is made for pupils' spiritual development through collective Christian worship, Christmas Carol services with other schools, the celebration of festivals and traditions of other faiths, and when visitors attend school assemblies. Careful attention is given to the creation of suitable atmospheres in special assemblies using symbols, candles, scents and music. There is very effective promotion of pupils' understanding of right and wrong through the development of a pupils' charter, the development of codes of conduct in classrooms and the very good role models provided by all the adults in school. Pupils are taught to treat learning resources such as musical instruments and science equipment, with respect.
32. There are many good opportunities taken to foster pupils' social development through responsibilities in class, learning in other schools and colleges, work experience, visits and residential experiences. The oldest students are given responsibility to keep the post 16 unit tidy. There are missed opportunities, though, during the long lunch break to plan activities to promote pupils' social development. The lack of outdoor play space further limits the opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills.

33. Through music, art, geography, religious education, French, and collective worship, provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils are taught about the traditions and artefacts of different faiths and they learn about the styles of famous painters. Pupils listen to and play music from around the world in lessons and in highly successful public musical performances. They visit the theatre. They learn about the French culture in French lessons. Records show that good displays and topic work have promoted multi-cultural awareness well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school's provision for the care and welfare of pupils is very good and a major strength of the school. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection and has made a positive contribution to the high quality learning and personal development being achieved by pupils in the school. Staff display a high level of care and concern for the pupils and a very good rapport and respect exists between pupils and staff.
35. Excellent child protection procedures are in place, which are well understood and acted upon by all staff. The school is correctly regarded by the LEA as a "site of good practice in child protection". Staff are well trained and alert to the need for regularly monitoring the welfare of pupils. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and all respond in a discreet and sensitive manner to any personal queries raised with them by pupils.
36. Very good health and safety procedures are in place. Regular fire evacuation drills are practised each term and all annual equipment checks and inspections are undertaken as necessary. Whole school health and safety inspection audits are undertaken each term and reports and recommendations made to the termly governors' meeting. Risk assessment is well established in the routines of school life and regular governor reviews ensure that the health and safety of pupils and staff is actively promoted throughout the school. There is adequate provision of staff with first aid training.
37. Good procedures are in place for recording, monitoring and reporting pupils' attendance. Class registration procedures fully comply with statutory requirements. The very good liaison between teachers and visiting health professionals ensures pupils' individual programmes are well planned to minimize disruption to their learning.
38. There are excellent and well-established routines for managing pupils' behaviour. These include very good procedures for managing pupils with challenging behaviour, which have been implemented since the previous inspection. The successful application of these procedures helps to generate the very good attitudes to learning displayed by pupils. Procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour are excellent and there is no evidence of any bullying or oppressive behaviour by pupils. All staff are trained in the correct use of physical restraint and excellent use is made of strategies for crisis intervention.
39. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievements, progress and personal development are good. There are very good systems in place for English, mathematics, ICT and PHSE, where the use of 'P' scales is well established into teachers' routines and well used to monitor and report pupils' achievements. Detailed termly targets are prepared

and shared with parents. These are well focused as clear “stepping stones” for assessing and reporting pupils’ progress. The very good liaison between teachers and visiting health professionals ensures pupils’ individual programmes are well planned to minimise disruption to their learning. Annual reviews of statements of special educational needs accurately reflect the contents of statements and are supported by a range of detailed reports from the school. They include subject and personal development reports and reports from the school medical officer, physiotherapist and speech and language therapists.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school's partnership with parents is very good and represents an area of improvement since the previous inspection. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school, hold the staff in the highest regard and believe their children receive a very good quality and standard of care and education.
41. There is a positive approach to consulting and involving parents in the life of the school and encouraging them to be involved in the education of their children. The headteacher operates an "open door" policy and parents are always welcome in school. The induction procedures for new parents are very good; these include home visits by staff to introduce and welcome parents and pupils to the school. The school prospectus and post 16 induction booklet are comprehensive publications and viewed as valuable reference documents. Well-established procedures ensure that parents are involved in the regular termly reviews of their child's individual education plans and progress made against the targets set. Additionally, teachers make themselves available at the beginning and end of the school day to respond to any parent queries or concerns.
42. The highly valued "home-school" book serves as a timely and informative communication medium between teachers and parents. In addition to providing for the daily exchange of comments between parents and teachers, the diary is well used by pupils as a reminder of class timetables, and by health professionals exchanging advice and information with parents about their children.
43. A group of parents regularly provide help in the classroom and on out of school activities; this is very much appreciated by teachers. The school also benefits significantly from the many more parents and community volunteers who give freely of their time to provide ad-hoc help and support. Of particular note is the success of the "Parents Partnership Committee" and the impact this has had on improving the involvement of parents in the school. Termly meetings are organised and all parents are consulted and their views canvassed on a range of issues. For example, the home-school agreement policy was the product of extensive parental consultation and serves to demonstrate well the school's positive approach to working closely with parents in the development of school policy. However, for a few parents the issue of homework is a concern; the school needs to clarify with parents its arrangements for homework.
44. The school benefits from an active "parents, teachers and friends association" which organises regular social fund-raising events, all of which are well attended and raise considerable sums of money for the school fund. These events provide good opportunities for further informal exchange between parents and teachers about their child's progress in the school and home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher and senior management team provide very effective leadership and management. This is very good improvement since the last inspection. Good communication throughout the school, and strong teamwork, ensure that staff work to common goals, share good practice, and are committed to school improvement at every level. This commitment is evident in the extensive procedures used by the senior management team (SMT) to check all aspects of the school's work, and the positive attitudes that all staff have towards these.
46. Monitoring of teaching and learning is very well established. The SMT is responsible for monitoring all teachers' plans and pupil targets identified in their individual

education plans (IEPs). Subject co-ordinators have clear roles, which are well understood. They are responsible for monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that work is linked throughout the school. Subject co-ordinators and the SMT also carry out classroom observations on a regular basis. This is good practice and works well as can be seen by the improvements in the quality of teaching.

47. The governors are a skilled and supportive group who carry out their responsibilities very effectively. They are strongly committed to school improvement. Governors frequently visit the school, attend functions and carry out checks, for example, on school visits. Every time a governor visits, a concise report is written. This is used well to contribute towards governors' thorough knowledge of the school. This good practice has recently been extended by establishing a policy based on the school's teaching and learning policy, which includes a proforma for reporting visits.
48. A good start has been made to performance management. This has been implemented very well. The headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher and senior teacher have been identified as team leaders. Team members have been allocated, initial objectives and time scales agreed. All appropriate committees are in place, and the governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities.
49. The school's aims, values and policies are very well reflected in practice. Staff know what is expected of them and what criteria will be used in evaluating their work. The school has implemented policies for each National Curriculum subject. These are revised and updated annually following an annual audit in which the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)** documentation is used to complement existing policies.
50. The school development plan successfully supports improvements in the school. It is formulated following wide consultation and reflects local and national priorities, as well as areas the school has identified for further improvement. It is fully costed. The headteacher, senior management team and governors closely monitor the implementation of the plan. The development plan has effective built in success criteria and the governing body is kept well informed on its progress through the headteacher's termly report, regular committee meetings, and their own visits to school.
51. The school has very good numbers of teachers, nursery nurses and non-teaching support staff for a school of this type. Teachers have a high level of expertise in their subjects and are very experienced. All support staff are well trained and clear about their job descriptions. This very good provision of staff ensures that pupils usually receive a high level of support in class.
52. There are very good arrangements to introduce teaching and non-teaching staff to the school and this is evident in the way that staff quickly settle in to established routines. The provision for staff training is very good. There are very good arrangements for teachers to gain higher qualifications to teach the growing number of pupils who have needs that are more complex. The very good provision of training supports the school's aims well to provide a higher standard of care. The school has identified and arranged effective training to prepare staff to implement national initiatives, for instance in literacy and numeracy. This training has had a significant effect upon raising standards.
53. Overall, the accommodation is unsatisfactory. Some good facilities, such as the swimming pool, soft-play room and sensory room provide opportunities for teachers to plan tasks beyond the classroom. There is a good range of rooms such as

administrative rooms, conference room and resource room, but a serious omission is the lack of a medical room. There are no changing facilities for physical education. Toilet facilities and changing areas are inadequate. However, the school has very good plans to improve these facilities in the near future. There have been some good improvements since the previous inspection to provide, for instance, better storage. The provision for students who are over 16 is now also very good; their base enables a more age-appropriate approach to be adopted by staff. However, there has not been sufficient progress on the extremely important issue of the lack of outdoor recreation space. There is a small play area for the youngest pupils, which is used well but older pupils do not have access to a designated outside area where they can play, engage in exercise or meet each other socially.

54. The provision of learning resources is good, being particularly good for music. This represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection when resources were unsatisfactory for science, religious education, modern foreign languages, history and geography. There is though still a need for more artefacts for religious education. Teachers also plan effectively to make use of facilities in the local community to promote learning; for example, the swimming pool of a local independent school.
55. The school manages its finances very well. It allocates a high proportion of the budget to teaching and support staff. These high staffing levels are appropriate and extremely beneficial and enhance standards and pupil progress. The Standards Fund is spent appropriately to extend the management and teaching skills of staff. For example, the implementation of National Numeracy and National Literacy strategies, curriculum developments, performance management, information and communication technology (ICT) developments, and the introduction of picture exchange communication systems. The school applies best value principles well. For example, where it can, it compares its performance with that of similar schools, and involves the LEA for advice, such as when purchasing musical instruments for the school.
56. The secretarial and administrative team gives very good support to the governors, head teacher and teachers. This is much appreciated by governors when interpreting the financial reports, and by the teachers who are able to pursue their primary job of teaching pupils. The latest auditor's report, 1999, was very complementary of the school. Controls were in place and operating satisfactorily, and financial records well maintained. No recommendations for improvements were made. Very good use is made of new technology for administration, financial accounting, planning and recording pupil attendance. The school is currently using information technology very effectively to record and plot pupil targets and "P" scores.

** The National body responsible for management of the curriculum that should be offered in all schools.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Increase teaching time for pupils aged between 7 and 16. Consideration should be given to using part of the long lunchbreak. (Paragraph 25)
- Improve the planning of physical education lessons. This should include developing a programme that ensures that pupils experience a full range of activities and their skills and involvement are recorded and developed as they move through the school. (Paragraphs 118, 119)
- Implement as soon as possible the plans to provide pupils with outside playground facilities. (Paragraphs 32, 53)

In addition governors should consider improvements to the following minor issues;

- Clarifying with parents when and how much homework will be provided for pupils. (Paragraph 23)
- Plan more carefully, lessons in the sensory room to ensure that teachers are clear what they want pupils to achieve. (Paragraph 23)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 60 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 35 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 7 | 54 | 37 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Pupils on the school's roll | No of pupils |
| Number of pupils and students on the school's roll | 42 |
| Number of full-time pupils 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 | 2 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 3 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | % | Unauthorised absence | % |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| School data | 8.1% | School data | 0.1% |

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

Attainment at the end of each Key Stage 1

Pupils' achievements and progress are recorded on 'P' scales. These indicate that all pupils are achieving below Level 2 in all subjects.

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | |
| Black – African heritage | |
| Black – other | 1 |
| Indian | |
| Pakistani | |
| Bangladeshi | |
| Chinese | |
| White | 41 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | |

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y13

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 7.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 6 |
| Average class size | 8 |

Education support staff: Y1-13

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 16 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 454 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999-2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|--------|
| Total income | 600039 |
| Total expenditure | 585876 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 13955 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 2917 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 17080 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 42 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 23 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 59 | 37 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 26 | 56 | 11 | 7 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 41 | 41 | 4 | 4 | 7 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 19 | 30 | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| The teaching is good. | 56 | 33 | 7 | 4 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 44 | 30 | 15 | 7 | 4 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 59 | 30 | 7 | 0 | 4 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 41 | 44 | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 41 | 33 | 19 | 4 | 4 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 37 | 48 | 7 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 44 | 26 | 11 | 4 | 4 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 37 | 30 | 19 | 7 | 4 |

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

ENGLISH

57. Standards of achievement in English are very good throughout the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented and has had a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Progress towards meeting the school's targets in literacy is very good.
58. The high standards achieved by pupils up to the age of seven are closely linked to the effective strategies used to promote learning. Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills through the use of language, signs and symbols. They enjoy listening to stories and many are beginning to answer questions well. Higher attaining pupils use one and two word answers as they follow a shared text. They make their needs known and respond to adults well. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to achieve eye contact. They give an object, such as a piece of fruit, on request and respond appropriately to adults. They almost all respond well to hearing their own name. The skilful use of a structured language programme, the consistent use of the picture exchange system (a communication system) and good individual literacy support, promote speaking and listening skills well.
59. By the age of eleven, pupils continue to develop their language skills through a range of good experiences. They respond in different ways. Some use pictures or symbols, while others sign or use spoken language. They understand the routines of the classroom and express choices and preferences. Lower attaining pupils follow the routine of the day well. Teachers ensure that they can understand their timetable set out in pictures and symbols. Objects of reference (this refers to teachers using pictorial symbols rather than words to describe an activity) are used effectively to indicate lesson changes in the timetable, and pupils show good understanding of these. Higher attaining pupils use vocabulary well, and are encouraged to discuss their own needs when necessary. They benefit from very good quality teaching that fosters communication at all times.
60. By the age of fourteen, pupils' confidence increases. Staff are very skilful at encouraging pupils to make choices and be fully involved in language activities. At this stage, information technology, such as a tape recorder, is used well with lower attaining pupils. Pupils listen carefully to the sounds and match their pictures and symbols to the sound they heard. Teachers plan work very carefully to the needs of individual pupils, ensuring each pupil will succeed. Higher attaining pupils are able to take messages around the school, and they use information technology more independently. When using a computer to write up their notes, pupils confidently use the space bar, capital letters and full

stops. They practise hard to improve their skills. Higher attaining pupils talk knowledgeably about their day and ask appropriate questions of visitors.

61. By the age of sixteen, pupils become more confident. This was evident in lessons where pupils were asked questions to see if they understood the story, and the characters within the story. They could also predict what was about to happen and offer their own ideas as to what they would like to happen. Pupils play interactive games, take turns and work together to take responsibility for improving their own speaking skills. Progress in the use of symbols is evident throughout this stage. Lower attaining pupils, who use alternative means of communication, make very good progress as they learn new vocabulary and increase the range of interaction that they can achieve. The consistently good adult support ensures that progress in speaking and listening continues to be very good.
62. Pupils with more profound learning difficulties, and those with autism, also make very good progress in speaking and listening. A wide range of communication aids is used to support individual needs. These ensure that each pupil makes progress in communicating with others. They begin to use switches, such as Big Macks*, in the very earliest class so that they can be included in question and answer sessions. They anticipate their turn and respond very well to the challenges set. As they move through the school, teachers continually monitor their needs to ensure that they can make the most of their ability. New communication aids are tried whenever possible. For example, in the secondary department, the English co-ordinator is investigating the possibility of linking the successful picture exchange system to information technology in a meaningful way. The use of the picture exchange communication system for lower attaining pupils, and Teacch* for pupils with autism is successful in raising standards in communication. These pupils use their pictures to express their needs and choices. They improve their skills through constant and consistent adult support and guidance. For example, in one year 7 lesson pupils were able to choose their activities and rewards by choosing the appropriate symbol.
63. Standards of achievement in literacy are also very good across the school. By the age of seven, pupils enjoy listening to stories and sharing text. They benefit from the very good resources that are used to support literacy. For example, pupils joined in with the story called *The Hungry Caterpillar*. The teacher had all the fruits and food mentioned in the story in a bag under the table. She produced the fruits to match both the type of fruit and number required, as if by magic, and really impressed and motivated the pupils. Higher attaining pupils count accurately up to 5 and match the fruit to the numbers. The high quality team approach in the classroom enables the pupils to move from recognition of fruit and food to recognising the pictures in the story. Higher attaining pupils are able to match pictures and find one the same. Most pupils are able to make a choice and find the correct fruit on request. Pupils are beginning to make marks on paper, and use paints and glue to make pictures and discuss them with staff.

64. Pupils up to the age of eleven enjoy singing songs and rhymes as part of their literacy work. They join in vocally or by signing and gesturing wherever possible. Most pupils make actions to the songs while others experience and enjoy the music and rhyme. By the age of fourteen, pupils continue to make very good progress in their literacy skills. Higher attaining pupils read simple text well. They recognise many letters and often try to build words that they do not know. They enjoy using books and treat them with care. All pupils in this stage have access to many books. They share them with an adult, and choose the ones they want to hear. Pupils with more profound learning difficulties benefit from the very good use of resources and good teaching strategies to support the acquisition of early literacy. Pupils' writing continues to improve. They consolidate prior knowledge of letter sounds, and practise saying and writing them. Higher attaining pupils write simple accounts, make lists, and use their knowledge of letter sounds to guide their writing.
65. By the age of sixteen, pupils' reading and writing skills are often linked to their Award Scheme Development & Accreditation Network (ASDAN) challenge studies. They write simple sentences independently, either with a pencil or on the keyboard. Their writing is generally neat and easy to read. All pupils are given high levels of support to achieve their tasks. Good strategies are used to help them succeed. For example, work is broken down into small steps, and adults support them by drawing lines, putting dots where they should begin, and by forming the beginning of words for them. There is also good use of information technology to enable pupils to write in symbols and text. These strategies are very successful in helping pupils to feel proud of their attempts.
66. Overall the quality of teaching and learning in English is very good across the school. Teachers in the best lessons are skilled in the use of different strategies to support literacy. They plan work to suit individual needs, and they use resources in an imaginative way. This helps to motivate pupils and they respond by working hard and showing high levels of enjoyment. These effective strategies are supported by good assessment. This ensures that tasks are well matched to ability. Teachers manage pupils well and generally know their pupils very well. Relationships are, therefore, strong and play a positive part in the quality of learning in English. Teachers use questions effectively to improve speaking and listening skills and encourage participation. Pupils respond well in lessons; they often share and take turns. This is linked to the good quality pupil management skills of all adults and, as a result of this, behaviour in lessons is invariably very good.
67. The English co-ordinator supports other teachers very well. Resources are very good, with some very good literacy resources, many of which have been made in-house. There is a good range of books, which shows improvement since the previous inspection as they are more appropriately age-related for the older pupils. These are well catalogued and easy to use. There is a good range of *Story Sacks*, which are very popular with pupils. Pupils are encouraged to use their literacy skills in many other subjects across the school. They use their communication skills at all times. This is a significant strength, which contributes well to pupils' social development.

Big Mack – a type of computer

Teacch - Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communications Handicapped Children

MATHEMATICS

68. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are very good. They make very good and occasionally excellent progress in lessons because the quality of teaching is now very good and occasionally excellent. The achievement made by pupils and the quality of teaching is much better than at the time of the previous inspection. One of the main reasons why pupils make such good progress is because of the very good planning for pupils to learn in each lesson. Teachers plan very well to provide regular opportunities for pupils to learn about numbers, shapes and to use their knowledge to solve problems. There is comprehensive assessment of what pupils are learning for all lessons and this helps teachers plan further work. Teachers have very high expectations for pupils to learn and set challenging but realistic targets for them to achieve.
69. The youngest pupils make very good progress in learning number skills. The teacher follows the National Numeracy Strategy well to plan tasks to help pupils to respond to numbers orally, providing opportunities for them to recognise signs and written numbers. Pupils show growing understanding of number order as they sing number songs. Lower attaining pupils are able to participate by signing and answer questions because staff provide very good encouragement and guidance. Higher attaining pupils respond very well to the high expectations for them to read, for example in selecting a number card between zero and five.
70. Pupils continue to make very good progress from the age of eleven. The teacher ensures that pupils understand the well-established routines to settle to their tasks as soon as they arrive at school, enabling them to make significant progress in individual tasks. Their progress was exceptionally good in one lesson observed. Higher attaining pupils worked independently to count sets of five objects, writing the numbers themselves. Lower attaining pupils showed that they could select colours with increasing confidence as they sorted coloured pegs. A significant factor in promoting such good progress was the planning that provided work and support to meet each individual's needs. Staff promoted language well as pupils followed tasks such as using pastry cutters to make large and small pastry shapes. When the higher attaining pupils succeeded in the task, they progressed well to identifying a medium sized shape. Teachers promote the concept of time very well. This meant that pupils refer to a pictorial timetable and respond very well to prompts to work faster, for example, in one lesson when the teacher informed them that there were only a few minutes left to finish the work before the next lesson.
71. Pupils respond very well to praise and guidance and this encourages them to put forward their ideas. Because they received a high level of support, higher

attaining pupils aged from eleven to thirteen understood that they could describe the differences between models of the regular solids by listing the number of 'flat' sides' or if they rolled. The way that staff asked pupils questions led them to put forward their own ideas and describe how they found their answers. Consequently, pupils tackled the next task more independently, noting the attributes of a different solid shape on their worksheet. An example of the exceptional planning to promote pupils' numeracy skills throughout the day was during a lesson in design and technology to make picture frames. Pupils chose shapes for their frames such as pentagons. They deepened their understanding by examining the number of sides and identifying their own shape.

72. The oldest pupils make very good progress completing work for accreditation. Pupils have very different needs and several have difficulty staying on task. However, through excellent methods to involve pupils, such as games and exemplary teamwork from staff to support them, all pupils complete sufficient work to make very good progress. In one lesson, higher attaining pupils enjoyed the competition to see who could solve the most problems. This encouraged them to try to answer oral questions more quickly, such as adding nine to six. The teacher chose the moment extremely well to demonstrate how pupils could 'count on' and they found the answer more quickly. Lower attaining pupils persevered to match objects such as cups to pictures and select a number of model animals through effective individual support.
73. Pupils of all levels of ability make the same very good progress throughout the school because of the way that they receive individual support. Consequently, those who have difficulty communicating receive effective opportunities to express themselves in their own way, such as using a series of pictures to ask or answer questions. Those who have the most complex needs follow work that matches their needs. In one lesson, for instance, pupils became increasingly aware during a musical game that they needed to press the tape recorder switch to make the music stop. The effective arrangements for assessment enabled the teacher to record progress, such as individual pupils looking at the switch or reaching out. The recording of the small steps in learning provides very good information to plan further work to promote more progress.
74. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively introduced. The quality of leadership of the subject is better than at the time of the previous inspection. This is evident in the way that all teachers follow systematic planning for pupils to make progress. The school is able to monitor standards very well by comparing pupils' achievements with nationally designed assessments to measure small steps in learning. The resultant information enables the school to judge progress and set targets to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

75. All pupils make good progress in science. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Achievements are likely to rise further as a result of the plans to use the new 'P' scales for assessing progress in science. This

development has the potential to improve significantly the current arrangements for the planning and assessment of scientific enquiry skills.

76. The youngest pupils learn science as part of their developing knowledge and understanding of the world. They are learning to observe objects and living things around them. Pupils with the most complex learning difficulties respond positively to the sensory stimuli provided, for example when feeling the materials used to make a wormery and to plant seeds. They respond positively to light and sound in the multi-sensory room. The targets for learning in the multi-sensory room are not, however, always detailed enough for staff to be able to monitor whether pupils, have made the expected progress. By the age of eleven, because pupils have good access to practical work, most know that some materials are magnetic; i.e. 'they stick to the magnet' and others are not. The use of large size resources is especially effective in giving pupils with poor motor skills access to the experiments. Pupils are aware that some reactions can be reversed, like water freezing and melting, and that materials can change when they are mixed together. They experiment with electrical circuits and learn the effect of adding batteries to a circuit, and the effect of a break in a circuit.
77. By the age of fourteen, more able pupils learn that plant growth is affected by the availability of water, and that the heart is a pump. They understand the difference between soluble and insoluble and can test for acidity with litmus paper. Pupils extend their understanding of magnetism, learning that magnets have a north and a south pole, and they use iron filings to display magnetic fields. They use elastic bands to propel toy cars and make predictions about the distance each will travel. Many can work independently to investigate static electricity and those that can write are recording their results. By the age of sixteen the highest attaining pupils use a CDROM to locate the names and locations of the planets. They improve their scientific vocabulary, for example by using terms like attract and repel in their continuing work on magnetism. Pupils improve their understanding of electrical safety and of the function of batteries inside electrical equipment and toys. They understand the idea of putting a plug in a socket for electrical equipment to work.
78. Pupils on the autistic spectrum make good progress, especially when learning assistants provide one to one support. The assistants are well briefed about the science content of lessons and they are fully aware of the learning needs of the pupils they support. The management of challenging behaviours is very efficient and consistent and other pupils experience no loss of learning time as a result of these behaviours. In science lessons, staff make very good use of picture symbols and picture exchange procedures to help develop pupils' communication and literacy skills.
79. The planning of the science curriculum to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding is much improved. Pupils have annual and termly targets, which include many opportunities to take part in investigations. The recording of pupils' progress in investigative skills is not fully developed., There has been considerable staff turnover in the role of science co-ordinator since the last

inspection. The current new post holder has made a good start in monitoring and evaluating the science curriculum and teaching.

ART AND DESIGN

80. The teaching of art and the standards of pupils' achievements are strengths of the school. Pupils and students throughout the school show good gains in a range of art skills because of well-planned and stimulating teaching. For example, pupils under seven, hold a brush correctly. They produce long and short brush strokes and mix colours. Pupils experiment by mixing two colours together to see if they can produce a third colour; they know red and yellow will make orange. They work independently, concentrate well and persevere to complete their work. In the classroom there is ample evidence of their art work displayed attractively. Work examples include line drawings, wax crayon pictures, textile patterns, collage and printing. Pupils use their art to support simple work in numeracy and literacy, and in their design and technology work, they paint the *surf board* they have designed and made.
81. By the age of seven, pupils have practised a good range of techniques and are gaining a good understanding of colour, shape and pattern. From seven up to the age of fourteen, pupils develop their skills considerably. They concentrate better on tasks and many are able to work alone for more extended periods. Pupils experiment and are more adventurous. The higher attainers use tools to good effect. A more extended range of targets is set and progress against these is very good. Three-dimensional work is developed. In the lessons observed, pupils gain an increasing knowledge of composition and observation of detail of still life; they draw plants, flowers and fruits. Pupils compose their still life drawing; by walking around the table they decide which view is the most effective before drawing the picture. Once the picture is drawn, pupils then decide whether to use pencils, crayons or paint to complete the picture. Lower attaining pupils show good cutting skills with scissors, glueing to put the picture together and use of crayons to colour the final picture. Much attention is paid by the teacher to ensure that tasks set match pupils' abilities. Higher attaining pupils observe carefully and draw in more detail. Very good use is made of shading to create depth in the pictures. Pupils show great pride in their work, are quick to celebrate their own and each others' success and discuss freely their work with visitors.
82. Photographic records of work are very good and pupils are able to use photographs to build displays connected with outings in a range of subject areas. One impressive display is of a recent trip to Disney Land in America. Staff used every opportunity to ensure that the trip had excellent personal and educational value. The records support this.
83. By the age of sixteen, pupils make further gains. They consolidate their work and become more creative. In their still life work, they innovatively use large and small stones of different sizes, textures and weights to create exciting compositions. This encourages pupils' literacy and numeracy work as they describe large and small, rough and smooth, and shapes such as square,

triangle and oblong. They observe very carefully and describe natural shades they find in the rocks, trying to find colours to match. Lower attaining pupils match their picture exchange cards for dark and light shade. They use pencil, crayon and charcoal to create shading.

84. Although the lack of an art room does not significantly restrict the learning experiences offered, it does mean that resources for art are duplicated across classes, and there is no area where work can be left out until completed. The school does not have a kiln, which is a disadvantage, but pupils use *modrock* well in their three-dimensional clay work.
85. Art makes a positive contribution to the personal development of pupils through extending their creative skills. There is a strong spiritual dimension in art lessons as the pupils enjoy the excitement of producing colourful artefacts that sometimes have a magical effect. There is a valuable contribution to communication through the discussion groups, and to numeracy through a growth in spatial awareness.
86. There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection. Resources are now good. The curriculum is more extensive and pupils' art work is well assessed and recorded under the whole-school system linked to termly reports. The lack of a specialist base remains an issue, especially for secondary age pupils. The art department is very successful in spite of this and makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. Pupils' achievement is good because the quality of teaching is good and occasionally very good. This is largely the same as at the previous inspection.
88. The youngest pupils receive good opportunities to develop designs and experiment with materials. During a lesson to make shapes with dough, they rolled out cylinder type shapes. Higher attaining pupils began to understand that they could use tools to provide a rough or smooth finish. Pupils continue to make good progress up to the age of eleven. They work with increasing independence to sort materials into categories of rough and smooth. Pupils achieve well because in lessons the teachers remind them of their previous work and encourage each pupil to talk about their part in studying the materials in the construction of a model of the school. Their designs for model vehicles show originality because they are able to use computers to draw their own or select a vehicle from a selection on the screen. They all use the computers with some independence because teachers explain the tasks clearly. Lower attaining pupils respond very well to staff guidance, such as when choosing a vehicle to make. They persevere well to construct it out of cardboard and paint it their chosen colour.
89. Pupils between the ages of eleven and thirteen make good progress designing and making frames for their collages. Pupils use tools to cut and join wood and choose their own colour of paint for their frame. They have made different

shapes, such as a hexagon; this provides very good opportunities to apply their knowledge of shapes, learnt in numeracy lessons. Pupils' work is of a high standard and reflects the very good support provided by staff.

90. All pupils learn about aspects of food technology. There is a good emphasis upon the importance of hygiene to enable pupils to develop good practice. The oldest children make good progress following an accredited course. Planning is effective to promote the need to work systematically. This means that when they start a new topic, such as designing and making sweets, pupils anticipate that they will follow a sequence of tasks. Pupils who have needs that are more complex make the same progress as others because they receive such good support and work matched to their needs. For example, in a lesson to make peanut cookies, they made very good progress against their targets for learning by responding to opportunities to hold the spoon to mix ingredients. Staff judged the degree of support that each pupil required well. For instance, they allowed plenty of time for pupils to reach out to help to grease the baking trays ready for the oven.
91. There are good planning documents and teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. They work together well to ensure that pupils receive good provision and continue to make good progress as they move through the school. Teachers plan well to introduce a good range of materials and tools, sharing them well between classes. Pupils receive good opportunities to use the very good kitchen, provided for students over the age of sixteen, for lessons in food technology.

GEOGRAPHY

(Only a few lessons of geography were observed during the week of the inspection. Judgements about pupils' achievements and the progress they make have been supplemented through a detailed scrutiny of previous work, individual records, displays and photographic evidence of previous work.)

92. Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement in planning and the development of supporting documentation and good improvement in pupils' achievements and progress.
93. Pupils up to the age of seven make good progress as they begin to have experience of their immediate locality. They are provided with well-planned opportunities to explore their school and local environment through visits to local parks and going on country walks. While on such visits they develop an awareness of different modes of transport as they observe cars, buses and trains. Their very early responses to moving in different directions in class establish a sound base for further development in simple map work.
94. Between the age of seven and eleven pupils build on previous work as teachers effectively extend their knowledge of their immediate community through traffic surveys and looking at changes that have taken place in Horsham. A visit to a

building site added significantly to the latter experience. The careful use of simple tabletop maps, when developing road safety skills in preparation for visits, extends their map work. The teacher's imaginative use of a box on rollers had pupils moving in different directions with a great deal of enjoyment. The well-organised mini-visit around the school by a group of pupils with complex physical and learning difficulties provided them with a good multi-sensory experience of the different locations in the school. Teachers, to introduce them to settlements, use very good videos, and their acquisition of key words such as city, town and village provides a good foundation for future work on this topic. Teachers ensure that early work on simple daily weather charts is built upon as they now begin to understand the concept of sequential seasons and the need to wear seasonally appropriate clothes – supporting the acquisition of history skills and preparing pupils for future work on how climate affects people.

95. For pupils between the age of eleven and thirteen good planning and challenging experiences ensure that pupils continue to extend their knowledge of their immediate environment as they become more familiar with the layout of the school. Work on weather is extended through the use of more appropriate symbols and they compare the climate of the USA with that of the British Isles – their visit to the USA significantly helped with this comparison. The teacher's introduction of a simple rain cycle effectively supported their work on rainforests. Teachers effectively use pupils' previous work on settlements to extend their understanding with the very carefully targeted use of a video generating great interest and a very good understanding of this topic. A pupil with significant attention difficulties sustained interest for the bulk of this lesson and through her contribution showed clearly that she had grasped the key elements of different types of settlements. Design and technology skills are used to build a village as part of their study of different types of buildings, with a visit to a farm contributing to their understanding of the processes involved in getting food – milk, eggs and cheese – to the table.
96. Between the age of thirteen and sixteen pupils continue to make good progress. They have made a simple map of Egypt and identify the sea, desert, cities and link geography to history as they look at such famous features as the Valley of the Kings and Thebes. Teachers effectively use the pupils previous understanding of weather when studying how the climate of Egypt influences the lives of the people who live there, including clothing and work. Additionally, pupils are more consistent in their use of correct terms to describe the weather because they have a better understanding of rain, gales, tornado, hail and snow. Teachers, to promote pupils' understanding of polluted and non-polluted environments, carefully use visits to contrasting localities such as a village, town and a country park.

HISTORY

(Due to the timetable during the inspection period it was only possible to observe one lesson of history. Judgements about pupils' achievements and the progress they make

have been supplemented through a detailed scrutiny of previous work, individual records, displays and photographic evidence of previous work.)

97. During the lesson observed pupils made good progress. They used photographs and pictures to make judgements about how life in Tudor times was different from life in the 21st Century. The teacher's good questioning and prompting had them identify the difference between the food, housing, transport and clothing of rich and poor people, while sampling the poor person's bowl of soup and the rich person's marzipan cake effectively provided that variety in activities which helps to maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Pupils were well challenged as they recorded their understanding by matching drawings of transport, clothes and houses to the appropriate person, with the teacher's deployment of support staff to help individual pupils ensuring that all pupils had the opportunity to complete the lesson with tangible evidence of their success.
98. Younger pupils make good progress in their understanding of the passing of time through the use of their daily timetable, recalling the days of the week and studying pictures from "birth to adulthood". Equally, their celebrating of birthdays and major events in the calendar, such as Christmas, also contributes to their early understanding of the passing of time.
99. Pupils between seven years and eleven years have a more precise understanding of time through having a better understanding of the details of their timetables and through looking at clothes and costumes from long ago. They visit old Horsham to look at old buildings and go to the museum and focus on individuals such as Guy Fawkes and Louis Braille. Their work on Mary I generated good work on the writing of coded messages, while tasting Greek food supported their learning about the history of another country.
100. Between the age of eleven years and thirteen years pupils continue to make good progress as they build on previous learning. Work on the Battle of Hastings and the Spanish Armada introduces them to significant events in British history, while their early work on the rich and the poor is extended through work on Imperial China. They place events in their own life in sequence; they know about the mathematics of the year – 12 months, 7 days in a week – and are more able to discuss the what, where, why, and how of events and people such as was demonstrated in their work on North American Indians.
101. Between the age of thirteen years and sixteen years pupils study the reasons for World War II; use their map skills to plot the countries invaded by Hitler and re-visit the rich and the poor as they look at Victorian times. Their study of Egypt, the sphinx and Tutankhamun provided opportunities for good group work as well as extending their cultural development.
102. The good progress in history identified in the last inspection has been sustained and there has been significant improvement in the quality of supporting documentation

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. Achievement in this subject is good. Pupils have good opportunities to learn computer skills and use their skills whilst working in many other subjects, such

as in geography, to elicit facts from a CD ROM encyclopaedia. The quality of teaching is good. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection.

104. The youngest pupils have regular and good opportunities to develop early skills in using computers. For instance, progress was good when one pupil directed the mouse to select a very small circle on the screen to create animal sounds and visual effects. Through careful guidance from a support assistant, the pupil began to realise that it was more successful to make more effort to strike the target than to rely upon trial and error, consequently accuracy in controlling the mouse increased.
105. Pupils up to the age of eleven have good opportunities to improve their computer skills. For instance in design and technology, they use computers to provide an illustration of a vehicle that they might find in the school car park. The teacher plans very effectively for them to follow work that matches their needs. Higher attaining pupils used an art program on the computer to draw their car, selecting controls to print their completed design. Lower attaining pupils and those who have learning needs that are more complex made similarly good progress selecting a picture of a vehicle that they wanted to display. Pupils understand that they can program instructions into a 'Roamer' * to make it move forward. Through very effective guidance, pupils understood that they could change the settings to make the vehicle move the required distance, promoting numeracy skills well such as estimating distance.
106. Pupils over the age of eleven continue to make good progress developing computer skills, such as saving their written work or printing out their text independently. Teachers promote each pupil's skills effectively because they base their planning on the very good systems of assessment. These indicate the next task for pupils to learn and this enables teachers to plan effectively to build on what pupils already know. This often means that pupils follow different tasks during lessons to promote skills. Higher attaining pupils for instance used the keyboard to type their name. They made further progress selecting the correct key to insert capital letters. Lower attaining pupils matched words or pictures on the screen, using keyboard, mouse or special switch according to their need. The oldest pupils gain a good understanding of how technology in the home and school, such as office equipment, helps people, as part of their accredited work.
107. Pupils with more complex learning needs make similarly good progress in lessons operating equipment chosen well to meet their needs. They have good opportunities to operate special switches designed to help them to make a change on the computer screen, such as selecting an animal picture or introduce a sound effect. The school makes very good use of Big Mack switches to enable pupils to make a pre-recorded response, for instance to 'say' stop during a passing game. When pupils have difficulty operating a keyboard or switch, they can make choices by touching a special computer screen. Staff support pupils well to help them to improve their accuracy in operating their device.

108. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively. There is good planning to make more improvements to the subject by providing more training opportunities and to improve equipment provision significantly. This means that the school will be able to make more use of the Internet for pupils to find more information to support their work. As staff receive further training they use an increasing amount of equipment to support their work. They operate the digital camera effectively to retain evidence of pupils' work to help to measure progress. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use the Soundbeam* to enable them to take part in music lessons.

Roamer -A battery driven wheeled model with a keypad that can be used to program it to move in a given direction.*

Soundbeam' -The equipment detects movement, emitting sounds. This means that pupils can play notes for instance by simply moving a part of their body.*

FRENCH:

(During the week of inspection, because of time-table arrangements no French lessons were seen. However, through analysis of work and examination of teacher and pupil records, it is possible to judge the quality of teaching and learning, and pupil progress as satisfactory.)

109. In the previous report, pupils in the secondary department of the school were not taught French on a regular or formal basis, resulting in the school not meeting statutory requirements. Since the last report, the provision for French has improved. There is now a clear policy for French and appropriate planning has been implemented to support teachers who teach French. Learning resources are satisfactory. Many are made in-house by staff, who take great care to ensure the resources motivate pupils and are matched to their individual need. The co-ordinator supports staff well and both formal and informal discussions take place.

110. Achievement and progress are satisfactory. There is appropriately a strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills, which complements the school's literacy strategies. Pupils also record their work in their French workbooks. There are also good displays of work done in French and ample photographic evidence to support this. Pupils use French at registrations, indicating their understanding and pleasure at using French, and occasionally counting in French to complement their numeracy work. French within the school makes a positive contribution to pupils' social, moral and cultural development.

MUSIC

111. Progress and achievements in music are very good. Music was judged to be a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection, and continues to be so. Music is thoroughly integrated into the life of the school; it features in

physical education lessons, the celebration of festivals and the joint schools carol concert in a local church at Christmas. The very high achievements in music culminate in an annual musical performance. The concert is very well attended by parents. The theme of the concert is chosen especially so that all pupils can take part. There are very high levels of participation in all the whole school musical events and individual music lessons. Assessment procedures in music have improved significantly since the last inspection; they are now of good quality and cover a broad range of music skills.

112. Pupils benefit from consistently very high quality teaching provided by class teachers and visiting music teachers. Very high standards of subject co-ordination, the availability of music specialists, and a very good range of high quality resources also support the very good progress made in music. The promotion of literacy, numeracy, communication and personal and social skills through music is a particular strength. Teaching methods encourage pupils to listen to each other's performances, take turns, make choices about the songs they like to sing and the instruments they would like to play. By experiencing music from other countries, China, Spain, Africa, India and Egypt, for example, music makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their music lessons and the opportunities provided to visit theatres to listen to musicals.
113. Pupils play percussion and stringed instruments and handle them carefully. They compose music, and in some classes listen to recordings of their compositions so they can appraise their work. Pupils also compose using the sound beam, a method especially effective in promoting the involvement of those pupils on the autistic spectrum, and gaining a positive response from pupils with the most profound and complex learning difficulties. The latter pupils also respond very positively to musical instruments that vibrate. Pupils are encouraged to conduct the class 'orchestra'; they know how to stop and re-start the playing, and how to promote loud or quiet, fast or slow passages. Mixed age groupings and the integration of pupils with the most complex learning difficulties into lessons further promote pupils' confidence, self-esteem and communication skills.
114. The management of each teaching group for music is very effective; even in very cramped accommodation all pupils have access to the instruments. In music and movement lessons in the hall music generates a very positive response from none ambulant pupils. Very effective use of mood music at the end of these lessons helps pupils to relax and cool down.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

115. A combination of timetabled lessons and more informal approaches lead to very effective provision for personal, social and health education. The quality of teaching of personal, social and health education is consistently high across the school. Achievements and progress are, as a consequence, very good. The quality of the personal, social and health education curriculum has

improved since the last inspection. A policy and curriculum plan for all years now provides teachers with good quality guidance on the teaching of this subject. The curriculum is wide and relevant and incorporates careers education and guidance, and sex and drugs education. The use of a published Youth Award Scheme for much of the personal, social and health education provision secures a good breadth of well planned experiences for pupils aged fourteen and above. Aspects of the subject are successfully integrated into the whole curriculum in all years, so pupils develop, for example, skills for dressing, toileting and feeding. They learn personal and social skills, become more independent and develop the self-confidence to take on responsibilities in class, for example, being a monitor. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own belongings and to handle equipment safely.

116. All pupils develop an understanding of caring for the environment. This programme begins more informally in the primary years when pupils are taught not to drop litter. Then in the secondary years pupils investigate which types of rubbish disintegrate and which do not. In other lessons they explore prejudice through role play, and lessons of this kind make a good contribution to pupils' awareness of a multi-cultural and multi-racial society. By the age of sixteen the higher attaining pupils develop awareness of their personal appearance and of appropriate dress codes for different occasions. Through role play they learn procedures in the event that they get lost. Post 16 students develop an understanding of leisure time and how this can be planned. They produce very informative records of their personal, social and health education work. Pupils learn to keep themselves and others safe, and to know that some substances are harmful. They develop an understanding of the importance of healthy eating and a healthy life style, and put this in to practice by catering for themselves at lunch time. Especially effective is their learning to gauge the mood of communication and 'body language', for example, detecting happy, sad, and angry conversations. They learn to recognise the different roles that people play in the public services and in school.
117. Teachers make good quality assessments, usually on a daily basis, of the progress pupils make towards their individual targets for personal and social development. All staff treat the pupils with the utmost respect and provide excellent role models for pupils to develop their inter-personal skills. There has been some improvement since the last inspection in monitoring and evaluating the provision for personal, social and health education.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. Pupils' achievements in physical education are satisfactory. They are, though, good in swimming. During the inspection pupils' progress and achievements were good or even very good in many of the lessons. However, because there is no co-ordinated plan to build on the skills pupils have already gained, they are not making such good progress over time, as they move through the school. This can be seen in the targets set for pupils. There are examples of the same targets being set for pupils over the last four terms. They

will have had some good opportunities in physical activities but the planning for lessons has not ensured that pupils achieve the targets set and move on to higher skill levels.

119. With the exception of swimming, pupils are not being taught skills that improve what they can already do. An example, of this is in rounders. Pupils aged from twelve to nineteen join together for a games afternoon. During the inspection this involved practices in rounders and the opportunity to play a game. There is no evidence, though, to show that the expectations for pupils' achievements will change as they move through the school. All pupils completed the same practices and there were the same expectations for the game. This, therefore, did not extend what pupils could already do. In swimming arrangements are better because staff record what pupils have achieved and use this information to plan what will be taught later. For example, the most competent swimmers are developing their techniques in breaststroke and are being taught to make more use of their arms and legs. They are also beginning to be able to swim on their backs and, although their techniques involve paddling as opposed to lifting their arms out of the water, they are making good progress. Lower ability swimmers have clearly made good progress. They are now confident in the water and willingly take part in different activities. They are very well supported by staff, who offer them positive encouragement.
120. The youngest pupils in the school are beginning to understand the structure of physical education lessons. They all change and enter the hall ready to take part. Although most need staff support, they are beginning to explore apparatus, for example, in gymnastics they move along upturned benches and crawl through plastic tunnels. They can balance on a bench and many enjoy bouncing on the trampette. The teaching of these sessions is good, the strengths being in the way that all pupils are encouraged to take part.
121. There is also very good progress for a small number of pupils who join in with mainstream pupils for physical education lessons. Two pupils were seen taking part in a mainstream Year 8 athletics lesson. The pupils obviously enjoyed the experience, listened carefully to the teacher and enjoyed making friends with their mainstream peers. This was a very positive experience for all pupils.
122. The curriculum offered is appropriate in that pupils can take part in games, gymnastics and dance activities. There is, however, limited planning for athletics although evidence shows that pupils have taken part and there is indeed a school sports day. Although, pupils do not engage in outdoor education lessons specifically, almost all have the chance to go horse riding. These sessions are well planned with detailed expectations set for each pupil. Careful records are kept and pupils clearly gain a great deal from these experiences.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

123. Pupils' progress and achievements in the subject are good. The good and sometimes very good teaching in the subject identified during the previous inspection has been sustained; the quality of planning has been significantly improved and there has been very good improvement in the quantity, quality and organisation of resources.
124. Younger pupils up to the age of eleven years make good progress in understanding that different religions have different special books and different festivals. They know that the Bible is the book for the Christian faith and that Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter are paralleled in other religions through such festivals as Divali. Their introduction to the Ten Commandments is carefully linked to the role of class and school rules. Stories such as the story of Noah and Moses are used to help pupils understand how faith can contribute to the life of the believer. Families and friends are considered and in particular pupils' part as members of families. The use of role play by one class to promote an understanding of the different ways that help can be offered was effective in general and particularly effective in getting pupils with complex attention difficulties to fully and successfully participate in the lesson.
125. Between the age of 11 years and 13 years pupils continue to make good progress as teachers effectively build on previous knowledge and understanding. They are better able to understand the underlying concepts of other faiths. For example, they are developing an understanding of the celebrations in Judaism through playing 'Dreidle' games and looking at a "special candle" holder. Stories about Mother Theresa, Joan of Arc and Prince Siddhartha illustrate and help them to appreciate how religious belief can have an effect on the life of an individual. Sensitive activities and discussions support their understanding of happiness and sadness. The teaching of religious education fully reflects the pupils' different special needs and learning styles. This was effectively demonstrated in the lesson for pupils with severe and complex physical and learning difficulties when they all enjoyed and responded very positively to touching and tasting both the fish and the bread when participating in the lesson about the Bible story of Jesus feeding the 5000.
126. Between the age of 13 years and 16 years teachers present pupils with more challenging experiences as they re-visit previous work in more depth. Pupils respond well to discussions about the role of weddings, funerals and baptism and study the physical symbols that are embodied in Christian church buildings. They are more able to understand the concept of greed and their understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour is more closely linked to the concept of right and wrong. Their work on 'Ra', the shining Hindu sun god, is used well to link religious education to ancient history and the Christian story of creation is compared to a story from North America.

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION FOR THE STUDENTS IN THE POST-16 UNIT

127. Students within the Post 16 unit achieve very well in their accredited work, particularly in preparation for life beyond the school. They make very good progress in lessons in school and at college. The quality of teaching is very good. This is a very important factor in promoting students' progress. The students receive most of their education in very good, purpose built accommodation. The design enables staff to plan lessons in a distinctive way, suited to the students age and maturity for instance to hold group discussions in a relaxed setting. There is very good emphasis upon preparation for life through lessons, college placements and work experience. Overall, the very high quality of teaching and learning, the accommodation and relevance of the course is much better than at the time of the previous inspection.
128. Communication forms a major part of the work in class and planning is effective to develop speaking and listening skills in most lessons. Planning is very thorough to enable students to learn to communicate in the community. This was evident in a lesson to teach pupils to communicate in a socially acceptable way during conversations. They made very good progress understanding the need to let their faces show interest in what others are saying and to allow people to finish speaking before replying. They achieved extremely well when they joined drama lessons at a local college, remembering everyone's name and following instructions to perform actions. Pupils complete a significant amount of written work because they keep impressive records of their work for accreditation. This ensures that students make very good progress writing in different ways. For instance, they write accounts of their work experience that help them to discuss their experiences with others. Reading forms an integral part of most lessons. The teacher and support staff consistently seize opportunities to encourage students to read. When students make lunch, staff require higher attaining students to read recipes to learn to work with more independence. Lower attaining students made very good progress when they followed pictures to understand the sequence of meal preparation because they received very good support and encouragement. The teacher encourages students to take an interest in literature, providing excellent opportunities for them to develop good skills using the local library to change their books and tapes. Students use computers effectively to type up their work for their accredited records and for display in class. They have very good opportunities to attend a local college to join students for lessons. They undertake tasks such as preparing a series of pictures to illustrate their work. This enables them to make very good progress in learning computer skills.
129. Students make very good progress improving their skills in numeracy, particularly in preparation for applying their knowledge to practical tasks. For instance, they regularly make their own lunch as part of the course to encourage them to be more independent. This enables students to become more confident in handling money and to be aware of the need to keep to their list of items when they shop at the local supermarket to remain within budget. They made very good progress in measurement; aware of the need to choose the correct quantities when they shop. Students developed a very good understanding of the need to measure amounts, for instance the number of cups of pasta they required when they cooked lunch for the whole group. There

is a very good emphasis upon promoting students' understanding of how to use their number skills when they leave school. This is evident in the impressive progress students make in planning journeys, for instance to the airport and south coast. Students make very good progress understanding timetables, especially when they need to judge their times of travel to aim to be at a theatre at a given time. Students make very good progress in personal and social skills because of the very good course and high standard of instruction. They participate very well in lessons to prepare them for their residential visit to Southampton. The teacher prepared an excellent booklet to accompany the visit and this enabled them to anticipate how they should prepare. Through very effective questioning, they developed lists of items they needed to take for the outdoor activities, developing skills that will be useful when they go on other residential journeys. Students take part in some interesting sports and leisure activities such as ten-pin bowling. These out of school activities provide very good opportunities for students to practise their skills of preparing to travel on transport and performing appropriately in public. In one lesson, they discussed the range of sports and leisure activities available, expressing preferences. However, the opportunity was lost to consider each other's preferences for sport, to promote a better understanding of why students make different choices. Although students made good progress in this lesson overall, they spent too much time writing down words and this reduced the effectiveness of discussion. Students spend a significant part of their week in physical education lessons such as badminton and swimming. They share some lessons with much younger pupils and this is not a sufficiently distinct part of the course.

130. Students follow a wide range of subjects throughout the week. They achieve particularly well in art lessons, creating an impressive display of their own paintings based upon the work of famous artists. In one lesson, they made very good progress creating a collage in the style of Monet. They were able to identify and recreate a picture of water lilies, familiar with the scene from their work in previous lessons. Students achieve very well when they attend horticulture and design and technology courses at local colleges, developing an excellent relationship with staff and fellow students to make the most of the training opportunity. They make very good progress in horticulture skills and develop social skills to mix in the wider community. Students produce wooden planting troughs of a very high standard and display them proudly in their entrance hall. There is excellent preparation for life beyond the school through very good career guidance and some exceptionally good work experience placements. During a placement at a local supermarket, one student fully joined in the day to day tasks in the shop like a member of staff proving to himself and others that he could succeed and fit in well. When he wore the supermarket uniform, he was indistinguishable from other members of staff.
131. Students achieve very well in design and technology. They receive valuable experience at a local college, helping to design and make impressive wooden boxes to display plants. The work that they undertake in food technology makes an important contribution to their accredited training for independent living. Pupils receive regular opportunities to plan and make lunch for the class. Consequently, they begin to understand the sequence and anticipate what they

should do next. For instance during one lesson, they cleared away all the vegetable peelings from their work area before they moved on to the next step to add the chopped vegetables to pasta. The planning ensured that pupils received excellent opportunities to use numeracy skills, when they helped to purchase the ingredients and measured the quantities during cooking. Lower attaining pupils responded particularly well to the scales that 'spoke' the weight of the ingredients, when they helped to make fancy fruit tarts for dessert.

132. Students make particularly good progress in using computers because of the opportunities they receive in lessons, and when they attend college. They regularly use computers to type out their work, such as assignments as part of their accredited assessment of their experiences on work placement.
133. Students are provided with opportunities to discuss many of the underpinning key elements of religious education whilst being taught other subjects – particularly personal and social education - and as a consequence of previous learning have a clear understanding of the links between religion, culture and society.
134. The department leader provides very good leadership to arrange a very full and worthwhile course for students. The excellent prospectus sets out clearly the impressive range of subjects available and the high expectations for students to learn skills to help them in later life.